INDIANA
Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

2021-2025

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2021–2025

PREPARED BY

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STATE OF INDIANA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
State House, Second Floor
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

August 23, 2019

Dr. Bert Frost
Regional Director, Midwest Region
National Park Service
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, NE 68102

Dear Dr. Frost:

It has been five years since Indiana published our last Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). We have continued to use the Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust and the Land and Water Conservation Fund as primary funding sources to conserve and develop public outdoor recreation lands at the state, county and local level throughout Indiana. The SCORP is an invaluable guide for this development.

This letter certifies that the citizens of Indiana were provided with ample opportunity for public participation in our latest SCORP planning process. As with our previous SCORPs, the 2020 plan uses a needs assessment based primarily on public input solicited from the citizens of Indiana, park professionals, and a 15-member Plan Advisory Committee. Through third-party surveys we objectively gathered public input from citizens all over the state. At each stage, the Plan Advisory Committee offered reviews, feedback and ideas crucial to our plan's development using their extensive knowledge and hands-on experience in the subject matter. Like all things in Indiana, we combined this specialized input with data from national recreation trends and the review of local parks and recreation master plans to finalize the 2020 SCORP.

Our parks and outdoor recreation lands provide Hoosiers with the opportunity to experience nature and enjoy outdoor activities all across the state. The new 2020 Indiana SCORP details statewide acquisition priorities for these public outdoor recreation lands from willing sellers for the next five years.

Sincerely,

Eric J. Holcomb
Governor of Indiana

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DIVISION OF HEARINGS
Sandra Jensen

LAW ENFORCEMENT
Steve Hunter

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Tom Laycock

NATURAL RESOURCES FOUNDATION
Jody Kress

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR LAND HOLDING BUREAU
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WATER
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INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISIONS

- **Accounting & Internal Audit** provides internal DNR fiscal tracking and support to all other divisions.
- **Budget & Administrative Support** manages the administrative support staff for all of DNR, as well as providing budgetary control.
- **Engineering** provides engineering and technical support for all DNR properties and others, including architectural, sanitary, electrical, landscape, civil, and code enforcement.
- **Entomology & Plant Pathology** provides information and technical assistance in managing plant and insect pests, specializes in invasive and harmful species.
- **Facilities, Fleet & Asset Management** administers the department's facilities, including mailroom services, access control, safety and ADA compliance programs; fleet, including vehicle reservations, owned fleet inventory and maintenance, accident review board and Wright Express; and asset management, tracks all assets with a cost of more than $500 and a useful life of one year or more.
- **Fish & Wildlife** manages and monitors fish and wildlife populations, hunting and fishing licenses, and provides related technical assistance and information.
- **Forestry** manages State Forests and provides information and technical assistance to foresters and private landowners.
- **Land Acquisition** supports the acquisition of new properties from willing sellers via partnerships, donations, bequests and sales of the President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust Fund environmental license plate.
- **Historic Preservation & Archaeology** acts as staff for State Historic Preservation Officer and promotes conservation of cultural resources by facilitating Indiana and federal preservation programs.
- **Human Resources** serves as resource for current and future employees of DNR, provides information on employment, benefits, volunteering, internships, applications and more.
- **Information Services** provides technological service and support, DNR-wide.
- **Law Enforcement** provides 214 Indiana Conservation Officers in 10 law enforcement districts, handles environmental investigations, emergency response, education, law enforcement and property protection.
- **Natural Resources Foundation** supports the charitable, educational and scientific programs, projects and policies of the DNR.
- **Nature Preserves** provides permanent protection to significant natural areas, maintaining sustainable examples of all native ecological communities in Indiana.
- **Oil & Gas** oversees petroleum production and exploration through three program areas: permitting and compliance, field services, and abandoned sites.
- **Outdoor Recreation** handles state- and local-level park & recreation master planning and parks, streams, and trails grants; manages two properties and multiple programs; and provides technical assistance for the public and for recreation professionals.
- **Communications** provides internal and external communications, public relations, marketing, and public education for DNR.
- **Reclamation** protects resources by overseeing reclamation of abandoned mines, active mines, mine blasting, mining permits, and public participation in oversight and permit processes.
- **State Parks** manages and operates Indiana State Parks, state-managed lakes recreation, and State Park Inns, and provides education, recreation, resource conservation and management of these public lands.
- **Water** oversees above- and below-ground water, provides customer information services, permitting, technical services, and engineering services; operates three work groups: floodplain management, resource assessment, and the compliance & projects branch.

OTHER RELATED INDIANA GOVERNMENT OFFICES

- **Indiana Department of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation** provides guidance, education and technical assistance to public and private landowners throughout Indiana.
- **Indiana Department of Environmental Management** deals with Indiana's environmental quality and the sustainability of its air, water and land. Technical oversight, permits and regulatory compliance are part of its mission.
- **Indiana State Department of Health** provides policy, guidance and facilitation of public health and health-care activities and programs statewide. ISDH is responsible for creating the Indiana Comprehensive Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan 2010-2020.
- **Indiana Department of Transportatio**n works with all aspects of the statewide transportation system, including bus, car, rail, air, bicycle and foot.
- **Indiana Natural Resources Commission** comprises 12 bipartisan resident members who meet four times per year to address DNR issues.
- **Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs** provides planning, grants and technical assistance for rural economic development statewide.
- **Indiana Economic Development Corporation** is a public-private partnership with a 12-member board that acts as the top economic development agency for Indiana.
- **Indiana Office of Tourism Development** is a stand-alone agency within state government that uses public and private funds to expand tourism statewide.
- **State Museum & Historic Sites** operates a wide variety of historic/cultural programs and facilities, including the Indiana State Museum in Indianapolis, Gene Stratton-Porter Cabin, Historic New Harmony, and the Angel Mounds archaeological site.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

STATEWIDE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

SCORP Vision Statement

The SCORP is an information resource that quantifies and analyzes the state's outdoor recreation resources for the social, environmental, health, and economic benefit of citizens statewide. The SCORP is intended to support local, regional and state-level recreation decision making, as well as foster research, partnerships and cooperation among users, planners, government officials, nonprofits, and the private sector.

SCORP Goals

- Provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis of outdoor recreation supply and demand statewide.
- Improve the provision of outdoor recreation to all users.
- Qualify Indiana for National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) state-side grants.
- Set statewide priorities for funding of grants through LWCF, the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), and any other applicable funds available at State or federal levels.

SCORP Planning

The production of the Indiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) requires the expertise of people from many disciplines to assemble an effective tool for Indiana. Those who volunteer as members of the Plan Advisory Committee share input several times a year during the research and writing. They provide valuable insight and commentary that guides the development of surveys, research analysis, and creation of a plan that can be used by providers from all levels of community, including state, county, municipal and township.

The DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation thanks the committee members for their advice, support, expertise, time and talent. Committee members give direction to the SCORP 2016-2020 and ensure the priorities and contents are consistent with the State's vision, mission and goals for outdoor recreation and the DNR.

Plan Advisory Committee

Susan Craig . . . . Southeastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
Jerry Byanski. . . . . Park Planner, EarthPlan Associates
Jenny Orsburn. . . . . Portage Parks and Recreation Department
Ric Edwards . . . . DNR, ADA Safety Director
Walter Lenckos. . . . . Porter County Parks and Recreation Department
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Nathan Schaumleffel. . . . . Indiana State University, Recreation & Non-Profit Leadership Program
Steve Slauson. . . . . St. Joseph County Parks
Donald Sporleder . . . . FAIA, Notre Dame, Professor of Architecture
Daniel Valleskey . . . . Paddler/Water Trails Representative
Bob Arnold . . . . Park Planner, EarthPlan Associates

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965 (Public Law 88-578, 78 Stat 897) was enacted "… to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to all citizens of the United States of America of present and future generations and visitors who are lawfully present within the boundaries of the United States of America such quantity and quality of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation in such recreation and strengthen the health and vitality of the citizens of the United States by (1) providing funds for and authorizing federal assistance to the states in planning, acquisition, and development of needed land and water areas and facilities and (2) providing funds for the federal acquisition and development of certain lands and other areas."

According to the National Park Service 2008 LWCF State Assistance Program Manual: "To be eligible for LWCF assistance for acquisition and development grants, each state shall prepare a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), and update it at least once every five years." In other words, a SCORP needs to look at outdoor recreation supply and demand; set priorities for current and future capital improvement, land acquisition, and development; and allow opportunities for citizens and local government officials to take part in the planning process.

The main objectives of the LCWF have remained the same for 54 years: land acquisition, preservation, provision, development, accessibility, and the strengthening of the health and vitality of our nation. This SCORP shows that Indiana's focus is still directly in line with the LWCF Act of 1965.

Indiana has received more than $90 million from the LWCF since the program's start. Indiana's smaller entities (e.g., counties, townships, municipalities) provide outdoor recreation opportunities to its citizens through the appropriation of LWCF grants. Since 1965, more than 170 Indiana park and recreation boards have obtained grants. The majority of projects funded each year include land acquisition, some include trail development, and a few include the development of new aquatic features. Amenities that potentially are included in these projects include, but are not limited to:

- Spray Pads
- Picnic Areas
- Natural Areas
- Playgrounds
- Ball Fields
- Dog Parks

LWCF requires a 50/50 match from communities that receive the grant. All funds for the project must be paid by communities and then reimbursed upon successful project completion. As operating and maintenance costs increase, so does the importance of the LWCF in funding continued acquisition of land where needed. Unfortunately, these grants cannot fund every project in the state. Alternative funding methods will be discussed in this SCORP.

INTRODUCTION

A new SCORP offers the chance to track and analyze the many changes and new trends in Indiana and nationwide since the last SCORP. The provision of parks and recreation in Indiana are often directly affected by these changes and trends. Some of these changes include changing demographics and socio-economics; the continuing children and nature movement; the growing statewide obesity epidemic; and the increasing importance and economic benefits of Indiana travel, tourism and outdoor recreation, both statewide and to individual local communities.

Data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau and similar sources yield the following socio-economic changes in the state:

- **Hoosier Population Growth Slowing:** The 2018 U.S. Census estimates (American Factfinder, 07/2018), that the state has grown in population, but similar to what the 2010 Census numbers showed, not by much. The growth was from 6,596,855 estimated population in 2014, to 6,691,878 in July of 2018, a 1.44% increase. For the 2016 SCORP, Indiana had observed a 1.74% population growth rate, from 2010 to 2014.
- **Older Hoosiers:** Indiana is still aging slightly. The state's median age has risen from 36.4 in 2010, to 37.7, according to the 2017 Census estimates.

People continue to live longer and medical care and access are improving.

- **More Baby Boomers Retiring:** Baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) began turning 65 in 2011. In 2019, the youngest of the baby boomers will reach 55 years of age.
- **Hoosiers Earning More:** Median household income in Indiana was $50,011 in 2013, compared to $54,181, according to 2017 Census estimates.
- **More Hoosiers Living Under Same Roof:** Average Indiana household size has grown slightly to 2.54 (according to the 2018 Census estimates) up from 2.52 in 2010.
- **Unemployment Still Falling:** Indiana's January 2019 statewide seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.5%, down from the March 2015 unemployment rate of 5.8%. By comparison, Indiana's unemployment rate in March 2008 was 5.0%, meaning the state has finally reached pre-recession unemployment levels. (IN Dept. of Workforce Dev.; 2008/2015/2019)
- **Manufacturing and Healthcare Employment Improving:** In the Indiana Dept. of Workforce Development 2017 Economic Analysis Report (published in October 2018), the top three highest employment increases for the period of 2012 to

2017 were in Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Accommodation and Food Services. The top three declining industries in that same period were in Mining, Educational Services, and Information Services.

- **Poverty Now Decreasing in Indiana:** The percentage of Indiana families living below poverty level has declined from15.4% in 2013, to 13.3% in 2017, according to Census estimates. For comparison purposes, in 2017, the Census estimated that the nationwide poverty rate was 12.3%.
- **Gasoline Costs Almost Unchanged:** The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) in May 2015, reported the U.S. average price per gallon was $2.48/gallon. On March 4, 2019, EIA reported that the U.S. average price per gallon was $2.42/gallon. (U.S. Energy Info Admin, 2015 & 2019).

RESEARCH STUDY FINDS THAT PEOPLE WANT QUALITY OF PLACE, AND BUSINESSES FOLLOW PEOPLE

In 2016, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana Chamber Foundation, and the Wellness Council of Indiana commissioned a study by the Ball State University Center for Business and Economic Research with the goal of creating a "Healthy, Wealthy, Wise Index" in order "to give businesses, non-profits, and local government leaders the data needed to assess wellness within counties in Indiana." (CBEC, 2016, pg. 3) The final section of the study has an interesting discussion of the effects of local-level parks and recreation on population growth and economic development: "The policymakers also have a role in wellness and thoughtful economic development. First, over the past few decades, the United States economy has shifted from a condition where a higher share of migration was employment related. As late as the 1970's, about one-third of household incomes and half of household spending were related to goods that could be produced anywhere. The businesses were footloose and families had to follow the jobs. However, the recent decade (especially in Indiana), there appears to be a reversal in the trend. Households now choose where they would like to live and businesses move to these workers (Hicks and Faulk 2016). The study also finds a strong correlation between the built environment and the places where people are moving, implying that households

put more value on the recreational amenities. Therefore, infrastructure related to traditional wellness activities (such as trails, playgrounds, parks, and open green space) matter more than ever in where people and subsequent businesses relocate." (CBEC, 2016, pg. 6)

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT EXPERIENCES WITH NATURE MAY PROMOTE FORMAL LEARNING AND STEWARDSHIP

In the February 19, 2019 Issue of "Frontiers in Psychology," researchers Ming Kuo, Michael Barnes, and Catherine Jordan conducted an extensive, systematic critical literature review of the most current research into effects of nature experiences on personal learning and environmental stewardship. They asked: "Do experiences with nature – from wilderness backpacking to plants in a preschool, to a wetland lesson on frogs – promote learning?" Earlier research in this area had been weak and unconvincing, but this examination of current research is much more compelling. According to the article: "What emerged from this critical review was a coherent narrative: experiences with nature do promote children's academic learning and seem to promote children's development as environmental stewards – and at least eight distinct pathways plausibly contribute to these outcomes." The eight pathways discussed in the article are:

1. Nature has Rejuvenating Effects on Attention
2. Nature Relieves Stress
3. Contact with Nature Boosts Self-Discipline
4. Student Motivation, Enjoyment, and Engagement are Better in Natural Se ttings
5. Time Outdoors Is Tied to Higher Levels of Physical Activity and Fitness
6. Vegetated Settings Tend to Provide Calmer, Quieter, Safer Contexts for Learning
7. Natural Settings Seem to Foster Warmer, More Cooperative Relations
8. Natural Settings May Afford "Loose Parts" (Creative, Self-Directed Play Using Natural Materials), Autonomy, and Distinctly Beneficial Forms of Play

INDIANA'S OBESITY EPIDEMIC IS STILL INCREASING

Indiana's statewide obesity epidemic has increased since the 2016 SCORP. According to the 2018 U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Behavioral Risk

Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), the world's largest ongoing telephone public health survey, over one-third (34.1%; up from 31.8% in 2013) of Hoosiers are obese (i.e., have a body mass index of 30 or greater). This ranks Indiana as having the 15th highest adult obesity rate in the nation. The CDC reports that the associated economic impact of the nationwide obesity epidemic exceeds $147 billion (in 2008 dollars). Estimates published in the journal "Obesity" in 2012 show that during an average year, Hoosiers pay $3.5 billion in obesity-related medical costs. According to a 2017 CDC online article: "Adult Obesity Causes & Consequences" (https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/adult/causes.html).

"Obesity is a complex health issue to address. Obesity results from a combination of causes and contributing factors, including individual factors such as behavior and genetics. Behaviors can include dietary patterns, physical activity, inactivity, medication use, and other exposures. Additional contributing factors in our society include the food and physical activity environment, education and skills, and food marketing and promotion. Obesity is a serious concern because it is associated with poorer mental health outcomes, reduced quality of life, and the leading causes of death in the U.S. and worldwide, including diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some types of cancer." The article goes on to discuss the effects that the built environment has on obesity: "People and families may make decisions based on their environment or community. For example, a person may choose not to walk or bike to the store or to work because of a lack of sidewalks or safe bike trails. Community, home, childcare, school, health care, and workplace settings can all influence people's daily behaviors. Therefore, it is important to create environments in these locations that make it easier to engage in physical activity and eat a healthy diet."

Another benchmark in measuring Indiana's overall health is a yearly report by the United Health Foundation: "America's Health Rankings: A call to action for individuals and their communities. Annual Report 2018." The report states: "The longest-running annual assessment of the nation's health on a state-by-state basis provides updated data to serve as a benchmark for states and to spark data-driven discussions on opportunities to promote the health and well-being of our country. Thirty-five markers of health are evaluated this year (2018), covering behaviors, community and environment, policy, clinical care and health outcomes data. This year, the report finds increases in mortality and chronic disease such as obesity that continue to impact the nation's health." The 2017 data from this report ranked Indiana as the 38th healthiest state in the country; unfortunately, in 2018, Indiana fell three places to

41st healthiest. In the 2018 rankings, Indiana had the third-largest decline in ranking, behind only Oklahoma and Alaska. Indiana's worst areas driving the ranking were health behaviors, policy, and clinical care. For comparison, in 2018, Hawaii was ranked by the study as the healthiest state; the ninth time in the No. 1 spot for that state since 1990, when the rankings were first published. The study also stated: "While the country's ability to address treatment of chronic conditions may improve with increasing numbers of key health providers, interventions and policies at the individual, community, state and national levels are needed to curb these troubling trends."

INDIANA'S ECONOMY MAY SLOW DOWN SOON

According to the article: "Indiana's Outlook for 2019" by Dr. Ryan Brewer (IU-Columbus), written in Winter 2018, for the Indiana Business Review, Volume 93, No. 4, published online at: http://www.ibrc.indiana.edu/ibr/2018/outlook/indiana.html: "The economy appears poised to see its strongest growth in the first quarter of 2019, after which growth rates are expected to slow but remain strong through the end of 2019. Tailwinds include rising wages and consumer spending strength, as well as potential for further capital investment. Headwinds include uncertainties with international trade, political unknowns, labor shortages and the effects of weaning off of inexpensive credit. For the upcoming calendar year, it is most likely Indiana will continue to experience growth across the board — in jobs, numbers of establishment, income levels (which is buttressed by capital investments), wages and gross state product (GSP). Econometric modeling suggests that U.S. economic growth (as of fourth quarter 2018, on a rolling four-quarter arithmetic average basis) will cool somewhat throughout 2019. Indiana economic growth measured in rolling four quarters of output is expanding right now with the coming year's output expected to peak in the first quarter of 2019, with subsequent rolling-four-quarter growth measurements likely to slow, yielding an expected annual growth in 2019 of 4.5 percent, unadjusted from its baseline forecast indications. By fourth quarter 2019, however, modeling suggests the rolling-four-quarter growth rate will have cooled to 3.5 percent."

INDIANA TOURISM AND OUTDOOR RECREATION CONTRIBUTING TO INDIANA'S ECONOMY MORE THAN EVER

Indiana's economy benefits from tourism more than ever before. According to a 2017 Rockport Analytics study commissioned by the Indiana Office of Tourism Development, it was another record-setting year, with 80 million visitors spending nearly $12.7 billion on lodging, food, entertainment, shopping and transportation all over Indiana. This was the seventh consecutive year of growth for Indiana tourism, and gained 3.7% over 2016 totals. Employment within the Indiana tourism industry reached nearly 200,000 workers in 2017, which generated $5.6 billion in total wages and proprietor income. Based on employment figures, tourism was the 10th largest private sector employer. Of the $12.7 billion spent by Indiana visitors, about $9 billion stayed within the state economy, which supported private business revenue, jobs across the state, and state and local government revenue. Tourism now accounts for about 5.2% of all Indiana nonfarm jobs. Tourism also outgrew total Indiana employment across all industries by 0.2%. Tax receipts from tourism in 2017 generated about $2.5 billion, with state government receiving $873 million (up 3.6% from 2016), and local governments statewide receiving $537 million (up 3.3% from 2016). In 2017, visitors made up approximately 9% of all sales in Indiana. The study also looked at day trips by visitors: "Daytrips remain a critical component of Indiana visitors. Hoosier daytrips reached 48.8 million, a 1.4% gain vs. 2016. Daytrips reached 48.2 million in 2016, an increase of a million trips (2.1%) over 2015, and now comprise 61% of total visitor volume. Daytrips are measured as anyone who has traveled more than 50 miles one way to visit an Indiana destination but has not stayed overnight. They include both out-of-state and in-state visitors. . Domestic overnight visits surpassed 31 million in 2017, a 1.2% increase over the year before. International trips added another 830 thousand mostly overnight stays. This too, represents a new all-time high."

Park professionals across Indiana sharing anecdotal park-use evidence in local parks and recreation master plans reviewed by the DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation staff still indicate that local and regional park use is rising, keeping pace with the slow

improvement of the economy. There is support for this perception from the national level from a 2018 study by the Outdoor Industry Association: the "Outdoor Recreation Participation Report." According to the report, "Outdoor participation slightly increased from 48.4% of the US population in 2016 to 49.0% in 2017. That 49.0% of the American population translates into 146.1 million people ages 6 and over, participating in an outdoor activity at least once in 2017. 20% of outdoor enthusiasts participated in outdoor activities twice per week or more. Exercise was the biggest motivator for outdoor recreation participation. Participating in outdoor activities as children made adults more likely to participate in outdoor recreation as adults, as opposed to those whose childhood had no outdoor exposure. Of the adults who were exposed to the outdoors as children, 38% grew up to participate in outdoor activities as adults. Outdoor pedestrian exercise such as running, jogging, and trail running was the single most popular activity by both participant counts and total outings per year. Walking for fitness was the #1 crossover activi-

ty, since 45.8% of all outdoor recreation participants also walked for exercise or pleasure."

This study agrees with the DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation's longitudinal research in the past four SCORPs, each of which shows outdoor pedestrian use (including day hiking) as the most popular outdoor recreation activity among Indiana residents.

Even considering the significant economic impact of Indiana's public parks and recreation, and the still-growing use of our recreation lands, it is still prudent to ask if investing in public outdoor recreation space has any tangible benefit for state governments. Many people agree that having quality parks and recreation sites and facilities improves the quality of life in a community, but does it really affect a state's fiscal health? In 2018, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) worked with the Center for regional Analysis at George Mason University to create a second iteration of an earlier study on the "Economic Impact of Local Parks: An Examination of the Economic Impacts of Operations and Capital Spending by Local Park and Recreation Agencies
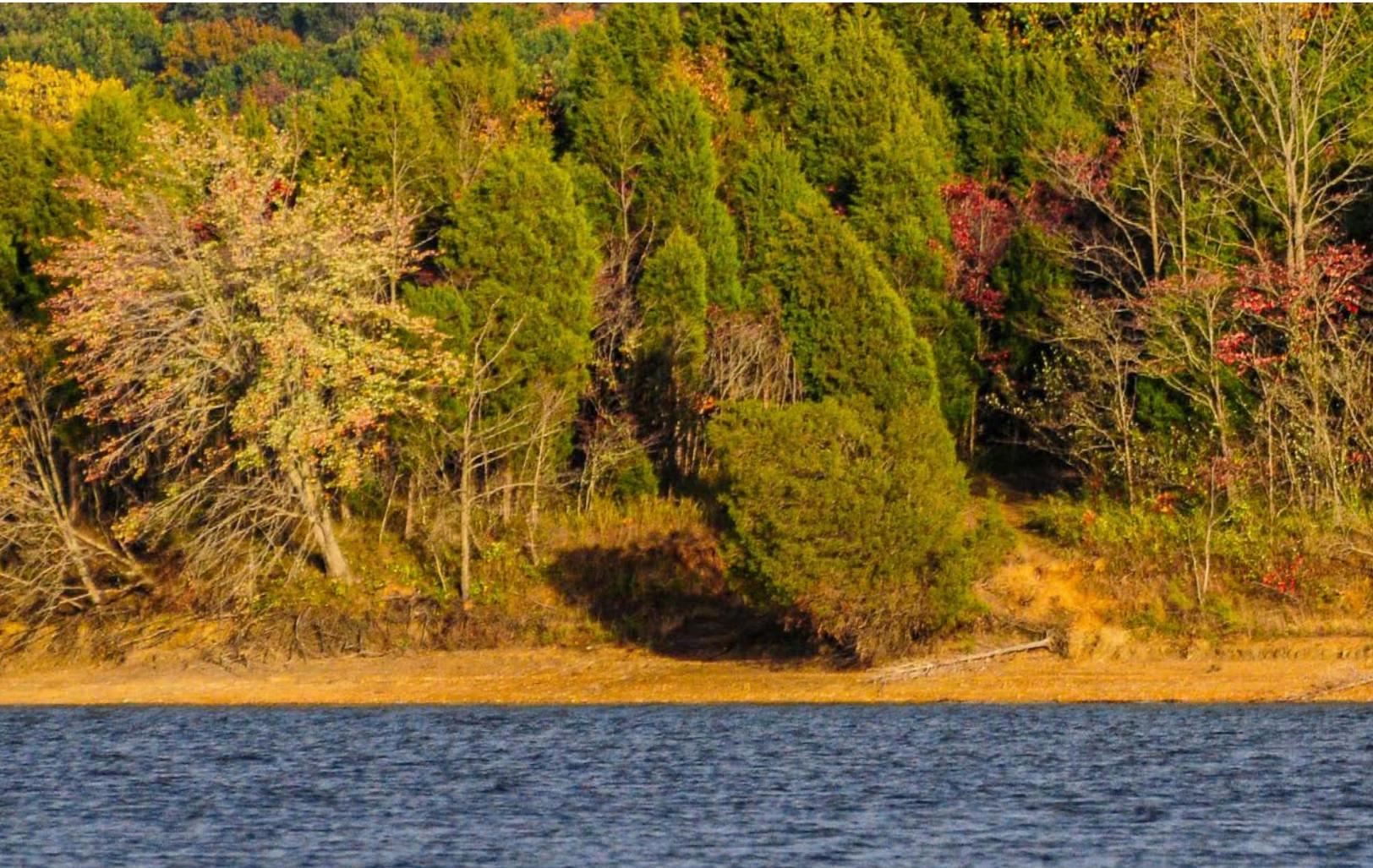
on the United States Economy." The study analyzed detailed economic data from the 2015 U.S. Census Bureau to look at these economic impacts at both the national and state levels. According to the study: "In 2015 alone, America's local public park and recreation agencies generated more than $154 billion in economic activity and their operations and capital spending supported more than 1.1 million jobs." The study also went on to examine the economic effects at the state level: "The state analysis followed that of the national study and considers the economic impact of local park and recreation agencies' operations and capital spending. The estimates of total economic impacts include the direct, indirect, and induced effects of local park and recreation agency spending in each state ... In Indiana, $1,234,379,444 in economic activity (transactions) was generated by local parks and recreation in 2015. 10,758 jobs were supported by parks and recreation in 2015. $436,074,781 in salaries, wages and benefits were generated due to parks and recreation." Discussing the study in the March 2018 issue of the NRPA's Parks and Recre-

ation magazine, Dr. Kevin Roth said: "These are challenging times for park and recreation professionals. Eight years into an economic recovery and park and recreation leaders have to fight harder than ever before to keep their already limited funding in place ... While elected and appointed government officials agree parks and recreation is a valuable service, they are likely to view park and recreation agency funding as one of the most discretionary budget lines in their city, town, or county. This becomes particularly acute during challenging fiscal times when local government officials target parks and recreation for the greatest budget cuts. But, there is a tremendous cost to these 'savings'. Taking dollars away from parks and recreation deprives people of gathering places to meet with friends and family, open spaces to exercise and reconnect with nature or community resources where they can get a nutritious meal. In addition, cutting back on park and recreation budgets harms economic activity in the community ... Policymakers and elected officials at all levels of government should take notice and support greater and more stable tax-

payer funding for parks and recreation. Local park and recreation agencies not only help raise the standard of living in our neighborhoods, towns, and cities, but they also spark economic activity that can have ripple effects well beyond the initial expenditure by creating jobs and prosperity throughout our nation." (2018, NRPA Economic Impact of Local Parks)

DNR and the Division of Outdoor Recreation have created this SCORP as a way to share research and other information with state residents, park professionals, park board members, urban planners, government officials and many more. We have a strong tradition of blending public opinion and input from parks-and-recreation professionals in the field to give us an understanding of current and future recreational needs and preferences statewide. The next section of this chapter contains the priorities that have emerged from all the collected data and analysis from this SCORP.

OUTDOOR RECREATION GOALS & OBJECTIVES FOR PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION PROVIDERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Based on the data contained in this SCORP, these goals and objectives are recommended, in random order, to guide decision-making in parks-and-recreation and natural resources management for the next five years.

1. Develop more trails and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

   a. Whenever possible, acquire rights-of-way, easements and railroad corridors for future trail development from willing sellers, rail-banking, donors or partners.
   b. Emphasize trails and bike/pedestrian facilities as means to connect and improve existing and future outdoor recreation facilities, as well as tie into community infrastructure.
   c. Integrate bike/pedestrian facilities of all types into long-term planning of community infrastructure design and construction whenever possible.
   d. Encourage development of trail facilities of all kinds for bike/pedestrian use: urban, rural, long-distance, connector, commuter, recreational, exercise/wellness, etc.

   e. Require trail development using accessible, sustainable design and surfacing wherever possible.

2. Encourage and promote outdoor recreation participation.

   a. Use outdoor recreation as a tool to fight the continuing obesity epidemic by offering locations to participate in as many kinds of healthy exercise as possible and facilitating lifestyle change that encourages lifelong healthy living.
   b. Encourage continued development of new outdoor recreation facilities, especially in areas of expanding population growth, high user demand, or significant gaps in service provision.
   c. Encourage development of more neighborhood-level outdoor recreation facilities that meet local needs close to home, preferably within walking or biking distance of residential areas, libraries, schools, retail areas, medical facilities, etc.
   d. Provide outdoor recreation opportunities for all user demographics, including all ages, abilities and skill levels.

3. Continue emphasizing Indiana's aquatic resources, both natural and man-made.

   a. Preserve and protect rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands and riparian corridors when and wherever possible through acquisition, education, funding, restoration and development of new areas.
   b. Encourage actions that improve the quality of Indiana's waters as well as user access to all types of aquatic recreation resources.
   c. Whenever possible, provide or enhance access to aquatic resources, such as splash pads, pools, water features, wetlands, ponds, lakes, access/launch sites, etc.

4. Protect and enhance Indiana's natural and outdoor recreation resources.

   a. Use the 2021 SCORP Participation Study top five favorite outdoor recreation activities when considering parks and recreation user preferences: walking/hiking/jogging/
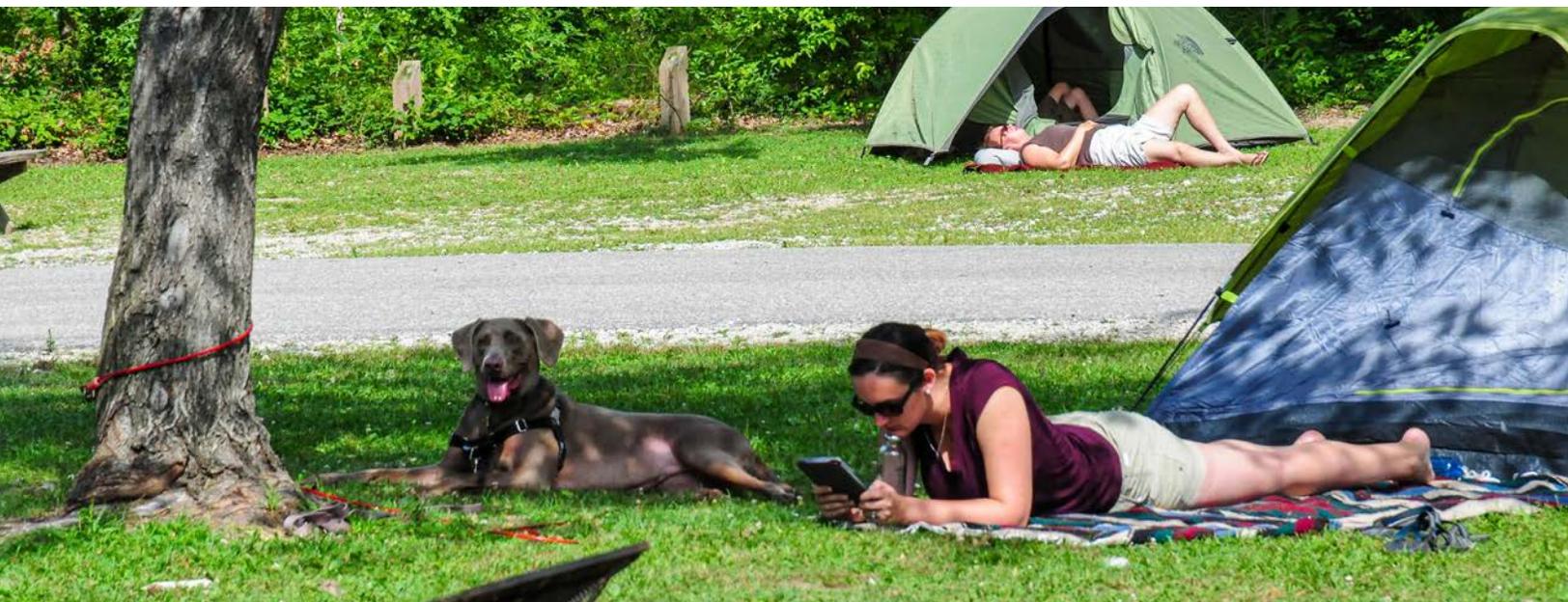
running; camping; fishing; swimming; and canoeing/kayaking/paddle sports.

b. Protect Indiana's natural heritage by identifying and preserving significant natural areas, including wildlife/fish habitats for endangered, rare, threatened or species of special concern.

c. Protect Indiana's outdoor recreation potential by identifying and preserving areas with existing or potential outdoor recreation opportunities or access.

d. Provide for education of the citizens of Indiana in environmental stewardship and wise use of Indiana's natural resources.

e. Consider the improvements possible in water and air quality, brownfield remediation, tourism and commerce, and economic development created by enhancing outdoor recreation.

f. Use "green" or sustainable designs, materials and energy sources in facility development, such as recycled materials, alternative/renewable energy sources (solar active and passive, wind, hydroelectric), and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building certifications/very energy-efficient designs.

5. Provide funding for outdoor recreation development at the state and local levels.

a. Explore alternative funding methods such as public/private partnerships, recreation impact fees (RIF), cooperative agreements, cost sharing, corporate sponsorships, etc.

b. Continue to administer state-level grant programs such as Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants, Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grants, Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund grants and Indiana Shooting Range grants.

c. Emphasize parks and recreation facilities that are cost-efficient and financially self-supporting while promoting financially affordable access to the greatest number of users possible.

d. Consider the benefits of parks and recreation toward community economic development, tourism, job growth, urban and rural revitalization, reduction of health care costs and improving quality of life.

e. Use existing financial resources as efficiently and effectively as possible; consider strategies such as detailed cost-benefit analysis for choosing public provision or privatization of services, maintenance or construction, multi-agency bulk purchases, interagency work-sharing agreements, volunteers and "friends" groups, and other means to control the costs of operations and maintenance.

CHAPTER 1
The Surveys

The introductory chapter of this SCORP examined some of the changes Indiana has undergone since publication of the 2016-2020 SCORP and looked briefly at some of the state and national trends that affect how we use and provide outdoor recreation in Indiana. This chapter will look at the backbone of this SCORP: the surveys administered by our third-party surveyors, the methods used, and the results.

There's a difference between Indiana's SCORPs and those created by other states. How is the Indiana SCORP different?

- We actually try to directly "count" (via local government self-reported data) the supply of public outdoor recreation acreage, both by county and by level of government.
- We hire objective, unbiased, professional third-party surveyors to do our surveys.
- We ask members of the public what preferences they have for outdoor recreation activities, as well as gather opinions and ideas from professional outdoor recreation providers.

What do these differences mean for this SCORP? This SCORP looks at what public outdoor recreation acreage actually exists, both geographically and by cumulative "type" of acreage, so that SCORP readers can cross-compare themselves against their peers in multiple ways. The way we survey both the public and outdoor recreation professionals allows the Indiana DNR to look at what real people actually want to do, as well as how real recreation professionals provide those activities. We also look at the needs and challenges faced by both groups. The Indiana SCORP has always essentially been a multi-purpose informational touchstone—for researchers looking for data on recreation preferences, for park professionals writing park plans or strategic documents, for local government leaders seeking to compare their community against local and regional competition, and even for interested members of the public who want to know what activities their friends and neighbors enjoy doing while visiting public outdoor recreation sites.

Once again, this SCORP was created using three main surveys:

- **The Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey:** Asks the public about their outdoor recreation activities and frequency of use.
- **The Trail User Survey:** Asks the public about how they use one of our most popular amenities.
- **The Local Parks and Recreation Provider Survey:** Asks professional and non-profit local outdoor recreation providers about their challenges, issues, and solutions.

THE OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION SURVEY

Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey Methods

- The survey took place from April 2017 through April 2018.
- The completed respondent database consists of 6,276 valid respondents.
- The survey used a paper intercept questionnaire.
- The questionnaire contained 18 regular questions and one large, multi-part question containing 28 separate recreational activity categories.
- The estimated time needed to take the survey was eight to 10 minutes.
- Paper survey results were manually entered into the database post-survey.
- Respondents were chosen on a next-available basis.
- People younger than age 17 were not discouraged from taking the survey, but were not actively recruited.
- The survey was conducted at county fairs, libraries, and other public locations throughout the state.

Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey Demographic Results

- Respondents were 61.4% female, 38.6% male.
- The average age of respondents was 42.7 years.
- Every county in Indiana was represented in the data.
- 50.7% of survey respondents were married, 26.1% were single (never married), and 10.9% were single (divorced). [Results all somewhat comparable to current U.S. Census estimated demographic data for Indiana]
- 76.6% of respondents reported themselves as white, 12.8% as black, 6.1% as Hispanic/Latino, and 2.3% as multi-racial.
- 64.6% of respondents stated that they had between two and four family members living in their household.
- 40.5% of respondents reported having no persons younger than age 18 living in their household.

Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey Results

- The top three reasons why respondents participate in outdoor recreation were:

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1. To be with family and friends 38%
2. Physical health 37%
3. Mental health 34%

NOTE: In the last several SCORP Participation surveys, by public request, DNR reported Mountain Biking separately from all other reported bicycle-related activities. Per stakeholder feedback, to make the Bicycle activity participation data more comparable to the Walking/Hiking/Jogging/Running data, this SCORP will report Bicycling data as Bicycling – All and Bicycle Touring (road, touring, casual, etc.) with Mountain Biking reported separately. As shown below, this change creates some differences in the Participation Survey results.

• The top five outdoor recreation activities participated in more than once per week by the survey respondent and/or by others in the household (if Mountain Biking were not included as part of Bicycling – All) were:

1. Walking/Hiking/Jogging/Running
2. Relaxation/Spiritual Renewal
3. Gardening/Landscaping
4. Bird/Wildlife Watching
5. Health-Related Activities (Exercise, Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, etc.)

• If Mountain Biking were added to all other types of Bicycle-related activities, then the top five activities participated in more than once per week by the survey respondent and/or by others in the household were:

1. Walking/Hiking/Jogging/Running
2. Relaxation/Spiritual Renewal
3. Gardening/Landscaping
4. Bicycle Activities (All)
5. Bird/Wildlife Watching

• The outdoor recreation activities most selected as something respondents did "once a year" were possibly related to the seasonal aspect of those activities (With Bicycle – All including the respondents from Mountain Biking):

1. Fall Foliage Viewing 18.80%
2. Picnicking 14.30%
3. Family/Friends/Group Outdoor Gatherings/ Reunions. 11.80%
4. Gathering (Berries, Mushrooms, Etc.) .11.30%

5. Bicycle Activities - All 11.20%

• The potentially seasonal outdoor recreation activities most selected as something respondents did "once a year" changed with Mountain Biking separated from Bicycle Touring (road, touring, casual):

1. Fall Foliage Viewing 18.80%
2. Picnicking 14.30%
3. Family/Friends/Group Outdoor Gatherings/ Reunions. 11.80%
4. Gathering (Berries, Mushrooms, Etc.) .11.30%
5. Outdoor Pool Swimming or Water Park. .9.10%

• The top 10 "favorite" outdoor recreation activities described by respondents were:

1. Walking , Running, Jogging
2. Camping/RV Camping
3. Hiking/Backpacking
4. Fishing
5. Boating, Wakeboarding, Sailing, Tubing, Jet Skiing, Water Skiing
6. Picnicking, Barbecuing/Cookout
7. Gardening, Landscaping, Yard Work, Mowing
8. Swimming, Snorkeling, Diving, Scuba, Splash Pad
9. Bicycling
10. Golf

• The No. 1 "favorite" outdoor recreation activity, "Walking, Running, Jogging," was more than five times more popular than the No. 10 activity, Golf.

• The top methods of travel used to reach the outdoor recreation activity they participated in the most were:

1. Car/Truck 64.1%
2. Walk/Jog/Run. 29.3%
3. Bike 5.8%
4. Other 5.3%
5. Motorcycle 1.5%
6. Horseback 1.0%

• Asked in which county in Indiana they most often participated in outdoor recreation activities, the respondents most commonly cited the counties with the highest population. This may indicate that people recreate outdoors most often close to where they live.

• Asked how much money they were willing to spend per year on their favorite outdoor recreation activity

(including cost of equipment, training, travel, etc.), respondents said:

1. Less than $100 . . . . .35.7%
2. $101-$250. . . . . .20.4%
3. $251-$500. . . . . .15.7%
4. $501-$750 . . . . .8.2%
5. $751-$1,000 .6.2%
6. Over $1,001 .13.8%

• Asked what primary sources for funding the development of new outdoor recreation facilities (after first pursuing all federal funds, grants, and donations), respondents preferred:

1. State general taxes 28.8%
2. Trail-use fee 20.0%
3. Local taxes 14.6%
4. None 13.6%
5. Land development set-asides. 11.5%
6. State tax on recreation equipment 9.2%
7. Other. 8.6%
8. Local bond issue 3.0%

• Asked what primary sources for funding the operations/maintenance of existing outdoor recreation facilities (after first pursuing all federal funds, grants, and donations), respondents preferred:

1. Trail-use fee 29.4%
2. State general taxes 24.4%
3. Local taxes 17.0%
4. None 14.0%
5. State tax on recreation equipment 18%
6. Other. 10%

• Asked how far they were willing to travel one way to participate in their favorite outdoor recreation activity, respondents said:

　◦ 0-5 miles. 11.4%
　◦ 6-10 miles. 9.1%
　◦ 11-15 miles 7.6%
　◦ 16-25 miles 11.7%
　◦ 26-35 miles 7.7%
　◦ 36-50 miles 14.7%
　◦ 51-75 miles 9.6%
　◦ 76-100 miles 7.8%
　◦ More than 100 miles 20.5%

• The main reason given why respondents did not participate in outdoor recreation activities more often was:

1. None, I participate as much as I want to 39.2%
2. Personal barriers, no time, no motivation, lack of skills, physical, mental or emotional health, etc. 26.9%
3. Cost barriers, lack of money/economic factors 11.9%
4. No recreation facilities close to my home. 9.9%
5. Social barriers, no one to participate with, family conflict, responsibilities to others, etc. 8.3%
6. Structural barriers, poor setting/physical environment, lack of facilities or programs, transportation, safety, etc. 4.9%
7. Disability-related access prevents me from participating as much as I would like 5.2%
8. Customs, cultural barriers, etc. 8%

• Asked if they or any of their immediate family have any type of physical or intellectual disability that prevents them from participating in outdoor recreation activities, 18% said yes, and 82% said no (comparable to current U.S. Census statistical estimates on the percentage of Indiana residents with a disability).

• Respondents who answered "yes" to the previous question reported having the following type(s) of disability:

1. Walking. 61.3%
2. Lifting 30.8%
3. Bending. 26.8%
4. Other. 25.4%
5. Breathing 24.7%
6. Hearing 10.6%
7. Seeing. 7.9%

THE LOCAL PARK AND RECREATION PROVIDER STUDY

Local Park and Recreation Provider Study Methods

• Individual survey respondents were invited via email, from a DNR statewide list of over 755 public parks and recreation providers.
• After an initial email invitation, potential respondents were also mailed a survey invitation postcard containing a QR code that provided an anonymous

link to the online survey, or respondents could access the survey via a survey website or a link printed on the postcard.

- Potential respondents from the initial list were also emailed an invitation to participate in the survey from the SCORP planning staff at DNR.
- The survey used an online survey with a ZIP code question to group responses by region.
- The main questionnaire was approximately 44 questions long, followed by an optional set of 12 demographic questions.
- The estimated time needed to take the online survey was 20 minutes.
- Survey results were entered into a survey database and tabulated.
- The survey took place from October 2017 through February 2018.
- The completed database consists of 111 respondents representing the entire state.

Local Parks and Recreation Provider Survey Demographic Results in the Communities Surveyed

- 63% have a Park Board or Parks & Recreation Board.
- 60% have a Parks & Recreation Department with paid staff.
- 27% have a "Friends of Parks" or similar non-governmental management group.
- 15% have an agency (other than a Parks Department) that manages local public parks and recreation. Asked what other agencies managed their local parks, respondents answered: City/Town Councils, DNR, County Parks & Recreation Departments or Boards, and Township Park Boards.

The Respondents

- 43% are employees of municipal park departments.
- 24% are employed by "other units of local government. (e.g., Streets, Public Works).
- 10% are employees of county park departments.
- 5% are employees of township park departments.
- 10% were municipal park board members.
- 2% were county park board members.
- 4% were township park board members.
- 13% were park directors.
- 9% had various municipal government positions.

- Of those who answered the Question: "What was your highest level of education?"
  ◦ 38% reported finishing a bachelor's degree.
  ◦ 33% reported finishing a graduate-level degree.

Local Park & Recreation Provider Survey Results

- Which units of government provide local recreation in your community?
  ◦ 73% reported that their community had municipal-provided parks and recreation facilities.
  ◦ 27% reported that their community had county-provided parks and recreation facilities.
  ◦ 13% reported that their community had township-provided parks and recreation facilities.
  ◦ 9% reported that their community had "other" organizations or groups that provided park and recreation facilities.
- Respondents reported operating park systems from as small as 1.0 acre up to park systems of over 11,000 acres; 80% of respondents managed less than 1,000 acres of parks.
- 27% of respondents reported counting visitor attendance in some way.

○ The methods to count visitor attendance included: attendance at events or programs; car counts; visitor center counts; gate admissions; registrations; spot counts and estimates; rentals; parking fees; vehicle and trail counters; and attendance at pools, golf courses, and other activities.

• 86% of respondents hire seasonal staff for their park system.

Asked how many people their facilities serve annually, respondents reported:

Table 1.1 **User Served as Reported by Respondents**

Number of Users Served Annually	Percentage of Respondents
16,000 – 280,000	44%
300,000 – 500,000	28%
700,000 – 800,000	11%
2,000,000 – 8,000,000	17%

• 15% of respondents said that their organization reached statewide.

• Respondents reported that the populations of their service areas ranged from 455 to 500,000 residents. The average number of residents in their service area was 97,520, and the mode number (number reported most often) was 38,710.

NOTE: The following tables are based on survey questions that were open ended, so the groupings of responses below may not always follow a set or even scale, but are simply gathered into ranges based on the answers given by respondents.

Table 1.2 **2018 Budgets as Reported by Respondents**

Revenue Ranges Reported	Percentage of Respondents Reporting Each Range
$0	12%
$350 - $700	7%
$1,400 - $10,000	16%
$19,100 – $66,000	14%
$90,000 – $821,000	28%
$1,100,000 - $9,900,000	21%

The average reported revenue was $948,148, and the mode (most reported) revenue was $78,180.

- Asked about changes in their yearly budgets since 2016, respondents reported:
  ◦ 63% Reported an Increase
  ◦ 14% Reported a Decrease
  ◦ 23% Reported No Change
- 65% of respondents reported using non-reverting funds for part of their finances.

Table 1.3 **Total Acres Managed**

# of Acres	# of Responses	Total Percentage of Responses
1-14	10	16%
15-30	5	8%
31-50	6	10%
51-80	6	10%
81-130	5	8%
131-200	6	10%
201-450	6	10%
451-1000	9	15%
1001-1500	5	8%
1501-11,000	3	5%

NOTE: As could be expected, there was a correlation between the number of acres and the budgets reported by respondents. Pearson Correlation: .663; Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1.4 **Number of Properties in Respondent's Park System**

Number of Properties	Percentage of Responses
1-10 Properties	66%
11-20 Properties	14%
21-31 Properties	13%
60-62 Properties	3%
100 Properties	1.6%
211-212 Properties	3%

Table 1.5 **Forest Acres Used for Recreation**

Number of Acres	Percentage of Responses
0-10	32%
20-30	24%
40-150	14%
200-800	24%
1200-3828	5%

Table 1.6 **Recreational Open Green Space**

Number of Acres	Percentage of Responses
1-50	60%

Table 1.7 **Prairie Acres Used for Recreation**

Number of Acres	Percentage of Responses
0-30	74%
50-234	26%

Table 1.8 **Acres of Ponds and Lakes Used for Recreation**

Number of Acres	Percentage of Responses
0-30	81%
50-200	11%
230-1384	8%

Table 1.9 **Wetland Acres Used for Recreation**

Number of Acres	Percentage of Responses
0-20	67%
25-200	30%
336	3%

Reported Miles of Trail by Trail Type

Table 1.10 **Paved Walking or Hiking Trails**

Miles of Paved Trail	Percentage of Respondents
0 Miles	6%
0.3 – 1.1 Mile	26%
1.2 – 3.1 Miles	19%
3.5 – 5.1 Miles	24%
5.5 – 20 Miles	14%
More than 20 Miles	8%

Table 1.11 **Unpaved Walking or Hiking Trails**

Miles of Unpaved Trail	Percentage of Respondents
0 Miles	18%
0.7 – 3.1 Miles	38%
5.0 – 10.1 Miles	23%
12.0 – 18.1 Miles	13%
More than 18.1 Miles	8%

Table 1.12 **Bicycle Trails**

Miles of Bicycle Trail	Percentage of Respondents
0 Miles	20%
1.0 – 3.5 Miles	28%
4.0 – 7.0 Miles	25%
8.0 – 13.0 Miles	19%
More than 24 Miles	8%

Several trail types had very low reported miles of trail: Motor Vehicle Trails, Equestrian Trails

Table 1.13 **Types of Trails Offered by Respondents:**

Types of Trails Offered in Their Trail System	Percentage of Respondents Who Offered This Type of Trail
Multi-Use Natural Surface Trail: e.g., Bike/Ped; Equestrian, etc. (Not Including Motorized)	60%
Multi-Use Natural Surface Trail: All Above Uses, Including Motorized Use	11%
Nature/Interpretive Trail	55%
Connector Trails to Other Existing Trails	61%
Multi-Use Paved Trail: e.g., Bike/Ped; Equestrian, etc. (No Motorized)	71%
ADA-Compliant Accessible Trail	80%
Water Trails	22%
Greenways or Other Paved Trail	47%

Asked about collaboration with other providers of recreation in their community, respondents reported:

Table 1.14 **Partner Collaboration**

Type of Organization Partnered With	Percentage of Respondents Who Collaborated With This Type of Organization
Privately Owned Neighborhood Parks in Subdivisions	19%
Private, For-Profit Providers	28%
No-Profit Provider	62%
School Systems Providing Recreation	65%
State Properties	31%
Federal Properties	13%
Other Types	22%

60% of respondents reported offering in-house recreation programs for their users.

ADA Compliance Responses

• 31% of respondents dedicated some portion of their yearly budgets to ADA Compliance.
• Budget Percentages dedicated varied from 1% to 10%.
• Recent ADA barrier removals or improvements included:
  ◦ Accessible Routes and Ramps
  ◦ Accessible Trail Upgrades
  ◦ Parking & Paving
  ◦ Upgrading Existing Facilities; Especially Restrooms
  ◦ Adding New Facilities that Comply with the ADA

THE TRAILS USER SURVEY

Trails User Survey Methods

• The survey used a paper intercept questionnaire.
• The questionnaire was 20 questions long.
• The estimated time needed to take the survey was between 3 and 6 minutes.
• Paper survey results were manually entered into the database post-survey.
• Respondents were chosen on a next-available basis.
• People under the age of 17 were not discouraged

Table 1.15 **Funding Alternatives Tried and Used**

Funding Types	Percent Who Tried/Used a Funding Type	Percent Who Plan to Try/ Use a Funding Type in the Future	Percent Who Did Not Use or Plan to Use a Funding Type
Worked with Park Foundation	40%	12%	48%
Levied Taxes	47%	6%	47%
Bond Fund	27%	12%	61%
Engaged in Fundraising	73%	8%	19%
Approach Small Local Businesses for Funds	76%	11%	13%
Pursued Non-Park Foundations	56%	6%	38%
Closed Facilities	27%	0%	73%
Received Donations	96%	4%	0%
Applied for Grants	82%	13%	5%
Pursued Public-Private Partnership	54%	26%	20%
Sold Advertising Space to Local Businesses	54%	6%	40%
Sold Naming Rights to Individuals or Local Businesses	19%	37%	44%

from taking the survey, but they also were not actively recruited.

- The survey was conducted at county fairs, libraries and other public locations throughout the state.
- The survey took place from September of 2016 through August of 2017.
- The completed database consists of 1,033 respondents, representing every county in the state.

Trails User Survey Demographic Results

- 47.7% of respondents were male, and 52.3% were female.
- Average age of respondents was 49.
- 80% of respondents were white (non-Hispanic), 10% Black/African-American and 6% Hispanic (Demographics of responses roughly track with statewide data according to 2017 U.S. Census estimates).
- Every county statewide across Indiana was proportionally represented in the data.

Trails User Survey Results

- Walking is the trail activity most participated in.
- The general public is 3-4 times more likely to use trails for walking than for most other activities.
- Over 80% of respondents use trails for walking sometime during the year.
- The top 3 trail activities are:
  ◦ Walking
  ◦ Using trails for alternative transportation routes
  ◦ Bicycle touring (Casual, tour, or both)
- The top 3 reasons why respondents used trails were:

1. Pleasure, relaxation, recreation 31%
2. Health/Physical training 28%
3. Family or social outing. 24%

- Asked what trail activity they would like to participate in at least 12 times per year in the future, respondents said:

1. Walking/running/jogging. 75%
2. Hiking/backpacking. 42%
3. Bicycle touring (casual, touring or both). . 40%
4. Canoeing/kayaking on water trails 35%

- 68% of respondents said there was a trail within 5 miles or 10 minutes of their home.
- 32% selected asphalt as their preferred trail surface, 31% prefer native soil, and 23% had no preference for trail surface type.
- 81% of those who had an opinion said that they either strongly or somewhat agreed that trail connectivity should be an important part of a community's infrastructure (up from 79% in the last SCORP).
- Respondents believed that trail connectivity was extremely important for:

1. Personal health 60%
2. Community Health 59%
3. Environmental Health 47%
4. Alternative Transportation Corridors. 35%

- Word of mouth was the top way that respondents found out about trail opportunities. Signage at parks was 2nd; Trail websites was 3rd.
- Asked why they do not use trails as much as they would like:
  - Personal barriers (no time, no motivation, lack of skills, physical /mental/emotional health, ability level, etc.) were cited by 33% of respondents.
  - 36% of respondents said they participated as much as they wanted to.
  - 17% of respondents said that there were no trails close to their home.
- Respondents who reported being limited in participating in trail activities by health factors cited issues with walking as their most common limitation. Breathing issues were the second most cited limitation.
- 38% of respondents stated that there were no improvements that would increase their use of trails,

Table 1.16 **Respondents were asked how well the current supply of trails in Indiana met their needs:**

Type of Trail	Supply is More Than Enough	Supply is Just Right	Supply is OK for Now but Needs to be Increased in the Future	Supply Does Not Meet my Needs	Uncertain, Don't Know Current Supply	Don't Use
Using Trails for Alternative Transportation Routes	3.5%	8.9%	17.4%	13.8%	12.0%	44.3%
Walking/Running/ Jogging	8.9%	25.1%	33.5%	6.3%	8.7%	17.5%
Hiking/Backpacking	5.6%	16.2%	22.1%	8.8%	12.6%	34.8%
Bicycle Touring (Casual, Tour or Both)	4.5%	15.0%	23.7%	9.9%	9.3%	37.6%
Mountain Bike Riding	2.5%	8.5%	10.2%	6.6%	12.3%	59.9%
In-Line Skating	0.7%	5.1%	6.4%	4.8%	14.0%	68.9%
Cross Country Skiing	0.6%	4.3%	5.0%	4.9%	14.6%	70.6%
Snowmobiling	0.7%	4.0%	5.2%	4.1%	15.1%	71.0%
Off-Road Vehicle Riding (Motorcycle, 4-Wheel, ATV, etc.)	1.4%	6.4%	6.5%	5.4%	15.1%	65.2%
Canoeing/Kayaking on Water Trails or Blueways	2.6%	14.0%	13.5%	8.8%	14.2%	46.9%
Horseback Riding	1.0%	7.6%	7.0%	7.3%	14.8%	62.4%

22% would like to see better trail surfaces, and another 22% would like increased personal safety measures.

- 49% of respondents are only willing to spend less than $100 annually on trail activities. 24% are willing to spend between $100 and $500.
- Asked the distance trail users are willing to travel (one way) to participate in trail activities;
  - 20% said 0-5 miles.
  - 14% said 36-50 miles.
  - 12% said 11-15 miles.
  - 11% said 16-25 miles.
  - 10% said more than 100 miles.
- Asked what primary sources for funding the development of new trails, (after first pursuing all federal funds, grants, and donations) respondents preferred:

1. State general taxes 28%
2. None 18%
3. Land development set-asides 17%
4. Local taxes 15%
5. State tax on recreation equipment 11%
6. Trail use fee 10%
7. Other 6%
8. Local bond issue 3%

- Asked what primary sources for funding the operations/maintenance of existing trails, (after first pursuing all federal funds, grants, and donations) respondents preferred:

1. State general taxes 28%
2. Local taxes 18.1%
3. None 18.0%
4. Trail use fee 17.6%
5. State tax on recreation equipment 15%
6. Other 7%

- Respondents were asked how much would they be willing to pay for an annual trail fee if money was spent in their local area to help support trail upkeep and new trail development. Their responses were:
  - Less than $5: 32%
  - $5.00 - $9.99 . . . . 26%
  - $10.00 - $14.99 . . . . 18%
  - $15.00 - $19.99 . . . . 11.8%
  - $20.00 or more 12.3%

The next chapter will compare and contrast these datasets with selected research from outside sources. Emergent themes and trends as well as the limitations of the surveys will be discussed.

If any readers wish to obtain the entire dataset from any of the SCORP surveys for their own use, please contact the Division of Outdoor Recreation for copies: Greg Beilfuss, 317-232-4071; gbeilfuss@dnr.IN.gov or by mail at Division of Outdoor Recreation 402 W. Washington St., W271, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2782.

CHAPTER 2
Themes & Trends

Chapter Two compares and contrasts the survey data presented in Chapter One, and analyzes emerging themes and trends. A needs assessment was created from the theme/trend analysis, which formed the basis for the Outdoor Recreation Goals and Strategies for Public Parks and Recreation Providers and Stakeholders listed at the end of the Introduction (pg. 9). This chapter uses survey data to determine the preferences and needs of the state's users of parks and recreation facilities, as well as those of parks professionals statewide.

SURVEY CHALLENGES

The surveys used by the DNR to create each SCORP are naturally impacted by:
- Lack of funds and time to create the 'ideal' scientific survey before each SCORP planning cycle ends.
- The challenges inherent in successfully surveying an entire state of more than 6.6 million people in a fully random manner.
- The challenges of surveying busy park professionals or park board members, who work for more than 1,600 units of local government.
- The moving-target problem, in which constant changes in statewide demographics, economics, legislation, funding, etc., combine to provide DNR

staff an impossible number of variables to completely account for or tabulate.

DNR Outdoor Recreation staff members do their best to minimize each of these limitations, and the SCORP surveys are designed to provide the best possible representation of the needs, desires and preferences of users and managers of the state's parks and recreation facilities. All surveys used in this SCORP are designed to best represent all Hoosiers statewide, while making the most efficient and effective use of taxpayer dollars.

MIXED METHOD SURVEYING IN THIS SCORP

This SCORP features surveys that use methodologies that run the gamut from old-school paper intercept surveys to fully automated online surveys. Mixed-method public- input surveying is generally the best way to ensure good demographic representation in a sample. The advances in survey technology have provided useful new ways for DNR to discover what Hoosiers prefer and want from outdoor recreation. All survey methods have both advantages and drawbacks, so the multiple methods used in this SCORP's surveys are combined to reach as diverse a statewide demographic sample as possible.

EXAMINING THE SURVEYS

Two of the surveys for this SCORP were intended to sample all Indiana residents: the 2017 Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey and the 2017 Trails User Survey. These surveys asked people about their participation in outdoor recreation activities, barriers to recreation, funding, and barriers to participation. The other survey used in this SCORP, the 2017 Local Parks and Recreation Provider Survey, was intended to provide a statewide sample of all Indiana park superintendents, park board members, local government officials, trail system administrators and others who work with county and municipal parks and recreation facilities and programs. This survey asked park professionals and other recreation providers about what types of facilities they operated, their budgets and revenue, capital projects, recreation programming, facility inventories, funding issues, ADA compliance and staffing.

All three surveys were created independently of each other, with separate goals, question sets, survey populations, and results. Direct comparisons between the surveys aren't a main goal of the SCORP;

the variances between the surveys are a deliberate strategy to provide as diverse a dataset as financially possible, given the time constraints. As mentioned in Chapter One, these three different survey population samples were intended to try to ascertain outdoor recreation needs statewide from both the provider and user viewpoints. Table 2.1 illustrates the methods used to produce the surveys.

A fourth survey used in this SCORP is the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) 2019 NRPA Agency Performance Review, formerly known as the NRPA Field Report. The Performance Review can be downloaded for free at: www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/agency-performance-review/. The NRPA Agency Performance Review is an analysis of data contained in NRPA's nationwide Park Metrics public parks and recreation database, formerly known as the Parks and Recreation Operating Ratio And Geographic Information System (PRORAGIS) database. Park Metrics was originally created as PRORAGIS by NRPA in 2010 as a means to collect parks and recreation system data at the community, region and national levels for use in

Table 2.1 **Survey Methods**

Survey Name	Date(s) of Survey	Number of people surveyed (n)	Survey Method(s)	Survey intended for (N)	Subject matter covered
2018 Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey (Survey America)	April 2017 through April 2018	6,276 respondents statewide	Paper intercept survey	All IN residents	Recreation participation, barriers, funding, activities
2018 Local Park and Recreation Provider Survey (Ball State University)	October 2017 through October 2018	111 Park professional respondents statewide	Online survey	IN Park superintendents, park board members, local government officials, and others who work with local parks and recreation facilities and programs	Facilities operated, budgets, capital projects, programming, renovations, funding, competition, staffing
2017 Trails User Survey(Survey America)	September 2016 through August 2017	1,033 respondents statewide	Paper intercept survey	All IN residents	Trail activities, motivations, barriers, connectivity, surfaces, funding preferences
2019 National Recreation and Parks Association "Agency Performance Review"	Database began in 2010; current data gathered between 2016 and 2018	1,075 Park Systems Reporting data so far: Nationwide	Self-reported local data on park systems and programs	All US park departments, big or small	Park sites, budgets, amenities, staff, management, Trends, etc.

comparative benchmarking between parks agencies and in parks research and planning of all types. The yearly Agency Review from NRPA uses a Park Metrics database analysis to create a valuable synopsis of national trends and statistics gleaned from thousands of individual community datasets from communities big and small, all over the country. This is the second SCORP to use this database-driven NRPA survey to double check and verify DNR's statewide research surveys against a national data source.

RECURRING THEMES IN THE SURVEYS

Table 2.2 illustrates briefly some of the common themes that emerged during analysis of the data from all three surveys.

Walking/Jogging/Running Now a 25-year #1 Hoosier Recreation Favorite

Since the 1995 SCORP, Walking/Jogging/Running is the No. 1 most popular outdoor recreation activity for Hoosiers. In the Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey, 49% of respondents said they participated in walking for exercise or pleasure more than once per week. In the Trail User Survey, 80% of respondents said they walked on trails at least once per year, and 25% said that they walked on trails once per week or more. As noted in the 2016 SCORP, walking requires little or no skill or training, minimum equipment, no special facilities, costs little and has no age limits. "Walking" may include a great many related activities, including but not limited to jogging, power walking, strolling, wheeling a wheelchair, pushing a stroller, running, or simply travelling as a pedestrian.

Hoosiers Are Still Experiencing Financial Constraints

All three SCORP surveys had question responses that indicated financial issues and limitations were on the minds of Hoosiers. In the Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey, 36% (the single largest percentage of respondents, up from 28% in the 2014 survey) said that they spend less than $100 annually on their favorite recreation activity. A total of 32% of Trails Activity Survey participants (the single largest percentage of respondents in that survey) said the top amount they would be willing to spend to support trail upkeep

Table 2.2 **Common Survey Themes**

Survey Name	Preferred Recreation or Recreation Facility	Financial Constraints Still Affect Recreation Choices	"Still Doing more with less"
2018 Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey (Survey America)	Walking (#1 by a huge margin)	Largest single percentage of respondents (36%) spend less than $100 annually on the favorite recreation activity (Up from 28% in 2013)	Respondents are actually participating at higher rates in mostly very low-cost/no-cost activities (like walking); while they say that the activities they hope to do in the future are more costly traditional outdoor activities, like camping
2018 Local Park and Recreation Provider Survey (Ball State University)	Trails or walking paths are STILL a major priority for many park systems	Vast majority of respondents again reported seeking funding beyond tax revenues	Innovation for funding, staffing, programming, partnerships, etc. determines success or failure of the systems
2017 Trail User Survey (Survey America)	Walking/Hiking	32% of respondents say they would only pay less than $5 to support trail upkeep and new trail development via an annual trail fee	Top 3 trail activities were low-cost/no-cost: Walking, biking, alternative transportation; future uses include higher-cost activities like hiking/backpacking.
2019 National Recreation and Parks Association Field Report	Trails or walking paths	Nationwide, many public park systems report budgets still very tight or shrinking	Park agencies report having to add more programs, and more responsibilities, with no additional funds

and new trail development, via an annual fee, was less than $5. Local parks and recreation providers indicated they currently used mostly non-tax-based funding strategies to pay for their parks: 82% applied for grants, 96% received donations, 40% pursued a Community Foundation, 47% levied taxes, and 27% said that they closed facilities (up from 14% in 2014).

It's evident that many Hoosiers are still struggling financially and adjusting expenditures to compensate. This factor may be driving the continuing increases in the use of local parks and recreation facilities, services and programs. Local sites have the advantage of reduced travel costs, low-or-no entry fees, minimum travel time and easier, more convenient access, as opposed to outdoor recreation activities far from home. Continued low fuel prices may be easing this to some degree, but high-cost recreation options still appear to be much less used by those surveyed.

In Indiana, anecdotal data obtained through local parks and recreation master plans indicate that park use in all but the largest communities is stable, and, in many cases, is increasing. This likely reflects a complex set of variables, including individual community population growth/decline, local economic circumstances, size and variety of amenities in local park systems, availability of programming in the parks, and competition for local recreation participation from local non-profits, commercial businesses or larger-scale recreation sources (such as state or national parks or recreation sites).

Hoosiers Are Doing More With Less

All three primary surveys in this SCORP show that both the Hoosier public and park professionals are doing more with less. The Participation Survey clearly indicates that respondents are participating at higher rates in many low-cost or no-cost outdoor recreation activities, including, but not limited to walking, gardening, relaxation/spiritual renewal, bicycle touring (casual, tour or both), and outdoor pool swimming or water park use. The survey reported that respondents or others in the household participated in these activities more than once per week.

Growing user participation in these inexpensive outdoor recreation activities may be driven by a num-

ber of factors. These might include either small or no entry fees, low equipment costs, minimal skill needed to participate, no expensive training or assistance needed to start, short time commitments, and little or no travel costs.

Ordinary outdoor recreation activities commonly considered traditional include camping, fishing, canoeing, etc. The traditional public outdoor recreation activities were reported by respondents as having significant participation rates. These activities often have moderate entry fees, involve much higher equipment costs, require some skill or training, require taking vacation time from work, and usually take place far enough from home to require some travel cost.

These may be a few of the reasons why this Participation Survey in particular had a significant difference between the activities that participants actually do often versus the activities that they say are their favorites. It is possible that tight budgets at home may restrict some Hoosiers from actually doing some of the more traditional outdoor recreation activities, versus those activities that are close-to-home and cost less. Another possible explanation for the difference between the actual and preferred participation in outdoor recreation activities might be human nature. An example would be survey respondents' wishful thinking about what would be fun and adventurous outdoor recreation versus what life's circumstances often result in or allow. Fabulous vacations in exotic locales are something that many people dream of in the future, but most seldom actually get to a location more exotic than a local amusement park.

Doing more with less has become a vital skill for outdoor recreation providers. Due to tight budgets, limited revenues, minimal or reduced staff, and increasing public demand for facilities, services and programs, providers are innovating by necessity. In the Outdoor Recreation Provider Survey, public park operators reported that new methodologies for obtaining funds, acquiring staff, creating and operating programs, and forging new partnerships are necessary and key to providing sustainable, high-quality recreation services and amenities in these difficult economic times.

Trails users may also be doing more with less. Similar to the results of the Participation Survey, respondents to the Trail User Survey said that their top three trail activities were Walking, Using Trails as Al-

ternative Transportation Routes, and Bicycle Touring (Casual, tour, or both). All three uses are low-cost or no-cost to the user. Asked what trail activity they would like to participate in at least 12 times in the future, Trail User Survey respondents said Walking/ Running/Jogging, Hiking/Backpacking, and Bicycle Touring (Casual, tour, or both). As a predicted future trail use, Hiking/Backpacking can have a significantly higher equipment/gear cost.

This difference in activities completed versus activities intended coincides with the Provider Survey results. Cost of activity is possibly one of the factors in this difference, but the complexity of the variables involved makes this possibility conjecture. Another possibility is the previously mentioned idea of doing what is immediately available and easy within the constraints of daily life versus the more difficult to achieve but more attractive "dream" future activity. With only one activity different between "what we do" versus "what we intend/hope to do" results in this survey, that difference is more likely to be circumstantial. This difference may be something that can be further investigated in future SCORP/Trails Plan research.

NRPA Research Results Support 2019 SCORP Findings

The 2019 Agency Performance Review published by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) includes a fascinating chapter, Issues and Trends. The chapter lists a series of five trends and includes a discussion of how each affects public outdoor recreation for better or worse. The trends observed and documented in the chapter support the public survey findings in this SCORP. In the following text, the trends will be listed. Some discussion will be listed for each, as will a few examples of how some of these trends are playing out in Indiana.

Trend 1: *Investments in Park Infrastructure Will Rise in 2019 – 2020*

• "Economic conditions are expected to remain favorable for new investments in park and recreation infrastructure if local and state tax collections continue to rise and interest rates remain relatively low. As a result, parks and recreation agencies – regardless of size, location, population served or budget – will likely be able to plan for and construct

more recreation facilities, expanding the proven social and economic benefits parks and recreation bring to every community."

- Anecdotal data from local parks and recreation master plans statewide indicate that all sizes of community are carefully working to improve and even expand their parks and recreation facilities. This work is often attributed at least in part to attempts to improve local quality of life, with an eye toward better economic-development competitiveness, in addition to greater community pride and positive community image.

Trend 2: *Greater Impact of Technology on Agency Efficiency, Costs, and Performance*

- "Technology is having a greater impact on parks than ever before. Lower costs, technological simplification and mass production are making highly sophisticated technology more accessible and less expensive for parks and recreation agencies."
  - All sorts of new technology are now being seen across the state, in parks at all levels, including DNR properties. Parks are using Wi-Fi, drones, GPS surveying, commercial LED lighting, and many more developing technologies that offer parks lower costs to own and operate equipment, energy savings, and longer service life for new products. Even technology-driven media advances like social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) and park webpages offer recreation professionals new and more effective advertising and improved information-sharing with their users for less cost than old-fashioned brochures, fliers and newsletters.

Trend 3: *Consolidation of Public Services Offers Opportunity*

- "Parks and recreation agencies are increasingly affected by efforts to consolidate public services—consolidation which, in theory, reduces costs and allows for greater efficiencies. Consolidations of government services have been occurring for nearly five decades, and include combining park facilities with public schools or consolidating public works functions with park and recreation maintenance and operation. Recent park/school consol-

idation initiatives look to encourage even greater collaboration to promote access for youth to take advantage of sports fields and playing facilities. This trend presents both threats and opportunities for parks and recreation, and agencies should be fully prepared to address—and perhaps even initiate— such proposals.

- Local park plans indicate that this is a growing trend in Indiana. Communities as different as Fort Wayne and Mooresville have been doing school/park Joint Use Agreements (JUA) for years. Other types of JUA, such as agreements between parks and sports leagues, or parks and senior centers (among others), are also becoming more common, as both parks and non-profits seek better cost-effectiveness for their programs and services.

Trend 4: *Looking Forward*

- "In reviewing emerging trends that will affect agency performance in the coming years, it is clear that parks and recreation agencies must become nimbler and more adaptable to changing conditions and public inputs. The public and their elected officials have greater expectations for sustained, high-level performance from their park and recreation departments. Changing economic, environmental, and social conditions demands that agencies be proactive in assessing emerging trends while continuing to be fully grounded in reliable data to justify their investments and expenditures to benefit the public good."
  - Organizational agility and the ability to be more strategic and proactive are two other sets of reasons why Indiana communities are writing their own local parks and recreation master plans. Communities are listening more closely to the needs and preferences of their user base. Budgets are tight enough to make poor, uninformed decisions too costly to contemplate. DNR is seeing more park plans come in from first-time park planners in communities that want to be more flexible and informed in their parks departments.

Trend 5: *"Declining General Fund Support and Increasing Demand for Self-Generated Revenue"*

- "Local government spending on parks and recre-

ation continues to recover from the Great Recession, as agencies have been increasingly challenged to generate more of their operating and maintenance costs from fees and charges. The amount of general fund support from local and state governments for parks and recreation systems across the country has declined, and there are no signs that this trend will be reversed. If anything, it will likely continue as municipal government budgets remain unable to keep up with inflationary pressures, tax-averse citizenry and long-term debt. As noted earlier, the median amount of cost-recovery from self-generated revenues is just over 27 percent. Surprisingly, a quarter of parks and recreation agencies reported 46 percent or more in cost recovery in 2017.

The ability to generate revenue (and be less reliant on the whims of elected officials) bodes well for parks and recreation agencies being able to weather economic downturns and further reductions in general funds. At the same time, the need for self-generated revenue could put pressure on agencies as they continue in their mission to serve all members of their communities, including those with little means to pay for parks and recreation services. Balancing financial needs with the social equity mission will be one of the most challenging issues facing parks and recreation professionals in the coming year and beyond."

