

2018 – 2022

Idaho Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Idaho Department of Parks & Recreation



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Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



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Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	2
Purpose	2
Planning Process and Methodology.....	2
Wetlands Component	4
Chapter 2: Outdoor Recreation Programs and Supply	5
Providers of Outdoor Recreation in Idaho, and Their Roles	5
Non-Government Programs.....	5
Local Government Programs	7
State Programs.....	7
Federal Programs	12
Chapter 3: Outdoor Recreation Demand	16
Outdoor Recreation Demand.....	16
Population Changes and the Impacts on Demand.....	16
Travel and Tourism	19
Participation	20
Spotlight on the Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation	20
Summarizing Outdoor Recreation Demand.....	26
Outdoor Needs and Trends as Identified by Providers.....	26
Land and Water Conservation Fund Projects	27
Emerging Activities and Trends.....	28
Chapter 4: Outdoor Recreation Issues and Recommendations	32
Common Themes	32
SCORP Focus Areas 2018-2023	33
1. Access.....	33
2. Experience.....	34
3. Stewardship	35
Chapter 5: Moving Forward.....	36
Appendices.....	38

Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose

This Idaho Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is produced by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) in order to provide an overarching document to guide outdoor recreation in Idaho for the next five years. The Idaho SCORP provides a contemporary assessment of the outdoor recreation system in Idaho, from detailing providers and supply, to understanding the demand and needs, and identifying issues impacting outdoor recreation throughout the state. The SCORP provides a comprehensive understanding of Idaho's outdoor recreation system and will be useful for a variety of providers in making decisions. However, it is not considered a site specific plan, nor does it attempt to solve or address every issue facing Idaho's recreation delivery system. While the plan helps identify statewide and regional trends and issues, IDPR strongly encourages local and regional planning, research and interagency cooperation in order to meet and understand local demands and needs.

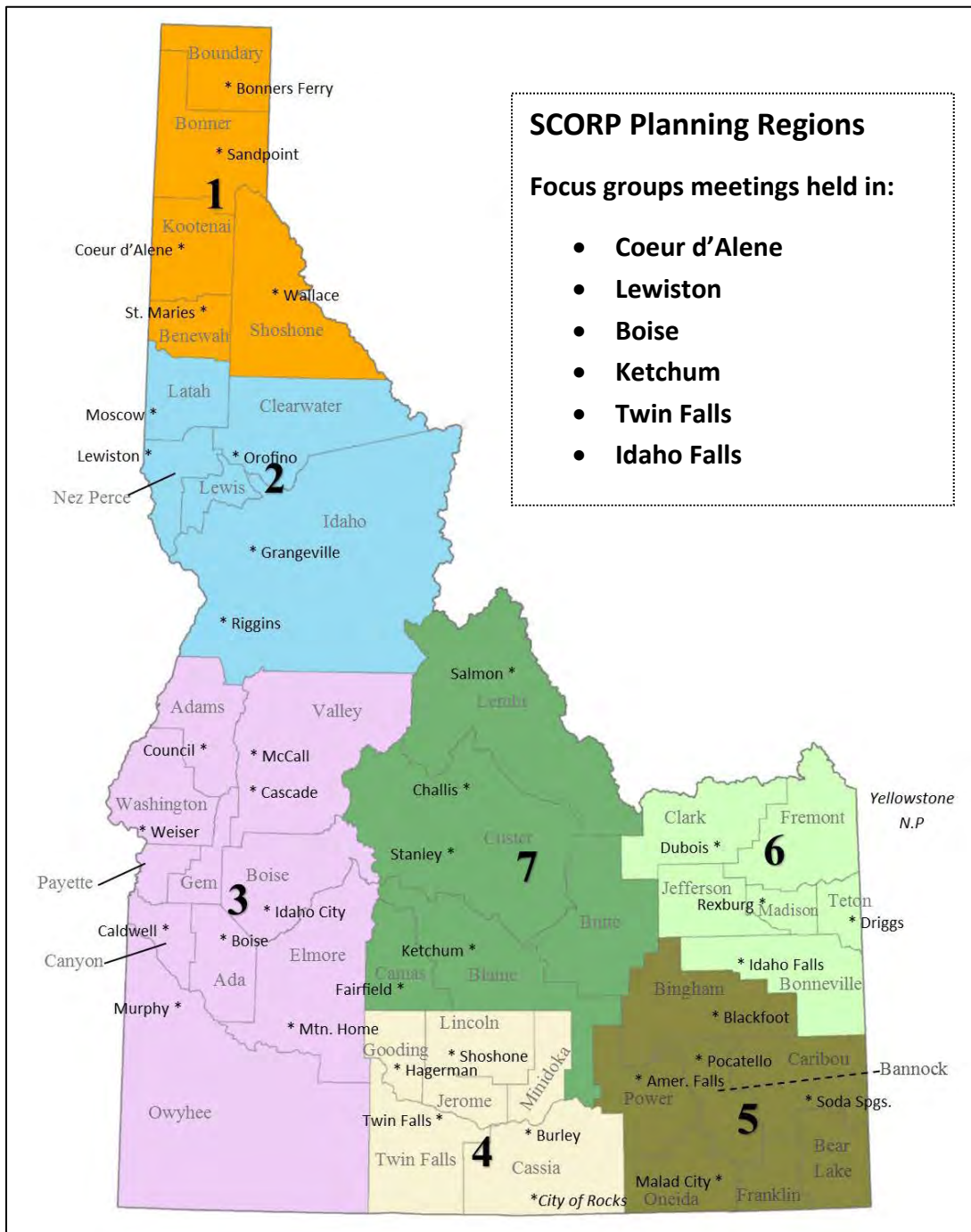
IDPR is given the legal authority to develop the SCORP through Idaho Code 67-4223 (8). The powers of the Idaho Park and Recreation Board include to "prepare, maintain and keep up-to-date, a comprehensive plan for the development of the outdoor recreation resources of the state." Additionally, under Section (9) the Board is empowered to "apply to any appropriate agency or officer of the United States for participation by the department or a political subdivision of the state or the receipt of aid from any federal program respecting outdoor recreation." With the passage of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-578; 78 Stat. 897) funds were made available to the states for the "planning, acquisition and development of needed land and water areas and facilities." This law requires each state to prepare and acceptable comprehensive outdoor plan before acquisition and development projects are considered.

The Governor of Idaho has designated the current Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation director, who is secretary and ex-officio member to the Idaho Park and Recreation Board, as the State Liaison Officer (SLO) for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program in Idaho. As officer to the board, the director guides the development and implementation of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan in accordance with Idaho Code.

Planning Process and Methodology

Idaho's SCORP serves as the process and document meant to fulfill LWCF requirements, which include an evaluation of recreation supply and demand, an implementation plan, a selection process for evaluating and distributing the state's LWCF apportionment, and an opportunity for public participation.

In order to understand issues impacting Idaho, IDPR staff conducted six focus group meetings with public recreation providers and land managers across the state. For the purpose of this plan, and to underscore the importance of recreation to tourism, IDPR used regional boundaries set by Visit Idaho and the Idaho Department of Commerce when establishing the focus group meeting locations. A focus group meeting was held in each region, and were conducted from October 2016 – February 2017.



The purpose of these meetings was to determine statewide and regional issues impacting outdoor recreation in Idaho. IDPR sent a follow up survey to recreation providers to provide further feedback and to clarify the level of importance of the issues identified during the meetings. In all, the focus group meetings totaled more than 100 attendees, with 70 individual responses to the follow up survey from a variety of local, state and federal agencies.

IDPR provided a separate survey online to the general public during the summer of 2017. This survey was not conducted using a random sample, but yielded approximately 1,900 responses. The survey included responses on outdoor recreation participation from Idaho residents and tourists. IDPR reviewed information from these responses and the National Survey on Outdoor Recreation and the Environment (NSRE)--conducted by the University of Georgia for the USDA Forest Service—to help inform the demand section of this plan. IDPR used the regional results from the NSRE in this plan, including responses from neighboring states of Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, as well as Idaho, to help determine participation in outdoor recreation.

In addition, IDPR placed the draft plan on the IDPR website for 30 days during which the public was encouraged to comment. These efforts combined to allow IDPR to develop Idaho’s Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The full results of the surveys, focus groups and other public input can be found in the appendices of this plan.

Wetlands Component

LWCF requirements for the SCORP include a provision that the plan contain a wetlands priority component consistent with Section 303 of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986. This requirement is satisfied by two documents produced by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game:

Idaho Wetland Conservation Prioritization Plan – 2012

Murphy, C., J. Miller, and A. Schmidt. 2012. Idaho wetland conservation prioritization plan – 2012. Prepared for Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Boise, ID. 29 pp. plus appendix.

Idaho’s Wetland Program Plan

Murphy, C. 2014. Idaho’s Wetland Program Plan: A plan for implementing the Idaho Wetland Conservation Strategy focused on Idaho Department of Fish and Game’s wetland and riparian habitats. Prepared for U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10, Wetland Program Development Grant. Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Bureau, Habitat Section, Boise, ID. 99 pp. plus appendix.

These documents can be found at <http://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/scorp2018>.

Chapter 2: Outdoor Recreation Programs and Supply

Providers of Outdoor Recreation in Idaho, and Their Roles

Outdoor recreation in Idaho is provided by a system of federal, state and local governments, private organizations and businesses, and other and non-governmental entities. These providers work together to fund, manage and support opportunities for outdoor recreation across the state. Each plays a different role in the spectrum of opportunities, from community parks and ballfields to backcountry rivers and trails that are miles from any city or road. Across Idaho, this collaboration and coordination leads to a state defined by its natural setting and outdoor opportunities, attracting millions of visitors and contributing to residents' quality of life.

Non-Government Programs

Idaho's outfitters, guides, clubs and other non-government programs play an important role in meeting the needs of the state's residents and visitors. Private programs in Idaho include campgrounds, marinas, country clubs, hunting clubs, which along with non-profit conservation organizations and industries with large land holdings (*i.e.* timber) play a part in the overall provision of outdoor recreation. Often, these businesses and organizations can more fluidly react and adapt to changes in consumer demands, as well as purchase or acquire additional lands.

Commercial Providers and Outfitters

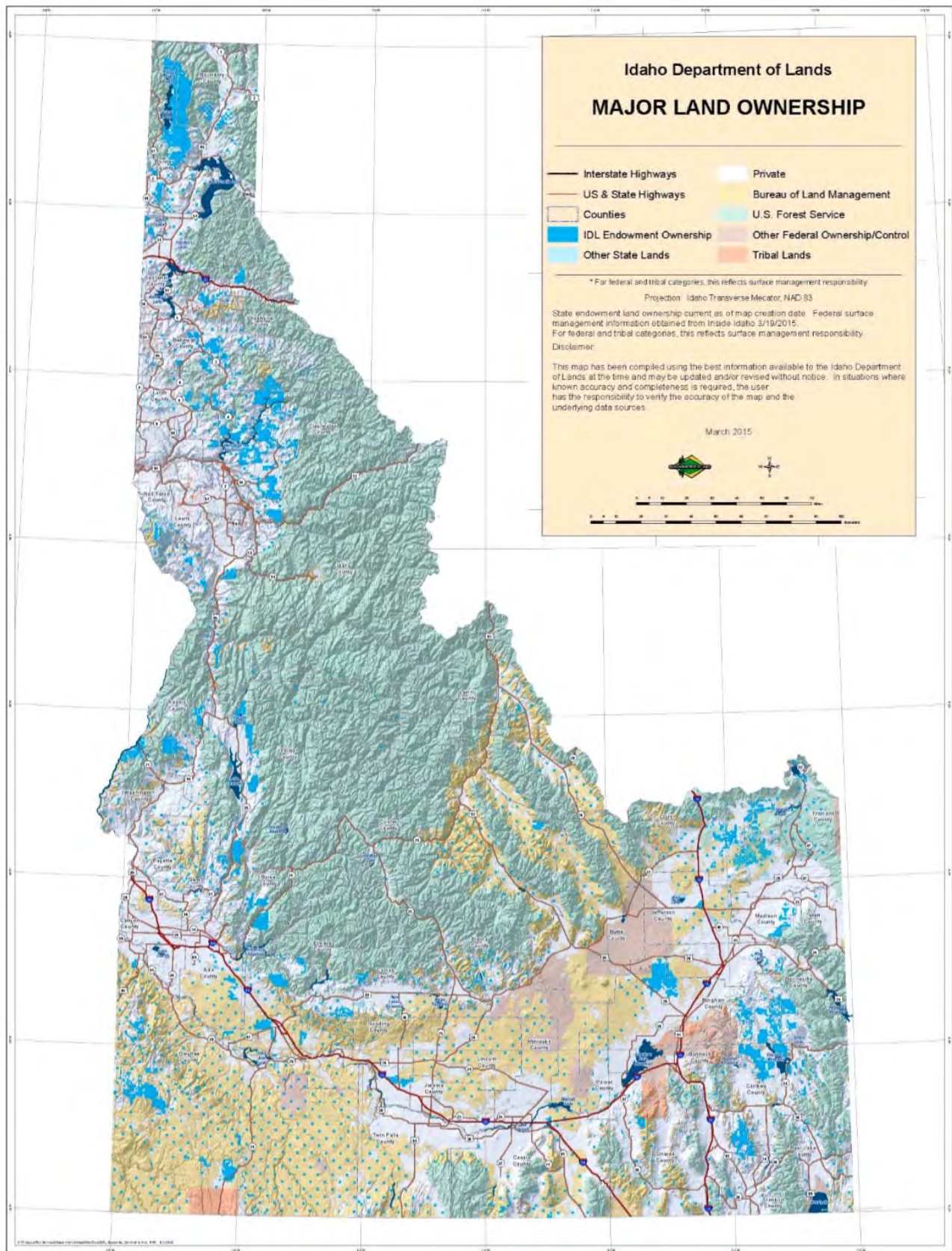
Commercial providers, outfitters and guides are an important component of Idaho's economy and outdoor recreation access. Whether through hunting outfitters, guest ranches, developed hot springs, jet boat rides, or many other opportunities, commercially offered facilities and services help provide outdoor experiences to residents and tourists across the state.