- ◦ Indiana has very much followed this trend, especially after voters statewide passed a

Table 2.3 **Activity Trends**

	1989	**1995**	**2000**	**2005**	**2010**	**2015**	**2020**
1	Picnicking	Hiking, Walking Jogging	Hiking, Walking Jogging	Hiking, Walking Jogging	Hiking, Walking Jogging	Hiking, Walking Jogging	Walking, Running, Jogging
2	Pleasure Driving	Picnicking	Fairs, Festivals	Fairs, Festivals	Camping	Camping	Camping RV Camping
3	Walking	Swimming	Fishing	Swimming SCUBA Snorkeling	Picnicking	Fishing	Hiking Backpacking
4	Swimming	Camping	Camping	Nature Observation, Photography	Fishing	Swimming	Fishing
5	Fishing	Fishing Hunting	Picnicking	Camping	Swimming	Canoeing Kayaking Paddle Sports	Boating Wakeboarding Water Skiing Sailing
6	Bicycling	Bicycling	Swimming SCUBA Snorkeling	Fishing	Boating, Water Skiing, Personal Watercraft	Bicycling	Picnicking, Barbecue/ Cookouts
7	Camping	Boating	Nature Observation, Photography	Picnicking	Golf	Hunting	Gardening Landscaping Yard Work
8	Nature Observation	Nature Observation	Playground Use	Bicycling	Bicycling	Fairs/Festivals Outdoor Concerts	Swimming Snorkeling Diving
9	Motor Boating	Playground Use	Bicycling	Off-road Motorized Vehicle Use	Hunting	Boating Water Skiing Sailing	Bicycling
10	Golf	Off-road Motorized Vehicle Use	Boating, Water Skiing, Personal Watercraft	Boating, Water Skiing, Personal Watercraft	Horseback Riding	Off-road Motorized Use	Golf

set of property tax caps in 2010. Many local governments and school districts have struggled to pay for their services, operations, and maintenance since those caps took effect. Accordingly, this has also affected individual government departments, such as parks. The mix of funding used for local parks and recreation has changed enormously over the last 10 years and is still changing. Indiana public parks are likely to continue to innovate, economize and explore new funding paradigms as this trend continues.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This section provides an overview of the needs identified by analyzing survey data, national trends, and related information. These identified needs directly contribute to the Outdoor Recreation Goals and Strategies listed at the end of the Introduction.

Identified Needs From The Surveys

More varied kinds of trail or trail-related facilities (especially pedestrian) are needed.

- The results of all three surveys showed that many kinds of trails use are growing and are in great demand statewide by a variety of users. This is especially true of trails with a pedestrian emphasis. National data fully agree with this growing trend, now in its third decade in Indiana.
- Recreation programmers and planners should remember that there is a wide diversity of trails users, and that multi-purpose trail facilities are likely to better serve the needs of their public than single-use sites. People use trails for all kinds of reasons, in all kinds of ways, and developing a trail system that caters to as many different types of users as possible is more likely to be successful, as well as lowering the opportunity cost for each additional trail-use type.

Natural-resource-based recreation of many kinds is still a major need among Hoosiers.

- Nonconsumptive natural-resource-based recreation is a strongly growing area of use that includes activities such as bird-watching, nature photography and observation, camping, swimming, and more. In the Participation Survey, all of the top five outdoor recreation activities actually participated in "more than once per week" were

non-consumptive.
- More traditional consumptive resource-based recreation uses are still popular but less in demand (hunting, fishing, wild food gathering, etc.). In the Participation Survey, only one of the top five favorite outdoor recreation activities was consumptive.
- Water-based recreation of all kinds is still extremely popular and has expanded beyond traditional activities, such as boating; canoeing; and swimming in lakes, ponds and rivers, to more developed urban water recreational activities, such as using splash pads and waterparks/spray parks.

Community and individual health and wellness needs are becoming a greater priority.

- The surveys indicate that Hoosiers are choosing to recreate outdoors as part of a growing awareness of outdoor recreation's positive effect on their health.
- It is becoming common for health providers (e.g., hospitals, health clinics, physicians) to actively cooperate with parks and recreation agencies for programs, infrastructure and community health/wellness initiatives.
- Health and wellness as motivators for outdoor recreation of all kinds appeared to cross all demo-

graphics—all types of people were recreating for health reasons.

- At the State level, Indiana is creating programs and plans to fight the growing obesity epidemic. Examples are the Indiana Healthy Weight Initiative and the State Department of Health's Comprehensive Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan – 2010 to 2020. Parks, recreation and trails are an integral part of these efforts.

Use of and demand for local parks and recreation appears to be growing.

- Many reasons are driving an increase in use of local parks and recreation.
  - The cost of living is outpacing wage growth.
  - The slow-growing economy is affecting recreation use in households.
  - Health-conscious visitors are using local and regional parks more.
  - Local parks and recreation offer better options to recreate for users limited by time or opportunity.
- Communities are responding to economic and social pressures.
  - Parks and recreation is seen as an economic engine in local communities. Strong parks and recreation programs encourage users to spend their recreation dollars close to home, not just in parks, but in local businesses, restaurants, etc.
  - Tourism dollars are attractive to cash-strapped communities.
  - New businesses gravitate toward communities that offer a strong quality of life, health and wellness for their work force.
  - New residents attracted to a community bring new tax revenues. Residents who leave take their tax money with them. Hoosiers indicate where they prefer to live by moving there.

Funding is tight for parks and recreation. Adaptation and innovation are vital.

- Users continue to rate increased fees as one of their least favorite ways to pay for access to parks and recreation.
- Due in large part to property tax caps, property tax revenues remain down in many communities. This forces tight budgets, affecting parks and recreation's most traditional funding source.
- Parks and recreation providers who actively seek innovative new ways to fund their programs or partner/cooperate with those who can are the most successful providers. RIF, TIF, COIT and many others offer alternatives for communities to fund not only acquisition, but also development, operations and long-term maintenance of their parks systems.
- State-level grants are both more important than ever for local communities to acquire and develop their future parks and recreation resources, and harder for local governments to find match money to contribute to. Once again, those who can think creatively to amass match funds are the most successful.
- Greater use of existing parks and recreation facilities, programs and services are driving up the costs of operation and maintenance of facilities for local providers.
  - Preventive maintenance is more important than ever—it is cheaper to carefully care for facilities and equipment than to replace them.
  - Life-cycle costing, in which the lifetime costs of operating and maintaining facilities and equipment are planned for and taken into account over time has become a best management practice for parks and recreation professionals.
  - Careful outsourcing or privatizing of operations and maintenance services in some cases can lead to real-world cost savings without loss of quality of service or product. Savings must be verified, documented, and analyzed over time (not all privatizations save money over time).
  - Replacing old, outdated equipment can not only save money on things like fuel and maintenance, but also improve speed and efficiency of work, which in turn saves staff time and effort.
- Use of volunteers, creation of friends groups, in-kind donation of equipment and services, donations, bequests, corporate sponsorships, and other innovative financial and operational strategies are helping budget-conscious providers meet their organization's needs.

The next chapter of the document will focus on:

- Guidelines for recreation, parks and open space.
- Local, regional and total outdoor recreation supply.
- Total outdoor recreation acres.
- Critical counties and regions.

Supply of Outdoor Recreation Acreage in Indiana

Chapter Three examines the current supply of outdoor recreation acreage in Indiana. The two previous chapters gave an overview of the public input for this SCORP, determined the main issues and trends, and subjected them to a needs analysis. The surveys looked at both the public point of view and the parks and recreation provider perspective. The purpose was to better understand the outdoor recreation needs of all Hoosiers.

Looking at the supply of outdoor recreation acreage in Indiana gives us yet another measurement to assess outdoor recreation needs. The DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation maintains a database of facilities statewide to help track the supply of these resources. This inventory database is maintained primarily from self-reported local government data, research (including the internet, park websites, etc.), and data reported in local five-year parks and recreation master plans kept on file with the Division of Outdoor Recreation.

The data from this inventory are used in this chapter to compare the current amount of public outdoor recreation acreage on the local, State/federal and total (statewide) levels with national and state guidelines, and provide another basis for statewide strategic park planning. All population data used in this SCORP are taken from the latest available primary source: the U.S. Census 2018 Population Esti-

mates, which were released in spring 2019 for public use.

NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC PARK ACREAGE

Drs. James D. Mertes and James R. Hall co-authored (with editor Roger A. Lancaster) the definitive book on recreation, park and open-space level of service guidelines in 1983. The book was published by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), and for decades was considered the gold standard for determining the minimum desired acreage of outdoor recreation lands at the local and regional level. This book featured a relatively simple classification system for parks, and provided recommended acreages for parks on a population-ratio basis—so many acres per 1,000 people residing in a community.

Here are the most basic level-of-service guidelines, as they were published in 1983:

- **Mini-Park:** Has a service area with less than a quarter-mile radius, and approximately a quarter- to half-acre per 1,000 people.
- **Neighborhood Park:** Has a service area between a quarter-mile and half-mile radius, with population up to 5,000. Has 15-plus acres, equaling 1.0 to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people.

- **Community Park:** Has a service area with a 1- to 2-mile radius (would normally include several neighborhoods), and is 25-plus acres, which equals 5.0 to 8.0 acres per 1,000 people.
- **Regional/Metropolitan Park:** Has a service area of one hour's driving time (would normally include several communities), and is 200-plus acres, which equals 5.0 to 10.0 acres per 1,000 people.
- **Regional Park Preserve:** Has a service area of one hour's driving time (would normally include several communities), and is 1,000-plus acres. A total of 80% of this land would be reserved for natural resource management and conservation, and 20% would be reserved for recreational development. The number of acres per 1,000 people for a regional park preserve would vary widely depending on the property available.
- **Linear Park, Special-Use Area, or Conservancy Area:** No applicable guidelines were set in the document.

Over the next 20 years or so, these guidelines were widely accepted, but even the NRPA noted that the guidelines were meant to be flexible benchmarks, not an absolute number. Anyone who has tried on a one-size-fits-all T-shirt knows that "fits all" isn't always true. Academics and park professionals started trying to create a new method of determining how much park and open-space land a given community might need, taking unique local priorities into account. A more locally based and flexible means of determining a minimum amount of parks and recreation land or facilities began to emerge in the mid-1990s. Level of Service (LOS) is a process of strategic planning that takes into account the unique aspects of individual communities. LOS also measures demand for recreation opportunities, current parks and recreation resources, and the needs and preferences of community residents. Indiana has used the 1983 NRPA guidelines as a benchmark since they were first published, but has created its own LOS guidelines for park and recreation open space.

INDIANA'S LOS GUIDELINES FOR PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

To simplify processing of the facilities inventory data, Indiana divides the current supply of recreation acreage into three categories: Local, State/federal and Total (statewide):

- **Local (County, Township, City or Town) recreation acres:** Land owned by municipal, township and county governments, as well as land privately owned but open for public use.

- **State/federal recreation acres:** Land owned mostly by State or federal governments, and does include some non-profit sites (such as those owned by Land Trusts) open for public recreational use.
- **Total (Statewide) recreation acres:** Total of all statewide public recreation land that is owned by all the entities in the other two categories.

The State of Indiana took the above categories and created LOS guidelines for publicly-owned parks, recreation and open space for all Hoosiers. Indiana's guidelines for outdoor recreation in terms of acres per 1,000 people are:

- **Local LOS:** 20 acres per 1,000 people (.02 acres per person).
- **State/Fed LOS:** 35 acres per 1,000 people (.035 acres per person).
- **Total (Statewide) LOS:** 55 acres per 1,000 people (.055 acres per person).

Because the Indiana SCORP is a document with a focus on statewide, public-owned parks and recreation, these guidelines are on a different scale than the NRPA guidelines mentioned earlier. Indiana's parks, recreation and open-space LOS guidelines are set according to the government level owner/operator of public recreation property (such as local, State/federal or total/statewide levels), instead of by types or sizes of park property. All acreages discussed in the SCORP are based on publicly owned or accessed lands. The SCORP excludes all schools. This is because many schools do not allow public access to their outdoor facilities; therefore, the DNR has no means to verify true public access to all school properties statewide. Private lands not open for public use are also excluded. Tables are included in this chapter that examine the supply of Local, State/federal and Total/statewide owned outdoor-recreation acres, organized and tallied by county and by region. The tables also look at current population (and population growth in the Critical Counties), as well as the best available inventory of public outdoor recreation acres available within each county and region.

LOCAL OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES LISTED BY COUNTY AND BY REGION: MUNICIPAL, TOWNSHIP, COUNTY, AND PRIVATELY OWNED BUT OPEN FOR PUBLIC USE

As previously mentioned, Indiana uses an LOS guideline (20 acres of locally owned and operated public outdoor recreation acres per 1,000 people) to determine which local government entities have an adequate supply of acreage or a deficit of small-scale, local-level parks.

Local (owned by a county, township, city, or town) Acres by County

The first data tables in this SCORP provide data on local outdoor recreation acres, tallied by county, to illustrate those counties that may need more assistance in improving their supply of locally owned and managed public outdoor recreation acreage. In the "Difference" column, a bracketed number in red print (X), indicates a negative or deficient number of acres of OR land.

Let's look at the Indiana Local Acres by County Table listing for Adams County as an example (Figure 3.1). From the left-hand column:

- County ID number (1).
- County Name (Adams).
- 2018 U.S. Census County Population Estimate (35,636 residents).
- DNR-recommended LOS Local Acres of outdoor recreation land (.02 acre * 35,636 people = 712.72 acres recommended).
- Current inventory of local acres of OR land (356.97 acres).
- Recommended number of OR acres—current number of local OR acres = "Difference" (356.97 local acres – 712.72 recommended acres = 355.75-acre deficit of OR acres in Adams County).

Of 92 counties in the state, 60% (55 counties) are deficient in local-level public outdoor-recreation acres.

Figure 3.1 **Local Acres Example**

County Number	County Name	2018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Local 20a/1000 People	Sum Of County Local Acres	Difference
1	Adams	35,636	712.72	356.97	(355.75)

Table 3.1 **LOCAL ACRES BY COUNTY**

County Number	County Name	2018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Local 20a/1000	Sum Of County Local Acres	Difference
1	Adams	35,636	712.72	356.97	(355.75)
2	Allen	375,351	7,507.02	5,853.33	(1,653.69)
3	Bartholomew	82,753	1,655.06	1,245.73	(409.33)
4	Benton	8,653	173.06	70.50	(102.56)
5	Blackford	11,930	238.60	104.35	(134.25)
6	Boone	66,999	1,339.98	607.97	(732.01)
7	Brown	15,234	304.68	1,569.54	1,264.86
8	Carroll	20,127	402.54	304.08	(98.46)
9	Cass	37,955	759.10	1,188.26	429.16
10	Clark	117,360	2,347.20	1,121.21	(1,225.99)
11	Clay	26,170	523.40	215.85	(307.55)
12	Clinton	32,250	645.00	192.70	(452.30)
13	Crawford	10,558	211.16	33.00	(178.16)
14	Daviess	33,147	662.94	2,494.12	1,831.18
15	Dearborn	49,568	991.36	1,576.53	585.17
16	Decatur	26,794	535.88	217.27	(318.61)
17	Dekalb	43,226	864.52	462.99	(401.53)
18	Delaware	114,772	2,295.44	2,673.74	378.30
19	Dubois	42,565	851.30	1,624.01	772.71
20	Elkhart	205,560	4,111.20	2,687.54	(1,423.66)
21	Fayette	23,047	460.94	909.40	448.46
22	Floyd	77,781	1,555.62	858.25	(697.37)
23	Fountain	16,351	327.02	358.25	31.23
24	Franklin	22,736	454.72	256.00	(198.72)
25	Fulton	20,092	401.84	470.30	68.46
26	Gibson	33,452	669.04	1,354.00	684.96
27	Grant	65,936	1,318.72	349.40	(969.32)
28	Greene	32,006	640.12	537.00	(103.12)
29	Hamilton	330,086	6,601.72	4,178.79	(2,422.93)
30	Hancock	76,351	1,527.02	509.65	(1,017.37)
31	Harrison	40,350	807.00	2,036.43	1,229.43
32	Hendricks	167,009	3,340.18	1,554.72	(1,785.46)
33	Henry	48,271	965.42	1,671.37	705.95
34	Howard	82,366	1,647.32	1,079.10	(568.22)
35	Huntington	36,240	724.80	356.13	(368.67)
36	Jackson	44,111	882.22	251.70	(630.52)
37	Jasper	33,370	667.40	880.49	213.09
38	Jay	20,764	415.28	331.10	(84.18)
39	Jefferson	32,208	644.16	283.50	(360.66)
40	Jennings	27,611	552.22	694.00	141.78
41	Johnson	156,225	3,124.50	1,361.38	(1,763.12)
42	Knox	36,895	737.90	680.25	(57.65)
43	Kosciusko	79,344	1,586.88	636.04	(950.84)
44	LaGrange	39,330	786.60	1,164.30	377.70
45	Lake	484,411	9,688.22	10,862.40	1,174.18
46	LaPorte	110,007	2,200.14	2,735.22	535.08
47	Lawrence	45,668	913.36	863.04	(50.32)

County Number	County Name	2,018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Local 20a/1,000	Sum Of County Local Acres	Difference
48	Madison	129,641	2,592.82	1,225.30	(1,367.52)
49	Marion	954,670	19,093.40	11,806.33	(7,287.07)
50	Marshall	46,248	924.96	731.79	(193.17)
51	Martin	10,217	204.34	259.60	55.26
52	Miami	35,567	711.34	573.25	(138.09)
53	Monroe	146,917	2,938.34	5,704.43	2,766.09
54	Montgomery	38,346	766.92	979.97	213.05
55	Morgan	70,116	1,402.32	529.83	(872.49)
56	Newton	14,011	280.22	7,796.00	7,515.78
57	Noble	47,532	950.64	2,559.45	1,608.81
58	Ohio	5,844	116.88	48.00	(68.88)
59	Orange	19,489	389.78	437.00	47.22
60	Owen	20,845	416.90	69.90	(347.00)
61	Parke	16,927	338.54	492.60	154.06
62	Perry	19,102	382.04	315.00	(67.04)
63	Pike	12,410	248.20	1,003.28	755.08
64	Porter	169,594	3,391.88	2,993.84	(398.04)
65	Posey	25,540	510.80	249.81	(260.99)
66	Pulaski	12,469	249.38	94.44	(154.94)
67	Putnam	37,779	755.58	1,529.80	774.22
68	Randolph	24,851	497.02	543.87	46.85
69	Ripley	28,523	570.46	615.82	45.36
70	Rush	16,663	333.26	140.49	(192.77)
71	St. Joseph	270,771	5,415.42	3,431.86	(1,983.56)
72	Scott	23,878	477.56	164.20	(313.36)
73	Shelby	44,593	891.86	391.25	(500.61)
74	Spencer	20,327	406.54	406.10	(0.44)
75	Starke	22,935	458.70	488.32	29.62
76	Steuben	34,586	691.72	1,255.55	563.83
77	Sullivan	20,690	413.80	2,608.00	2,194.20
78	Switzerland	10,717	214.34	71.61	(142.73)
79	Tippecanoe	193,048	3,860.96	3,302.20	(558.76)
80	Tipton	15,128	302.56	181.57	(120.99)
81	Union	7,037	140.74	208.00	67.26
82	Vanderburgh	180,974	3,619.48	2,273.13	(1,346.35)
83	Vermillion	15,479	309.58	170.26	(139.32)
84	Vigo	107,386	2,147.72	2,352.69	204.97
85	Wabash	31,280	625.60	549.89	(75.71)
86	Warren	8,263	165.26	279.00	113.74
87	Warrick	62,567	1,251.34	1,901.42	650.08
88	Washington	27,943	558.86	594.42	35.56
89	Wayne	65,936	1,318.72	2,287.33	968.61
90	Wells	28,206	564.12	396.16	(167.96)
91	White	24,133	482.66	198.24	(284.42)
92	Whitley	34,074	681.48	381.19	(300.29)
Statewide Local Acres		**6,691,878**	**133,837.56**	**126,414.08**	**(7,423.48)**

Figure 3.2
LOCAL OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES, BY COUNTY

Meets Recommendation

Does Not Meet Recommendation

Local (owned by a county, township, city, or town) Acres by Region

A word about "Regions" in this document: Previous authors of the Indiana SCORP, going back decades, have used a number of different ways to divide the state into manageable regions or groups of counties. These regions would share some aspects that gave certain advantages to analyzing them in aggregate. The past several SCORPs have used a regional map first obtained from the Indiana Association of Regional Councils (IARC), under the former State of Indiana Department of Planning in the early 1970s. This map divided Indiana into 18 regions, based on groups of counties that had officially banded together in development districts or planning commissions for shared economic development, coordination of urban and regional planning, and intergovernmental cooperation. Since created, the IARC's member county groups have changed many times, and by 2010 many of the new regional councils bore little resemblance to their old counterparts. This made it time for the DNR to adopt the latest version of IARC's regions. The latest (as of August 2017) map of the IARC's member councils shows 15 different regional councils (all with different names), listed in alphabetical order and numbered 1-15. (The old list had several "subdivided" regions, such as 3A and 3B). The current IARC map also makes it clear that in the past several decades, a number of counties in the center of the state have opted not to participate in any regional planning councils; these counties will be numbered as region 16 on the DNR maps in this SCORP, and will be listed as unaffiliated.

Out of the 15 IARC member regions and 16th unaffiliated group of counties, nine regions (56%) are deficient in local-level public outdoor-recreation acreage.

Table 3.2 **Local Acres by Region**

Regions	2014 Population (Estimated)	2018 Population	Percent of Population Change	Recommended Acres; Local 20a/1000	Sum Of Local Acres	Difference
1	302,454	302,533	0.03	6,050.66	5,778.36	(272.30)
2	198,044	192,638	(2.73)	3,852.76	3,127.49	(725.27)
3	125,505	124,451	(0.84)	2,489.02	3,818.39	1,329.37
4	145,100	143,961	(0.78)	2,879.22	10,111.07	7,231.85
5	130,069	129,641	(0.33)	2,592.82	1,225.30	(1,367.52)
6	595,260	601,923	1.12	12,038.46	7,487.23	(4,551.23)
7	470,954	482,419	2.43	9,648.38	7,069.45	(2,578.93)
8	768,748	764,012	(0.62)	15,280.24	16,591.46	1,311.22
9	222,723	223,042	0.14	4,460.84	6,266.51	1,805.67
10	281,330	287,312	2.13	5,746.24	4,774.51	(971.73)
11	249,021	248,594	(0.17)	4,971.88	4,153.98	(817.90)
12	159,300	157,933	(0.86)	3,158.66	4,834.01	1,675.35
13	226,331	224,431	(0.84)	4,488.62	7,369.2	2,880.58
14	226,065	223,358	(1.20)	4,467.16	3,685.18	(781.98)
15	140,661	137,534	(2.22)	2,750.68	4,089.09	1,338.41
16	2,355290	2,448096	3.94	48,961.92	36,032.86	(12,929.06)
Totals:	**6,596,855**	**6,691,878**	**1.44**	**133,837.56**	**126,414.08**	**(7,423.48)**

Figure 3.3

INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS PLANNING REGIONS
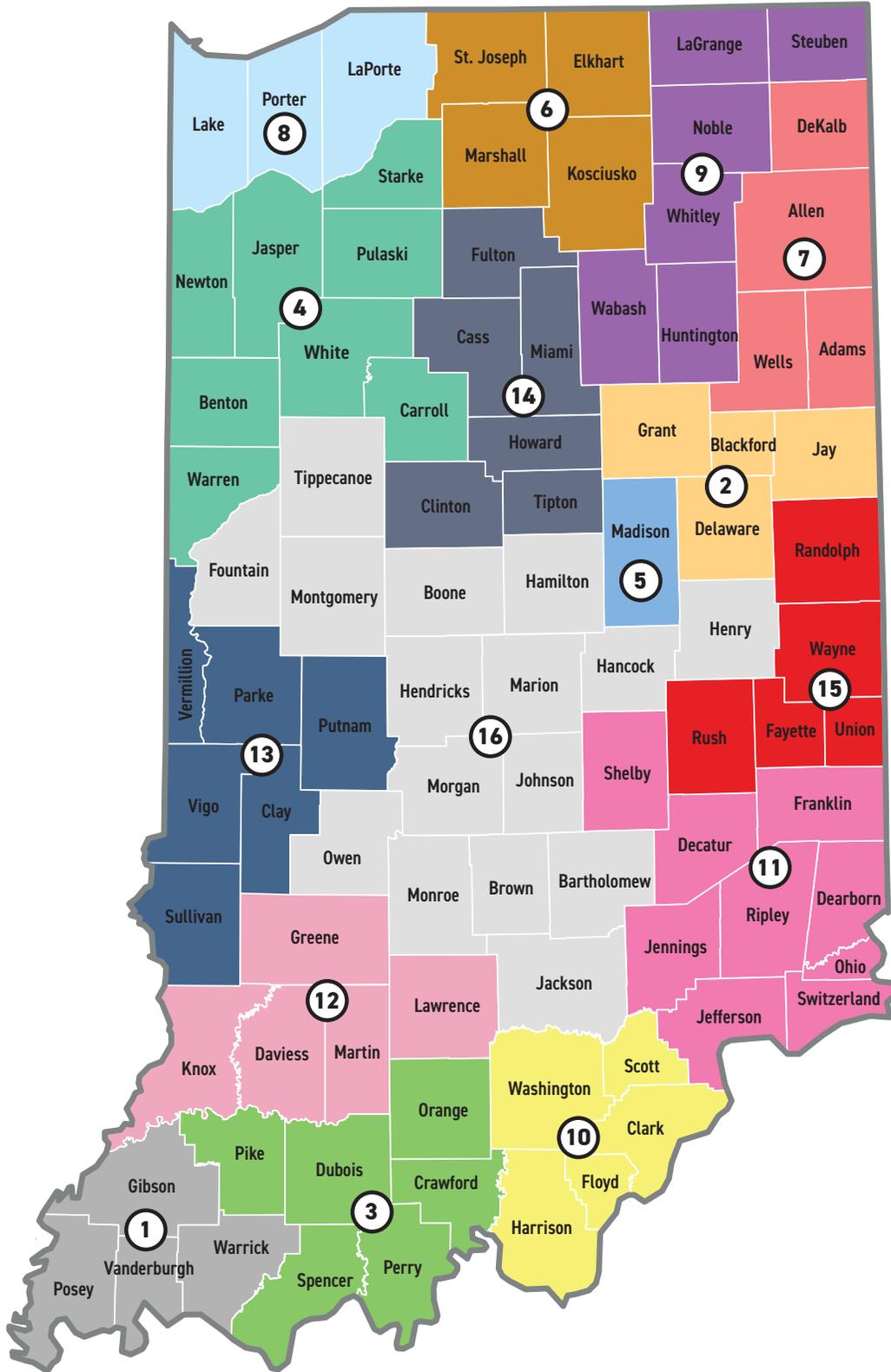
1. Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana
Carol Hagedorn, Vice President
318 Main Street, Suite 400, Evansville, IN 47708
P: 812.423.2020   F: 812.423.2080
chagedorn@southwestindiana.org
www.southwestindiana.org

2. East Central Indiana Regional Planning District
Bill Walters, Executive Director
1208 White River Blvd, Ste 127, Muncie, IN 47303
P: 765.254.0116   F: 765.286.0565
bwalters@ecirpd.org
www.ecirpd.org

3. Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission
Lisa Gehlhausen, Executive Director
221 E First Street, Ferdinand, IN 47532
P: 812.367.8455 F: 812.367.8171
lisa@ind15rpc.org
www.ind15rpc.org

4. Kankakee - Iroquois Regional Planning Commission
Edwin Buswell, Executive Director
115 E 4th Street, PO Box 127 Monon, IN 47959
P: 219.253.6658   F: 219.253.6659
elb@kirpc.net
www.kirpc.net

5. Madison County Council of Governments
Jerrold Bridges, Executive Director
739 Main Street Anderson, IN 46016
P: 765.641.9482   F: 765.641.9486
jerry@heartlandmpo.org
www.mccog.net

6. Michiana Area Council of Governments
James Turnwald, Executive Director
227 W Jefferson Blvd, 1120 County/City Building
South Bend, IN 46601
P: 574.287.1829   F: 574.287.1840
jturnwald@macog.com
www.macog.com

7. Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council
Dan Avery, Executive Director
200 E Berry Street, Suite 230
Ft. Wayne, IN 46802
P: 260.449.7309   F: 260.449.7682
Dan.avery@co.allen.in.us
www.nircc.com

8. Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
Ty Warner, Executive Director
6100 Southport Rd, Portage, IN 46368
P: 219.763.6060   F: 219.762.1653
twarner@nirpc.org
www.nirpc.org

9. Region III-A Economic Development District & Regional Planning Commission
Matt Brinkman, Executive Director
217 Fairview Blvd, Kendallville, IN 46755
P: 260.347.4714   F: 260.347.4718
mbrinkman@region3a.org
www.region3a.org

10. River Hills Economic Development District & Regional Planning Commission
Jill Saegesser, Executive Director
300 Spring St, Suite 2A, Jeffersonville, IN 47130
P: 812.288.4624   F: 812.288.8105
jsaegesser@riverhills.cc
www.riverhills.cc

11. Southeastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
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405 W. US Hwy 50, PO Box 765 Versailles, IN 47042
P: 812.689.5505   F: 812.689.3526
susan.craig@sirpc.org
www.sirpc.org

12. Southern Indiana Development Commission
Greg Jones, Executive Director
PO Box 442, Loogootee, IN 47553
P: 812.295.3707   F: 812.295.3717
gejones@sidc.cc
www.sidc.cc

13. West Central Indiana Economic Development District
Ron Hinsenkamp, Executive Director
1718 Wabash Ave
Terre Haute, IN 47807
P: 812.238.1561   F: 812.238.1564
rhinsenkamp@westcentralin.com
www.westcentralin.com

14. North Central Indiana Regional Planning Council
Steven Ray, Executive Director
1525 West Hoosier Boulevard, Suite 204
Peru, IN 46970
P: 765.689.4026
sray@ncirpc.com
www.ncirpc.com

15. Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
Jeff Plasterer, Executive Director
401 East Main Street
Richmond, IN 47374
P: 765.977.3907
jeffplasterer@gmail.com

Total (statewide) Local Acres

Just because local acres of public outdoor recreation land are deficient by both county and region, it does not mean that the total (statewide) level is deficient. Indiana has grown 1.44% in population, to 6,691,878 residents, according to the population projections published by the U.S. Census in 2018. Multiplying the current population by the recommended LOS of 20 acres of public outdoor recreation land per 1,000 people (.02 acre per person) equals 133,837.56 acres. Subtracting the current supply of local acres (126,414.09 acres) equals a statewide deficit of local public outdoor recreation land of 7,423.48 acres.

Why Are There Deficits in Locally Owned Public Outdoor Recreation Acres?

There are many reasons why such a high percentage of counties and regions in the state have a deficit in the number of local public outdoor recreation acres. A few possible explanations are:

- Nearby State- or federal-owned properties may provide for significant public recreation needs, causing local governments to decide that they may not have to supply as many local parks.
- A lack of community resources and support to acquire, develop and/or maintain local outdoor recreation properties.
- Communities in that county/region may lack the organization or structure—such as park boards and/or park departments—to operate new or existing parks.
- The communities in that county/region may not have enough advocacy among underserved users and user groups to motivate local government leaders to acquire and/or develop sufficient local park land.
- A need for adequate funding for acquisition, development, personnel, operations and maintenance of existing or new public outdoor recreation properties.

STATE & FEDERAL OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES LISTED BY COUNTY AND REGION: STATE AND FEDERAL PUBLIC OUTDOOR RECREATION LAND

The Division of Outdoor Recreation examines the supply of State/federal public outdoor recreation acres (public outdoor recreation acres mostly owned by the State or federal government, or by certain non-profits) at the same geographic scale as it does local public outdoor recreation acres: by county, region and total (statewide).

State/Federal (State and Federal-owned) Acres by County

The third set of data tables in this SCORP covers State and federal outdoor recreation acres by county, illustrating those counties that may need more assistance in improving their supply of State and federal public outdoor recreation acreage. In the "Difference" column, a bracketed number in red print (X), indicates a negative or deficient number of acres of outdoor recreation land.

Let's look at the Indiana State/Federal Acres by County Table listing for Adams County as an example (Figure 3.2). From the left-hand column:

- County ID number (1).
- County Name (Adams).
- 2018 U.S. Census County Population Estimate (35,636 residents).
- DNR-recommended LOS Local Acres of Outdoor-Recreation Land   (.035 acre* 35,636 people = 1,247.26 acres recommended).
- Current inventory of State/federal acres of outdoor recreation land (570.42 acres)
- Recommended number of outdoor recreation acres—current number of State/federal outdoor recreation acres = "Difference" (570.42 State/Fed Acres – 1,247.26 Recommended Acres = 676.84 acre deficit of OR acres in Adams County)

Figure 3.4 **State/Fed Acres Example**

County Number	County Name	2018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; State/Fed 35a/1,000 People	Sum Of County State/Fed Acres	Difference
1	Adams	35,636	1,247.26	570.42	(676.84)

Figure 3.5
STATE/FED OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES, BY COUNTY

Out of 92 counties total in the state, 42% are deficient in state/federal outdoor recreation acres (39 counties).

Meets Recommendation

Does Not Meet Recommendation

Table 3.3 **STATE & FEDERAL ACRES BY COUNTY**

County Number	County Name	2018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; State/Fed 35a/1000	Sum Of County State/Fed Acres	Difference
1	Adams	35,636	1,247.26	570.42	(676.84)
2	Allen	375,351	13,137.29	1,643.61	(11,493.68)
3	Bartholomew	82,753	2,896.36	1,345.20	(1,551.16)
4	Benton	8,653	302.86	2,268.00	1,965.15
5	Blackford	11,930	417.55	0.00	(417.55)
6	Boone	66,999	2,344.97	64.81	(2,280.16)
7	Brown	15,234	533.19	68,372.00	67,838.81
8	Carroll	20,127	704.45	388.50	(315.95)
9	Cass	37,955	1,328.43	48.10	(1,280.33)
10	Clark	117,360	4,107.60	20,028.81	15,921.21
11	Clay	26,170	915.95	2,496.00	1,580.05
12	Clinton	32,250	1,128.75	29.00	(1,099.75)
13	Crawford	10,558	369.53	39,082.61	38,713.08
14	Daviess	33,147	1,160.15	8,845.33	7,685.19
15	Dearborn	49,568	1,734.88	47.20	(1,687.68)
16	Decatur	26,794	937.79	137.08	(800.71)
17	Dekalb	43,226	1,512.91	214.40	(1,298.51)
18	Delaware	114,772	4,017.02	0.00	(4,017.02)
19	Dubois	42,565	1,489.78	11,766.38	10,276.61
20	Elkhart	205,560	7,194.60	444.95	(6,749.65)
21	Fayette	23,047	806.65	108.00	(698.65)
22	Floyd	77,781	2,722.34	2,139.00	(583.34)
23	Fountain	16,351	572.29	580.86	8.57
24	Franklin	22,736	795.76	9,640.96	8,845.20
25	Fulton	20,092	703.22	789.94	86.72
26	Gibson	33,452	1,170.82	4,638.66	3,467.84
27	Grant	65,936	2,307.76	1,422.00	(885.76)
28	Greene	32,006	1,120.21	17,078.05	15,957.84
29	Hamilton	330,086	11,553.01	1.00	(11,552.01)
30	Hancock	76,351	2,672.29	0.00	(2,672.29)
31	Harrison	40,350	1,412.25	17,111.33	15,699.08
32	Hendricks	167,009	5,845.32	0.00	(5,845.32)
33	Henry	48,271	1,689.49	3,808.46	2,118.98
34	Howard	82,366	2,882.81	80.00	(2,802.81)
35	Huntington	36,240	1,268.40	15,519.00	14,250.60
36	Jackson	44,111	1,543.89	38,335.47	36,791.59
37	Jasper	33,370	1,167.95	5,905.10	4,737.15
38	Jay	20,764	726.74	614.28	(112.46)
39	Jefferson	32,208	1,127.28	19,113.52	17,986.24
40	Jennings	27,611	966.39	18,261.86	17,295.48
41	Johnson	156,225	5,467.88	4,649.00	(818.88)
42	Knox	36,895	1,291.33	418.52	(872.81)
43	Kosciusko	79,344	2,777.04	4,448.59	1,671.55
44	LaGrange	39,330	1,376.55	9,870.33	8,493.78
45	Lake	484,411	16,954.39	5,376.47	(11,577.91)
46	LaPorte	110,007	3,850.25	10,431.47	6,581.22
47	Lawrence	45,668	1,598.38	17,356.32	15,757.94

County Number	County Name	2018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; State/Fed 35a/1000	Sum Of County State/Fed Acres	Difference
48	Madison	129,641	4,537.44	285.00	(4,252.44)
49	Marion	954,670	33,413.45	2,279.88	(31,133.57)
50	Marshall	46,248	1,618.68	1,119.85	(498.83)
51	Martin	10,217	357.60	18,056.41	17,698.82
52	Miami	35,567	1,244.85	1,410.22	165.38
53	Monroe	146,917	5,142.10	40,957.20	35,815.11
54	Montgomery	38,346	1,342.11	1,752.77	410.66
55	Morgan	70,116	2,454.06	6,743.36	4,289.30
56	Newton	14,011	490.39	14,526.69	14,036.31
57	Noble	47,532	1,663.62	5,986.34	4,322.72
58	Ohio	5,844	204.54	22.29	(182.25)
59	Orange	19,489	682.12	47,979.00	47,296.89
60	Owen	20,845	729.58	12,546.87	11,817.30
61	Parke	16,927	592.45	8,165.07	7,572.63
62	Perry	19,102	668.57	62,920.46	62,251.89
63	Pike	12,410	434.35	16,492.79	16,058.44
64	Porter	169,594	5,935.79	13,253.38	7,317.59
65	Posey	25,540	893.90	13,488.92	12,595.02
66	Pulaski	12,469	436.42	10,524.17	10,087.76
67	Putnam	37,779	1,322.27	7,793.65	6,471.39
68	Randolph	24,851	869.79	681.72	(188.07)
69	Ripley	28,523	998.31	33,369.00	32,370.70
70	Rush	16,663	583.21	0.00	(583.21)
71	St. Joseph	270,771	9,476.99	36,816.47	27,339.49
72	Scott	23,878	835.73	10,683.20	9,847.47
73	Shelby	44,593	1,560.76	2.00	(1,558.76)
74	Spencer	20,327	711.45	3,728.00	3,016.56
75	Starke	22,935	802.73	3,825.52	3,022.80
76	Steuben	34,586	1,210.51	6,876.93	5,666.42
77	Sullivan	20,690	724.15	13,648.41	12,924.26
78	Switzerland	10,717	375.10	1,307.39	932.30
79	Tippecanoe	193,048	6,756.68	2,469.56	(4,287.12)
80	Tipton	15,128	529.48	37.00	(492.48)
81	Union	7,037	246.30	9,328.54	9,082.25
82	Vanderburgh	180,974	6,334.09	503.00	(5,831.09)
83	Vermillion	15,479	541.77	5,464.02	4,922.26
84	Vigo	107,386	3,758.51	775.23	(2,983.28)
85	Wabash	31,280	1,094.80	15,349.55	14,254.75
86	Warren	8,263	289.21	147.00	(142.21)
87	Warrick	62,567	2,189.85	7,914.10	5,724.26
88	Washington	27,943	978.01	18,039.96	17,061.96
89	Wayne	65,936	2,307.76	24.70	(2,283.06)
90	Wells	28,206	987.21	2,667.70	1,680.49
91	White	24,133	844.66	594.79	(249.87)
92	Whitley	34,074	1,192.59	660.07	(532.52)
Statewide State/Fed Acres		**6,691,878**	**234,215.73**	**826,708.77**	**592,493.04**

Table 3.4 **State & Federal Acres by Region**

Regions	2014 Population (Estimated)	2018 Population	Percent of Population Change	Recommended Acres; State/Fed 35a/1000	Sum Of State/Fed Acres	Difference
1	302,454	302533	0.03	10,588.66	26,544.68	15,956.03
2	198,044	192638	(2.73)	6,742.33	1,422	(5,320.33)
3	125,505	124451	(0.84)	4,355.79	181,969.24	177,613.46
4	145,100	143961	(0.78)	5,038.64	38,179.77	33,141.14
5	130,069	129641	(0.33)	4,537.44	285	(4,252.44)
6	595,260	601923	1.12	21,067.31	42,829.86	21,762.56
7	470,954	482419	2.43	16,884.67	5,096.13	(11,788.54)
8	768,748	764012	(0.62)	26,740.42	29,061.32	2,320.90
9	222,723	223042	0.14	7,806.47	54,262.22	46,455.75
10	281,330	287312	2.13	10,055.92	68,002.3	57,946.38
11	249,021	248594	(0.17)	8,700.79	81,901.3	73,200.51
12	159,300	157933	(0.86)	5,527.66	61,754.63	56,226.98
13	226,331	224431	(0.84)	7,855.09	38,342.38	30,487.30
14	226,065	223358	(1.20)	7,817.53	2,394.26	(5,423.27)
15	140,661	137534	(2.22)	4,813.69	10,142.96	5,329.27
16	2,355,290	2,448,096	3.94	85,683.36	184,520.72	98,837.36
Totals:	**6,596,855**	**6,691,878**	**1.44**	**234,215.73**	**826,708.77**	**592,493.04**

State/Federal Acres (State and Federal owned) by Region

Four regions in Indiana (25 %) do not meet the DNR recommendations of 35 acres of State/federal outdoor recreation acres per 1,000 people. The service-area gaps mentioned at the county level of State/federal acres are not as pronounced when viewed at the region level. The scattered nature of State/federal outdoor recreation properties simply doesn't show up as well when viewed at this larger geographic scale. It should be noted that the majority of the regions that are deficient in State/federal acres of public outdoor recreation land are either in the central or northern portions of the state. The large number of State and federally owned public outdoor recreation properties in the southern portion of the state, such as Hoosier National Forest and Morgan-Monroe State Forest, help those areas meet the DNR State/federal LOS recommendations for public OR land when viewed by region.