Clubs

This category of recreational suppliers includes hunting clubs, country clubs, tennis clubs, private marinas, and others. These facilities and services are open only to members, and are not considered part of the public recreation supply. However, they do provide a role in offering quality facilities and resources for specific uses.

Private Organizations

Private and semi-public organizations such as 4-H, scouting organizations, YMCA, and conservation organizations like The Nature Conservancy and Trust for Public Land help to preserve and protect Idaho's lands, in part for the benefit of the recreating public. Additionally, organizations with hydroelectric projects such as Idaho Power provide recreational access to their sites, with amenities including boat ramps, campgrounds and day-use areas. Owners of large private landholdings, often utilized for timber harvesting, may make their lands or portions of thereof open to the public.



Idaho's large availability of public lands is a primary component of outdoor recreation in the state.

Local Government Programs

While local government programs typically do not own large quantities of public lands compared to federal and state agencies, they are essential in providing close to home recreational opportunities while meeting community needs for recreation, open space, and environmental preservation. These types of opportunities are also the core purpose of the LWCF program. Local governments often fill the recreational needs gap by providing outdoor facilities and programs not typically provided by other governmental agencies, such as fields and courts for organized sports, swimming pools, paved pathways, and neighborhood and community parks. They also provide youth and adult programs to facilitate participation in outdoor recreation in sports and other outdoor ventures. Through partnerships with other governmental agencies, many local governments help provide and manage recreational opportunities on state and federal lands.

County

Idaho comprises 44 counties, ranging in size from Clark County with a population of 982 to Ada County with a population 392,365 (2010 U.S. Census). County roles in the provision of outdoor recreation vary, as the recreational needs and the funding and ability to provide opportunities differs in each county. Many counties with smaller populations do not have recreation departments, and some fund recreation opportunities through established recreation districts. Some of Idaho's more densely populated counties include a parks and waterways department, offering day use parks and boating access to the county's lakes and rivers.

Municipal

Idaho's 200 municipalities vary greatly in both size and recreational services and opportunities available. Municipalities in Idaho face the challenge of providing residents with a variety of recreational needs. These opportunities include facilities such as ball fields, courts, swimming pools, non-motorized trails, playgrounds, swimming beaches, picnic shelters and non-motorized boating access. Idaho's municipalities play an important role in providing convenient and nearby recreation access and opportunities to the residents they serve.

Recreation Districts

Idaho has 34 recreation districts throughout the state. The districts typically encompass all or parts of a county with the purpose of providing recreational opportunities within the specified jurisdiction of the district. Funding for recreation districts is provided by a set tax levied on the assessed value of properties within that district.

State Programs

While state owned land only accounts for 5% of the total land mass, state agencies play a critical role in providing, managing and funding outdoor recreation in Idaho.

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation

The mission of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) is to improve the quality of life in Idaho through outdoor recreation and resource stewardship. IDPR manages 30 state parks throughout every region of Idaho, and manages motorized and non-motorized trail programs essential to

maintaining Idaho's trails. IDPR also manages the registration of all boats, snowmobiles, recreational vehicles/campers, and off-highway vehicles. These registration fees go back to the users to develop and maintain trails, facilities, and education programs.

Idaho State Park System

IDPR owns and/or manages 30 state parks across the state, encompassing approximately 60,000 acres. These parks vary in their significance to Idaho, some demonstrating and protecting Idaho's natural and geological resources, with others are dedicated to interpreting Idaho's historical sites and cultural heritage. Outdoor recreation is critical to the mission of IDPR, with parks providing opportunities such as for camping, hiking, horseback riding, boating, swimming, and education and interpretation. Some of Idaho's state parks include Farragut, Bruneau Dunes, Trail of the Coeur d' Alenes, Bear Lake and Harriman.

Recreation Bureau

The Recreation Bureau, through partnerships with federal land managers and Idaho counties, helps to fund and maintain Idaho's motorized and non-motorized trails. IDPR trail crews perform trail work primarily on Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands to help keep motorized trails accessible and open. In the winter, IDPR administers a Park'n'Ski program, with revenues from the sale of permits going towards trail improvements, parking lot plowing, and grooming trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoe use. The Recreation Bureau also provides safety and education programs for snowmobilers, boaters and off-highway vehicle operators.



Grants

Waterways Improvement Fund

The purpose of the Waterways Improvement Fund (WIF) is for the protection and promotion of safety, waterways improvement, creation and improvement of parking areas for boating purposes, making and improving boat ramps and moorings, marking of waterways, and search and rescue. The WIF is funded annually with a portion of the total state gas tax revenues, providing approximately \$1.2 million in annual funding. Governmental entities and Indian Tribes are eligible for these grants.

Recreational Vehicle Fund

The purpose of the Recreational Vehicle (RV) Fund is for the acquisition, lease, development, improvement, operations and maintenance of facilities and services designed to promote the health, safety and enjoyment of recreational vehicle users. This program is funded annually from RV registration fees paid, with approximately \$3.8 million annually available in grants for local, state or federal recreation providers.

Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is administered by IDPR and provided through the Federal Highways Administration. Permissible uses of the funds are: maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails; development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails; purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment; and construction of new recreational trails. The RTP funding goes towards both motorized and non-motorized trail projects, with typically \$1.5 million available annually.

Off-Road Motor Vehicle Fund

The Off-Road Motor Vehicle (ORMV) Fund can be used to acquire, purchase, improve, repair, maintain, furnish, and equip off-road motor vehicle facilities and sites or areas used by off-road vehicles on public or private land. The fund can also assist with enforcement of laws and regulations governing the use of off-road vehicles in the State of Idaho. The ORMV is funded annually with a portion of the state gas tax revenues, with typical funding levels of approximately \$500,000 made available for grants and \$800,000 annually for purchase of trail dozers, groomers, and other trail maintenance equipment that is distributed for use across the state.



Motorbike Fund

The Motorbike Fund can be used to acquire or purchase land to be used for recreational off-highway vehicle activity, to secure, maintain or construct trails and other recreational facilities for off-highway vehicle use on state or federal lands, to finance an off road rider education program, or to acquire applicable federal matching funds. The Motorbike Fund is funded annually with a portion of off-road motor vehicle sticker registration revenue, with funding levels of approximately \$100,000 annually.

Road & Bridge Fund

The purpose of the Road and Bridge (R&B) Fund is to develop, construct, maintain and repair roads, bridges and parking areas within and leading to parks and recreation areas of the state. The R&B is funded from a portion of the state gas tax revenues, with approximately \$250,000 awarded annually.

Cutthroat Plate Fund

The Cutthroat Plate Fund was created as part of the Idaho wildlife specialty plates legislation. A portion of the registration fee for each specialty plate is deposited in a fund to be used for the construction and maintenance of non-motorized boating access facilities for anglers. IDPR is responsible for the administration of this account.

Mountain Bike Plate Fund

The Mountain Bike Plate fund was created in 2001 and is funded from a portion of the registration fee for each specialty plate. The intent of the fund is exclusively for the preservation, maintenance and expansion of recreational trails on which mountain biking is permitted. IDPR is responsible for the administration of this account.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a National Park Service funded program. IDPR administers the money allocated to the states from the fund for the acquisition, development or maintenance of outstanding property into perpetuity for outdoor recreation purposes. LWCF was included in part of the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1964, which also included a provision that each state must develop an acceptable comprehensive outdoor recreation plan before acquisition and development projects are considered. Available funding varies year-to-year, with typically \$400,000 available on an annual basis.

Clean Vessel Act Fund

The Clean Vessel Act (CVA) Fund is funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and administered in Idaho by IDPR. The purpose of this fund is for projects such as boat pump-out stations and educational programs relating to environmental and water pollution control pertaining to vessel operation. Public agencies and private businesses are eligible, provided access to the project funded by the CVA is given to the public.

Boating Infrastructure Grant

The Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) is funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and administered in Idaho by IDPR. The BIG provides funding for projects which construct, maintain or renovate tie-up facilities for transient boaters in vessels 26 feet or more in length, and to produce and distribute information and educational materials about the program.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

The mission of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) is found within the State of Idaho Wildlife Policy, which reads in part that “all wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds and fish, within the state of Idaho shall be preserved, protected, perpetuated, and managed...and provide for the citizens of this state and, as by law permitted to others, continued supplies of such wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping.”

IDFG works with hunters, anglers, trappers and other Idahoans to protect and preserve the fish and game of the state, in order to enable Idahoans rights to hunt, fish, and trap – an essential component of Idaho’s outdoor heritage and recreation opportunities. The IDFG Strategic Plan (2018) includes four goals: sustain Idaho’s fish and wildlife and the habitats upon which they depend; meet the demand for hunting, fishing, trapping and other wildlife recreation; improve public understanding of and involvement in fish and wildlife management; and to enhance the capability of Fish and Game to manage fish and wildlife and serve the public.

IDFG staff help to maintain access to more than 350 fishing and boating access sites throughout the state, as well as providing habitat management at 32 wildlife management areas encompassing approximately 314,000 acres. IDFG also manages the hunting and fishing license program.

Idaho Department of Lands

The mission of the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) is to professionally and prudently manage Idaho’s endowment assets to maximize long-term financial returns to public schools and other trust

beneficiaries and to provide professional assistance to the citizens of Idaho to use, protect, and sustain their natural resources.

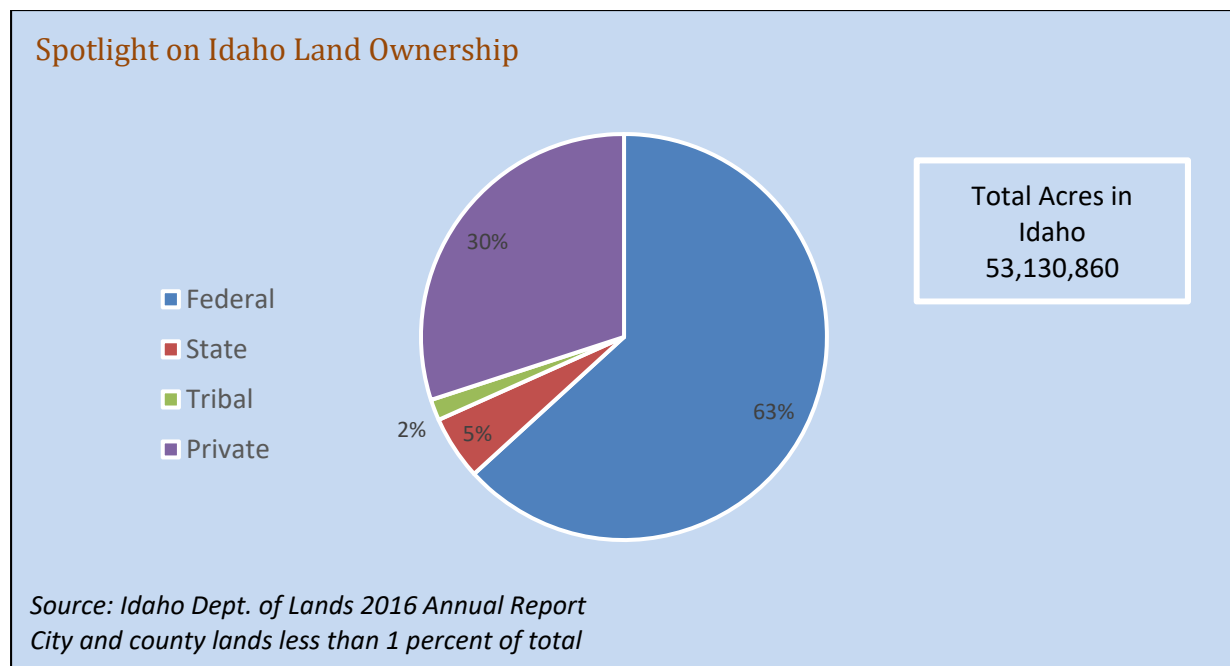
Upon achieving statehood in 1890, Congress granted millions of acres of land to the State of Idaho for the sole purpose of funding specified beneficiaries, most notably the state’s public schools. Today, these state endowment lands and funds, overseen by the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners, continue to provide funding for Idaho’s public schools and other beneficiaries.