TOTAL OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES LISTED BY COUNTY AND REGION: ALL PUBLIC OUTDOOR RECREATION LANDS CURRENTLY RECORDED IN THE DNR FACILITIES INVENTORY

DNR Outdoor Recreation also examines the supply of public outdoor recreation lands in Indiana by tallying the local and State/federal data and looking at them as a total. The total (statewide) LOS for Indiana is created by adding the other two LOS figures: 20 acres/1,000 and 35 acres/1,000, for a total LOS of 55 acres/1,000 people. These totals of all recorded public outdoor recreation acreage will be listed under county-, region- and statewide-level totals in the same way the local and State/federal data were. This provides a snapshot of all public outdoor recreation lands as recorded in the DNR facilities inventory database.

Total (statewide) Acres by County

A total of 53 counties in Indiana meet DNR's recommended total LOS of 55 acres of public OR land per 1,000 people. That is one more county meeting the Total LOS (when tallied by county) than during the last SCORP cycle. The 39 counties deficient in to-

tal outdoor recreation acreage is the same number as recorded in the current State/federal acreage by county tables. Given the size of many of the State/federal parcels, as noted earlier in the text, the State/federal property effect carries over into the total data.

Of the 53 counties that meet the total LOS recommendation, 28 counties (28% of all Indiana counties) actually meet all three LOS recommendations—Local, State/federal and Total (statewide):

- Brown
- Daviess
- Dubois
- Fountain
- Fulton
- Gibson
- Harrison
- Henry
- Jasper
- Jennings
- LaGrange
- LaPorte
- Martin
- Monroe
- Montgomery
- Newton
- Noble
- Orange
- Parke
- Pike
- Putnam
- Ripley
- Starke
- Steuben
- Sullivan
- Union
- Warrick
- Washington

Of the 39 counties that do not meet the total LOS recommendation, 30 counties (33% of all Indiana counties) are deficient in all three LOS recommendations—Local, State/federal and Total (statewide):

- Adams
- Allen
- Bartholomew
- Blackford
- Boone
- Carroll
- Clinton
- Decatur
- Dekalb
- Elkhart
- Floyd
- Grant
- Hamilton
- Hancock
- Hendricks
- Howard
- Jay
- Johnson
- Knox
- Madison
- Marion
- Marshall
- Ohio
- Rush
- Shelby
- Tippecanoe
- Tipton
- Vanderburgh
- White
- Whitley

Figure 3.6
TOTAL RECREATION ACRES, BY COUNTY

Meets Recommendation

Does Not Meet Recommendation

Table 3.5 **TOTAL ACRES BY COUNTY**

County Number	County Name	2018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Total 35a/1000	Sum Of County Total Acres	Difference
1	Adams	35,636	1,959.98	927.39	(1,032.59)
2	Allen	375,351	20,644.31	7,496.94	(13,147.37)
3	Bartholomew	82,753	4,551.42	2,590.93	(1,960.49)
4	Benton	8,653	475.92	2,338.5	1,862.59
5	Blackford	11,930	656.15	104.35	(551.80)
6	Boone	66,999	3,684.95	672.78	(3,012.17)
7	Brown	15,234	837.87	69,941.54	69,103.67
8	Carroll	20,127	1,106.99	692.58	(414.40)
9	Cass	37,955	2,087.53	1,236.36	(851.17)
10	Clark	117,360	6,454.80	21,150.02	14,695.22
11	Clay	26,170	1,439.35	2,711.85	1,272.50
12	Clinton	32,250	1,773.75	221.7	(1,552.05)
13	Crawford	10,558	580.69	39,115.61	38,534.92
14	Daviess	33,147	1,823.09	11,339.45	9,516.37
15	Dearborn	49,568	2,726.24	1,623.73	(1,102.51)
16	Decatur	26,794	1,473.67	354.35	(1,119.32)
17	Dekalb	43,226	2,377.43	677.39	(1,700.04)
18	Delaware	114,772	6,312.46	2,673.74	(3,638.72)
19	Dubois	42,565	2,341.08	13,390.39	11,049.32
20	Elkhart	205,560	11,305.80	3,132.49	(8,173.31)
21	Fayette	23,047	1,267.59	1,017.4	(250.19)
22	Floyd	77,781	4,277.96	2,997.25	(1,280.71)
23	Fountain	16,351	899.31	939.11	39.81
24	Franklin	22,736	1,250.48	9,896.96	8,646.48
25	Fulton	20,092	1,105.06	1,260.24	155.18
26	Gibson	33,452	1,839.86	5,992.66	4,152.80
27	Grant	65,936	3,626.48	1,771.4	(1,855.08)
28	Greene	32,006	1,760.33	17,615.05	15,854.72
29	Hamilton	330,086	18,154.73	4,179.79	(13,974.94)
30	Hancock	76,351	4,199.31	509.65	(3,689.66)
31	Harrison	40,350	2,219.25	19,147.76	16,928.51
32	Hendricks	167,009	9,185.50	1,554.72	(7,630.78)
33	Henry	48,271	2,654.91	5,479.83	2,824.93
34	Howard	82,366	4,530.13	1,159.1	(3,371.03)
35	Huntington	36,240	1,993.20	15,875.13	13,881.93
36	Jackson	44,111	2,426.11	38,587.17	36,161.07
37	Jasper	33,370	1,835.35	6,785.59	4,950.24
38	Jay	20,764	1,142.02	945.38	(196.64)
39	Jefferson	32,208	1,771.44	19,397.02	17,625.58
40	Jennings	27,611	1,518.61	18,955.86	17,437.26
41	Johnson	156,225	8,592.38	6,010.38	(2,582.00)
42	Knox	36,895	2,029.23	1,098.77	(930.46)
43	Kosciusko	79,344	4,363.92	5,084.63	720.71
44	LaGrange	39,330	2,163.15	11,034.63	8,871.48
45	Lake	484,411	26,642.61	16,238.87	(10,403.73)
46	LaPorte	110,007	6,050.39	13,166.68	7,116.30
47	Lawrence	45,668	2,511.74	18,219.36	15,707.62

County Number	County Name	2018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Total 35a/1000	Sum Of County Total Acres	Difference
48	Madison	129,641	7,130.26	1,510.30	(5,619.96)
49	Marion	954,670	52,506.85	14,086.21	(38,420.64)
50	Marshall	46,248	2,543.64	1,851.64	(692.00)
51	Martin	10,217	561.94	18,316.01	17,754.08
52	Miami	35,567	1,956.19	1,983.47	27.29
53	Monroe	146,917	8,080.44	46,661.63	38,581.20
54	Montgomery	38,346	2,109.03	2,732.74	623.71
55	Morgan	70,116	3,856.38	7,273.19	3,416.81
56	Newton	14,011	770.61	22,322.69	21,552.09
57	Noble	47,532	2,614.26	8,545.79	5,931.53
58	Ohio	5,844	321.42	70.29	(251.13)
59	Orange	19,489	1,071.90	48416	47,344.11
60	Owen	20,845	1,146.48	12,616.77	11,470.30
61	Parke	16,927	930.99	8,657.67	7,726.69
62	Perry	19,102	1,050.61	63,235.46	62,184.85
63	Pike	12,410	682.55	17,496.07	16,813.52
64	Porter	169,594	9,327.67	16,247.22	6,919.55
65	Posey	25,540	1,404.70	13,738.73	12,334.03
66	Pulaski	12,469	685.80	10,618.61	9,932.82
67	Putnam	37,779	2,077.85	9,323.45	7,245.61
68	Randolph	24,851	1,366.81	1,225.59	(141.22)
69	Ripley	28,523	1,568.77	33,984.82	32,416.06
70	Rush	16,663	916.47	140.49	(775.98)
71	St. Joseph	270,771	14,892.41	40,248.33	25,355.93
72	Scott	23,878	1,313.29	10,847.4	9,534.11
73	Shelby	44,593	2,452.62	393.25	(2,059.37)
74	Spencer	20,327	1,117.99	4,134.1	3,016.12
75	Starke	22,935	1,261.43	4,313.84	3,052.42
76	Steuben	34,586	1,902.23	8,132.48	6,230.25
77	Sullivan	20,690	1,137.95	16,256.41	15,118.46
78	Switzerland	10,717	589.44	1,379	789.57
79	Tippecanoe	193,048	10,617.64	5,771.76	(4,845.88)
80	Tipton	15,128	832.04	218.57	(613.47)
81	Union	7,037	387.04	9,536.54	9,149.51
82	Vanderburgh	180,974	9,953.57	2,776.13	(7,177.44)
83	Vermillion	15,479	851.35	5,634.28	4,782.94
84	Vigo	107,386	5,906.23	3,127.92	(2,778.31)
85	Wabash	31,280	1,720.40	15,899.44	14,179.04
86	Warren	8,263	454.47	426	(28.46)
87	Warrick	62,567	3,441.19	9,815.52	6,374.33
88	Washington	27,943	1,536.87	18,634.38	17,097.52
89	Wayne	65,936	3,626.48	2,312.03	(1,314.45)
90	Wells	28,206	1,551.33	3,063.86	1,512.53
91	White	24,133	1,327.32	793.03	(534.29)
92	Whitley	34,074	1,874.07	1,041.26	(832.81)
Statewide Total Acres		**6,691,878**	**368,053.29**	**953,122.85**	**585,069.56**

Total (statewide) Acres by Region

Twelve regions in Indiana meet DNR's recommended total LOS of 55 acres of public outdoor recreation land per 1,000 people. This statistic rose by one region since the last SCORP cycle. The four regions deficient in total outdoor recreation acreage (25% of all Indiana regions) are the same as recorded in the current State/federal acreage tables, tallied by region. Given the size of many of the State/federal parcels, as noted earlier, the State/federal property effect carries over into the total data.

Of the 12 regions that meet the total LOS recommendation, seven regions (44% of all Indiana regions) actually meet all three LOS recommendations—Local, State/federal and Total (statewide):

- Indiana 15 Regional Planning District (Region 3).
- Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning Commission (Region 4).
- Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (Region 8).

- Region III-A Economic Development District and Regional Planning Commission (Region 9).
- Southern Indiana Development Commission (Region 12).
- West-Central Indiana Economic Development District (Region 13).
- Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (Region 15).

The four regions that do not meet the total LOS recommendation (25% of all Indiana regions) are actually deficient in all three LOS recommendations—Local, State/Fed and Total (Statewide):

- Energize-ECI Regional Planning District (Region 2).
- Madison County Council of Governments (Region 5).
- Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (Region 7).
- North Central Indiana Regional Planning Council (Region 14).

Table 3.6 **Total Acres by Region**

Regions	2014 Population (Estimated)	2018 Population	Percent of Population Change	Recommended Acres; Total 55a/1000	Sum of Total Acres	Total Difference
1	302,454	302,533	0.03	16,639.32	32,323.04	15,683.72
2	198,044	192,638	(2.73)	10,595.09	4,549.49	(6,045.60)
3	125,505	124,451	(0.84)	6,844.81	185,787.63	178,942.83
4	145,100	143,961	(0.78)	7,917.86	48,290.84	40,372.99
5	130,069	129,641	(0.33)	7,130.26	1,510.30	(5,619.96)
6	595,260	601,923	1.12	33,105.77	50,317.09	17,211.33
7	470,954	482,419	2.43	26,533.05	12,165.58	(14,367.46)
8	768,748	764,012	(0.62)	42,020.66	45,652.78	3,632.12
9	222,723	223,042	0.14	12,267.31	60,528.73	48,261.42
10	281,330	287,312	8.42	15,802.16	72,776.81	56,974.65
11	249,021	248,594	(0.17)	13,672.67	86,055.28	72,382.61
12	159,300	157,933	(0.86)	8,686.32	66,588.64	57,902.32
13	226,331	224,431	(0.84)	12,343.71	45,711.58	33,367.88
14	226,065	223,358	(1.20)	12,284.69	6,079.44	(6,205.25)
15	140,661	137,534	(2.22)	7,564.37	14,232.05	6,667.68
16	2,355,290	2,448096	3.94	134,645.28	220,553.58	85,908.30
Totals:	6,596,855	6,691,878	1.44	368,053.29	953,122.85	585,069.56

Figure 3.7
TOTAL ACRES BY REGION

Meets Recommendation

Does Not Meet Recommendation
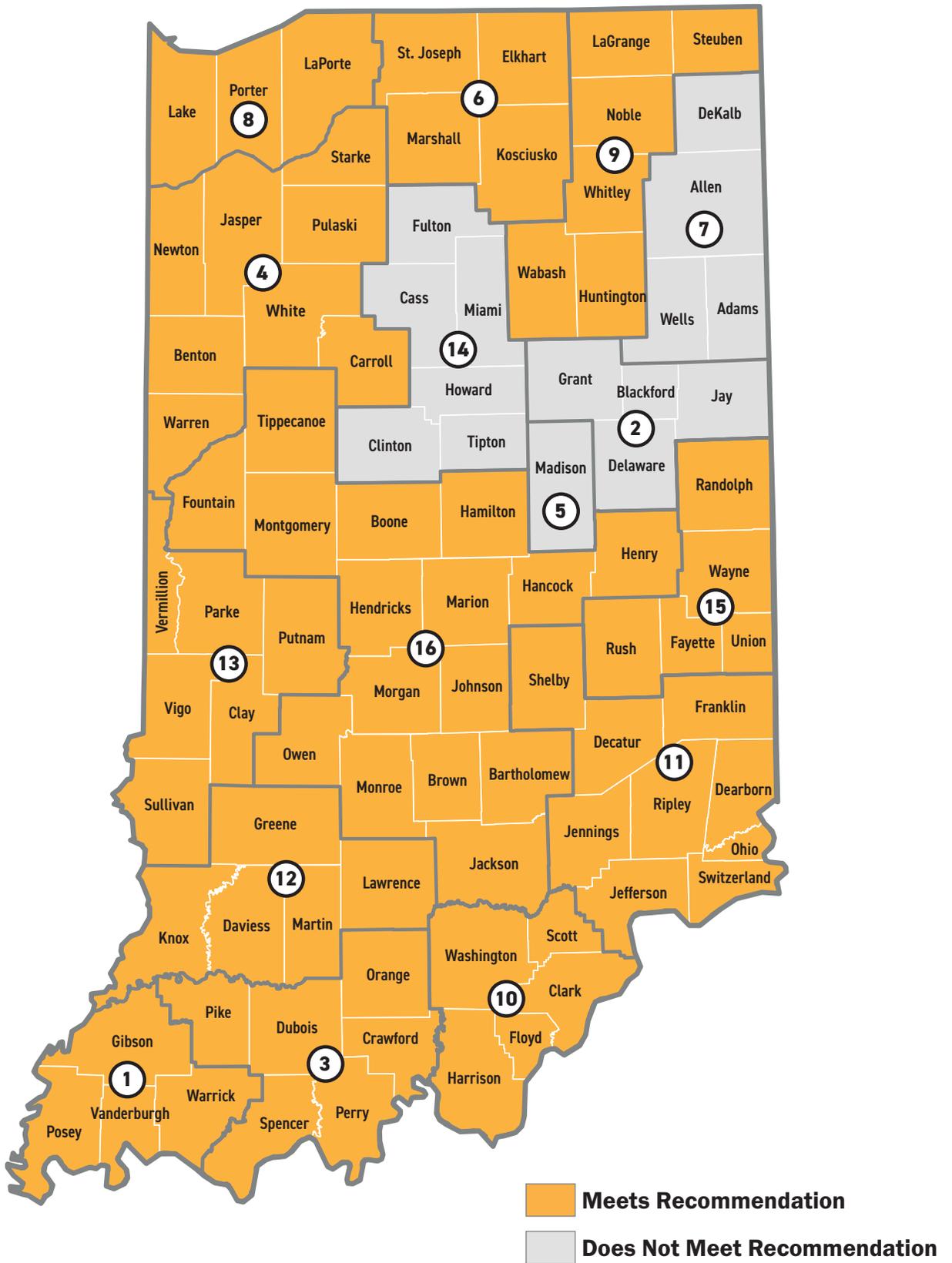
Total (statewide) Outdoor-Recreation Acres

As noted elsewhere in the SCORP, Indiana has grown 1.44% in population, to 6,691,878 residents, according to the population estimates published by the U.S. Census in 2018. Multiplying the current population by the recommended Total (statewide) LOS of 55 acres of public outdoor recreation land per 1,000 people (.055 acre per person), yields a total of 368,053.29 acres. Subtracting the Total (statewide) Recommended LOS acres (368,053.29) from the current supply of Total (statewide) public outdoor recreation acres (953,122.85) yields a statewide surplus of total public outdoor recreation land of 585,069.56 acres.

Conclusion of Total Outdoor Recreation Acres

Indiana now ranks 17th in the country in total population as of the 2018 U.S. Census population estimates. That ranking is one lower than in 2014, and two lower than in 2010. Indiana has gained population, but not as fast as some other states. The total state acreage of Indiana is 23,307,520. Of that total, 953,122.85 acres are designated for outdoor recreation. Indiana therefore has only 4.09% of its land area available for public outdoor recreation.

One observation that cannot be avoided is the continuing difference between counties and regions that have reported surpluses of public outdoor recreation land, and those that have deficits. There are still significant gaps between the haves and have-

nots for outdoor recreation acreage in Indiana. As noted earlier, the southern portion of the state tends to have more counties that meet the total LOS guidelines than the northern tier. And when population distribution and service areas are taken into account, these differences grow. It was noted in the last three SCORPs that there was an apparent inequity in the distribution of public outdoor recreation acreage statewide. That still has not significantly changed for this SCORP.

CRITICAL COUNTIES

The definition of "critical county" in Indiana has changed again for this SCORP. That is because the state's population-growth rate has decreased since the last SCORP. A critical county is defined as:

- A county that does not have the recommended supply of outdoor-recreation acres of 55 acres per 1,000 population or greater.
- A population-growth rate higher than the 2014 to 2018 estimated Indiana statewide population growth rate of 1.44% (data obtained from the U.S. Census 2014 and 2018 population estimates).

14 counties meet the critical counties criteria:

- Adams
- Allen
- Bartholomew
- Boone
- DeKalb
- Elkhart
- Floyd
- Hamilton
- Hancock
- Hendricks
- Johnson
- Marion
- Tippecanoe
- Whitley

Table 3.7 **Critical Counties Based On Total Acres**

County Number	County Name	2018 Population	Recommended Acres; Total 55a/1000	Sum of County Total Acres	Difference
1	Adams	35,636	1959.98	927.39	(1032.59)
2	Allen	375,351	20644.31	7496.94	(13147.37)
3	Bartholomew	82,753	4551.42	2590.93	(1960.49)
6	Boone	66,999	3684.95	672.78	(3012.17)
17	Dekalb	43,226	2377.43	677.39	(1700.04)
20	Elkhart	205,560	11305.80	3132.49	(8173.31)
22	Floyd	77,781	4277.96	2997.25	(1280.71)
29	Hamilton	330,086	18154.73	4179.79	(13974.94)
30	Hancock	76,351	4199.31	509.65	(3689.66)
32	Hendricks	167,009	9185.50	1554.72	(7630.78)
41	Johnson	156,225	8592.38	6010.38	(2582.00)
49	Marion	954,670	52506.85	14086.21	(38420.64)
79	Tippecanoe	193,048	10617.64	5771.76	(4845.88)
92	Whitley	34,074	1874.07	1041.26	(832.81)

If the critical counties criteria used only the supply of local acres of outdoor-recreation land (at 20 acres/1,000 population), the list above would change somewhat (up to 17):

- Adams
- Allen
- Bartholomew
- Boone
- Clark
- DeKalb
- Elkhart
- Floyd
- Hamilton
- Hancock
- Hendricks
- Johnson
- Marion
- Porter
- Switzerland
- Tippecanoe
- Whitley

Figure 3.8

CRITICAL COUNTIES BASED ON TOTAL ACRES

Critical Counties
Non-Critical Counties

CHAPTER 4
Supply of Wetlands in Indiana

Chapter four examines the supply and types of wetlands in Indiana. Due to their rarity and threatened habitat status, wetlands are a priority of acquisition for outdoor recreation purposes, via the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant program. After decades of removal, neglect, drainage, development and destruction, wetland habitats have slowly undergone resurgence nationwide.

Each SCORP in the nation is required to have a chapter specifically addressing many aspects of wetlands: existing federal and State programs and initiatives, supply, types of wetlands commonly found in the state, and methods currently being undertaken to restore or conserve them.

Definition and Traits (from the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act)

There are many definitions of wetlands. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service uses the most commonly accepted scientific definition. In 1979, Cowardin, Carter, Golet and LaRoe published "Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States." This document was adopted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as its standard for wetlands classification. It defines wetlands as "… lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems, where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water." Wetlands in this standard must also have one or more of the following traits:

1. The vegetation of the site sometimes consists mainly of aquatic plants.
2. The underlying materials are mostly undrained, moist (wetland) soils.
3. The underlying materials are not actually soils, and are saturated with water or covered by water at some point during the growing season of each year (examples include peat, sand or muck).

This definition and set of traits are used in some form by most state agencies that have the authority to create wetland conservation initiatives. The State of Indiana uses them in an almost identical form.

INDIANA WETLANDS LEGISLATION, INITIATIVES, AND RESOURCES

Section 303 of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (EWRA) of 1986, (16 U.S.C. Sections 3901-3932, Nov. 10, 1986, as amended 1988 and 1992) requires all SCORPs to: "… address wetlands within that State as an important outdoor recreation resource …" as part of the National Park Service SCORP review and approval process.

The Indiana Wetlands Conservation Plan

In 1996, the Indiana DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife created the "Indiana Wetlands Conservation Plan" (IWCP) as required by, and consistent with, the EWRA's National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan. The IWCP contains much information about wetlands in Indiana, and sets priorities for their identification and conservation. To view or download the IWCP, go to: on.IN.gov/IWCP.

Many of the wetlands conservation efforts in Indiana have begun shifting over to similar programs and staff within the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. Its contact information is:

> IDEM - Watershed Planning Branch
> Wetlands, Lakes, and Streams Regulation
> 100 North Senate Avenue
> MC65-42, WQS IGCN 1255
> Indianapolis, IN 46204
> (317) 233-8488

Hoosier Wetlands Conservation Initiative (HWCI)

The IWCP created the Hoosier Wetlands Conservation Initiative (HWCI) as the action component of the plan. The HWCI uses six tactics for conserving wetlands in Indiana:

1. Implementing the IWCP through local wetland conservation partnerships.
2. Obtaining scientific information about Indiana's wetland resources, with an emphasis on making conservation techniques effective and cost-efficient.
3. Providing positive incentives to motivate conservation and restoration of wetlands.
4. Providing educational opportunities for educational staff, landowners, schoolchildren, and other audiences to enhance community understanding of the functions and benefits of wetlands.
5. Acquisition (from willing owners) for the purpose of permanently protecting the highest priority wetlands.
6. Continuing the work of the IWCP's Wetlands Advisory Group and Technical Advisory Team as cooperative partners, led by the DNR.

IWCP Wetland Conservation Priorities

The IWCP separates the priorities for wetland conservation into two types:

1. Water quality, flood control and groundwater benefits.
2. Biological and ecological functions.

Priorities based on water quality, flood control and groundwater benefits are recommended to be made on the watershed or sub-watershed level. Criteria for identifying priorities based on these three aspects are given in Appendix E of the IWCP, while Appendix F of the IWCP has descriptions of the water management basins and watersheds of Indiana. According to the IWCP, priorities based on biological or ecological functions should be developed from these criteria:

- Rarity of wetland type.
- Presence of endangered, threatened or rare species.
- Presence of endangered, threatened or rare species habitat, but species not yet identified at the site.
- Diversity of native species.
- Proximity of other valued ecosystem types.
- Natural quality (amount/degree of disturbance or degradation).
- "Irreplaceability" (Can the wetland type be re-created?).
- "Recoverability" (Can the wetland type recover from disturbance it has experienced?).
- Size.
- Location.

The IWCP also states that these priorities should be identified based on the natural regions used by the Indiana DNR divisions of Nature Preserves and Fish & Wildlife, and other agencies and organizations. Appendix F of the IWCP identifies natural regions and wetland ecology found in each watershed. Appendix G of the IWCP describes wetland ecological communities. Recreation and historical benefits of wetlands are also mentioned in the IWCP as items to be considered when identifying priorities. Planners trying to create priorities for wetlands conservation in their area are highly encouraged to use the IWCP as a primary guidance document. The entire text of the IWCP is available

for free download at: on.IN.gov/IWCP.

IDEM's most recent wetland-related publication is the "Indiana Wetland Program Plan," published in March of 2015. This non-binding, non-regulatory plan is part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Enhancing State and Tribal Wetland Programs (ESTP) Initiative." This voluntary plan was intended to act as a guide to wetland stakeholders statewide and offers public-input-informed goals to conserve and protect Indiana's remaining wetlands.

U.S. Deptartment of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) and the Wetland Reserve Easements Program (WRE)

One of the largest wetlands conservation efforts in the state is the U.S.D.A. – Natural Resources Conservation Service Indiana Wetlands Reserve Easements Program (WRE). Indiana began participating in the program in 2014, after passage of the 2014 Farm Bill consolidated three former programs (Wetlands Reserve Program, Grasslands Reserve Program and Ranch Lands Reserve Program) into the new Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). The ACEP is a voluntary landowner-participation program that encourages protection, restoration, and enhancement of wetlands on private property.

The Indiana NRCS ACEP 2014 website describes the benefits of the WRE program:

Figure 4.1

NRCS WETLANDS RESERVE EASEMENT SITES
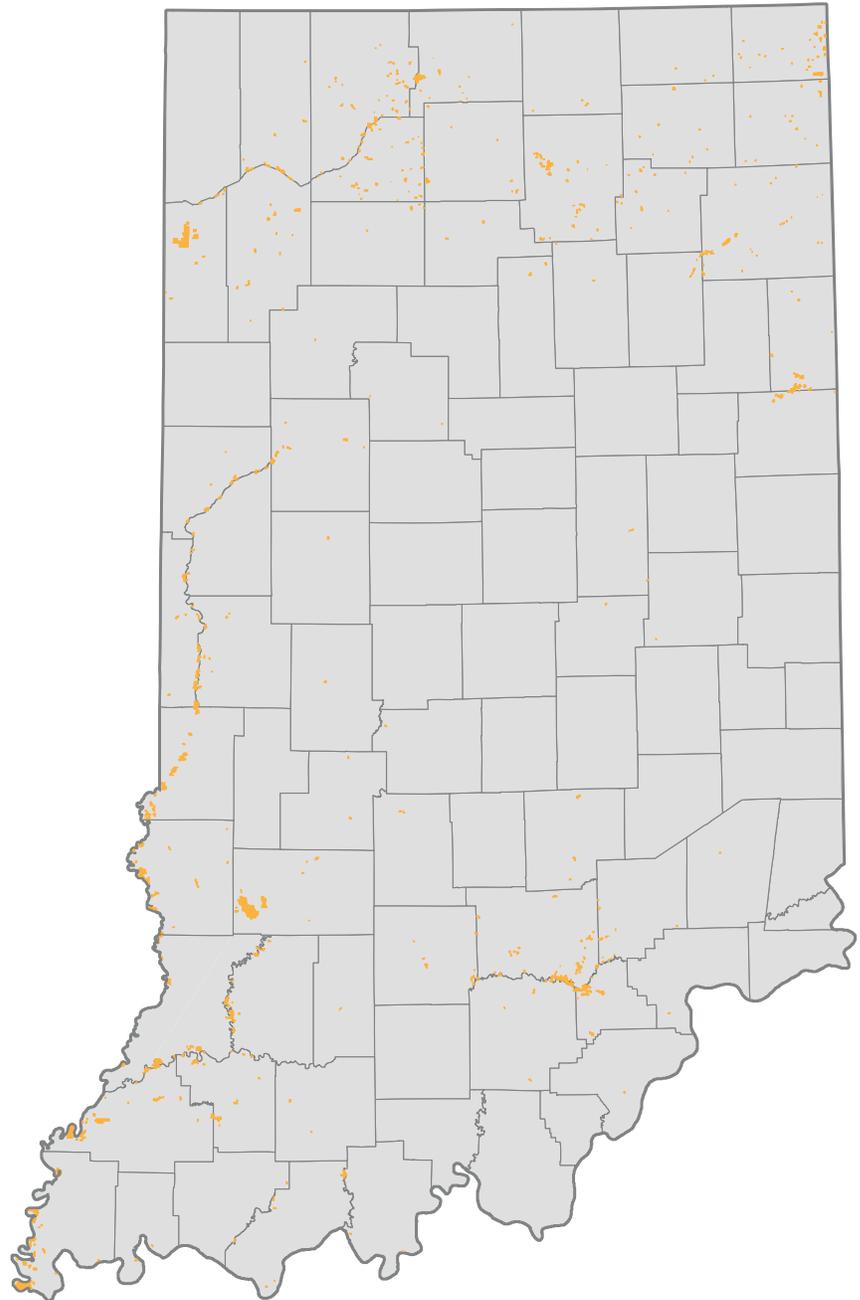
"Wetlands Reserve Easements provide habitat for fish and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species, improve water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater, protect biological diversity and provide opportunities for educational, scientific and limited recreational activities."

Healthy Rivers INitiative

In June 2010, Gov. Mitch Daniels announced the Healthy Rivers INitiative (HRI), the largest land conservation initiative to be undertaken in Indiana. The initiative includes a partnership of resource agencies and organizations who work with willing landowners to permanently protect 43,000 acres located in the floodplain of the Wabash River and Sugar Creek in west-central Indiana, as well as another 26,000 acres of the Muscatatuck River bottomlands in southeast Indiana. Together, HRI has a total land protection goal of 70,000 acres. As of June 2016, HRI had reached the halfway milestone: 35,275 acres permanently protected.

These projects involve protection, restoration and enhancement of riparian and aquatic habitats and the species that use them, particularly threatened or endangered migratory birds and waterfowl. This initiative also benefits the public and surrounding communities by providing flood protection to riparian landowners, increasing public access to recreational opportunities (such as hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, boating, and bird watching), leaving a legacy for future generations and providing a major conservation destination for tourists.

Eight key objectives identified for HRI:
- Design an effective model for sustainability of natural resources.
- Connect fragmented parcels of public land on a broad scale to benefit wildlife diversity.
- Restore and enhance riparian habitat, including wetlands and bottomland hardwood forests.
- Protect essential habitat for threatened and endangered species.

- Open public access for recreati onal opportunities (fishing, hunting, trapping, hiking, canoeing, bird watching and boating).
- Preserve significant rest areas for migratory birds, especially waterfowl.
- Create a regionally significant conservation destination.
- Provide additional flood relief to current riparian landowners.

Recent HRI "Years in Review":
- 2017 – 795 new acres purchased, three new river miles protected, 1,428 new acres opened for public recreation.
- 2018 – 1,193 new acres purchased, 745 acres of wetlands protected through permanent NRCS easements.

More details on the Healthy Rivers INitiative can be found at: healthyrivers.IN.gov.

Benefits of Wetlands to Indiana's Residents (from the IWCP)

For many reasons, it is vitally important for Indiana to conserve and restore wetlands whenever possible. Wetlands offer a significant set of financial, ecological, and recreational benefits to Hoosiers, including:
- Flood control – Wetlands can store large amounts of storm runoff, as seen with the constructed wetlands and settling ponds at Miller-Showers Park in Bloomington.
- Groundwater inlet and outlet – Aquifers can receive and expel water through wetlands as needed, such as the recharge taking place in Celery Bog Park in West Lafayette.
- Improved water quality – Wetlands can act as a biological filter for pollutants such as fertilizers, animal wastes, road runoff, sediments, pesticides and more; water filtered by wetlands costs less to treat and use as drinking water. This filtration process is used to treat acid coal mine drainage at the DNR's Interlake State Recreation Area in Pike and Warrick counties.
- Sewage disposal – Constructed wetlands are being used as highly effective disposal methods for treated sewage from livestock farms and municipal wastewater. Constructed wetlands are being used for treated sewage disposal at The Farm at Prophetstown and Prophetstown State Park in Tippecanoe County.

- Fish and wildlife habitat – Wetlands are one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in Indiana. Many fish and wildlife species depend on wetlands for some or all of their food, shelter and water needs. Many species of plants also require the conditions found in wetlands to survive. Goose Pond Fish & Wildlife Area near Linton is being restored as a diverse wetland by a consortium of partners, including the DNR, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and others. One reason for this project is to re-establish historically diverse plant and animal communities.
- Soil stabilization – Wetlands slow erosion by slowing the movement of water through a watershed and by holding soil down (especially on shorelines) with extensive aquatic root systems. IDEM has approved several projects on private property that use wetlands as part of a larger soil stabilization project.
- Food – Wetlands are an important source of food for both wildlife and humans, providing habitat for edible plants, fish, shellfish, waterfowl, deer and other animals.
- Timber production – If managed carefully, valuable timber and forest products can be harvested from wetlands in a sustainable manner without harming the resource.
- Fun – Wetland areas can be used for many popular forms of outdoor recreation such as canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hiking, nature photography, bird watching, swimming, boating and sightseeing. Pisgah Marsh in Kosciusko County is an example of a multiple-use DNR Fish & Wildlife Area that actively supports many types of outdoor recreation.

INDIANA WETLANDS ACREAGE

As of the creation date of the 2021-2025 SCORP, there still is not a current inventory count of wetlands acres in Indiana. The current best available dataset for Indiana wetlands acres was created in 1991, by R.E. Rolley, as part of the DNR "Indiana's Wetland Inventory" project. According to the 1996 IWCP, the most recent analysis of the acreage of wetlands in Indiana by habitat type was the 1991 Rolley dataset. At the time, Indiana had approximately 813,000 acres of wetlands, divided into seven basic types (see Table 4.1).