Currently, IDL manages more than 2.4 million acres of state endowment lands. Along with generating revenues for schools, these lands are becoming increasingly popular for their recreational opportunities, including off-highway vehicle riding and sportsman access. IDL is currently pursuing additional recreation opportunities on their lands.

Idaho State Historical Society

The mission of the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) is to preserve and promote Idaho’s cultural heritage; with a vision to inspire, enrich, and engage all Idahoans by leading the state in preserving and sharing our dynamic cultural heritage.

ISHS maintains a few historic sites across the state, including the Old Idaho Penitentiary, and the Rock Creek Station and Stricker Homesite. ISHS also includes the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), which manages Idaho’s National Register of Historic Places program and provides a local voice for Idaho’s history in federal project planning. SHPO also works closely with state agencies, local governments, tribal governments, citizen groups, and property owners to help preserve Idaho’s cultural heritage.



Federal Programs

Accounting for more than 33.5 million acres, nearly 65% of land in Idaho is federally owned, making the federal government an essential provider of outdoor recreation in Idaho. Often, the federal lands offer opportunities and experiences that are not provided by local or state governments and host some of Idaho's most iconic rivers, mountains and landscapes. Across Idaho, federal agencies manage the forests, deserts, dams and reservoirs, waterways and wildlife refuges that are critical to the state's outdoor recreation supply.

U.S. Department of the Interior

National Park Service

The mission of the National Park Service (NPS) is to “preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.” In Idaho, the NPS properties include the following: City of Rocks National Reserve, Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve, Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument, Minidoka Internment National Monument, Nez Perce National Historic Park and a small part of Yellowstone National Park. The NPS also provides funding for recreation and conservation related projects through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (administered in Idaho by Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation), and offers technical assistance to state and local governments and private organizations on conservation and recreation related planning efforts through the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program.

National Trail System

The NPS works with federal, state and local governments to designate and protect components of the National Trail System, a network of scenic, historic, and recreational trails of national significance. The Oregon, Nez Perce, California and Lewis and Clark National Historic Trails are examples of long distance trails that pass through Idaho. The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail follows the crest of the Rockies along Idaho's border with Montana.

National Natural Landmarks and National Historic Landmarks

The NPS identifies National Natural Landmarks and National Historic Landmarks, distinguishing areas of national geologic, ecologic or historical/cultural significance. Some of Idaho's natural landmarks include Niagara Springs, a unit of Thousand Springs State Park in Gooding County and North Menan Butte in Jefferson and Madison counties. National Historic Landmarks include the Cataldo Mission, located in Old Mission State Park in Kootenai County and Fort Hall in Bannock County.

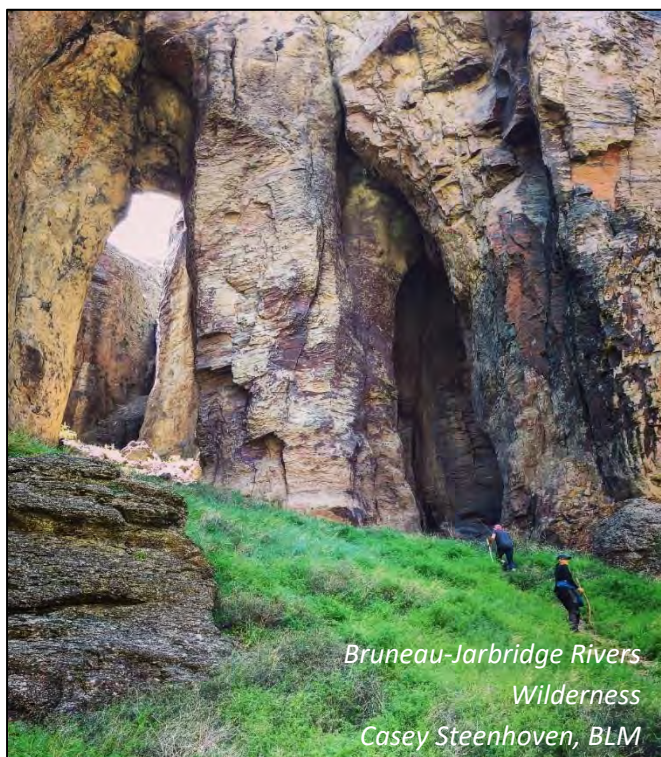
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is to work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. In Idaho, the USFWS manages six Nation Wildlife Refuges: Bear Lake, Camas, Deer Flat, Grays Lake, Kootenai and Minidoka. These refuges are managed to conserve and restore the fish, wildlife and plant resources and their habitats within the refuge. Recreational opportunities are limited at the refuges, and typically involve bird watching, wildlife viewing, fishing, education/interpretation and in some cases

hunting. Additionally, USFWS manages three national fish hatcheries – Dworshak, Hagerman and Kooskia. These hatcheries are part of the National Fish Hatchery System, which is comprised of a network of field stations located across the nation that work with tribal, local, state and federal agencies to conserve fisheries.

Bureau of Land Management

The mission of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America’s public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The BLM manages 12 million acres of public lands in Idaho, nearly one quarter of the state’s land mass. Additionally, the BLM manages 1,100 river miles in Idaho, including 325 Wild & Scenic River miles. Wild



and Scenic Rivers are designated as such because they possess outstanding natural, cultural, and/or recreational values in a free-flowing condition. The lands and waters managed by the BLM host many unique and special outdoor recreation opportunities where visitors can enjoy scenic landscapes in Idaho and learn more about the state’s history.

Opportunities include the wilderness areas and wild and scenic rivers of the Owyhee Canyonlands, camping along the Salmon River, and raptor viewing at the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. The BLM also provides opportunities to learn more about Idaho’s history by hosting large portions of National Scenic and Historic Trails in Idaho, including the Lewis and Clark, Nez Perce, Oregon, California and Continental Divide Trails.

In 2016, the BLM saw 5.7 million visitors in Idaho, many participating in outdoor recreation activities such as hiking, off-highway vehicle riding, fishing, boating, mountain biking, horseback riding, fishing and hunting.

Bureau of Reclamation

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public. The BOR was established to help sustain the economy and improve quality of life in the Western United States by developing reservoirs to establish reliable sources of water, primarily to provide irrigation water to Idaho’s thousands of acres of farmland. In Idaho, 20 recreation areas have been created by BOR, with most being managed by local, state or federal partners. BOR projects in Idaho include Cascade, American Falls, Soldiers Meadow, and Black Canyon, among many others.

Recreation at BOR projects is often water-based, with projects offering motorized and non-motorized boating opportunities, swimming beaches and fishing along with camping, picnicking and hiking along the shores of the reservoir. Unlike other federal land managers, BOR has limited authority to develop recreation areas, and relies on partnerships to manage and develop these opportunities. Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation manages BOR properties as state parks at Lake Cascade and Lake Walcott.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

U.S. Forest Service

The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. In Idaho, nearly 40% of the land mass, or 20.3 million acres, is occupied by National Forests, making the Forest Service an essential provider of outdoor recreation opportunities across the state.

The Forest Service manages nine national forests in Idaho, including: the Boise, Salmon-Challis, Sawtooth, Caribou-Targhee, Nez Perce-Clearwater, Idaho Panhandle, Payette, and portions of the Bitterroot and Wallowa-Whitman. The Forest Service also manages the Curlew National Grasslands.

Popular recreational activities in the national forests include camping (in developed areas and dispersed areas), fishing, hunting and boating. Trail uses including hiking, mountain biking, horseback, as well as motorcycle, ATV, UTV and jeep riding. The national forests also provide access to Idaho's rivers, providing exceptional rafting, kayaking and canoeing opportunities.

In the winter, many forest roads become snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and snowshoe trails with the help of partners who do the grooming. Idaho's popular ski resorts and lodges are operated under a special use permit with the Forest Service, providing excellent skiing and snowboarding opportunities.

There are two national recreation areas (NRA) in Idaho; the Sawtooth NRA managed by the Sawtooth

National Forest and the Hells Canyon NRA managed by the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. An NRA is designated by Congress for its outstanding plant and animal communities, geologic features, scenic qualities, or other special features. These areas are managed to emphasize their recreational values.

Idaho's national forests also have eight congressionally designated wilderness areas: the Frank Church River of No Return, Gospel Hump, Hells Canyon, Sawtooth, Selway-Bitterroot, Jim McClure-Jerry Peak, White Clouds, and Hemingway-Boulders. The BLM and Forest Service jointly manage the Jim McClure-Jerry Peak and White Clouds wilderness areas. The prevailing characteristics of wilderness areas are



their lack of noticeable human presence, relatively untrammelled natural setting and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

U.S. Department of Defense

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is to deliver public and military engineering services; partnering in peace and war to strengthen our nation's security, energize the economy and reduce risk from disasters. The primary vision of USACE is to engineer solutions to our Nation's toughest



challenges, including the development of dam, lock and levee systems across the nation. In Idaho, USACE projects are part of the Walla Walla District, including Lucky Peak and Dworshak project areas, as well as part of the Lower Granite project in Lewiston. Like the BOR, the USACE often works with public and private partners to manage and preserve resources and provide recreational opportunities such as camping,

fishing, boating, swimming, bird watching and hunting. Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation manages USACE properties as state parks at Dworshak and Hells Gate.

U.S. Department of Transportation

Through the Federal Highway Administration, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) provides grant funding to state and local governments for recreational trails, and also manages the scenic byway program. The Recreational Trails Program provides funding for motorized and non-motorized trails and related projects. Idaho typically receives around \$1.5 million annually from this fund.

Idaho has six scenic byways stretching hundreds of miles, including the Northwest Passage Scenic Byway, the Pioneer Historic Byway, and the Payette River Scenic Byway. These routes offer scenic drives that introduce visitors to the natural and historical resources of the area.

Chapter 3: Outdoor Recreation Demand

Outdoor Recreation Demand

Demand for outdoor recreation opportunities can be attributed to many factors, including population and demographics, tourism, trends in activities and availability of resources. As Idaho's population grows and becomes more diverse, it is important to determine how this growth and the changes in demographics may impact demand for recreational opportunities. Additionally, determining where the growth is occurring and understanding how that impacts the surrounding area will help land managers and recreation providers better plan for the future. However, to focus solely on Idaho's population discounts the considerable influx of visitors to the state that participate in recreation opportunities. Tourism is a critical piece to understanding the overall demand for outdoor recreation.

Population Changes and the Impacts on Demand

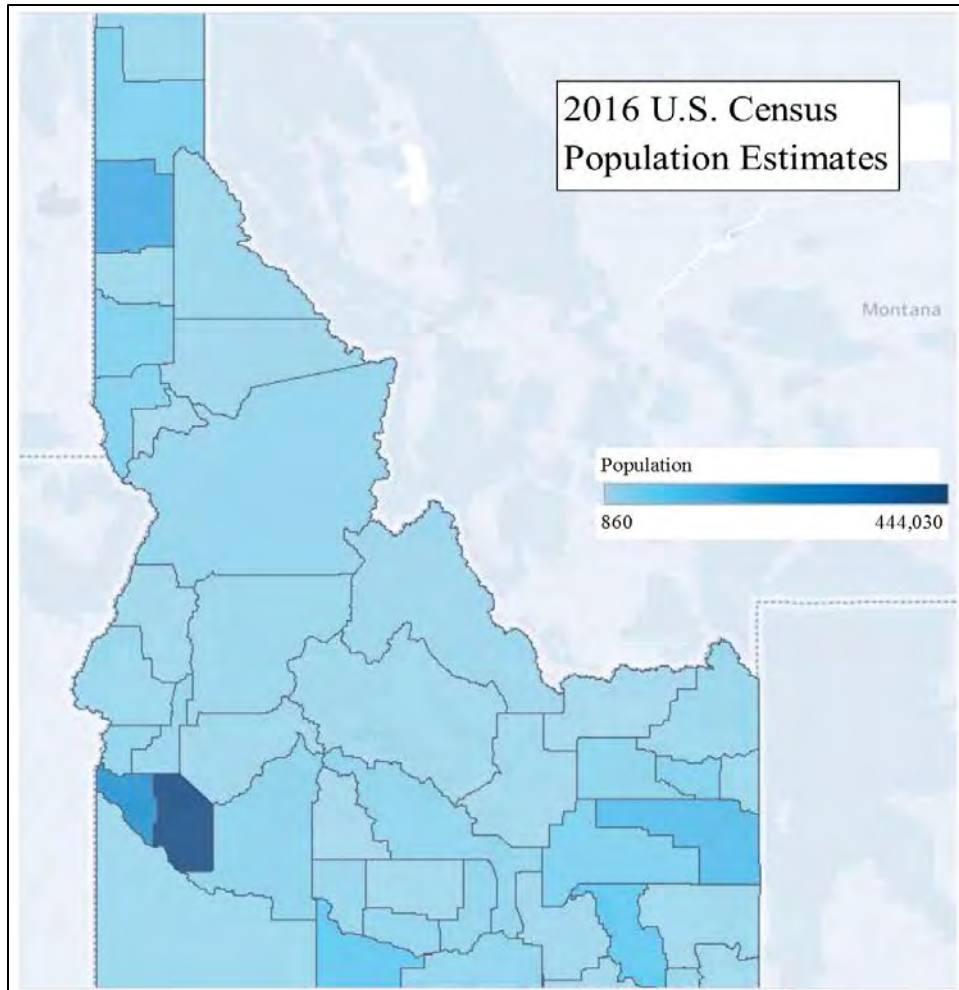
The growth of the state's overall population, as well as demographic changes within that overall growth, impacts the demand for outdoor recreation. Idaho's population is estimated to grow 13% from 2015 to 2025, with the total population approaching 2 million (1,908,684) by the end of this ten year span (Idaho Department of Labor). This growth will be concentrated in the urban areas, particularly in counties hosting larger cities such as Kootenai County (Coeur d'Alene), Ada County (Boise), Canyon County (Nampa) Twin Falls County (Twin Falls) and Bonneville County (Idaho Falls). Overall, Idaho's more populous areas are growing, while areas with smaller populations are shrinking. Between 2010 and 2015, half of Idaho's counties lost population – with declines coming from historically less populated counties in every region of the state.