For comparison, it has been estimated that in

Table 4.1 **Indiana Wetland Acres (Rolley, R.E., 1991)**

Wetlands Habitats	Acres	% of Total
Scrub-Shrub	42,131	5.2
Forested	504,336	62.0
Wet Meadow	55,071	6.8
Shallow Marsh	67,564	8.3
Deep Marsh	20,730	2.5
Open Water	98,565	12.1
Other	24,633	3.0
Total	**813,032**	**100**

the 1780s, as the first settlers arrived, Indiana had approximately 5.6 million acres of wetlands. This indicates Indiana has lost approximately 85% of its wetlands to agriculture, roads, community development, pollution, vegetation clearing and other land uses. There have been some significant additions to the State's wetlands portfolio since 1991. The 8,064-acre Goose Pond Fish & Wildlife Area and more than ¾ of a mile of fen at Prophetstown State Park in Tippecanoe County are just two examples. If the newly acquired acreage from HRI is added to these examples, along with other new piecemeal wetland acreage statewide, gains in the total wetland inventory in Indiana are likely, but not yet provable with expert-verified data on a statewide basis.

As with many other states, Indiana, in the past, had placed a greater priority on development or conversion of wetlands to other uses. Historically, many farmers saw wet bottomlands on their properties as nuisances to be drained and used for agriculture, not as a natural resource to be conserved or protected. With greater overall understanding of the ecological importance and other benefits of wetlands, as well as recognition of their biodiversity and utility, attitudes toward wetlands have shifted toward conservation, remediation, and enhancement. The IWCP identifies some of the habitat lost or converted, as well as areas that need to be restored. State, federal, private and not-for-profit organizations are working together in many ways to identify, purchase and restore more of the former wetlands to their original glory.

CHAPTER 5
Accessibility and Outdoor Recreation

This chapter addresses some of the common challenges and issues park professionals and other interested persons face when trying to make their programs, services, and activities accessible to people with disabilities. Included is information about the requirements involved, pertinent legislation, guidelines to follow, and potential resources to help succeed in the effort.

ACCESS TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES IN EXISTING FACILITIES

Public entities have an ongoing obligation to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from programs and services because facilities are unusable or inaccessible to them. There is no "grandfather clause" in the ADA that exempts older facilities. However, the law strikes a careful balance between increasing access for people with disabilities and recognizing the constraints many public entities face. It allows entities confronted with limited financial resources to improve accessibility without excessive expense.

In the years since the ADA took effect, public facilities have become increasingly accessible. In the event that changes still need to be made, there is flexibility in deciding how to meet this obligation -- structural changes can be made to provide access, the program or service can be relocated to an accessible facility, or the program or service can be provided in an alternate manner. For example:

- In a two level Nature Center without an elevator, presentations can be moved to a first floor room if the group includes a guest with a mobility disability.
- If an application for a particular program must be made in person at an inaccessible office, the agency could allow a person with a mobility disability to complete and submit the application by mail or email.
- If a property office is inaccessible, staff can provide curb-side service for a patron with a mobility disability to obtain property information.

Structural changes are not required where other solutions are feasible. However, where other solutions are not feasible, structural changes are required. When making structural changes is the method chosen to make a program or service accessible, the changes must meet the requirements of the 2010 ADA Standards—unless it is technically infeasible to do so. When full compliance is not technically feasible, the changes must follow the standards to the maximum extent feasible. For example, if there is not enough space to install a ramp with a slope that complies with the standards, a public entity may install a ramp with a slightly steeper slope. However, deviations from the

standards must not pose a significant safety risk. In addition, public entities are not required to take any action that would threaten or destroy the historic significance of a historic property.

Whatever method is chosen, the public entity must ensure that people with disabilities have access to programs and services under the same terms and conditions as other people. For example:

- If a program is conducted in a conference room by using a PowerPoint presentation on the second floor of a building without an elevator, a public area on the first floor without a screen/projector would not be an acceptable alternate location to present to a client who has a mobility disability. The alternate location must provide access to the same degree of information as the other location.
- If an agency holds a public hearing and a person with a hearing disability provides advance notice that they want to participate, it is not acceptable to conduct the hearing with that person individually with an interpreter, because the group interaction is a critical component of the hearing.

There are limits to a public entity's program access obligations. Entities are not required to take any action that would result in undue financial and administrative burdens. The decision that an action would result in an undue burden must be made by a high-level official of no lower rank than department head, who has budgetary authority and responsibility for making spending decisions, after considering all resources available for use in the funding and operation of the service, program, or activity. Notice of such a decision must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion. If an action would result in an undue burden, a public entity must take any other action that would not result in an undue burden but would nevertheless ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the benefits or services provided by the public entity.

A key concept is that public programs and services, when viewed in their entirety, must be accessible to people with disabilities, but not all facilities must necessarily be made accessible. For example, if a property has multiple shelters and limited resources, it can decide which shelters to make accessible based on factors such as the geographic distribution of the sites, the terrain surrounding the shelter, and the particular programs offered at each shelter so

that the program as a whole is accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.

Another key concept is that public entities have an ongoing obligation to make programs and services accessible to people with disabilities. This means that if many access improvements are needed, and there are insufficient resources to accomplish them in a single year, they can be spread out over time. It also means that rising or falling revenues can affect whether an access improvement can be completed in a given year. What might have been seen as an undue burden during an economic downturn could become possible when the economy improves and revenues increase. Thus, public entities should periodically reassess what steps they can take to make their programs and services accessible. Public entities should also consult with people with disabilities in setting priorities for achieving program access.

Temporary access interruptions for maintenance, repair, or operational activities are permitted, but must be remedied as soon as possible and may not extend beyond a reasonable period of time. Staff must be prepared to assist individuals with disabilities during these interruptions. For example, if the accessible route to an office is temporarily blocked by chairs from a conference room that is being cleaned, staff must be available to move the chairs so a visitor who uses a wheelchair can get to the office. In addition, if an accessible feature such as an elevator breaks down, public entities must ensure that repairs are made promptly and that improper or inadequate maintenance does not cause repeated failures. Entities must also ensure that no new barriers are created that impede access by people with disabilities. For example, routinely storing a garbage bin or piling snow in accessible parking spaces makes them unusable and inaccessible to people with mobility disabilities.

For activities that take place infrequently, such as a fundraising event, temporary measures can be used to achieve access for individuals who have mobility disabilities.

WHO BENEFITS FROM ACCESSIBILITY?

There are few recreational programs that have not felt the challenge of doing more with less. With less financial resources, fewer personnel, and less time, it might be tempting to argue that accessibility costs

too much. But have you thought about the cost of not providing access to "people," as opposed to just "people with disabilities"? If not, you need to.

Accessibility benefits people with disabilities certainly, but many people who end up being helped are not legally disabled. For example, a ramp benefits the following:

• Family with large, heavy gear and folding chairs.
• Mom with a child in a stroller.
• Older person with bad knees.
• Person on crutches coming back from a skiing holiday.
• Park employees taking up equipment from a boat.
• Young artist with heavy paints and easel.
• School group on a field trip (whose participants are less likely to stumble).
• Couple carrying a heavy lunch basket.
• Emergency fire or medical personnel responding with a gurney and equipment.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than one in five Americans, approximately 54 million people, have a disability. In Indiana, there are about 900,000 people 5 years of age and older who reported having a disability. These numbers make people with disabilities the largest minority group in the nation. Many of these people have spouses, children, relatives and friends. They belong to churches, support groups, and social organizations. As more people live longer and naturally encounter disabling conditions and more veterans return home with disabilities, it takes little effort to see that the answer to the question "Who benefits from Accessibility?" is everyone. And these people with disabilities (according to the U.S. Census Bureau) have $220 billion in discretionary spending power. The Open Doors Organization released a 2015 market study that showed that American adults with disabilities now spend $17.3 billion annually on just their own travel. Clearly, providing accessible recreation programs can also improve your bottom line.

Legal Benefits
• Avoid arbitrations/mediations.
• Avoid court cases.

Technical Benefits
• Ramps are easier to manage/clean.
• Accessibility features require little if any extra effort.
• Good for all, not just people with disabilities.
• Improve use.

Economic Benefits
• Increase productivity—spend less time defending against complaints.
• Reduce costs (maintenance/support).
• Decrease injury claims (public and worker).
• Increase profits (greater participation).

P.R. Benefits
• Property seen as inclusive and forward-looking.
• Avoid complaints.
• Avoid bad press.

NOTHING NEW

For more than 47 years, as required by the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, federal government agencies and entities receiving federal funds had to make their facilities and programs accessible to people with disabilities.

In 1990, more than 25 years ago, Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which extended accessibility and non-discrimination requirements in five areas: employment, public services, public accommodations, telecommunications and miscellaneous provisions.

How does this translate to park and recreation providers? State and local governments, including counties, cities, towns and townships, are covered by Title II of the ADA (public services). Likewise, commercial and non-profit park and recreation providers are covered by Title III (public accommodations) because they provide services to the public. These include non-profit groups such as Friends of the Parks and trail groups, YMCAs, and Boys and Girls Clubs, as well as commercial entities that provide canoe rentals, fitness facilities, go-cart racing, amusement parks, ski resorts, rafting, bowling alleys, etc. As a rule of thumb, if you are involved with the public, whether via government or private business, you have had to provide accessible facilities, programs and services for quite a while.

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

If you are asking "What standard do I use?" or "We want to comply, but how?" a good rule is to start with the best, most current information. There are basically two standards, the *2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design* and *Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Standards*. Detailing various laws and how they apply here is unnecessary. For our purposes, following these standards will satisfy all your requirements.

The ADA is a comprehensive civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The ADA requires that newly constructed and altered State and local government facilities, places of public accommodation, and commercial facilities be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. To continue to guide in this process, the *2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design* went into effect on March 15, 2012. The Justice Depart-

ment adopted the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (2010 Standards or Standards) as part of the revised regulations for Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The standards can be found at: www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleII_2010/titleII_2010_regulations.htm.

The standards set minimum requirements—both scoping and technical—for new construction and alterations of the facilities of more than 80,000 State and local governments and more than 7 million businesses. Until the 2012 compliance date, entities could use the revised standards to plan current and future projects so that their buildings and facilities are accessible. After the March 15, 2012 date, ALL entities had to use the 2010 standards.

In addition to the official version of the 2010 standards, the DOJ has also posted on its website important guidance about the standards that is compiled from material in the Title II and Title III regulations. This guidance provides detailed information about the DOJ's adoption of the 2010 standards, including changes to the standards, the reasoning behind those changes, and response to public comments received on these topics.

Achieving accessibility in outdoor environments has long been a source of inquiry due to challenges and constraints posed by terrain, the degree of development, construction practices and materials, and other factors.

Element-by-Element Safe Harbor for Existing Facilities

The requirements in the 2010 ADA Standards are, for many building elements, identical to the 1991 standards and the earlier Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS). For some elements, however, the requirements in the 2010 standards have changed. For example:

- The 1991 standards allowed light switches, thermostats, and other controls to be installed at a maximum height of 54 inches. Under the 2010 standards, the maximum height is 48 inches.
- The 1991 standards required one van-accessible space for every eight accessible spaces. The 2010 standards require one van-accessible space for every six accessible spaces.
- The 2010 standards for assembly areas contain

revised requirements for dispersion of accessible seating, sightlines over standing spectators, and companion seating.

If a facility was in compliance with the 1991 standards or UFAS as of March 15, 2012, a public entity is not required to make changes to meet the 2010 standards. This provision is referred to as the safe harbor. It applies on an element-by-element basis and remains in effect until a public entity decides to alter a facility for reasons other than the ADA. For example, if a public entity decides to restripe its parking lot (which is considered an alteration), it must then meet the ratio of van-accessible spaces in the 2010 standards. The ADA's definition of the term "alteration" is discussed below.

The 2010 standards also contain requirements for recreational facilities that were not addressed in the 1991 standards or UFAS. These include swimming pools, play areas, exercise machines, court sport facilities, and boating and fishing piers. Because there were no previous accessibility standards for these types of facilities, safe harbor does not apply. Instead, the program-access rules apply, and the 2010 standards must be followed when structural change is needed to achieve program access.

New Requirements in the 2010 Standards

Not Subject to Safe Harbor

- Amusement rides.
- Recreational boating facilities.
- Exercise machines and equipment.
- Fishing piers and platforms.
- Golf facilities.
- Miniature golf facilities.
- Play areas.
- Saunas and steam rooms.
- Swimming pools, wading pools, and spas.
- Shooting facilities with firing positions.
- Residential facilities and dwelling units.
- Miscellaneous:
  - o Team or player seating.
  - o Accessible route to bowling lanes.
  - o Accessible route in court sports facilities.

Alterations

When a public entity chooses to alter any of its facilities, the elements and spaces being altered must comply with the 2010 standards. An alteration is defined as remodeling, renovating, rehabilitating, reconstructing, changing or rearranging structural parts or elements, changing or rearranging plan configuration of walls and full-height or other fixed partitions, or making other changes that affect (or could affect) the usability of the facility. Examples include restriping a parking lot; moving walls; moving a fixed ATM to another location; installing a new service counter or display shelves; changing a doorway entrance; or replacing fixtures, flooring or carpeting. Normal maintenance, reroofing, painting, wallpapering, or other changes that do not affect the usability of a facility are not considered alterations. The 2010 standards set minimum accessibility requirements for alterations. In situations where strict compliance with the standards is technically infeasible, the entity must comply to the maximum extent feasible. "Technically infeasible" is defined as something that has little likelihood of being accomplished because existing structural conditions would require removing or altering a load-bearing member that is an essential part of the structural frame, or because other existing physical or site constraints prohibit modifications or additions that comply fully with the standards. The 2010 standards also contain an exemption for certain alterations that would threaten or destroy the historic significance of a historic property.

New Construction

The ADA requires that all new facilities built by public entities must be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. The 2010 standards set out the minimum accessibility requirements for newly constructed facilities.

The U.S. Access Board has issued requirements that are now part of the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Standards and apply to national parks and other outdoor areas developed by the federal government. They do not apply to outdoor areas developed with federal grants or loans. A guide that explains these requirements is available at: www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/outdoor-developed-areas/a-summary-of-accessibility-standards-for-federal-outdoor-developed-areas.

The new provisions address access to:
- Trails.
- Picnic and camping areas.
- Viewing areas.
- Beach access routes. Other components of outdoor developed areas on federal sites when newly built or altered.

They also provide exceptions for situations in which terrain and other factors make compliance impracticable. The new requirements are located in sections F201.4, F216.3, F244 to F248, and 1011 to 1019 of the ABA standards.

The U. S. Access Board intends to develop guidelines for non-federal outdoor sites covered by the ADA and areas developed with federal grants and loans covered by the ADA through subsequent rulemaking.

Although accessibility specifications for these recreational facilities are not yet adopted by standard-setting agencies, they are considered "best available information" and should be used when constructing new or altering existing facilities.

Remember, there is no grandfather clause written into accessibility legislation or standards.

It is a common misconception of facility managers and building owners that facilities built before accessibility standards existed do not need accessibility modifications. As is noted in the next section, this is not the case. According to accessibility standards, altering a facility triggers using the accessibility standards. Furthermore, each State and local government entity is required by Title II to conduct a self-evaluation of the accessibility of programs and facilities, and create a corresponding transition plan to correct identified accessibility deficiencies. Because many facilities built before accessibility standards are mostly inaccessible, the transition plan will include ways to remove barriers from these facilities.

PROGRAM ACCESS

Program accessibility was first legislated in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which states that "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 7(20), shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by

any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service." This important principle was also written into the ADA legislation: "A public entity may not deny the benefits of its programs, activities, and services to individuals with disabilities because its facilities are inaccessible.

A public entity's services, programs, or activities, when viewed in their entirety, must be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. This standard, known as program accessibility, applies to all existing facilities of a public entity. Public entities, however, are not necessarily required to make each of their existing facilities accessible." (US DOJ, ADA Title II; 1990)

In essence, program accessibility applies to almost anything. Although you may not be constructing new or altered facilities, program access may or may not require you to make physical changes to your facilities. Program access may also require modifications to your policies, practices and/or procedures. Consider the following scenarios:

- The park department main office is located in an inaccessible building built in the 1950s. The park department retrofits the building so that the parking, route to building, public offices, and support facilities such as public restrooms are accessible to the public.
- Signs interpreting the natural and cultural history of the area are provided on a trail. Audio tours may be used to effectively communicate to a person with low or no vision the information contained in the interpretive displays.
- Park board meetings usually are held in an inaccessible historic building. The new park board members decide to officially move the meeting location to an accessible location that allows all interested public, regardless of ability, to attend without prior notification.
- The park department offers movie nights each Friday in September. Staff ensures captions are turned on during each movie to ensure people who are hard of hearing or deaf can also enjoy the show.

MEASURE, MARK AND MEASURE AGAIN

You have probably heard this rule of thumb before. It refers to making sure the cut is made correctly the first time. But it can extend to the philosophy of doing things correctly and planning for inclusion. Throughout the process, you will be in the best shape if you design for more than the minimum. For example, the range for the height of grab bars in a restroom is 33-36 inches from the floor to the top of the gripping surface. Shooting for 34 or so will give you plenty of wiggle room. It will not cost more, but even if a contractor makes a small adjustment, you'll still be safe.

In addition, you should understand that the ADA standards were developed by a number of individuals with a variety of interests and perspectives. Building to the standards will not accommodate all people with disabilities, just many of them. Exceeding the standards, where possible, will provide increased accessibility and opportunities for even greater numbers of people. For example, incorporating universal design concepts will provide greater access for those in your community with more severe disabilities.

The term "universal design" was coined by the architect Ronald L. Mace to describe the concept of designing all products and the built environment to be aesthetic and usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life. In most instances, the increased cost is negligible while the benefits are significant.

Some examples might be:
- Smooth, ground level, entrances without stairs.
- Surface textures that require less force to travel across.
- Wide interior doors, hallways, and alcoves with 60" x 60" turning space.
- Single-hand operation with closed fist for operable components like door and faucet handles.
- Light switches with large flat panels rather than small toggle switches.
- Buttons and other controls that can be distinguished by touch.
- Bright and appropriate lighting, particularly task lighting.
- Instruction that presents material both orally and visually.

Consider your own preferences and desires. For example, would you be more inclined to take your family to a well-kept, clean park or, when seeing trash or unmowed areas, just move on? The answer is obvious. The same idea holds for exceeding requirements. Clearly, an area that the community can be proud of will be less likely to be defaced or vandalized. Having a model will draw in people and support from a wider area, which is a major reason for our work in outdoor recreation.

A WORD ABOUT PRODUCTS, DESIGNERS AND CONSULTANTS

At one time or another (perhaps daily) most park and recreation professionals are responsible for choosing products for use in park and recreation facilities. Whether new additions or replacements, there are many products for which the professional must know how to determine accessibility.

Picnic tables, benches, play structures and surfacing, sinks, lockers, and drinking fountains are among the many products that need to be accessible. It is important for the buyer to investigate potential products and not rely solely on a vendor's claim of accessibility or "ADA Approved."

For more guidance on this topic, refer to "ADA Approved and Other Accessible Product Myths: Choosing Products to Improve Access at Your Parks & Facilities," which is available at ncaonline.org/resources/index.shtml.

In addition to purchasing products, recreation practitioners also work with designers and consultants during capital improvement projects. Before hiring a specific company, recreation practitioners should ask how much accessibility experience that company's staff has. While many architects, landscape architects and engineers are aware of accessibility, it is often not their main focus when designing and constructing a new facility or during rehabilitation projects. Before hiring a designer or consultant, requests for qualifications (RFQ) may be posted. If RFQs are used, be sure to ask for information regarding accessibility compliance.

After hiring a company, be sure to have a knowledgeable person on park staff review plans for accessibility as well as other concerns before bidding. Work with the person (consultant or in-house) preparing the bid document to include language regarding the liability of the contractor as it relates to accessibility. Include people with disabilities in the process.

Asking for this input/perspective not only provides an informed second opinion, but also helps spread the word about your program.

WRAP-UP AND RESOURCES

Our intent is to provide the tools necessary to ensure that whatever program you develop will be the best it can be for all. No one, including people with disabilities, wants to be unnecessarily singled out or treated differently. We all want to enjoy our natural resources in as natural an environment as possible, but we also want to make sure we do not create barriers to accessibility that could be avoided. Please contact the following resources for free and anonymous accessibility information and/or technical assistance.

U.S. Department of Justice:

Find out more about the ADA or the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design using the toll free ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301 (Voice) or 800-514-0383 (TTY), or go to ada.gov.

The U.S. Access Board:

The Access Board is an independent federal agency devoted to accessibility for people with disabilities. Created in 1973 to ensure access to federally funded facilities, the board is now a leading source of information on accessible design. The board develops and maintains design criteria for the built environment, transit vehicles, and telecommunications equipment, as well as for electronic and information technology. It also provides technical assistance and training on these requirements and on accessible design and continues to enforce accessibility standards that cover federally funded facilities.

> United States Access Board
> 1331 F Street, NW, Suite 1000
> Washington, DC 20004-1111
>
> Phone (voice): 202-272-0080
> Toll free: 800-872-2253
> Phone (TTY): 202-272-0082
> Toll free: 800-993-2822
> Fax: 202-272-0081
>
> access-board.gov
> info@access-board.gov

Great Lakes ADA Center:

The DBTAC-Great Lakes ADA Center provides information, materials, technical assistance and training on the ADA. Topics addressed include the nondiscrimination requirements in employment, the obligations of State and local governments and business to ensure programs, services and activities are readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. This includes access to the information technology used by these entities including but not limited to websites, software, kiosks, etc.

> Great Lakes ADA Center
> University of Illinois at Chicago
> Institute on Disability and Human Development
>   (MC 728)
> 1640 W. Roosevelt Road, Room 405
> Chicago, IL 60608
>
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National Center on Accessibility:

The National Center on Accessibility is a nonprofit center operating under Indiana University in
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> Indiana University Research Park
> 501 N. Morton Street, Suite 109
> Bloomington, IN 47404
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CHAPTER 6
Indiana Trails Plan

This chapter of the SCORP serves as an update to the *2016 Indiana Trails Plan*. Dedicated statewide trail planning began in the late 1990s with Indiana Trails 2000, followed by the 2006—2016 *Hoosiers on the Move: The Indiana State Trails, Greenways, and Bikeways Plan*.

The 2006 plan was extremely comprehensive and featured data from the Trails Inventory, a database of all trails in Indiana maintained by the DNR that had been recently updated to include many more data points, including GPS-based trail data. This advancement allowed for the DNR to identify and show progress on key long-term, statewide trail goals outlined in Hoosiers on the Move, including the original goal of having every Hoosier within 7.5 miles of trail. Hoosiers on the Move also established the Visionary Trail System, an interconnected arterial of existing trails and planned potential trail corridors based on input from trail stakeholders.

After a brief progress report to Hoosiers on the Move in the 2011-2015 SCORP, the DNR engaged the public and stakeholders in 2014 for a refreshed *2016 Indiana Trails Plan*. This plan better captured these more recent perceptions of trails and illustrated how Indiana's trail system continued to grow and make progress on many of the original 2006 goals.

The *2016 Indiana Trails Plan* then officially updated the main goal to be having a trail within 5 miles of every Hoosier, which was set by then-Gov. Mike Pence after the original 7.5-mile goal was virtually met in 2014. Additionally, the *2016 Indiana Trails Plan* also re-visited the Visionary Trail System. Largely based on feedback from trail stakeholders at the 2014 Trails Charrette, the Visionary Trail System was updated to include 1,070 miles of Visionary Trails and 1,144 miles of Potential Visionary Trails, an increase from 986 miles and 677 miles, respectively.

A new Indiana Trails Plan is expected to be completed in 2026 (in conjunction with that edition of the SCORP). Like the 2016 plan, that Trails Plan will more fully engage the public as well as vital trail stakeholders in its development. Even so, due to increasing interest in and development of trails around Indiana, an update to the *2016 Indiana Trails Plan*, even with limited public engagement, is warranted.

The main reason, in particular, is the Next Level Trails program (NLT), which was announced by Gov. Eric Holcomb in late 2018, infused $90 million into the state trail system by providing funding to local and regional projects around the state. By awarding the largest investment of state funding in Indiana history in 2019 and 2020, NLT will have an immediate and momentous impact on Indiana's trail network.

In addition to NLT, this chapter will also cover

and begin to explore the impact of new trends, issues, and successes relating to trails in Indiana that have occurred since 2016. It will also provide a progress report on the *2016 Indiana Trails Plan* goal and strategies, as there has been dramatic advancement in many in just a few short years. Finally, this chapter will take a critical look at these objectives by analyzing the current trail context to begin to tailor appropriate trail priorities for the future.

NEW TRAIL-RELATED LEGISLATION

Several new laws were passed in Indiana over the past few years that impact the landscape for recreational trail use. They include:

Indiana Bicycle Trails Task Force

Indiana Code 8-4.5-7 took effect on July 1, 2017 and established the Gov. Holcomb-appointed Indiana Bicycle Trails Task Force with the primary goal of developing actionable concepts to connect existing bicycle trails throughout Indiana. In order to create a larger, more comprehensive and connected state trail network, the task force was asked to study the feasibility of these concepts by estimating costs, presenting at least six innovative funding sources, and preparing a timeline for completion of these connections.

Additionally, the task force was charged with recommending changes to Indiana law to increase bicycle safety on trails and roadways. The task force had its final meeting on June 19, 2019, and presented its findings in a final report by the July 1, 2019 deadline.

Youth ORV Helmet

On July 1, 2017 a new law changed the language in IC 9-18.1-14-11 and IC 14-16-1-33 to require all children younger than age 18, as an operator or passenger, to wear a helmet on or in any Off-Road Vehicle (ORV). This applies to all ORVs, including but not limited to ATVs, UTVs (side-by-side vehicles), and dirt bikes. The law, which applies to both public and private property, aims to reduce the number of serious and fatal youth ORV accidents.

Trail Access Liability

Effective as of July 1, 2018, Indiana Code 14-22-10-2 limits landowner liability for an injury to a person or property caused by an act or failure to act of another person using the landowner's property for recreational purposes. This does not apply only to owners with trail access points near their property, but for all landowners adjacent to trails, parks, and greenways. This new law is similar to existing legislation that prevents landowners from being liable for injuries sustained by persons on their property while hunting and fishing.

E-Bikes

Starting July 1, 2019 E-Bikes are being regulated the same as bicycles. This new law — referred to in IC 9-13-2-25.8, IC 9-13-2-26.6, 26.7, 26.8, IC 9-13-2-49.2, and IC 9-21-11-13.1 — establishes that E-bikes are designated into three classes based on their maximum speed and components. All classes of e-bikes must follow the same rules and be given the same responsibilities as any other bicycle on a road. However, only class 1 and class 2 e-bikes are allowed on multi-use, hard surface trails or paths unless a broader or stricter policy is specified by the local authority. Conversely, all classes of e-mtb (e-mountain bikes) are prohibited on any natural surface trails unless that trail is open to motorized trail use or specifically allowed by the local trail manager.

Safe Passing Law

As of July 1, 2019, new rules for vehicles overtaking a bicycle took effect in IC 9-21-8-5. A motorist must provide 3 feet of clearance at minimum when overtaking a bicycle until the vehicle is safely clear of the bicycle. Crossing the non-passing double marked lines in the center of the street is allowed to safely overtake a bicycle. Failure to comply can result in a traffic citation and fine. Several communities throughout Indiana have had this law in place locally for years, but this law extends this requirement statewide.

NEW TRAILS DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES

Since the *2016 Indiana Trails Plan*, several new documents relating to trails in Indiana have been released. Although the purposes of these documents vary, all touch on trails in some capacity and can be a resource for those involved in trail development, management, and promotion.

Moving Toward an Active Indiana: Walking and Bicycling in the Hoosier State

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) continues to support the development of active transportation opportunities throughout the state, with a particular focus on infrastructure and programs supporting bicycle and pedestrian transportation. In 2018, INDOT stepped up its commitment by starting *Moving Toward an Active Indiana: Walking and Bicycling in the Hoosier State*, the state's first active transportation plan.

INDOT, with the assistance of its steering committee, engaged with several stakeholders by conducting its Active Transportation Survey and stakeholder interviews to form the basis of its plan. These efforts help assess the overall public understanding of existing active transportation infrastructure in Indiana as well as the demand for additional and improved infrastructure, such as multi-use trails. By creating a statewide inventory of pedestrian, bicycle, and trail infrastructure and analyzing the collected data, *Moving Toward an Active Indiana* develops several key recommendations and strategies that will help bridge the gaps for those walking and biking as transportation.

One of the greatest deliverables of the plan, as it relates to trails, is the trails cost calculator that could help trail developers and stakeholder better envision the cost of a potential project.

Information about *Moving Towards an Active Indiana* can be found at: www.IN.gov/indot/3963.htm.

Bicycle Trails Task Force Final Report

Instead of prioritizing specific trail connections, the task force decided that local communities should lead the charge. The task force felt that the State Visionary Trail System, last updated in the 2016 State Trail Plan, provided an excellent starting spot. Opting to build on this, the task force proposed adding an additional category, Proposed Visionary Trails, in the next iteration of the State Visionary Trail System. The three categories would be:

- **Priority Visionary Trails:** Completed or well-planned and near completion.
- **Potential Visionary Trails:** Have a lesser degree of planning and support, and are likely to become Priority trails in time.
- **Proposed Visionary Trails:** Corridors that close gaps and connect major destinations, but have little to no planning.

The task force concluded that in order to assist and encourage these communities, state funding should prioritize trails that connect visionary trails, multiple communities or counties, recreational or cultural destinations, and direct, well-established routes, such as railroad or riparian corridors. The Final Report included seven recommended funding sources for these new trail connections. Those included:

1. Increase tipping (waste management) fees.
2. Encourage use of public-private partnerships.
3. Waste tire fee reallocation.
4. Dedicate a percentage of sales tax on sporting goods.
5. Reallocate some of the state gas tax.
6. Appropriate general funds.
7. Create a real estate transfer tax.

The final report estimated that the average trail creation cost was $600,000 per mile. With only 45.6% of the Visionary System and 15.2% of the Potential Visionary System complete, the task force recommends finding an additional $15 million in new dedicated trail funding sources annually to make signifi-

cantly more progress in the next 10 years. This would be in addition to the one-time $90 million NLT program, which is already boosting trail development.

Finally, the task force recommended the adoption of three statewide laws/policies to help protect cyclists and make Indiana a more bike-friendly state:

- Statewide Safe Passing Law (3 feet)
- Statewide Complete Streets Policy
- Clarify e-bike laws in State Statute

It should be noted that both the safe passing and e-bike laws were passed and signed as part of House Bill 1236 in May of 2019, just before the Final Report. Although the task force will no longer exist going forward, it leaves behind a number of recommendations in terms of tasks that still need to be completed:

- Create an Indiana bicycle trail brand for marketing.
- Promote and monitor the brand.
- Seek funding for the system.
- Monitor and promote progress toward the system.
- Have the State serve as a central service point for communities seeking trail assistance.
- Assist in the passage of laws and creation of programs that make Indiana safer and more bicycle friendly.

The Bicycle Trails Task Force Final Report is available at: www.visitindianatourism.com/sites/default/files/documents/BikeTrailsFinalReport-compressed.pdf.

2017 Indiana Trails Study

In 2017, at the behest of the Greenways Foundation, Indiana University's Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands completed and published a study measuring health, economic, and community impacts of trails in Indiana.

Information and data were gathered by conducting surveys of trail users, non-trails users (control group), and adjacent property owners to trails, as well as trail counts. Eight trails throughout the state were studied. By gathering these data, the Eppley Institute was able to both reinforce and update its findings from a similar survey in 2001. Once again, research showed benefits to trail users, as well as property owners adjacent to trails. Additionally, the new trail counts showed that the number of trail users continues to grow.

The study can be found at: www.eppley.org/

wp-content/uploads/2018/06/TrailsStudy_SummaryReport.pdf.

Trail Guidelines

Complying with Public Law 67, which was enacted in 2016, the Department of Natural Resources developed Trail Guidelines to address the 10 issues outlined in the law. They include:

1. Clear statement of ownership and management of each trail.
2. Right-of-way inconsistencies.
3. Who is responsible for maintenance of fences, drainage, and maintenance of drainage or drain tiles.
4. Tree, weed and brush removal between responsible parties and landowners adjacent to recreational trails.
5. Mowing responsibility.
6. Law enforcement jurisdiction.
7. Signage.
8. Conflict resolution procedures.
9. Appeal procedures.
10. Use by public utility facilities.

The DNR developed these guidelines based on two public surveys in 2016. The first set went out to trail owners or managers, while the second sought consensus of the draft guidelines from a larger trail stakeholder group. The guidelines not only comply with Public Law 67, but also can be seen as a recommendations for both trail managers and adjacent property owners to approach Action 1, Strategy 1 of *Hoosiers on the Move*, which is to "Encourage interested and affected representatives, including urban and rural landowners, not-for-profits, the agriculture community, businesses, public transit and governmental entities to get involved in all phases of developing new trails."

The Trail Guidelines can be found at: www.in.gov/dnr/outdoor/4126.htm.

TRAIL FUNDING

As trails become an amenity in higher demand by residents, many communities are prioritizing these projects and pursuing them with their own funds. More and more trail projects, many part of complete streets projects, larger parks plans, or quality of life initiatives, have been fully funded at the local level between public and private sources. However, many communities

as well as non-profit and other agencies struggle with limited budgets, making trail projects hard to fund. Trail developers and managers across Indiana continue to search for ways to supplement their limited budgets and staffing to build, operate, and maintain trails.

Indiana continues to use its traditional federal sources, such as the Recreational Trail Program (RTP) and Transportation Alternatives (TA), as the primary ways to fund trail projects outside of local budgets. Additionally, several other federal sources, such as Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD, formerly TIGER) have been used or pursued for trail projects as well.

Several trail projects received a temporary bump in funds for land acquisition through the Bicentennial Nature Trust, while others have been able to use the President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust (formerly Indiana Heritage Trust) to purchase land for public trail use. Additionally, a handful of trail projects have been able to take advantage of the state-funded and DNR-administered Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund.

Those seeking to develop trails in Indiana have also gotten creative in looking for funding sources and have taken advantage of several new state-funded grants that are not necessarily focused on trails, but can be used for them and other outdoor recreation projects. These include Indiana Office of Tourism Development's Destination Development grant, Indiana Housing and Community Development's Authority's CreatINg Places grant, and the Office of Community and Rural Affairs' Quick Impact Place-Based grant. Additionally, many communities have used Indiana State Department of Health's Bicycling and Pedestrian Planning Grants to assist them in creating local bike/ped plans, which often lay the groundwork for future trail projects.

Furthermore, Indiana Economic Development Corporation's Regional Cities Initiative awarded north-central, northeast, and southwest Indiana $42 million each to assist with regional development plans in late 2015. All nine applicants to the program included a trail component in their regional plans, and the three awardees have been using some of their funds to develop trails in their respective region.

Next Level Trails

Finally, the most impactful new source of trail development funding since the 2016 State Trail Plan was published is NLT. The program will invest $90 million—the largest infusion of state trail funding in Indiana history—toward the development of regionally and locally significant trails throughout Indiana.

Part of Gov. Holcomb's broader $1 billion Next Level Connections infrastructure program, NLT was designed to incentivize collaborative efforts to accelerate trail connections. A total of $70 million of the available NLT monies will fund regional projects, which tend to focus on more trail connections between communities and major long-distance trails, while $20 million will go toward local projects that typically connect key amenities and attractions within their communities. The program is administered by the DNR in conjunction with INDOT.

NLT funds will be awarded in three rounds, with one in 2019 and two in 2020. With a $5 million cap for regional projects and $2 million for local projects, awardees can finally develop their entire project or larger sections of it all at once, as compared to using other programs with smaller limits that realize shorter sections of trail at a time.

Additionally, with up-front funding and an incentive for projects on an accelerated timeline, or faster than four years, NLT will help drastically increase Indiana's trail network in a short amount of time. NLT gives preference to regional projects that will help complete the Visionary Trail System, so major progress is anticipated by 2026 and the next Indiana Trails Plan.

The NLT program requires a 20% minimum grant match, but was designed to be as flexible as possible by allowing monetary contributions, land value, and in-kind donations of labor and materials. The program also encourages applicants to exceed the minimum match requirement (if possible) and reach out to public and private partners in their community for contributions. This allows for the $90 million state investment to stretch to more Indiana communities and leverage additional public and private funds for larger total investment in trails. In reality, the NLT program will most likely greatly exceed $112.5 million, which is the amount of state funds available plus the minimum 20% match, total value in trail development by 2024. These figures make NLT an unprecedented investment for trails in Indiana.

THE VISIONARY TRAIL SYSTEM

The Visionary Trail System is a collection of existing and proposed trail corridors that provide a backbone for connected trails throughout Indiana. All trail corridors within the system must cross county lines and/or connect two Visionary Trails. For Visionary Trails yet to be planned, the corridor is intended to be broad rather than a specific route.

There are two types of trails in the Visionary Trail System: Visionary and Potential Visionary. Both are made up of existing trails, trails under development, and proposed trails that are planned and actively supported. The level of planning and active support may vary widely from formal to exploratory planning, and can vary from small, grass roots non-profits, to regionally led trail initiatives. The difference is that Visionary Trails tend to have a higher degree of certainty of actually being completed than Potential Visionary. Potential Visionary Trails tend to have less of a degree of public planning and/or support, but show some promise of completion. It is possible for Potential Visionary Trails to make significant progress in trail development, planning, and support, to rise to Visionary Trail status. In addition to trails changing status, it is also possible for new trails to be added and removed from the Visionary Trail System as opportunities and priorities change.