As Idaho's urban areas continue to grow, the demand for urban outdoor recreation opportunities will increase, and much of that burden will fall on local governments to provide the appropriate facilities and programs within these areas. Additionally, public lands and open space adjacent to these urban areas will continue to see increased pressure on the existing facilities and resources, challenging land managers to balance opportunities with the preservation of the natural resources. Inversely, the rural areas seeing a decline in population will be faced with challenge of maintaining and providing parks and other recreational facilities for their residents as their tax base is reduced.

Impacts on recreational use and demand from large population centers proximate to Idaho's borders must also be considered. Recreational facilities in the northern region of Idaho see considerable use from the Spokane-Spokane Valley, WA Metropolitan Statistical Area (population 540,915), while demands and participation in the southeast and eastern regions of the state are impacted by use from the Salt Lake City-Provo-Orem, UT Combined Statistical Area (population 2,271,696). Much of this use occurs on Idaho's campgrounds, waterways, and motorized and non-motorized trails.



Cricket at Boise's Ann Morrison Park



Changing Demographics, Changing Needs

Changing demographic landscapes have a significant role in shaping outdoor recreation trends. Different groups of people may use and value public lands in different ways, and it is important that public land managers understand the demographic makeup of their community to ensure appropriate opportunities. This section will help highlight Idaho’s demographic trends.

Baby Boomers

Idaho’s growing population is seeing notable change in the age distribution of its population. Retiring Baby Boomers will significantly impact recreation demand. In Idaho, the 65+ age group accounted for the greatest percent growth (20 percent) of any age group between 2010 and 2015, and now represents nearly 15 percent of the population. The 40-64 age group, the latter of which are included in the Baby Boomer generation, currently accounts for 30 percent of Idaho’s population (*Idaho Department of Labor; U.S. Census Bureau*). As this generation enters retirement age, their mobility, spending patterns, and consumer demands (e.g., health care and housing) can affect how communities develop economically. An aging population can also affect changing demands on land use (e.g., recreation) as their active leisure time greatly increases.

It is important to understand the preferences of this age group to ensure that they are not underserved and that opportunities provided fit their needs. According to the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE 2005-2011), the 54-65 age group favor walking for pleasure, picnicking, boating, gardening/landscaping for pleasure and viewing/photographing natural scenery and wildlife. In the older age groups, health and physical limitations often impact participation, with viewing/learning and developed setting activities drawing higher participation rates.

Youth

While Idaho is certainly getting older, the state's median age is still below the national average. The 19 and under age group is the second largest segment of Idaho's population and continues to be an integral demographic regarding the relevancy of public lands (*Idaho Department of Labor*). Recognizing this, the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment included a comprehensive National Kids Survey, conducted from 2007 – 2011. This survey provides significant insight on outdoor recreation participation for youth aged 6-19 in the Idaho region. The study found that 84 percent of youth spend at least an hour outdoors. The primary outdoor activity for youth was unstructured outdoor play/hanging out, followed by biking/walking/skateboarding, etc. and playing or practicing team sports. Youth participation seems slightly skewed toward activities found in more developed settings that allow for social interaction.

The study also found that the primary reasons for not spending more time outdoors were interests in internet/texting, music/art/reading and video games/TV. Additionally, nearly 20 percent of youth said their neighborhood lacked good access for outdoor activities. Some, particularly African-American youth, responded that they do not spend more time outdoors because it is not safe to play or do sports outside.

Technology can help connect recreation providers with the younger audiences. Accessible technology has continued to advance, and can now play a critical role in guiding visitors to and through parks and public lands. Public land managers should continue embracing this technology, as smartphones and tablets become an essential part of our culture, particularly with youth. Technology can not only provide information regarding access to outdoor recreation, but can also facilitate the actual experience through interactive interpretation. At the same time, this technology can offer a stronger sense of safety with GPS locating capabilities available on most smartphones.