The Visionary Trail System is based on input from trail stakeholders on where they have and want trails, as well as what trail projects they are currently supporting. The DNR does not create the Visionary Trail System Map, but curates it. The DNR does so by collecting this information from the stakeholders, selecting the trails that meet the above-mentioned criteria, and presenting the information as a statewide map. Currently, the State Visionary System is re-visited every 10 years with a large public engagement from across the state. However, as Indiana's trail system continues to rapidly develop and new opportunities arise, it may be worth revising sooner than every 10 years.

The Indiana Visionary Trails System is not a construction plan or a system that the State is unilaterally building. Instead it is a tool to help encourage Indiana's trail providers and developers, which most often are units of local governments and non-profits, to work together to complete and connect these corridors. The Visionary Trail System is the State's attempt to provide guidance, encourage interjurisdictional coordination, and in some cases, funding, to see those local efforts to fruition.

Figure 6.1
2016 INDIANA VISIONARY TRAILS SYSTEM

Visionary Trails
Potential Visionary Trails
American Discovery Trail
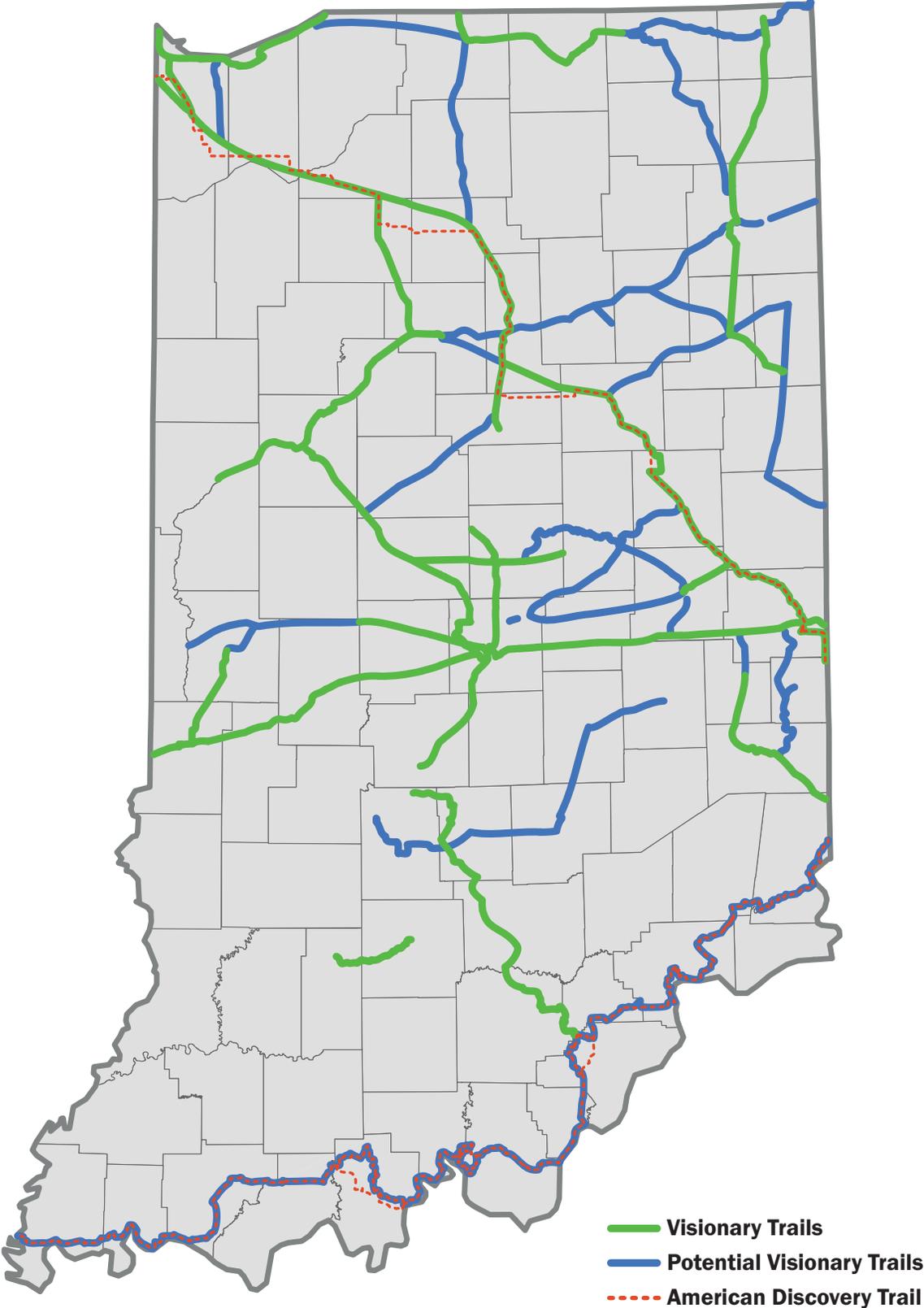
NEW TRAIL & POTENTIAL TRAIL CORRIDORS

Several new potential long-distance trail corridors have been identified in Indiana over the past few years. Although these corridors differ in stages of planning and development, all are cross-county and have the potential to be included in the Visionary Trail System in 2026. They include:

Hawpatch

In 2019, LaGrange County Trails, a non-profit trail group, outlined its intent to develop a 17-mile multi-use trail. The Hawpatch, as the non-profit refers to it, would follow the discontinued Wabash Railroad from Millersburg through Topeka to Wolcottville. The proposed trail would connect Elkhart, LaGrange, and Noble counties. Although the project is still in the early planning stages, stakeholders hope that it will eventually provide the communities, many with large Amish populations, with much-needed safe bicycle infrastructure for commuters as well as a recreational and tourist amenity.

Monon South

CSX filed to abandon a 62-mile stretch of railroad from New Albany to just north of Mitchell in December 2017. Two entities have filed to railbank the corridor for trail use and have been approved by the Surface Transportation Board to negotiate with CSX. The corridor does not have an official name yet, but is sometimes referred to as Monon South because it is part of the historic Monon rail line that ran across Indiana from Louisville, through Indianapolis, to Chicago.

Although it has not been railbanked at the time of publication, the length and location of this potential trail provides a unique opportunity. At 62 miles through five southern Indiana counties, this corridor would be Indiana's longest contiguous rail-banked corridor if successfully secured. Additionally, if developed, it would finally provide access to a long-distance bicycle and pedestrian trail to residents in this area of the state as well as provide an opportunity for significant tourism and economic development in the communities connected by a potential trail.

Nickel Plate (Marion and Hamilton Counties)

In February 2017, Fishers, Noblesville, and Hamilton counties announced plans to turn their section of the former Nickel Plate railroad into a trail. Although named for the same historic railroad, this new potential trail would not connect to the existing Nickel Plate Trails located from Kokomo to Rochester or in Connersville. Fishers began the process of initial design and planning in 2018, releasing its final master plan in May 2019. Indianapolis has also joined the Hamilton County communities in exploring the concept of developing the corridor into a multi-use trail. As of July 2019, the communities are in the initial phase of removing the tracks, and Fishers plans to break ground on its first phase of the trail shortly thereafter.

If and when fully constructed, the Nickel Plate Trail would span more than 16 miles and connect Indianapolis, Fishers, and Noblesville. The corridor would navigate through major commercial centers, as well as residential neighborhoods, parks, and regional attractions. It would also expand the region's trail network by connecting to other trails such as the Midland Trace and the Fall Creek Trail. In addition to opportunities for recreation, wellness, and alternative transportation, the communities hope the trail can provide a significant increase to quality of life for residents and attract future development.

Great American Rail-Trail

In 2016, Rail-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) embarked on an 18-month route assessment to study the feasibility of the Great American Rail-Trail (GART), the idea for a national multi-use trail. The goal of the trail was to connect the country and provide an All-American, personal way for residents and tourists to experience the U.S. The trail would also deliver a multiplier effect by which it would benefit all trails users visiting the trail, whether single day or a through trip, as well as the communities that it connects.

In order to develop the trail route, RTC coordinated with state trail officials, including the transportation and resource agencies, in every state to identify the optimal route. In May 2019, the RTC formally announced the GART and unveiled the preferred route.

The GART route spans more than 3,700 miles from Washington, D.C. to Washington State. It will traverse 12 states, including Indiana. Currently, the route takes advantage of 125 existing trails for more than 1,900 miles that are open to explore immediately. This includes several marquee long-distance trails such as the Great Alleghany Passage (Pennsylvania),

Ohio to Erie Trail (Ohio), and Cowboy Trail (Nebraska). Although interested trail users can already start to experience the GART, several major and minor gaps in the route need to be tackled in order to get the trail from its current 52% complete to 100%.

In Indiana specifically, the GART route largely mirrors that of the American Discovery Trail North, another national trail. At nearly 225 miles, the GART will enter Indiana near Richmond and run northwest to Munster before exiting to Illinois. The GART will be composed of several existing Indiana trails, including the Cardinal Greenway, named as Indiana's "Gateway Trail," as well as the Nickel Plate Trail (Peru), Erie Trail, and Pennsy Greenway, among others.

As of May 2019, the GART was nearly 50% complete in Indiana with more than 109 miles of trail open and another 115 miles to be developed. Although this is a lot of existing trail to explore, Indiana still lags behind several states in percentage of trail complete. Along Indiana's route, RTC identified 11 critical gaps as well as several areas that have been planned that need to be developed in order for the GART to be complete in Indiana.

Finishing the trail across Indiana will ultimately fall to local trail organizations or agencies to pursue if interested; however, both RTC and the State of Indiana will support them with technical assistance and resources when available, to help make sure this vision becomes reality.

Figure 6.2

NEW & POTENTIAL TRAIL CORRIDORS

Legend:
- Nickel Plate Trail
- Monon South
- Hawpatch Trail
- Great American Rail-Trail
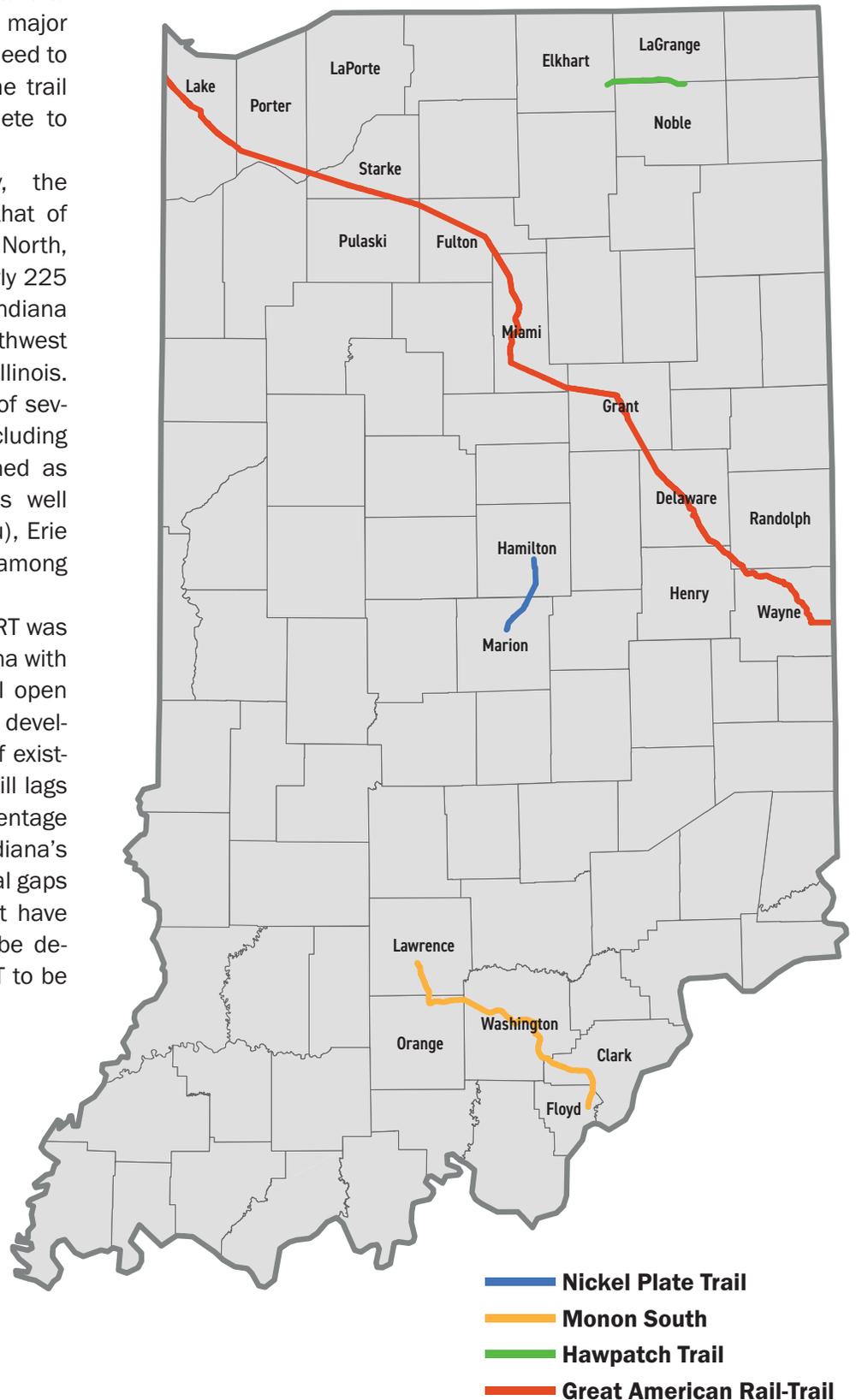
TRAIL TRENDS

The way in which trails are used and how trail users access information about trails has changed significantly in the last couple of years due to technology and other trends. Similarly, the way trails are developed, managed, maintained, and promoted also continues to evolve. Below are some of the newest trends we are seeing in Indiana related to trails:

- Trail running, or running on natural surface trails, continues to grow in popularity while other pedestrian based activities hold steady. This can be gleaned from an uptick in specific trail running events with a growing number of competitive participant classes, held in Indiana over the last few years.

- More backpackers and bikepackers are opting to use hammocks for camping rather than traditional tents, as this is lighter and takes up less space. As a result, those using hammocks prioritize camping spots along the trail that have trees close enough together to set up rather than treeless, open areas. Done improperly, hammock camping can damage trees, and this accordingly affects management of the resource.

- Mountain biking continues to grow in popularity and appears to be increasingly diverse. This can be gathered by Indiana now having a National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) league, an organization for youth mountain bike development and competition that has participation from around the state, as well as from an increase in mountain bike skills clinics and sessions, including many targeted specifically to Indiana's women and urban youth.

- New mountain bike trails being developed tend to be purpose-built trails, meaning designed specifically with mountain bikers and their experience in mind. In particular, "flow trails" that often have berms, rollers, tabletops, jumps, and other features are growing in popularity. These new types of trails have been developed in nearly every corner of the state in the past few years, including the regionally renowned Hobbs Hollow Flow Trail in Brown County State Park.

- Bike parks and progressive trails provide opportunities for off-road bicyclists to improve their technical skills. A safe spot to develop these skills and progress is critical to developing new trail users, such as those in the new National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) league. Several of these have been developed in Indiana over the past few years, including Griffin Bike Park in 2016, Indiana's first mountain bike park.

- Many more off-road trail users are opting for side-by-sides; sometimes called UTVs. The ability to fit two or even four people along with their comfort, versatility, capable handling, and speed, as compared to ATVs and traditional four-wheel-drive vehicles, has skyrocketed their share of the ORV market. Although Indiana does not track specific types of ORVs, their increase in popularity can easily be witnessed on ORV trails throughout the state. Wells Fargo Securities Research estimates over 483,474 UTVs were sold worldwide in 2017.

- Bikeshares (or bikeshare programs), which provides residents and visitors an easy and affordable opportunity to rent a bike, is now a staple on many Indiana trails. Indiana's first dock-style bikeshare appeared in 2014 on the Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy of Eugene and Marilyn Glick, and quickly spread to communities varying in sizes and settings, including college campuses. Bikeshare has evolved to quickly offer a dockless system, as introduced in South Bend in 2017, and be more inclusive with options such as children's and tagalong bikes, as seen in Kokomo's 2019 launch of its bikeshare. Although not every bikeshare program launched in Indiana has been successful, many have, and generally their key to success is a location near safe bike infrastructure, such as trails.

- The styles of bicycling have evolved in the past few years beyond more traditional road, recreation, and mountain biking. Newer cycling trends include gravel road riding, cyclo-cross racing, and bikepacking on all types of surfaces, as well as fat tire biking, especially in the winter. These new bicycle-use styles change not only the way bikes look, as many feature unique components that provide advantages for each style of riding, but also when and where cyclists use trails, roads, and public lands.

- E-bikes continue to grow in popularity in Indiana, and can be seen on both roads and trails. Marketed as an alternative to a traditional bicycle,

especially for individuals with limited physical fitness, advanced age, or disability challenges, e-bikes are sold by several Indiana bike shops, and a handful even specialize in them. E-bikes have become mainstream enough to regulate them, especially their use on trails, through laws and policies on federal, state, and local levels.

- E-scooters were first introduced in Indiana in Indianapolis in 2018 and quickly spread to several other cities. The e-scooters' dockless design and affordable price provide an efficient alternative to biking and walking, and direct competition to many existing bikeshare systems. With battery-powered, motorized speeds up to 15 mph, a dockless design, and the ability to go nearly anywhere, e-scooters quickly became popular with many. However, this combination also led to some safety concerns and controversy for many others, leaving some community officials scrambling on how to regulate them, including whether they should be allowed on trails that currently bar motorized vehicles. As e-scooter companies continue to push into new markets and local officials figure out how to regulate them, the long-term impact of e-scooters on micromobility and trails is yet to be seen.

- More people are wanting to paddle and more are also opting to own personal watercraft to do so. As seen from our Water Trail User Survey, most opting to buy or rent seem to prefer kayaks over traditional canoes, and many are also opting for stand-up paddleboards, a relatively new trend in the last five years. This may be because both are more maneuverable, efficient, lighter, and generally easier to transport than other options, and because of the ability to purchase them at big box stores at an affordable price point.

- The concept of user-accessible, formally created and marketed water trails continues to gain traction as paddling becomes increasingly popular. Water trails provide a more quality experience to paddlers with a marked route on navigable waterways, well-developed access sites, and often ample amenities, such as boat parking, restrooms, food, or camping, along the way. Although Indiana does not have an official state water trail program, there have been local efforts across the state to make many of Indi-

ana's rivers more like water trails, with signage, better information online, and new access sites, including several more accessible launches, and programming.

- Most trail users are now getting information about trails through websites, social media, and trail-specific apps as opposed to brochures, paper maps, and word of mouth, which were more prominent in the past. In particular, a large percentage of this traffic is via mobile phones. Trail managers should pay specific attention to making sure crucial trail information such as location, mileage, difficulty, status, trailhead and amenity locations, special events, descriptions, and other necessary information about their trail can be easily found online, and is mobile-friendly. Interactive maps, photos, and video are also preferred, as these allow users to have a better grasp of what to expect.

- Trail users are not only using apps to get information about the trails, but also using apps, smart watches, and GPS tracking devices while on the trail. Although these can have added benefits, like helping to navigate, they are primarily focused on tracking progress, especially regarding personal fitness. These devices may help develop repeat trail users because they allow users to better see personal trail-use benefits or find new trails as a result of other trail users being able to easily share their experiences. Additionally, some of these data are publically available and may be good trail usage tools for some trail managers.

- A few new forms of technology have been assisting trail managers looking to manage, develop, or promote their trails. These include trail counters, which have seen significant technology advancements and become more affordable in recent years, as well as trail cameras, drones, and bikeshare data.

- Trails are being promoted by communities, businesses, and trail advocates as a key piece of quality of life and important tools for place-making. There have been more efforts to integrate things like public art, parks and other recreational opportunities, as well as historic and cultural resources, among others, into trail systems to create a stronger sense of quality of place for

residents and visitors. This trend can be seen in projects both small and large across the state, as well as in numerous recently completed local trail plans.

- Within the past few years, neighboring Michigan and Kentucky have launched a Trail Town program. The point of Trail Town programs and similar others throughout the U.S. is to create a more trail-friendly town. This is accomplished through wayfinding, business offerings, infrastructure, and other things, in order for communities to better take advantage of the opportunity for positive economic impact that having a trail running through a community provides. Hoosier communities are increasingly interested in this, and as a result the Greenways Foundation offered workshops on this topic as a resource in the fall of 2019.

- As more individual Indiana trails are developed, more emphasis has been put on connecting these trails in recent years. Connecting trails, both within and outside of local jurisdictions, into a more integrated system not only allows users more miles of recreational opportunities, but also creates a stronger active transportation network. It also can improve the tourism and economic impact capacity of the newly connected trail. The focus on connecting trails can be seen in both the main assignment to the Bicycle Trails Task Force in 2017 and throughout the Next Level Trails program criteria.

INDIANA'S TRAIL SUPPLY

Indiana Trails Inventory

Indiana DNR staff maintain a database and map of all known trails in the state, including those that are open, under development, proposed, or have potential to be developed or proposed. This includes trails managed by federal, State, and local governments as well as those run by non-profit organizations. This information is kept up-to-date through the close monitoring of new trail construction and related news stories, review of aerial imagery throughout the state, information gained from the administration of grants programs, and frequent communication between the DNR, trail organizations, stakeholders, and local governments. Maps and data are made available to

DNR staff and the public through resources like the Indiana Trail Finder, a mobile and user-friendly interactive map launched in 2016.

As of September 2019, Indiana has more than 4,000 miles of trails open to the public. The breakdown of trails in the state in terms of usage and status type is as follows:

Open Trail Types by Usage
- Hike/Pedestrian – 3,613 miles
  - Natural Surface (Native Soil or Rock) Hike: 1,745 miles
  - Hard Surface (Asphalt, Concrete or Crushed Stone) Pedestrian: 1,721 miles
  - Other Surface (All other Trail Materials) Hike: 147 miles
- Bicycle Trails: 2,165 miles
  - Hard Surface Road Bike – 1,535 miles
  - Mountain Bike – 630 miles
- Equestrian – 690 miles
- Snowmobile – 237 miles
- Motorized* – 95 miles
  Includes trails open to dirt bikes, ATVs, side x sides, 4x4 vehicles, and/or other types of ORVs. Does not include snowmobile or privately owned, for-profit trails or sites.

Trails By Status
- Open – 4,093 miles
- Planned – 1,203 miles
- Potential – 2,698 miles
- Under Development – 118 miles

Motorized Trails

Indiana offers a few options for off-roading recreationists. The state manages two multi-use properties, both of which are repurposed former coal mines that allow off-roading. Interlake State Recreation Area (SRA) provides more than 75 miles of trail sprawled across over 3,500 acres, while Redbird SRA has more than 20 miles of trail on 700 acres. Both properties offer trails of varying difficulties for all manner of off-road vehicles, from dirt bikes to full-size vehicles. In addition to these public trails, Prairie Creek Reservoir also offers a few miles of publicly owned and operated ORV trails. These trails are included in the amount of motorized trails in the Trails Inventory.

Indiana also has private off-roading opportunities around the state. These include The Badlands,
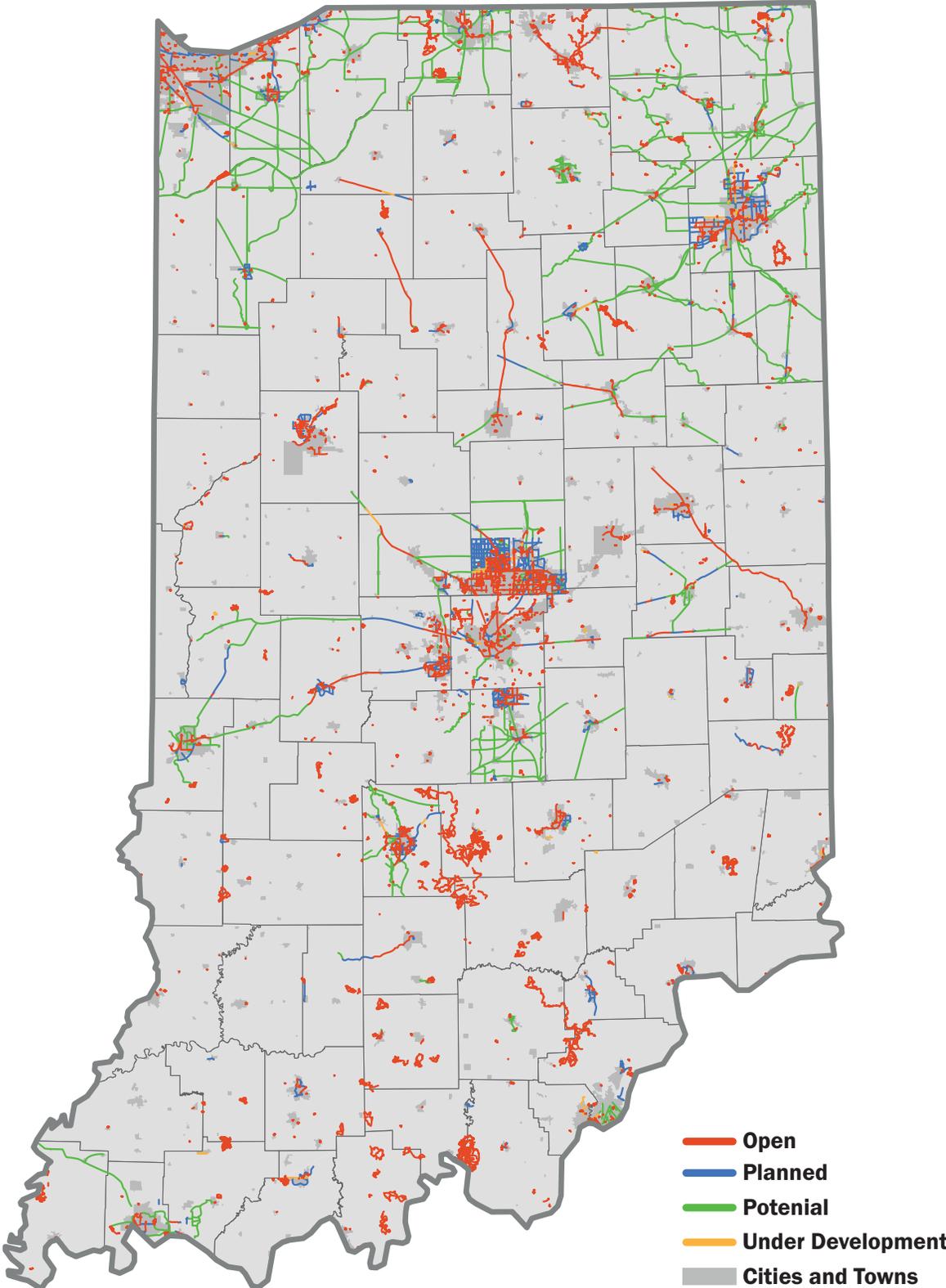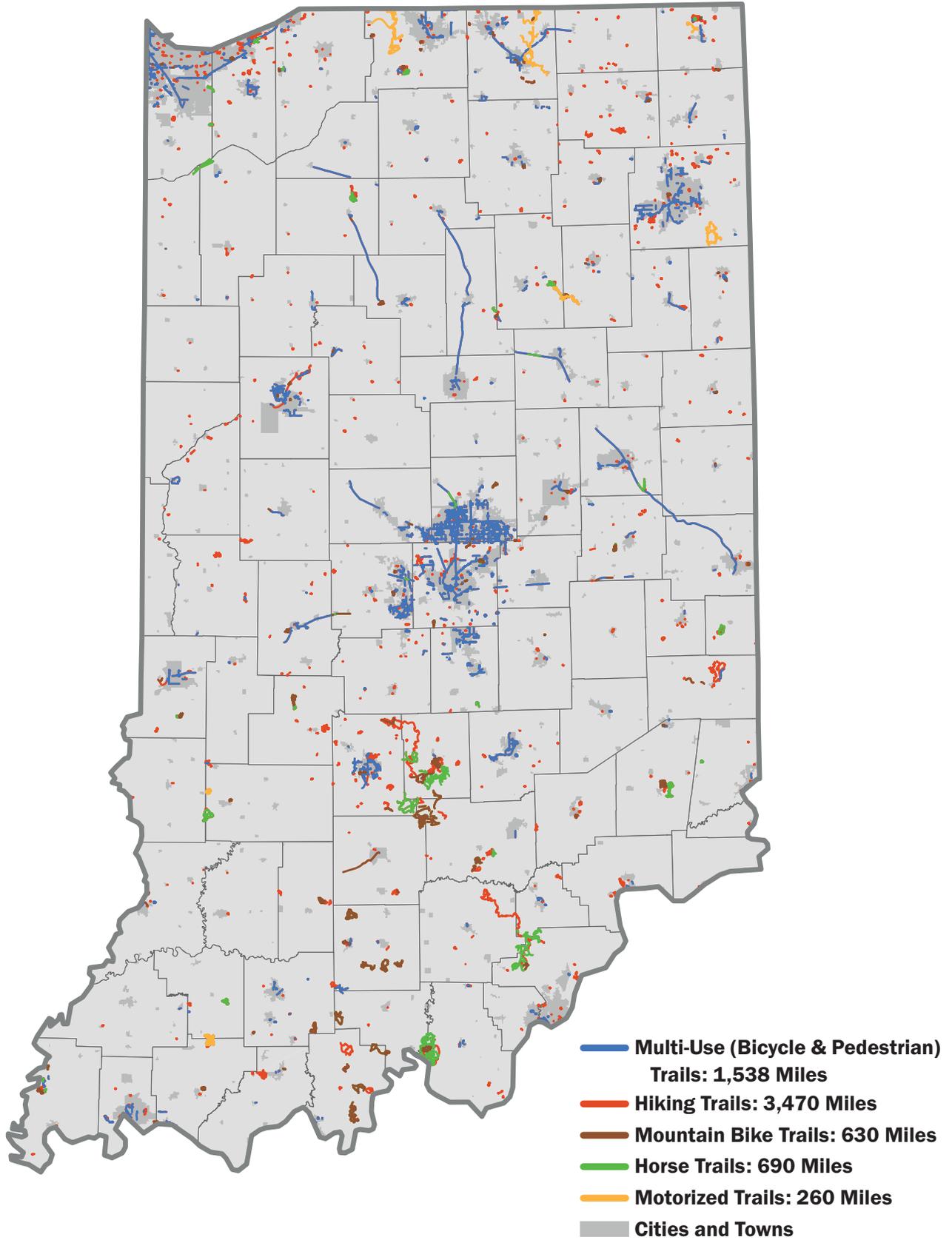
Figure 6.3
2019 INDIANA TRAIL INVENTORY

Open
Planned
Potenial
Under Development
Cities and Towns

Figure 6.4
2019 INDIANA TRAIL TYPES

Legend:
- Multi-Use (Bicycle & Pedestrian) Trails: 1,538 Miles
- Hiking Trails: 3,470 Miles
- Mountain Bike Trails: 630 Miles
- Horse Trails: 690 Miles
- Motorized Trails: 260 Miles
- Cities and Towns

Haspin Acres, and Lawrence County Recreation Park. Although these facilities have trails and are open to the public to ride, because they are private, they are not tracked in the Indiana Trails Inventory.

Indiana has four State Snowmobile Trails—Buffalo Run, Miami, Salamonie, and Heritage. These trails, which are a result of a partnership between the local snowmobile clubs and the DNR, are open when weather conditions allow from Dec. 1 to March 31. There is also one privately maintained trail, the Potawatomi Snowmobile Trail. All five trails combine for 237 miles available for sledding and are included in the Trails Inventory total amount of mileage despite being seasonal.

Water Trails

Indiana is home to a sole National Water Trail, the Kankakee River. It traverses from northeast Indiana, south through Illinois before flowing into the Illinois River. Recent efforts to designate a few other water trails in the state through the National Park Service's program are being explored. The program has detailed criteria for designation and an application process.

Indiana offers more than 35,000 miles of streams, many of which have been deemed navigable. In the DNR's recent Water Trails Survey, 32 different rivers were offered as options for respondents to choose from to indicate interest in paddling.

Additionally, the Division of Fish & Wildlife (DFW) promotes 821 access sites in their inventory and interactive map, "Where to Fish." The access sites include both lake and stream access sites, and are open to paddlers to use. Many of these access sites have been installed and are maintained by the DFW, but some are developed and managed by user groups, local park and recreation departments, and others. Like the Trails Inventory, maintaining this inventory, especially for new, local, access sites, is an ongoing venture.

With the bounty of rivers and access sites, there are plenty of options for paddling throughout in Indiana. However, at this time there is no active state water trails program, with official designations, in Indiana as there is in some other states, including Ohio and Michigan. It is important to note that no water trail miles are included in the Trail Inventory mileage at this time.

COMPARISON TO NEIGHBORING STATES' TRAIL SYSTEMS

In order to better understand the degree to which activities and policies both past and present have promoted trail development, it is worthwhile to look into the recreational trail infrastructure of other states, particularly Indiana's neighbors. Below are the key trail metrics reported by the Ohio and Michigan DNRs. Comparable figures from Illinois and Kentucky are not readily available.

Ohio

- 5,000 total trail miles (all types, including water trails).
- 1,600 miles of recreational trails for hiking, backpacking, and mountain biking.
- 650 miles of water trails (across 11 state-designated water trails).
- Since 2000, Ohio has invested more than $86 million in state funding for trail development through its Clean Ohio program, which includes a trail grant program. More than $6 million in annual funding is available for trail corridor acquisition, trail development, and trailhead facilities through the Clean Ohio Trails Fund.

Michigan

- 12,000 miles of total trail miles (all types, including water trails).
- 6,407 miles of snowmobile trail.
- 2,627 miles of ORV trails.
- 2,623 miles of rail-trail.
- 590 miles of equestrian trail.
- $164 million invested from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for land acquisition and recreational facility development, including trails. Roughly $15-20 million in grants from the trust fund is awarded each year.

DEMAND FOR TRAILS IN INDIANA

Trail User Survey

The trails user survey shows very little change from 2013 to 2017. Trails used for walking (+1%), hiking (+2.7%), and for transportation (+1.1%) all showed a slight increase. The only big increase was in those who canoe and kayak in a given year, which increased more than 6%.

Some 5% fewer people spent less than $100 (the lowest category of spending) on recreational activities, from 49% down to 43.9%, in 2017. This suggests that some outdoor recreation users in Indiana are investing more in their activities than previous surveys indicated.

More users said a general tax (+3.1%) or local tax (+1%) is the most appropriate way for funding recreational trail development and maintenance after pursuing all available grants and donations. This appears to indicate that more Hoosiers are willing to invest their tax dollars in their outdoor recreation activities.

There was a modest increase in the number of respondents who said that the current supply of trails (in all categories of trail use, except "roller/in-line skating") was "Just Right." At the same time, many respondents also stated that the trail supply was not enough, which indicates that there is still plenty of work left to be done.

Also identified in the Trail User Survey was the amount of trail users who want to see trail connectivity, which most strongly agreed or somewhat agreed was important to their community's infrastructure. The last trend showcased from the Trail Users Survey regards how the respondents indicated they find out about trail opportunities. Unsurprisingly, people said they are using websites and digital formats more, and relying less on booklets, brochures, and paper maps.

Trail Stakeholder Survey

The DNR's 2018 Trails Stakeholder Survey shows that stakeholders believe Indiana should push for trails of all sizes, should use railbanking, and that a combination of groups should own, operate, and maintain trails. Funding-source responses from stakeholders showed 66.7% used existing budgets/local money, 60.6% relied on private funding, 51.5%

used federal grants, 48.5% did fundraising, and only 27.2% used state grants.

An often-recurring answer to the open-ended question "What new challenges … is your trail system struggling with?" was funding. Some answers even noted that while not a new problem, funding is an ongoing problem they face. Furthermore, from the previous stakeholder survey, asked if current funding of trail maintenance and operations is adequate, more than 80% answered "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree." Only 5 % of respondents answered 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree.' This suggests that funding, specifically for trail maintenance, is a recurring issue for many trail stakeholders.

Water Trail Survey

The DNR's online Water Trails Survey had 341 respondents. Asked why they visited the water trails guide and ultimately ended up taking the survey, respondents gave "seeking information about public access sites" as the most common response. Among Indiana Water Trails, Sugar Creek was the most popular water trail people searched for information about.

Following behind in popularity were both forks of the White River, the Wabash River, and the Blue River. Respondents overwhelmingly (more than 90%) use kayaks on water trails, 53% use canoes; and 10% paddle on standup paddle boards. Note that the question asked respondents to check all watercraft they use on water trails. Another demand shown in the survey was that the majority of respondents prefer to get their information by website (89%) or from an app (55%).

Next Level Trails

In addition to its catalytic role in the development of dozens of miles of new trails throughout the State of Indiana, a positive result of the $25 million allocated for round one of NLT was its clear illustration of the high levels of demand for trail development from local governments, non-profits, and the general public. Consider some of the statistics gathered from applications for the project's first round alone:

- 82 applications from 42 of Indiana's counties were received.
- $143,780,509 in grant funds was requested.
- The projects would represent more than 236.75 miles of new trail, if it were possible to award

funds to every applicant.

- The program encourages partnerships as a way to help applicants with match, stretch NLT funds, and show community support for the project. Partners are defined as contributing something of financial value to the NLT project. Partners pledging support in round one included local governments, nonprofits, foundations, hospitals, schools, religious organizations, private companies, and individuals.

This strong response to a new program clearly indicates that communities, organizations, and individuals in all parts of the state understand the benefits of trails and would like to play a larger role in their development and usage. Additionally, it made obvious the fact that these same stakeholders are more than willing to put money into trail development, and that they are more likely to do so when these funds can leverage a robust funding source.

Moving Toward an Active Indiana

INDOT's Active Transportation plan, *Moving Toward an Active Indiana – Walking and Bicycling in the Hoosier State*, is being developed with the help of extensive research and outreach to active transportation users and stakeholders. One product of this process has been a survey of 2,500 Hoosiers about active transportation infrastructure, including trails and policies regarding them. Respondents indicated high amounts of interest in trail usage and development, as demonstrated by the following findings:

- 87% of respondents said they would use a paved recreational trail.
- Asked what keeps them from walking and cycling more often in all areas, respondents indicated that concerns about bicyclist/pedestrian safety in traffic and around vehicles (41%) was most likely to keep them from doing so.
- Asked what they thought would encourage more people to bike more often, 82% agreed that more bicycle paths and trails would do so; 63% also answered that way about "more separation between bikes and cars."
- Additionally, respondents said more trails and paths, along with improved sidewalks, would get Hoosiers walking more often.

IU Eppley Trails Study

The IU Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands conducted a study by surveying trail users, managers, and neighbors in 2017. This study produced a number of findings that provide evidence of demand for new trails and the improvement of existing ones. These include:

- The percentage of trail users who use trails for transportation (as opposed to exercise and recreation) has more than doubled since 2001—from 2% to 5%.
- A higher percentage of people bicycle than in 2001.
- The largest concerns of trail users are trail maintenance and access to facilities such as restrooms, with 18% of respondents identifying these as their primary concerns. This reflects a change from 2001, when access to restrooms/water fountains and the adequacy of safety patrols were the biggest concerns.
- Longer usage of trails—respondents indicated that they stay on trails longer, averaging 9 miles

travelled during their "primary activity." In 2001, this figure was 7 miles.

ORV and Snowmobile Registration Numbers

Indiana requires all ORV and snowmobiles, with a few minor exceptions, to be registered. Registration for both types of vehicles is $30 for three years and is handled through the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV). These registration numbers provide important data about the demand for trails to accommodate ORVs and snowmobiles.

Registration numbers for ORVs continue to climb in Indiana. In the past three years, over 60,000 ORVs have been registered through the BMV. The running three-year total in December 2016 was 52,000. Despite this recent growth of 15% in registration, numbers from the Trail User Survey show a small drop in off-roading.

Conversely, snowmobile registration numbers show a slight decline. As of July 1, 2019, a total of 9,362 snowmobiles had been registered in the preceding three years. The running three-year total in December of 2016 was 10,125, a decrease of 8%.

INDIANA TRAILS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

After carefully evaluating Indiana's supply and demand for trails as well as placing it into the larger current trails context, the DNR found several key themes. Those themes are listed below, as is some supporting evidence that will shape the state's future goals.

Indiana Trails Are Not Meeting Hoosiers' Needs

- Surveyed about the supply of trails, respondents to the Trail User Survey indicated strongly that the supply of all types of trails either needs to be increased in the future or does not meet their needs.
- More than 24% of respondents from the Trail User Survey did not use trails as often as they desired due to distance to a trail, the quality of the trail, or dangerous intersections.
- The 2014 Online Trails Stakeholder Survey, found that building more trails was the most important trail issue. It also was the most important trail issue to respondents in the most recent 2018 survey, with 69% rating it as "very important."
- According to the INDOT Active Transportation Survey the No. 1 reason for not using active transportation infrastructure is bicyclists and pedestrians feeling unsafe in traffic and around vehicles, and No. 2 was inconvenience.

- Respondents to the INDOT Active Transportation Survey did NOT want bike lanes on busy streets, but instead desired more trails and paths, as well as bike lanes on smaller side streets and better signage.
- The 2017 IU Eppley Study reported that across Indiana, 18% of users have concerns about trail maintenance and access to facilities.

Demand For Trails Is Growing

- 82 NLT applications for a total of 236.75 miles of desired trail development in just the initial round proved that statewide demand for trails is massive.
- 185 individuals attended the NLT Round 1 Workshop in person, and another 100 people attended via webinar to learn more about the new trail grant program as a funding opportunity for their project.
- 80% of respondents to the Trail User Survey use a trail for walking sometime each year.
- Every regional cities plan submitted contained plans with trail components, and some regions even made this a high priority.
- The 2018 Trail Stakeholder Survey put the highest focus for trail development on connecting local community destinations for residents.
- Trail connectivity, or linking together existing trails, was the second most important topic to respondents in the 2014 Online Trail Stakeholder Survey, with 56.3% saying it was very important.
- The Bicycle Trails Task Force was created by the legislature in 2017 in response to the demand for more trails and to connect existing trails.

Current Funding Levels Cannot Match Local Development And Maintenance Needs

- The Bicycle Trails Task Force's final report states that with current funding and no NLT investment, only 20 miles of trail will be developed per year. NLT is estimated to add around 150 miles of trails statewide over the life of the program. The report estimates a $15 million increase in State trails funding annually would yield more than 25 additional miles of trails per year.
- Tasked by the legislature to identify funding sources for trails, the Bicycle Trails Task Force recommended seven sources to help meet the need to develop and connect trails statewide.
- Round 1 of NLT funded $25 million for trails, an unprecedented amount of state trail funding by itself, on 17 trail projects, which equated to roughly 20% of projects that applied. However, even with the full $90 million available, only 65% of Round 1 projects could have been funded.
- The Trail User Survey showed that the most demanded form of trail funding, after federal funds, is state general taxes, followed by land development set-asides,.
- A 2018 Trail Stakeholder Survey showed that more than 50% of trail projects use federal funds, while the rest of the project cost is usually covered by local money and private funding. State grants were the lowest form of project funding.
- A total of 56.3% of respondents in the 2014 Online Trails Stakeholder Survey rated "designating a state funding source for trails" as very important, while 34.3% stated it was important. Additionally, 43.9% of respondents said that "designating a state funding source for trails maintenance" was very important, while another 37.1% said it was important.
- The same survey showed that 62% of stakeholders applied for a grant to fund their trail projects, making it the most popular of any funding source used.
- The survey also indicated that most stakeholders either strongly disagreed (34.4%) or disagreed (45.9%) with the statement that "current funding of trail maintenance and operations is adequate."
- The Greenways Foundation, for many years, has been advocating for a sustainable source of state funding for the existing, but empty, Trails Maintenance Fund. The Greenways Foundation estimates that it takes $3,500 - $6,500 per year to maintain 1 mile of trail.
- The lack of trail maintenance funding was brought up at many Bicycle Trails Task Force meetings as well as at the NLT stakeholder meeting. The Bicycle Trails Task Force final report recommends that any future State trail funding source should allow both trail development and maintenance as eligible costs.

Leadership And Coordination For Trail Development Is Inefficient

- A total of 97% of trail stakeholders said they want the state of Indiana to have a stronger role in railbanking. Their top ways for Indiana to be more involved include supporting local efforts, taking charge, and providing legal assistance or funding.
- The majority of stakeholders said they want all trail types elevated equally, while the next highest majority wants the State Visionary Trail System prioritized. This message was also echoed at the NLT stakeholder meeting, which led to key aspects of the grant program's design.
- With the current network of trails divided between different organizations promoting trails individually, the Bicycle Trails Task Force suggested a statewide brand to unify these different trails under one brand to promote the trail experience in Indiana.
- Completing trail connections between different municipalities, agencies, and organizations is essential to further developing a statewide trail network. This idea was heard in Bicycle Trails Task Force meetings and later incorporated into the NLT program.
- The Bicycle Trails Task Force recommends that the State act as a central point of contact for communities seeking trail assistance.

Better Information Is Needed For Trail Users

- Some 41.2% of respondents in the 2014 Online Trails Stakeholder Survey said publishing trail maps and guides was very important, and 47.6% said it was important.
- A total of 16% of respondents to a National Recreation and Park Association survey said they do not use outdoor recreation facilities due to not knowing the location or offerings.
- Some 89% of water trail users surveyed said they prefer information available on a website, and 55% wanted an interactive app/map for information.
- Indiana should follow other states, such as Michigan and Ohio, as examples for expanding available information online to include status of trails, location of trailheads, difficulty levels, and other useful information.

- A universal rating system for each recreation activity, similar to mountain biking or ORV trails, would give participants better expectations when planning trips using each trail type.

PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE 2016 STATE TRAILS PLAN GOALS AND STRATEGIES

2016 Trails Plan Goal Nearly Achieved: A trail within 5 miles of all Indiana residents by 2020.

Total trail mileage in Indiana has skyrocketed in the past 10 years and continues to increase. The previous goal of having a trail within 5 miles of every Hoosier is nearly obtained, with 96.2% of Hoosiers having a trail within this distance, an increase from 93.9% in 2015. Because of population density, topography, and other factors, it is unfeasible to target the remaining 3.8% specifically. However, this metric will continue to be tracked as more trails develop.

2016 Strategy 1: Improve coordination of trail development, planning and design at local, state and federal levels.
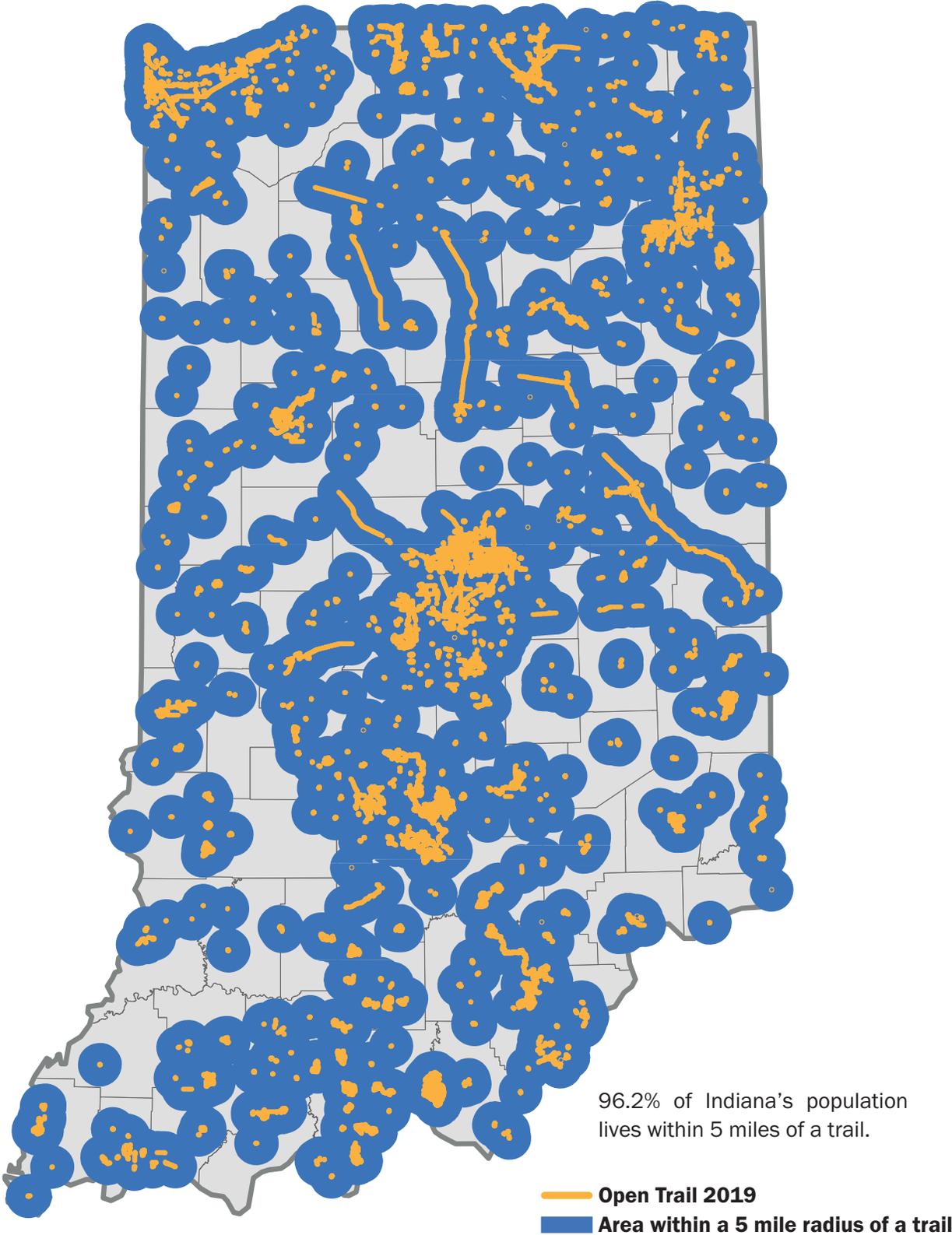
Improving the trail development, planning, and design process at all levels is a continuing effort as the demand for trails increases across the United States, as well as in Indiana. The Visionary Trail System, which was established in 2006 by planners, trail providers, and trail users, and updated in 2016, continues to be a resource for trail stakeholders across the state.

The Visionary Trail System is continually emphasized by stakeholders as something that should be considered for grant funding, as it is in NLT, and for any future plans or recommendations, as seen in the Bicycle Trails Task Force final report. Knowing the importance of this issue to stakeholders, the Visionary Trail System should be re-visited and updated for the 2026 Trails Plan and a charrette should be held to address improved coordination.

Although the Visionary Trail System has certainly helped, Indiana continues to struggle with coordination between jurisdictions at all levels, which is why collaboration and partnerships were particularly incentivized in the NLT program. Coordination between trail users and land or trail managers about

Figure 6.5
2019 POPULATION WITHIN A 5 MILE RADIUS OF A TRAIL

96.2% of Indiana's population lives within 5 miles of a trail.

Open Trail 2019
Area within a 5 mile radius of a trail

development, planning, and design also continues to be an area that could be improved, especially for natural surfaces and water trails. Although some meetings and networking events have been held over past few years to address this issue, more communication would likely help improve coordination.

2016 Strategy 2: Increase trail funding to provide trails to meet present and future demand.

Although federal programs like the Recreational Trails Program and Transportation Alternatives continue to be helpful in developing trails, their funding has remained steady. However, other State agencies such as the DNR, Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Indiana Office of Tourism Development, Indiana State Department of Health, and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation are helping fund Indiana trails projects through their grant programs, many of which were developed in the last five years or so.

Despite none of these grant programs being specifically designed for trails, they have helped in a variety of ways, including buying land, providing planning, improving trail amenities, or directly building new miles of trail. Unfortunately a few, like the Bicentennial Nature Trust and Regional Cities Initiative, no longer have funds available.

In September 2018, Gov. Holcomb announced the Next Level Connections initiative, which included $90 million in State funding for trail development to be awarded by the end of 2020. As the largest State trails funding in Indiana history, this funding will drastically impact Indiana's trail system by adding miles of trails to the network in a span of four years or less.

NLT, with its focus on connectivity and collaboration, will add new trail miles in a more meaningful and efficient manner on both a local and regional scale around the state. In particular, the concept of encouraging both partnerships and over-match, when possible, has allowed the funds to be leveraged further.

While the importance of these NLT funds to Indiana's network cannot be overstated, it should be noted that NLT is a one-time funding opportu-

nity. It is not a sustainable source, which is what is needed to complete the demanded state trail network.

Indiana has also made great progress in recognizing the demand for trails in the future and exploring options for funding trail building initiatives. The legislature created the Bicycle Trails Task Force and tasked it with exploring funding options for trails. The July 2019 report highlighted seven different recommendations for sustainable State funding sources for trails. Because most existing grants funds, including NLT, seem to focus on land acquisition and trail development, locating funds for trail maintenance projects has continued to be extremely difficult.

Recognizing this, as well as the fact Indiana has a growing number of maturing trails in need of maintenance, the task force made clear that any new funding source for trails should support both the development and the maintenance of trails in order to serve the network over time. Now that the first step of identifying potential sources and clearly stating what costs should be eligible has been completed, the heavy lift of pursuing these recommendations is the next step, in securing additional funds for trails.

2016 Strategy 3: Acquire more land for trails.

Since the last *Indiana Trails Plan*, Indiana has worked to provide funding opportunities to assist with acquiring land for trails through the Bicentennial Nature Trust, President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust (PBHCT), and now NLT. All have added significant acreage for trails in Indiana, but there is still a need for more acquisition, as judged by NLT program interest.

While these programs are great tools to acquire land, the only specific trail program is NLT, and only the PBHCT is longstanding. Working to create a permanent fund for trails will be a key to acquiring more acreage. Additionally, better railbank laws and policy, including first right of refusal by the State on any corridor filed for abandonment, could help make acquisition easier and much cheaper because it keeps the corridor intact.

Last, better collaboration between governments, non-profits organizations, landowners and other stakeholders, such as local companies or school districts, will also help with acquiring more land for trails.

2016 Strategy 4: Provide increased education about trails and trail benefits.

More than 118 organizations in Indiana are working on trail development, management, advocacy, outreach, and/or education. While many work to support their local trail, some organizations, such as the Greenways Foundation, have legislative agendas, and advocate statewide.

Additionally, some groups, such as the Trails Advisory Board and Bicycle Trails Task Force use an interdisciplinary approach to discuss difficulties and collaborate toward success for trail development and education in Indiana. Ten to twenty years ago the benefits of trails in Indiana were often unknown or not particularly trusted. But thanks to the work of these many groups, regardless of type, that work on our trail network, the many socio-economic, quality of life, transportation, and health benefits of trails are well established.

Another accomplishment since the last *Indiana Trails Plan* was the completion of the *2017 Indiana Trails Study* by Indiana University's Eppley Institute.

While the number of trails studies has drastically increased in the past 10-15 years, most were national or specific to other locales, which often leaves some stakeholders in Indiana skeptical. With its updated trail data being specific to Indiana, this study provides a more relevant example of Indiana communities' and the public's weighing in on trails.

The next step forward is to continue to make this study and the many other good resources available to decision makers and the public in order to better educate them. An online directory connecting Indiana stakeholders to these resources, which can be updated as new material becomes available, should be considered as a good way to assist with this.

The support for trails has drastically improved over the past few decades. Trails are now seen as an amenity that many people desire. However, progress can still be made to better prioritize this specific amenity, especially when it comes to the funding available.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR THE 2021-2025 INDIANA TRAILS PLAN

This plan is intended to provide a framework for a trail system throughout the state of Indiana, as well as build and expand on the *2016 Indiana Trails Plan* strategies.

The goal of serving Hoosiers throughout the state regardless of geographic location is well established and nearly complete, as reflected by the previous goal of having all Hoosiers within a 5-mile radius of a trail. It is therefore logical for any new goals to apply to the entire state and similarly aim to be applicable to a variety of trail types.

One of the overarching visions of this State Trails Plan is for a diverse range of trail types and trail users to be recognized, as well as for progress in trail development and trail-related policies to be implemented in a way that reflects all trail activities. Therefore, the goals listed below should apply to all trail types, including the Visionary Trail System, bicycle/pedestrian trails, natural- surface trails, recreational trails for motorized vehicles, water trails, and any other trail type.

Goal 1: Develop more miles of trail to meet need.

Objective 1: Make overall progress in new trail miles added, including trying to add miles in all trail types, including the Visionary Trail System, that do not meet current demands.

Strategy 1: Increase Funding for Trail Development.
   Actions:
   • Explore all potential options for increased funding, from any and all sources.
   • Explore creation of a permanent, revolving fund for trail development.
   • Explore funding of trail operations, not just development.
   • Encourage current and future non-trail-specific grant programs to make trails development an "eligible cost."

Strategy 2: Measure trail development progress over time.
   Actions:
   • Work with local trail stakeholders to gauge trail development.
   • Explore public demand/use for individual trail types.

Figure 6.6

2019 VISIONARY TRAILS SYSTEM PROGRESS

Visionary Status

	Total System Mileage	Open Mileage	Percent Complete
Visionary	1,070	488	45.61%
Potential Visionary	1,144	174	15.21%

— Open Visionary Trails
— Unopened Visionary Trails
— Open Potential Visionary Trails
— Unopened Potential Visionary Trails
▬ Cities and Towns
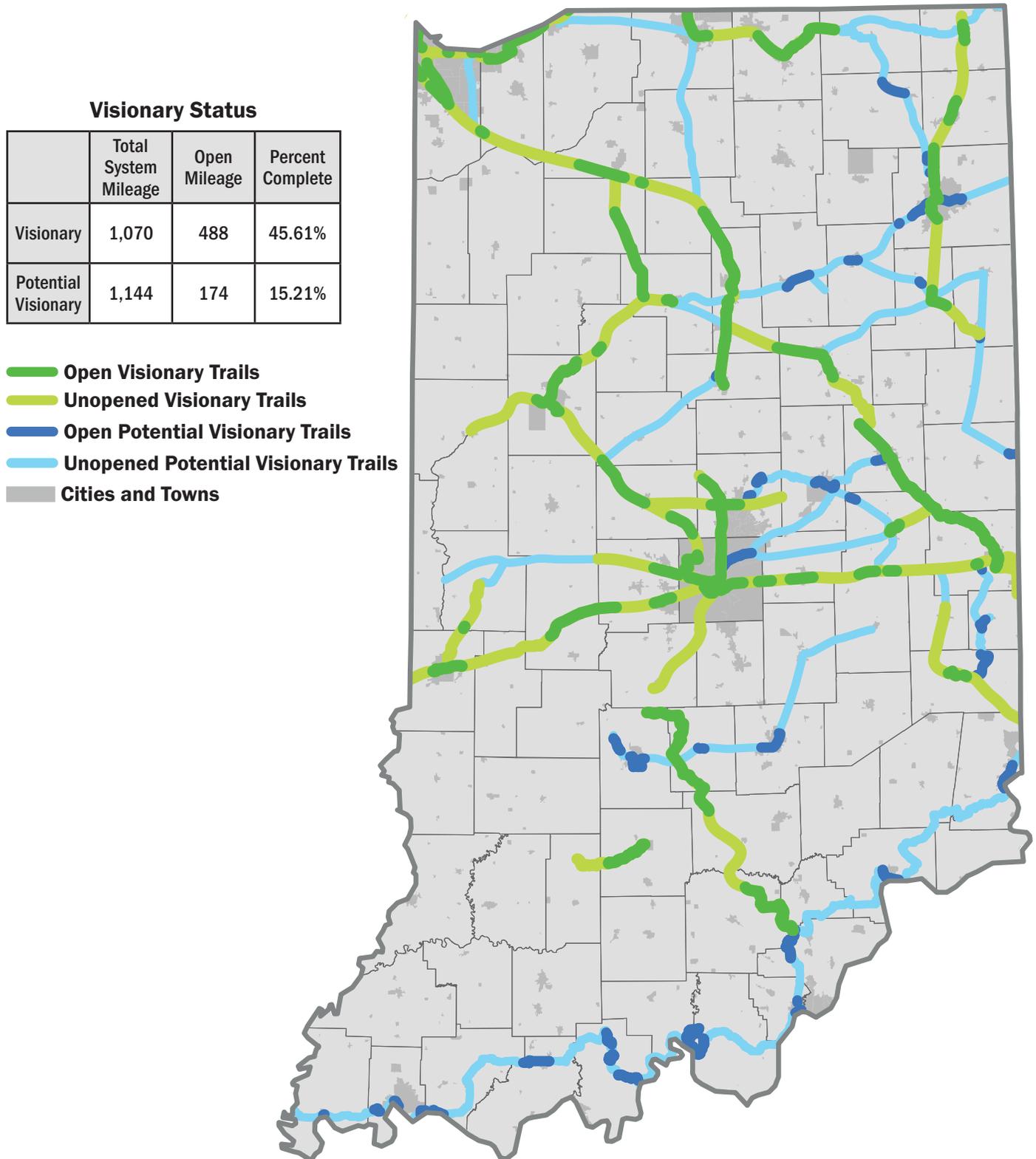
- Explore sustainability of all existing trail, and all types (long-term action).
- Create metrics and collect data from trail counters, studies, etc. to support all these efforts and show progress.

Strategy 3: Support local efforts to create and connect new Visionary and non-Visionary trail statewide.
   Actions:
- Regularly update the Visionary Trail System.
- Provide education and technical assistance for both Visionary and non-Visionary Trails.
- Start a toolkit or directory for those looking to develop trails so they can quickly find and utilize available resources.

Strategy 4: Improve the legal structure for trail development at the state and local levels.
   Actions:
- Make Railbanking (right of first refusal by the State) the automatic initial response to railroad corridor filed for abandonment under Indiana law.
- Better use of existing trail law, until laws improve or are changed.
- Study best possible improvements to all pertinent laws and regulations.

Strategy 5: Improve communication, collaboration, and coordination between all levels of government, land managers, stakeholders, non-profits, neighbors, etc.
   Actions:
- Make the DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation a touchstone for all trail stakeholders statewide.
- Explore online methodologies to disseminate information, and collaborate statewide.
- Encourage formation and support of collaborative organizations and groups working on all trails, trail advocates, user advocates, etc.

Strategy 6: Focus development efforts connecting existing trails to improve network.
   Actions:
- Explore creating a top 10 trail gap list to be tackled.

- Encourage all levels (and across levels) of government and non-profits to coordinate trail connection efforts.

Strategy 7: Better articulate public demand for trail.
   Actions:
- Gather new data about public demand for trails as evidence.
- Communicate all evidence to stakeholders, lawmakers, and levels of government, as well as the public.

Goal 2: Better maintain Indiana's existing trails.

Strategy 1: Increase trail maintenance funding.
   Actions:
- Gauge maintenance needs statewide (long-term action).
- Begin exploration of methods of using existing trails maintenance fund to disburse future maintenance dollars.
- Pursue a state funding source for trail maintenance.

Strategy 2: Improve trail maintenance information.
   Actions:
- Start toolkit/directory of best maintenance practices and methods.
- Begin examination of methods of maximizing limited resources.
- Determine best practices for transition to sustainable design.
   a. Sustainable future planning
   b. Sustainable future design
   c. Future remediation of unsustainable trail

Goal 3: Increase trail stakeholder capacity for trail management/use of best practices.

Strategy 1: Share information.
   Actions:
- Share education on best trail management practices with all stakeholders.
- Explore a "train the trainers" methodology with trail management experts.

Strategy 2: Know, assess, and respond to changing trail conditions over time.
   Actions:
- Regular monitoring of the trail by trained staff and volunteers.

- Assess, record, report, and track changes in trail conditions.
- Analyze trail condition reports to determine appropriate responses.

Strategy 3: Manage the trail for user safety and security.

Actions:
- Ensure trail and facilities are in good working order and do not present any inherent safety hazards.
- Identify and create trail safety improvements such as clear signage, street crossings/crosswalks, lighting, cameras, etc. as needed.
- Familiarize local emergency response agencies with trail and coordinate with them to develop protocols in case of emergencies.
- Encourage regular trail patrols by local law enforcement or trail volunteers.
- Incorporate user safety and security elements in facility design.

Strategy 3: Create, disseminate, and enforce trail-use policy.

Actions:
- Create statewide trail user right-of-way policy.
- Create policy for trail neighbor rights and courtesies.
- Create policy to illuminate and resolve trail user conflicts.
- Articulate a clear local trail-use policy and ensure that it is effectively communicated to all users and stakeholders: encourage feedback.
- Educate trail users and neighbors on these policies.

Strategy 4: Make timely and current trail information accessible to public.

Actions:
- Use best practices for traditional methods, such as trailhead signage, maps, and brochures.
- Integrate electronic methods, such as social media, websites, phone apps, etc. alongside traditional methods.
- Update trail users on latest trail conditions, special events, etc. in a timely manner.

Goal 4: Improve trail user experience.

Strategy 1: Provide better public outreach and public input.

Actions:
- Create convenient and effective marketing materials to disseminate trail information, which should be readily accessible to first time or occasional trails users, by utilizing a combination of traditional and electronic methods.
- Provide more detailed and informative trail information for regular trail users, using a combination of traditional and electronic methods.
- Create simple public feedback and comment methods, and ensure public input is heard, acknowledged, and acted on.

Strategy 2: Proactively adapt to evolving trail uses, trends, and equipment.

Actions:
- Stay abreast of local and national trail trends, and respond proactively.
- Encourage and accept trail user, public, and stakeholder feedback, specifically on evolution of trail uses and equipment.

Strategy 3: Add more trail amenities.

Actions:
- Encourage trail managers to provide trail facilities appropriate to the length, type, and uses of their trails. Facilities can include trailheads, public art, restrooms, water fountains, signage, etc.
- As trails grow and interconnect, encourage trail managers to add new or improved trail support facilities as needed.
- Coordinate with local business owners, tourism agencies, economic development groups, elected officials, and others to implement a "Trail Town" program or best practices.

Strategy 4: Increase programming and special events.

Actions:
- Use trail-based programming and special events to support trail marketing, user education, tourism, volunteer recruiting, and fundraising.

- Use trail-based programming and special events to reach a new audience or provide a unique experience for regular trail users.

Strategy 5: Collect and integrate public feedback.

    Actions:

- Create methodology and a collection platform for trail user and neighboring landowner public input for all trail managers.
- Analyze and process trail user and neighbor public input data.
- Share all trail user and neighboring landowner public input datasets with all trail managers, all levels of governments, non-profits, and the general public.

CONCLUSION

The goals listed above are purposely general and are based directly on the key themes found in the Needs Assessment, which integrates this plan's scoping, data collection, and public input. The intent behind this iteration of the Indiana Trails Plan is to introduce a more detailed and better organized framework of goals, strategies and actions than shown in previous "update" plans.

More specific and measurable objectives and actions within each of these four new, larger goals should be developed in the future to see more progress. However, it is important for these objectives and actions to reflect the vision and desire of Indiana's trail stakeholders. Because this *Indiana Trails Plan* only had a moderate component of public outreach, it seems best to develop these more detailed goals and strategies in the next trails plan, which will include full statewide public-input methodologies. Additionally, this future public input will also help to develop more detailed, specific actions and tactics that will support these goals.

Although there is still more work to be done in the years to come for the future *2026 Indiana Trails Plan*, these goals still reflect Indiana's trail needs and provide several ways to improve the state's trail network. The progress toward meeting many of these goals can be tracked over the next five years.

CHAPTER 7
Some Resources, Ideas & Information

This chapter closes the SCORP by examining resources for parks-and-recreation stakeholders, including insightful statewide local government research from the Indiana University Public Policy Institute, a free park-system benchmarking database from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), and a discussion of the timely and difficult topic of funding. The last portion of this chapter lists options, resources, and ideas for park boards, superintendents, and concerned citizens who want to improve the financial situation for their park departments.

'PLACEMAKING' DATA ARE PART OF THE 2017 INDIANA ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS SURVEY

In 2017, the Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (IACIR) administered a statewide survey to gather information on challenges and issues affecting the relationships and interactions between governments in the state. The survey is the 13th in an ongoing series of special statewide surveys of local government and school officials about their perceptions of issues facing local governments. The IACIR is administered by the staff of the Indiana University Center for Public Policy and the Environment, a part of the IU Public Policy Institute. The survey contains 30 questions, many of which were part of previous surveys, while some were current events-based questions on recent issues. The questionnaire was sent to 1,381 county, city, town, township, and school officials across the state in late 2017, and had an effective aggregated response rate of 33%.

The data from the survey included several questions that touched on aspects of local government-provided parks and recreation, and "placemaking" in particular. The 2017 IACIR survey defined placemaking as: "... the shaping of shared public spaces to improve a community's social, cultural, and economic situation."

An early survey question asked about the "extent to which parks and recreation is currently a problem in your community," with 6% saying it was a major problem, 21% saying it was a moderate problem, and 73% saying that it was minor or no problem. The 27% of officials who responded either "major" or "moderate" to this question in 2017 is within 4% of the response for this question in the last five surveys going back to 2008. The second half of that question asked about the change in the conditions of local parks and recreation in the last year; 27% said that it improved, 6% said that it worsened, and 67% said that they saw no change; 11% of respondents said that the conditions of their local parks and recreation infrastructure was

one of the three most improved conditions in their community.

Another question asked about fiscal management strategies in their communities in 2015-2016, and 18% reported reducing spending on parks and recreation. Comparatively, only 9% reduced spending on sheriff/police, 8% laid off employees, and 4% reduced spending on fire services. As another comparison, in 2012-2013, 30% of respondents reported reducing spending on parks and recreation. Local government officials were asked what arrangements they made to provide parks and recreation to their communities; 85% responded that they provided parks and recreation with internal resources, 8% had a contract or agreement with another local government, 2% contracted with a private for-profit firm, and 4% contracted with a non-profit organization.

Asked about their community's efforts toward placemaking, 75% of respondents reported creating recreational assets; 60% pursued historic preservation and adaptive re-use; 59% built bicycle-friendly/walkable roads, streets, and sidewalks; 49% made green/open spaces; and 45% started arts and culture amenities or events. Asked about their motivations for placemaking, 68% of respondents said economic development; 46% said safety; 39% said beautification; 35% said health and well-being; and 30% said to create inviting public spaces.

PRORAGIS IS NOW 'PARK METRICS' (NRPA'S FREE, PARK AND RECREATION DATABASE)

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the NRPA has created an amazing, free, benchmarking database for use by local government park and recreation departments of all sizes. "Benchmarking" is an informational analysis/planning method that allows a community to compare "apples to apples" by taking community information (such as data about a park system) gathered from similar communities, and comparing it directly. The website for this database is: www.nrpa.org/publications-research/ParkMetrics/. This database offers the opportunity for local government park departments to complete an extensive online data gathering process. The newly entered data are hosted for free on servers at NRPA and can be accessed by communities to cross-compare themselves against 1,075 other public parks and recreation agencies na-

tionwide. In the January 2018 issue of NRPA's Parks and Recreation Magazine, Dr. Kevin Roth wrote the article: "Park Metrics: A Little Investment of Time for A Wealth of Information." In the article, Roth discusses the importance and potential impacts of using Park Metrics: "It is that time of year when the simple act of setting aside 15-30 minutes of your time can have a positive impact on our industry. Those 15-30 minutes spent either entering or updating your agency's information in NRPA Park Metrics not only provide other agencies like yours with access to invaluable peer insight, but also will help you identify steps your agency can take to ensure that it is best serving your community. NRPA Park Metrics is the most comprehensive source of data standards and insights for park and recreation agencies across the United States. ... There is no other industry benchmarking resource that provides you with more powerful data and insights to help you gauge your agency's performance against those of its peers. ... This includes every type of agency, spanning from large systems located in urban settings to smaller agencies that serve just a few hundred residents in small rural towns. ... Park Metrics is the slimmed-down, streamlined questionnaire, based on the old PRORAGIS system. If you have not already checked out the survey instrument, you will see the 30-question survey takes far less time to complete and only asks questions that are relevant to a majority of park and recreation agencies."

PAYING FOR PARKS AND RECREATION DURING AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY

We already have discussed the effects that the recent nationwide economic downturn has had on the citizens of Indiana, its local governments, and on parks and recreation departments in particular. Tough financial times bring up the question: "Given our tight budgets, how do we pay for this?"

In reality, tight budgets are nothing new; just ask any park director who has been in the job for more than 10 years. As previously mentioned, many communities use innovation to find solutions. The good news is that no one has to re-invent the wheel financially; there are many previous examples of successful financing for all aspects of parks and recreation.

The list below offers a few ideas and options for financing or funding parks and recreation, or saving money that can be used elsewhere. Each option has

a short description to give interested park professionals or stakeholders a head start on researching more details. We strongly suggest researching local communities that may have used some of these strategies. Modeling after a proven strategy helps ensure success. Some of these options are new, and some have been in use for decades. All have the potential for fiscally helping parks and recreation. If a nearby community has tried one or more of these methods and succeeded, ask them what worked. Many will happily share their ideas and tactics with anyone who asks.

An abbreviated list of fiscal management/ financing methods in parks and recreation:

- **Municipal General Funds and Revolving Funds:** These are the most common taxpayer-funded budget source for many departments. Revolving funds that roll over each budget year help eliminate the spend-it-or-lose-it issue, and allow for better fiscal agility over time.
- **Taxes:** These include Local Option Income Tax (LOIT), County Option Income Tax (COIT), County Adjusted Gross Income Tax (CAGIT), County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT), Hospitality/Innkeeper Taxes, etc. The proceeds of these tax programs have all been used for park, recreation and trail-related projects with varying amounts of success.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** These are cooperative efforts between businesses and communities with formal written agreements. These can be either short-term or long-term (single project or ongoing services).
- **Intergovernmental Partnerships and Cooperative Agreements:** These include cooperative efforts between levels of government to provide services for all, using formal, written agreements. One example is for a township to provide some funding to a nearby town's park system in exchange for free public

park and recreation access to township residents who live outside the town's boundaries.

- **Public and Private Foundations and Endowments:** Examples are the Ball Brothers Foundation, Lilly Endowment, and other well-known foundations, community foundations, etc. Many foundations and endowments offer the chance to apply for specialty grants or offer other kinds of assistance.
- **Governmental and Non-Governmental Grants and Funds:** These include the usual park, recreation and trails grant programs such as LWCF and RTP, but also can include Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), INDOT Transportation Enhancement (TE), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and others, given the use of some creative thinking.
- **Private Philanthropy:** Private giving from individuals or families is still a common method for people to give back to their community. What better way to have your name live on than to pay for a park?
- **Recreation Impact Fees (RIF):** These are local-lev-

el fees paid by developers that are intended to help the community cover the new costs of providing local government services to the added development.

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** TIF uses the anticipated future improvements in an area's tax base to pay for current capital development.
- **Municipal Improvement Districts (MID) or Business Improvement Districts (BID):** Similar to TIF, these target improvements specifically to urban blighted or economically depressed areas to encourage development and uses future improvements to the MID/BID's tax base to fund current park development.
- **User Fees and Charges:** These include memberships, dues, subscriptions, entry fees, program fees, events, event sales, etc., used to place part or all costs of providing recreation directly on those who use it most. Best practices use sliding scales, scholarships, "free" days, library checkout park passes and other tactics to avoid being too expen-

sive for use by low- or restricted-income residents.

- **Concessions and Concessioners:** These include vending, gift shops, event food sales, contracting, etc. For example, if Little League draws thousands of hungry kids, friends, and parents, consider using the profit from what they buy from you to help maintain those sports fields. This can be either a public function (in which all the profits go back to the park) or a contracted function (in which a contractor does the concession and pays fees or percentages of the profits by contract).

- **Contractor-Provided Services or Private Operators:** Examples are when a contractor from the private sector leases or licenses portions of public park land for amenities such as golf courses, restaurants, sports facilities, skating rinks, or even hotels. If written carefully, the leases or licenses can be lucrative for a local public park system, but the local government will want to perform thorough due diligence for legality, context of services rendered, and public trust doctrine.

- **Branding:** A park department can use the same tactic shoe companies use to promote their product. Selling T-shirts and ball caps can market parks in a community, and may even make money.

- **Local Park Foundations and "Friends" Groups:** Locally run park foundations are a way to fund raise specifically for a community park system. They are targeted to local needs and don't depend on politics or government budgets. "Friends" groups gather human capital in much the same way, allowing interested people to band together to provide labor and work toward completing improvements and fulfilling needs in parks.

- **Donations, Memorials, Bequests and Gift Catalogs:** In-kind donations mean virtually anything donated besides money. Examples include manpower, skilled labor or materials. Memorials and bequests are a great way for people to honor family or friends in a lasting way, especially if the person honored loved some aspect of the park system. Gift catalogs can effectively spread the word about specific projects, wants, and needs. These tools help a park system make its needs known, which is often necessary in order for someone to offer such a gift.

- **Corporate Sponsorships and Naming Rights:** That big new car lot or corporation that just moved into town might like to put its name on the new ball fields in exchange for funding a couple of years of maintenance, or it might sponsor the new leagues.

- **Volunteer Programs:** Such activities bring enthusiastic public helpers into parks and programs to assist the staff. Trained, passionate volunteers can free up paid staff to work elsewhere and accomplish more for less labor cost.

- **Zoning and Development Requirements and/or Fees:** Similar to RIF, these basically require new commercial and/or residential developments to either build new parks-and-recreation features into their sites (such as a new bike/pedestrian trail extension into the road/sidewalk network of a new senior assisted living center), or pay a set fee to help the community provide the facilities and services the new development will need. It is much cheaper and simpler to build new recreation-based features during initial construction than to add them later. Many developers readily work with these requirements with an eye toward using these low-cost bonus recreation features to attract buyers/residents. People and businesses often want to move next to parks and trails, and often will pay a premium to do so.

- **Municipal Loans, Bonds and Levies:** Special Assessment, General Obligation, and other types of loans, bonds and levies have been used to successfully fund parks-and-recreation development for decades. Carefully research the various types for their diverse tax advantages, beneficial interest rates, etc.

- **"Green" Bonds and "Impact" Investing:** These are debt instruments similar to municipal bonds but are created specifically to raise funds for projects that have a positive environmental or social impact, such as parks. Some investors specifically seek out investments with an environmental or social improvement theme.

- **Parks and Recreation Special Districts:** Related to both zoning and tax methods, these districts are sometimes used to subdivide a larger community's park department into smaller portions that can concentrate in more detail on localized fees and financing options, as well as on programs and services that better benefit their unique neighborhoods and local residents.

- **Cooperation and Joint Use Agreements:** If a nearby county park has a lot of new mowers and the

staff to run them, and a city park has a trained arborist who could help the county park improve the health of its trees, perhaps an agreement to share personnel and equipment for mutual benefit could be developed. Such an approach works especially well between parks and nearby schools that might be willing to share the non-school-day use of playgrounds and sports fields/courts in exchange for help with maintenance. Indiana State Code directly supports School/Park recreational "Joint Use Agreements". (This can be found under: IC 20-26-8-1, 2).

- **Infrastructure Sharing:** This is sharing infrastructure resources among local government departments such as placing a park on top of a municipal parking structure whose fees pay much or the park's costs (like Post Office Square in Boston), or building a stormwater retention pond that doubles as a public lake (like the Historic Fourth Ward Park and Reservoir in Atlanta).
- **Special Events:** Consider using a popular event as a fundraising tool. If a park hosts all or part of a community's biggest local festival, and 50 vendor booths each contribute a $200 vendor fee, there is a $10,000 revenue added to the park's budget in exchange for minimum opportunity cost (mowing and trash pickup will have to happen to some degree anyway). The larger the event's scale, the greater the potential for fundraising.
- **Economy of Scale/Bulk Purchasing:** If parks, the community's public works department, and the county's maintenance department need to buy grass seed or fertilizer, lawnmowers or trucks, consider banding together and making a bulk purchase of enough for everyone, which could save everyone money. Coordination is not easy but the savings can be considerable.
- **Privatization/De-privatization of Maintenance and/or Services:** Consider doing the math about what it costs to do some maintenance and services cost in-house in terms of labor, materials, training, insurance, etc., and compare those with the costs of contracting them to carefully researched, qualified private firms. Sometimes the reverse is true, and in-house workers may be cheaper in the long run over private contractors. The trick is to do the homework. Make sure to include all possible costs when making comparisons.

- **Aggressive Preventive/Planned/Scheduled Maintenance:** Smart maintenance supervisors know the cost effectiveness of taking care of equipment and facilities. New trucks are expensive compared to the cost of a few oil changes. Plan equipment and facility maintenance in advance, and follow a carefully laid-out schedule. Train all levels of staff to habitually monitor and maintain all equipment, including taking it out of service when necessary. The same approach can be just as valuable in facilities. For example, air conditioning systems in buildings function longer and use less energy when filters are changed on time, coils are cleaned regularly, and the refrigerant and oil levels are kept full.

Other Financing or Funding Resources

A helpful online resource for any federal grant is: www.grants.gov/. The fully searchable website offers access to 26 federal grant-making agencies and their 800 grant programs, and even has downloadable or Web-based grant applications available for some programs.

Another helpful website is that of the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA): www.IN.gov/ocra/index.htm. This website features a number of different state and federal grant programs sometimes used for parks and recreation, such as Community Development Block Grants and Indiana Main Street. Contact the OCRA community liaison for any given area to get assistance directly targeted to a specific community's needs.

As mentioned earlier, local community foundations sometimes offer many kinds of specialized grants, or can help create a new donation account for a specific park department. Start at: www.cof.org/community-foundation-locator to find a nearby foundation.

You can find links to DNR's outdoor recreation grant programs at the Outdoor Recreation webpage, IN.gov/dnr/outdoor. The grants cover nearly every aspect of natural and cultural resources, and the website includes full details for each, plus contact information.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has a website specifically devoted to its competitive grants and fundraising: www.nrpa.org/fundraising-resources/. The site even offers a free online fundraising course.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
Indiana Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey

Are you: ___ Male   ___ Female   What is your age? _____

In which Indiana county do you live? _____   Do not live in Indiana ____

On average, how many times do YOU & ANY OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR IMMEDIATE HOUSEHOLD participate in the following outdoor activities? PLEASE PROVIDE AN ANSWER FOR EACH CATEGORY & INCLUDE YOUR ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD.

	More than once a week	Once a week	Twice a month	Once a month	Couple of times per year	Once a year	Never
Walking, Jogging, Running, Hiking							
Bicycling (Road, Touring, Casual, Etc.)							
Mountain Biking (Natural Surface Trail)							
Outdoor Pool Swimming or Water Park							
Splash Pad/Spray Pad							
Swimming/Scuba Diving/Snorkeling (Lakes, Ponds, Rivers, etc.)							
Family/Friends/Group Outdoor Gatherings/ Reunions							
Picnicking							
Playground Use							
Fall Foliage Viewing							
Gardening/Landscaping							
Gathering (Berries, Mushrooms, etc.)							
Relaxation/Spiritual Renewal							
Health Related Activities (Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, etc.)							
Bird/Wildlife Watching							
Outdoor Photography							
Attending Outdoor Spectator Sports (Baseball, Football, Soccer, etc)							
Playing Baseball/Softball							
Playing Basketball							
Playing Football							
Playing Regular Golf/Driving Range							

	More than once a week	Once a week	Twice a month	Once a month	Couple of times per year	Once a year	Never
Playing Disc Golf							
Playing Soccer							
Playing Tennis							
Playing Volleyball							
Rollerblading/Roller Skating							
Archery							
Playing Horseshoes							
Lawn Games (Badminton, Lawn Bowling, Bocce Ball, etc.)							
Skateboarding/BMX Bike							
4-Wheeling: ATVs, Motocross (Off-Road & On Trail)							
Horseback Riding (All Types)							
Fishing (All Types)							
Sport Shooting (All Types Shotgun, Rifle, Pistol, etc.)							
Hunting/Trapping (All Types)							
Camping (All Types)							
Canoeing/Kayaking/Rowing (Boat) Water Paddle Sports							
Sailing/Windsurfing							
Power Boating/Waterskiing (All Types)							
Winter Sports (All Skiing/Snowboarding, Sledding/Ice Skating, Outdoor Hockey)							
Snowmobiling							
Attending Outdoor Fairs/Festivals							
Attending Outdoor Concerts, Plays, etc.							
Visiting Historic Sites/Interpretive Centers/ Archeological Sites/etc.							
Visiting Parks, Wilderness Or Primitive Areas							
Visiting Farms, Wineries, Agricultural Venues, etc.							
Geo-caching/Orienteering							

What would you say is your FAVORITE outdoor recreation activity? Can be anything from boating, golfing, picnicking, camping, etc.

_____

In which county in INDIANA do you MOST OFTEN participate in outdoor recreation activities?
_____   Outside Indiana ____

Now think of the ONE outdoor activity that you participate in the MOST. How do you PRIMARILY travel to that outdoor recreational destination?

___ Walk/jog/run   ___ Car/truck   ___ Scooter   ___ Other
___ Bike   ___ Motorcycle   ___ Horseback

Approximately how much money are you willing to spend per year on YOUR FAVORITE outdoor recreation activity? (Include cost of equipment, training, travel, etc.)

___ Less than $100   ___ $501-$750   ___ $1501-$2000   ___ $5001-$7500
___ $101-$250   ___ $751-$1000   ___ $2001-$3000   ___ $7501-$10000
___ $251-$500   ___ $1001-$1500   ___ $3001-$5000   ___ More than $10000

After first pursuing all possible Federal funds, grants & donations, which do you feel should be the OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES FOR FUNDING for the DEVELOPMENT of new outdoor recreation facilities? (SELECT ONLY ONE)

___ State general taxes   ___ Local bond issue
___ State tax on recreation equipment   ___ Facility use fee
___ Land development set-asides   ___ Other
___ Local taxes   ___ None

After first pursuing all possible Federal funds, grants & donations, which do you feel should be the OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES FOR FUNDING for the OPERATIONS/MAINTENANCE of existing outdoor recreation facilities? (SELECT ONLY ONE)

___ State general taxes   ___ Local taxes
___ State tax on recreation equipment   ___ Other
___ Facility use fee   ___ None

Approximately how far are you willing to travel (ONE WAY) to participate in your FAVORITE outdoor recreation activity?

___ 0-5 miles   ___ 16-25 miles   ___ 51-75 miles
___ 6-10 miles   ___ 26-35 miles   ___ 76-100 miles
___ 11-15 miles   ___ 36-50 miles   ___ More than 100 miles

Which ONE of the following BEST describes the MAIN reason you do not participate in outdoor recreation MORE OFTEN. Please read ALL the answers and select only ONE.

___ None-I participate as much as I want to
___ There are no outdoor recreation facilities close to my home
___ Customs/cultural barriers (family traditions, race or ethnic expectations, beliefs, etc.)
___ Structural barriers (poor setting/physical environment, lack of facilities or programs, transportation, safety, etc.)
___ Cost barriers (lack of money/economic factors)
___ Social barriers (no one to participate with, family conflicts, responsibility to others, etc.)
___ Personal barriers (no time, no motivation, lack of skills, physical/mental/emotional health, ability level, etc.)
___ Disability-related access prevents me from participating as much as I would like

Do you or any of your immediate family members have any type of physical or intellectual disability that prevents you/them from participating in outdoor recreation activities?
___ Yes___ No

If "YES" to the previous question, what type of disability do you/they have? (Select all that apply)
___ Walking   ___ Hearing   ___ Lifting   ___ Other
___ Seeing   ___ Breathing ___ Bending

What is the MAIN reason you participate or would participate in outdoor recreation?
PLEASE READ ALL THE ANSWERS AND SELECT ONLY THE MAIN ONE.
___ Mental Health (relaxation, stress reduction, meditation, spiritual renewal, etc.)
___ Physical health
___ To be with family/friends
___ Volunteerism
___ Educational opportunities
___ Tourism
___ Other

And finally, tell us about your immediate family:

What is your current marital status?
___ Married   ___ Single-widowed   ___ Single-separated   ___ Other
___ Single-never married   ___ Single-divorced   ___ Committed partnership

Which of the following do you consider yourself to be?
___ White, non Hispanic   ___ Asian
___ Black/African American   ___ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
___ Hispanic/Latino   ___ Multi-racial
___ American Indian/Alaska Native   ___ Other

How many family members live in your immediate household?
___ 1   ___ 2   ___ 3   ___ 4   ___ 5   ___ 6 or more

What are the ages of those living in your household that are under 18 years of age?
_____   _____   _____   _____   _____   _____   _____

APPENDIX B
2018 Indiana Trails Stakeholder Survey for the Indiana Trails Plan (2021-2025)

1. **Should the State take a stronger role in the active rail-banking of abandoned rail corridor in Indiana?**
   a. No
   b. Yes
      i. If yes, what should that role be?
         1. Support local efforts
         2. Lead the way
         3. Legal assistance
         4. Funding
         5. Some combination of the above
         6. Something else? What? _____

2. **Which statewide priority should the State have for all Trails? (Select as many answers as needed).**
   a. Push the overall state trails system (large projects, with regional scale)
   b. Push local trail access (build more new, stand-alone small bits of local trail)
   c. Push small-scale / local trail connectivity (connect bits of local trails together)
   d. All the above
   e. Something else? What? _____

3. **What are the funding sources you are CURRENTLY using for your trail system? (Select as many answers as needed. Question 1 of 2)**
   a. Federal grants (RTP; CMAQ; Transportation Alternatives; Etc.)
   b. State Grants (Harrison Trust; Regional Cities; IEDC funds)
   c. Existing budgets/local money
   d. Private funding (Private foundations; Corporate funding; Etc.)
   e. Local level fundraising (Sponsorships; Naming rights; Individual donations; Individual Philanthropy)

4. **For the trail system funding sources you chose above, what PERCENTAGES of each source do you CURRENTLY use? (Question 2 of 2; Total of Percentages cannot exceed 100%)**
   ___% Federal grants (RTP; CMAQ; Transportation Alternatives; Etc.)
   ___% State Grants (Harrison Trust; Regional Cities; IEDC funds)
   ___% Existing budgets/local money
   ___% Private funding (Private foundations; Corporate funding; Etc.)
   ___% Local level fundraising (Sponsorships; Naming rights; Individual donations; Individual Philanthropy)

5. **Who is your trail system currently partnering with to develop and build new trails? (Select as many answers as needed).**
   a. A local Parks Department
   b. An local/regional Economic Development organization or Chamber of Commerce
   c. A Tourism organization or Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB)
   d. A Health or Wellness Organization (includes hospitals, clinics, local/regional health departments, medical schools, etc.)
   e. A Transportation organization (can include INDOT, county highway department, municipal street department, railroad, etc.)
   f. Other Trails groups or organizations
   g. Related Public Lands/Conservation groups (can include Land Trusts, Land Conservancies, Nature Preserves, etc.)
   h. Other
        i. What other partners?_____

6. **What sort of organization or government department currently owns and operates your local trail system? (Question 1 of 2)**
   a. A Public Works or Streets Department
   b. A Park Department
   c. An independent Non-Profit Organization or Friends Group
   d. A Combination of the Above groups

7. **Given your answer above, if you could change it, who would be the best/preferred group to own and operate your trails system? (Question 2 of 2)**
   a. A Public Works or Streets Department
   b. A Park Department
   c. An independent Non-Profit Organization or Friends Group
   d. A Combination of the Above groups
   e. No change needed

For the NEXT TWO Questions, PLEASE RANK your answers from highest (most important) to lowest (least important), with 1 being the highest:

8. **For your trail system; what are your highest priorities for trail development?**
   ___Connecting to INTERNAL community destinations (such as: schools, libraries, parks, etc.)
   ___Adding mileage to existing trails in your system
   ___Connecting to other trails outside your trail system
   ___Connecting your trail system to destinations OUTSIDE your community (such as: state parks, historical/cultural destinations, bigger cities, etc.)
   ___Networking residential neighborhoods, business districts, etc. for better alternative transportation connectivity

9. **In your opinion, how important is trail connectivity for the following:**
    ___Community economic development (such as: property values, tourism, business development)
    ___Personal health and wellness (for individual people)
    ___Community health and wellness (for overall health outcomes for everyone)
    ___Environmental quality and sustainability
    ___Alternative transportation corridors
    ___Community quality of life (such as: resident recruitment and retention, recreation opportunities, place-making)

10. **In the past 5 years, what NEW (that you haven't experienced before) challenges, problems or opportunities are your trail system struggling with? (Open-ended question; please list any new challenges in any order)**

    _____
    _____
    _____

APPENDIX C
Indiana Department of Natural Resources Trail Activity/Trail User Participation Survey

For purposes of this survey, trail activity is defined as any activity that you participate in that takes place on a linear corridor. Examples are walking or biking on a designated park trail system, off highway vehicle riding (4x4s, ATVs, dirt bikes, etc.) on designated properties and/or trails, in-line skating on a community trail or trail system, or canoeing/kayaking on a stream or water trail system.

IN INDIANA ONLY, during the past 12 months, how often did you participate in the following trail activities?

	More than once a week	Once a week	Twice a month	At least 1 time/ month	At least 6 times per year	Once a year	Never
Using Trails For Alternative Transportation Routes							
Walking/Running/Jogging							
Hiking/Backpacking							
Bicycle Touring (Casual, Tour Or Both)							
Mountain Bike Riding							
In-Line Skating							
Cross Country Skiing							
Snowmobiling							
Off –Road Vehicle Riding (Motorcycle, 4-Wheel, Atv, Etc.)							
Canoeing/Kayaking On Water Trails Or Blueways							
Horseback Riding							

Which of the following would you like to participate in AT LEAST 12 TIMES PER YEAR IN THE FUTURE? Select all that apply.

☐ Using trails for alternative transportation routes
☐ Walking/running/jogging
☐ Hiking/backpacking
☐ Bicycle touring (casual, tour or both)
☐ Cross country skiing
☐ Snowmobiling
☐ Off- road vehicle riding (motorcycle, 4-wheel, ATV,etc.)
☐ Canoeing/kayaking on water trails or blueways
☐ Mountain bike riding
☐ Horseback riding
☐ In-line skating
☐ None of these

Please indicate your TOP 3 reasons for using trails.
___ Pleasure, relaxation, recreation, scenery
___ Health-physical training
___ Family or social outing(s)
___ Safety – staying off roadways
___ Commuting or travel
___ Educational opportunities, natural environment
___ Associated with volunteer opportunities (trail clean-up/maintenance, identifying trail problems, etc.)
___ Other

Please indicate the TOP 3 ways you find out about trail opportunities.
___ Trail websites
___ Tourism websites
___ Trail provider booklets/brochures
___ Local tourism/community media (radio, television, etc.)
___ Tourism/national media (radio, television, books, magazines, etc.)
___ Organizational presentations (schools, Rotary, scouts, etc.)
___ Special events (fairs, festivals, etc.)
___ Word of mouth
___ Signage at parks or other recreational facilities
___ Other
___ None

What is your PREFERRED trail surface? Please read ALL the answers & select ONLY ONE.
☐ Native soil   ☐ Compacted limestone screenings
☐ Gravel   ☐ Wood chips
☐ Water   ☐ Other
☐ Asphalt/Concrete   ☐ No preference

Considering the trail activities that you participate in, what is the top annual amount you would be willing to spend to participate in those activities? (Include cost of equipment, training, travel, etc.)
☐ Less than $100   ☐ $1,501-$5,000   ☐ More than $10,000
☐ $100-$500   ☐ $1,001-$1,500   ☐ Do not participate
☐ $501-$1,000   ☐ $5,001-$10,000

Considering the trail activities that you participate in, how far (ONE WAY) would you be willing to travel, in INDIANA, to participate in these activities?
☐ 0-5 miles   ☐ 16-25 miles   ☐ 51-75 miles
☐ 6-10 miles   ☐ 26-35 miles   ☐ 76-100 miles
☐ 11-15 miles   ☐ 36-50 miles   ☐ More than 100 miles

To better indicate Indiana's area of need, in which Indiana county do you MOST OFTEN participate in trail activity? _____

Is there a trail within 5 miles or 10 minutes of your home?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

The following 2 questions deal with trail connectivity. By this we mean a system of trails that connect to points of interest, such as businesses, neighborhoods, schools, recreation area and/or other trails. Do you believe connecting trails should be an important part of your community's infrastructure?
☐ Strongly agree
☐ Somewhat agree
☐ Somewhat disagree
☐ Strongly disagree
☐ No opinion

How important do you believe trail connectivity is for:

	Extremely	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all	No opinion
Your communities economic development:					
Personal health and wellness:					
Community health and wellness:					
Environmental health and sustainability:					
Alternative transportation corridors:					

What are the MAIN reasons you DO NOT participate in trail activities as much as you would like? Select all that apply.
☐ None-I do not use trails
☐ None – I participate as much as I want to
☐ There are no trails close to my home
☐ Customs/cultural barriers (family traditions, race or ethnic expectations, beliefs, etc.)
☐ Structural barriers (poor setting/physical environment: lack of facilities or programs, transportation, safety,etc.)
☐ Cost barriers (lack of money/economic factors)
☐ Social barriers (no one to participate with, family conflicts, responsibility to others, etc.)
☐ Personal barriers (no time, no motivation, lack of skills, physical/mental/emotional health, ability level, etc.)
☐ Disability-related trail access prevents me from participating as much as I would like

Please indicate if your trail activity is limited by any of the following health factors. (Select all that apply)
☐ Walking
☐ Hearing
☐ Physical ability to ride a bike
☐ Physical ability to ride a motorized off road vehicle
☐ Seeing
☐ Breathing
☐ Physical ability to ride a horse
☐ Physical ability to use a canoe/kayak
☐ Other

What trail improvements could be made to increase your use of trails? (Select all that apply)
☐ Better surface
☐ Easier slopes
☐ Other
☐ Guided trail activity
☐ Increased personal safety measures
☐ Improved visibility
☐ Walking, biking or riding clubs
☐ None

For each of the following, how well does the CURRENT supply of trails, in Indiana, meet your needs?

	Supply is more than enough	Supply is just right	Supply is OK for now but needs to be increased in the future	Supply does not meet my needs	Uncertain, don't know current supply	Don't use
Using trails for alternative transportation routes						
Walking/running/jogging						
Hiking/backpacking						
Bicycle touring (casual, tour or both)						
Mountain bike riding						
In-line skating						
Cross country skiing						
Snowmobiling						
Off-road vehicle riding (motorcycle, 4-wheel, ATV, etc.)						
Canoeing/kayaking on water trails or blueways						
Horseback riding						

After first pursuing all possible Federal funds, grants & donations, which do you feel should be the OTHER PRIMARY SOURCE FOR FUNDING for the DEVELOPMENT of new trails? (Select Only One)

☐ State General taxes ☐ Local Taxes
☐ State Tax on recreation equipment ☐ Trail use fee
☐ Land development set-asides ☐ Other
☐ Local Bond issue ☐ None

After first pursuing all possible Federal funds, grants & donations, which do you feel should be the OTHER PRIMARY SOURCE FOR FUNDING for the OPERATIONS/MAINTENANCE of existing trails? (Select Only One)

☐ State General taxes ☐ Trail use fee
☐ State Tax on recreation equipment ☐ Other
☐ Local Taxes ☐ None

If the money was spent in your local area to help support TRAIL UPKEEP AND NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT, how much would you be willing to pay for an ANNUAL TRAIL FEE?

☐ Less than $5
☐ $5.00 to $9.99
☐ $10.00 to $14.99
☐ $15.00 to $19.99
☐ $20.00 or more

And finally, tell us about yourself:

Are you ...   ___ Male   ___ Female

What is your age? _____

In which Indiana county do you live? _____   **Do not live in Indiana** _____

Which of the following do you consider yourself to be?
___ White, non Hispanic   ___ Asian
___ Black/African American   ___ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
___ Hispanic/Latino   ___ Multi-racial
___ American Indian/Alaska Native   ___ Other

APPENDIX D
Local Recreation Providers Survey – Ball State University

What zip codes represent the community served by your local parks and recreation system?   Please note if your services reach statewide. _____

What is the zip code where you reside?_____

Which of the following best describes your role in local parks and recreation provision?
☐ Employee of County Parks and Recreation Department
☐ Employee of Township Parks and Recreation Department
☐ Employee of Municipal Parks and Recreation Department
☐ Affiliated with a Trail organization
☐ Other unit of local government (Street Department, Public Works, Public Works)
☐ Member of County Park Board*
☐ Member of Township Park Board*
☐ Member of Municipal Park Board*
☐ Member of "Friends of" group or similar (non-profit/nongovernmental management group)
☐ Other_____

*Park Board refers to a legally established management body that complies with IC 36-10-3 or IC 36-10-4, http://www.ai.org/legislative/ic/code/title36/ar10/ch3.html.

Please, indicate your primary role in the local parks and recreation system (superintendent, management, programming staff, facilities maintenance, park board chairperson, etc.) _____
_____

Which of the following exist in your community? (Check all that apply.)
☐ Parks and Recreation Department
☐ Park Board (or Parks and Recreation Board)
☐ "Friends of Parks" group or similar (nongovernmental/non-profit parks or trails management group)
☐ Other agency that manages local public parks and recreation or trails:
  Please explain: _____

Which units of government are involved with providing local parks and/or recreation opportunities to citizens in your community? Please check all that apply:
☐ County
☐ Municipal (City or Town)
☐ Township
☐ Other (please explain): _____

What is the population of your service area?
☐ 4,999 or less
☐ 5,000 to 9,999
☐ 10,000 to 49,999
☐ 50,000 to 149,000
☐ 150,000 or more
☐ Not Applicable

How many people, on average, do your facilities serve annually?
☐ Fewer than 100
☐ 100 to 499
☐ 500 to 999
☐ 1,000 to 1,499
☐ 1,500 to 1,999
☐ Greater than 2,000
☐ Not Applicable

Which of these would you most likely associate with the parks in your service area?
Please rank in order from 1 to 5 related to the facilities and parks in your parks and recreation system.

What are the approximate total number of acres managed under the local park system? _____acres

Of the following amenities, how many acres are used for recreation?

	Number of Acres
Forest	
Water bodies (e.g., ponds, lakes, wetlands)	
Open green space	
Other:	
Other:	

How many miles of each are present in your service area?

	Length in Miles
Walking/Hiking Trails (paved)	
Walking/Hiking Trails (unpaved)	
Bicycle Trails	
Motorized Trails	
River Trails/ Greenway	
Equestrian Trails	
Other (please specify)	

Please indicate in the table below if the local park and recreation system has collaboration with other providers of recreational opportunities in the community.

	Yes	No
Privately-owned Neighborhood Parks in Subdivisions		
Private for Profit Providers		
Non-Profit Provider (e.g. YMCA)		
School Systems providing recreation		
State Properties		
Federal Properties		
Other		

What was the 2017 budget for your agency?_____

What was the total revenue earned by the local parks and recreation system in 2017?_____

Has your legally appropriated budget increased or decreased since the 2016 fiscal year? _____

Do you dedicate any percentage of your budget to ADA compliance?
☐ Yes. If yes, what percentage?_____
☐ No

What measures, in the last five years, have you taken to achieve ADA compliance (if any)?
_____

What percent of the local tax base goes to the local parks and recreation department?
☐ <1%
☐ 1% - 2%
☐ 2% - 5%
☐ >5%

Does your facility use non-reverting funds?
☐ Yes
☐ No

Please rank how money is allocated within your service area:
_____ Personnel
_____ Land Management
_____ Expansion
_____ Environmental Education
_____ Promotion of Parks and Recreation
_____ Parks and Recreation Activities

Please complete the following table about your local park system regarding facilities and services:

	Do you currently have this facility in the local park system?		Do you regularly provide programs with this facility?		Would you be willing to provide this service if it is not already present?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Sports Fields (baseball, soccer, etc.)						
Playground						
Picnic Area						
Campground						
Hard surface courts (basketball, tennis, etc.)						
Skate Park						
Dog Park						
Swimming Pool/ Splash Pad						
Other:_____						

Please complete the following table about your local park system in regarding trails:

	Do you currently have this facility in the local park system?		Do you regularly provide programs with this facility?		Would you be willing to provide this service if it is not already present?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Multi Use Natural Surface Trail (bike/pedestrian & equine)						
Multi Use Natural Surface Trail (OHV, bike/pedestrian & equine)						
Nature/ Interpretive Trail						
Connector Trails to Existing Trails						
Single Use Trail (any surface)						
ADA-compliant Accessible Trail						
Water Trails						
Greenway or other Paved Trail						
Other Trail:_____						
Other Trail:_____						

In the past year, what are the operation and maintenance costs for the following parks and recreation facilities in your park system?

	Annual Operation Cost	Annual Maintenance Cost
Sports Fields (baseball, soccer, etc)		
Playground		
Picnic Area		
Campground		
Hard surface courts (basketball, tennis, etc)		
Skate Park		
Dog Park		
Swimming Pool/ Splash Pad		
Other:_____		

In the last year, what are the operation and maintenance costs for the following facilities regarding trail systems?

	Annual Operation Cost	Annual Maintenance Cost
Multi Use Trail (bike/pedestrian & equine)		
Multi Use Trail (OHV, bike/pedestrian & equine)		
Nature/ Interpretive Trail		
Connector Trails to Existing Trails		
Single Use Trail		
ADA-compliant Accessible Trail		
Water Trails		
Greenway or other Paved Trail		
Other Trail		
Other Trail		

What percentage of the budget is set aside for the PREVENTIVE/SCHEDULED/EMERGENCY maintenance of the above aspects of the facility (please explain in the next question)?

	Percent of Budget
Preventive Maintenance (e.g. tightening bolts on play equipment, changing engine oil, etc.)	
Scheduled Maintenance (e.g. seasonal/yearly vehicle tune-ups; winter season machinery tear-downs, interior/exterior painting)	
Emergency Maintenance (e.g. broken water pipes, vandalism repair/clean-up)	

Please give examples of maintenance projects, schedules, etc. that you use:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Please indicate any measures you have taken in the past five years to address funding challenges with parks and recreation in your community:

	Funding Sources Tried/Used	Funding Sources Planned (Future)	Not Used or Planned
Worked with Park Foundation			
Levied Taxes			
Bond Fund			
Engaged In Fundraising			
Approached Small Local Business For Funding			
Pursued Non-Park Foundations			
Closed Facilities			
Received Donations			
Applied For Grants			
Pursued Public-Private Partnership			
Sold Advertising Space To Local Businesses (Sponsorships)			
Private Funding For Naming Rights			
Other			

Please indicate any measures you have taken in the past five years to address staffing challenges with parks and recreation in your community:

	Funding sources tried/used	Funding sources planned (future)	Not used or planned
Used/Increased Volunteers			
Worked with Friends Of Parks Groups			
Worked with Community Centers			
Worked with Youth Sports Leagues			
Partnering with Other Government Agencies			
Partnering with Local Educational Programs			
Partnering with Local for Profit Agencies			
Local Business Donations of People/Staff Time			
Local Business Donations of Equipment			
Local Non-Profit Organizations			
Other			

Please indicate from the list below any measures you have taken in the past five years to address the need for land to expand the parks and recreation areas in your community:

	Funding sources tried/used	Funding sources planned (future)	Not used or planned
Land and Water Conservation Fund grant used to purchase land			
Partner with local schools for public use of their land or recreational facilities			
Utility corridors or Rights of Way			
Land trust or other nonprofit landowners			
Conservation easement with other landowners			
Cooperation with private landowners			
Indiana Department of Natural Resources Grant programs (other than LWCF)			
Other			

Does your local park and recreation system have a system wide master plan?
☐ Yes, it was published in the year_____
☐ No

Do you plan to develop a local parks and recreation master plan in the next 5-10 years?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Undecided

Please indicate the importance you and your organization place on the following:

	No Importance	Not Very important	Neutral	Important	Critical Importance
Trail Expansion					
Trail Maintenance					
Park Expansion					
Park Maintenance					
Signage and Interpretation					
Environmental Education					
Promoting Parks and Recreation					

Please indicate the level at which you agree or disagree with the following statements on a scale of 0-10:

Trails should be an important part of a community's infrastructure.
- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10

I think that ADA compliance is important for trail development and renovation.
- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10

There should be state legislation that supports the acquisition of former railroad corridors for the development of trails.
- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10

My community needs greater assistance in order to provide a satisfactory experience for users of our parks and recreation facilities.
- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10

Park development is more important than housing and community development.
- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10

How would you define a park?

_____
_____
_____

Below are a few dictionary definitions of a park. Please select the phrase that most closely relates to what a park means to you.

1a : an enclosed piece of ground stocked with game and held by royal prescription or grant

b : a tract of land that often includes lawns, woodland, and pasture attached to a country house and is used as a game preserve and for recreation

2a : a piece of ground in or near a city or town kept for ornament and recreation

b : an area maintained in its natural state as a public property

3a : a space occupied by military vehicles, materials, or animals

b : parking lot

4: an enclosed arena or stadium used especially for ball games

5: an area designed for a specified type of use (such as industrial, commercial, or residential use) amusement parks

Imagine this was an image of your service region. Which area would your community generally be lacking in terms of parks and recreation?

Imagine this was an image of your service region. Which area would your community generally be excelling in terms of parks and recreation?

Please tell us about the people who work within the parks and recreation system. Please indicate here if you would like to opt out of answering the demographic questions.
☐ Continue
☐ Opt Out

How long have you served in your current position?_____

What is your highest level of education attained?
☐ Less than high school degree
☐ Graduated High School Diploma
☐ Some college
☐ College Graduate
☐ Graduate School

Race/Ethnicity
☐ White, Nonhispanic (1)
☐ Hispanic (2)
☐ African American (3)
☐ Asian American (4)
☐ Native American (5)
☐ Mixed Race (6)
☐ Other (7) _____

Gender
☐ Male
☐ Female

Are you a person with a disability?
☐ Yes
☐ No

Age_____

How many years have you worked in the parks and recreation profession (in years)?_____

Number of male staff in your park system

Number of female staff in your park system

Number of staff with disabilities in your park system

How many staff people in the parks system fall in to the following ages?

Ages	Number of People
15-20	
21-30	
31-40	
41-50	
51-60	
61-70	
71 or older	

How likely are you to participate in a survey similar to this in the future?

	1	2	3	4	5
Not very likely : Highly likely					

Please provide any additional comments you have regarding this survey and the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX E
Water Trail Survey

What brought you to our website today? (check all that apply)
- ☐ Public Access Site (Launch) Locations
- ☐ Dam Information
- ☐ River Miles
- ☐ Average Float Times
- ☐ Current Water Levels or Conditions
- ☐ Descriptions / Photos
- ☐ Canoe or Kayak Rental (Livery) Information
- ☐ Streamside Camping Locations
- ☐ Surrounding Amenities (Restaurants, Lodging, Parks, etc.)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Please rank how important providing the following water trail information is to you.

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not at all important
Public Access Site (Launch) Locations					
Dam Information					
River Miles					
Average Float Times					
Current Water Levels or Conditions					
Descriptions / Photos					
Canoe or Kayak Rental (Livery) Information					
Streamside Camping Locations					
Surrounding Amenities (Restaurants, Lodging, Parks, etc.)					

For which stream(s) would you like water trail information? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ Big Pine
- ☐ Blue River
- ☐ Cedar Creek
- ☐ Deep River
- ☐ Driftwood River
- ☐ Eel River
- ☐ Elkhart River
- ☐ Fall Creek
- ☐ Fawn River
- ☐ Flatrock River
- ☐ Iroquois River
- ☐ Kankakee River
- ☐ Lake Michigan
- ☐ Little / Big Blue River (Shelbyville)
- ☐ Little Calumet River
- ☐ Maumee River
- ☐ Mississinewa River
- ☐ Muscatatuck River
- ☐ Ohio River
- ☐ Patoka River
- ☐ Pigeon Creek (Evansville)
- ☐ Pigeon River (Steuben County)
- ☐ St Joseph River
- ☐ St. Marys River
- ☐ Salamonie River
- ☐ Sugar Creek
- ☐ Tippecanoe River
- ☐ Wabash River

What other water trail information do you think would be helpful? (Check all that apply)

☐ Answer Choices

☐ Water Trail Safety

☐ Laws & Regulations

☐ Applicable Permits/Rates

☐ Water Trail Etiquette

☐ Paddling or Stream Stewardship Organizations

☐ Upcoming Paddling Events

☐ Trip Planning Help

☐ Water Quality

☐ Fishing

☐ Wildlife Watching

☐ Other (please specify)

What type of watercraft do or will you use on water trails? (check all that apply)

☐ Canoe

☐ Kayak

☐ Stand-Up Paddleboard

☐ Raft

☐ Tube

☐ Electric Motor Boat

☐ Gas Motor Boat

☐ Non-motorized Boat

☐ Other (please specify)

How do you prefer to get information about water trails? (Check all that apply)

☐ Website

☐ Interactive App (phone, tablet, etc.)

☐ Social Media

☐ Paper Map or Guide

☐ Brochure/Booklet

☐ Other (please specify)

What other water trail information could we provide that would help you and other trail users? (Open-Ended Question)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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