Hispanics

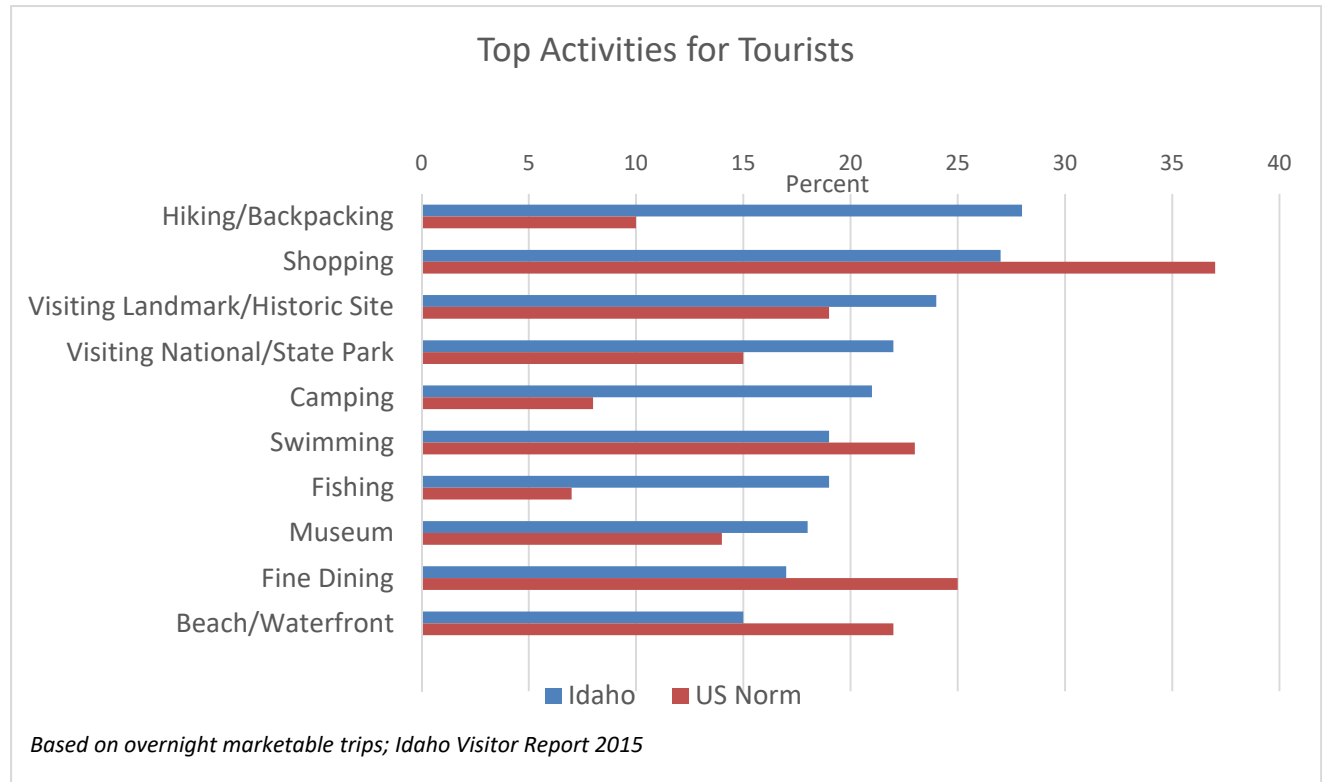
Hispanics are one of Idaho's fastest growing demographic group. While the state's Hispanic population is below the national average, Idaho saw significant growth (13 percent increase) in this population between 2010 and 2015. Most recent estimates from the US Census show Hispanic's representing 12 percent of Idaho's population, compared to 8 percent at the time of the 2000 Census. Idaho counties with the largest percentage of Hispanic population are Clark, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, Power, Cassia and Canyon – mostly in the southern portion of the state (*Idaho Department of Labor; U.S. Census Bureau*).

Understanding the various values, beliefs, and attitudes of the Hispanic community in an area can be an important consideration for public land managers working to meet the needs of the public or evaluating

potentially adverse impacts on a population. A study conducted by UCLA on Hispanic participation in outdoor recreation determined that Hispanics, on average, have less available leisure time. During leisure time, participation in activities is often driven by a commitment to family and friends, reflecting the strong family and community values held by the Hispanic population. In an encouraging sign, trends show that that leisure time is increasing, particularly with youth. The study also found that Hispanic youth, the fastest growing and largest segment of the Hispanic population, have positive attitudes towards outdoor recreation and show interest in gateway activities, such as camping, biking, trail running and hiking. (Source: *The Hispanic Community and Outdoor Recreation*; University of California Los Angeles, 2006) Recreation providers should review if they offer facilities that provide close to home family gathering opportunities such as shelters, grills and adjacent open space.

Travel and Tourism

The 2015 Idaho Visitor Report conducted by Longwoods International and Idaho Tourism provides a detailed look at tourism in the state. While not solely focused on outdoor recreation tourism, the results of the study emphasized the importance of outdoor recreation to Idaho’s tourism. The study found that the one of the most prevalent marketable trip types (excludes trips for business or visiting family/friends) is outdoor recreation, with hiking/backpacking, visiting a landmark/historic site, visiting a national/state park and camping included in the top five activities for overnight trips (see figure below). The study additionally found that travelers on overnight trips are more likely to use a camper/RV as a transportation mode when compared to the national average, and that a majority of marketable trips in Idaho originate in Idaho, Washington, California, Utah and Oregon.



Participation

Idaho, with its abundance of public lands and distinct seasonal opportunities (i.e. winter recreation), offers a variety of outdoor opportunities. A study released by the Outdoor Industry Association in 2017 found that at least 79 percent of Idaho residents participate in outdoor recreation, ranking the state third behind Alaska and Montana. Alongside Montana, three additional states bordering Idaho (Washington, Utah, Wyoming) are included in the top states for overall participation. The study further found that outdoor recreation in Idaho generates \$7.8 billion in annual consumer spending. These figures, along with the studies highlighted below, confirm the importance of outdoor recreation in Idaho and its significance in Idaho's economy and community vitality.



Spotlight on the Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation is a valuable component of Idaho's economy, tourism, and quality of life. According to the 2017 *Outdoor Recreation Economy* report from the Outdoor Industry Association, **outdoor recreation in Idaho generates \$7.8 billion in consumer spending** annually, along with 78,000 direct jobs, \$2.3 billion in wages and salaries, and \$447 million in state and local tax revenue.

IDPR studied the economic impact of specific summer and winter activities in Idaho, as well as the overall impact of Idaho's state park system. The studies determined:

- **Off-highway vehicle** participants took nearly 1 million trips in 2012, spending \$434 million in trip and capital expenditures.
- **Powerboating** participants took 411,559 trips in 2015, spending \$335.3 million in trip and capital expenditures. This spending increased employment by more than 3,000 jobs.
- **Snowmobiling** participants took 190,675 trips in 2015, spending \$197.5 million in trip and capital expenditures. This spending increased employment by more than 4,000 jobs.
- **Idaho's State Parks** received 5,460,780 visits in 2016, contributing \$127.1 million in trip related spending. Spending by visitors and park staff sustains 3,039 jobs across the state.

See Appendix F for links to these and other economic impact reports

*White Clouds Wilderness Area
Sawtooth National Forest*



There has not been a detailed study on outdoor recreation participation in Idaho since the 2004-2005 Idaho Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment. A detailed study should include statistically valid survey data specific to Idaho, assessing recreational participation, satisfaction and motivation for Idaho residents and visitors. The past SCORP (2013-2017) utilized participation information from the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment 2011 (NSRE), which included Idaho in its study of participation in a seven-state region. The lack of current and statistically valid, Idaho-specific information is an impediment in assessing recreation demand. However, through focus groups, informal surveys, recreation-related license and registration information and research review, this plan assesses trends in recreation activities and participation. In order to better inform future planning efforts, it is this plan recommends that IDPR conduct a statewide assessment of outdoor recreation participation in the next 3-5 years.

The following results are from the NRSE 2011, and include results from Idaho and the surrounding states of Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming:

Participation in Nature-Based Land Activities	
Activity	Percent Participating
Day Hiking	53.4
Visit a wilderness or primitive area	52.1
Developed camping	40.5
Primitive camping	31.6
Off-highway vehicle driving	30
Mountain biking	20.1
Backpacking	18.9
Hunting (any type)	17.3
Big game hunting	15
Mountain climbing	9.8

Participation in Developed-Setting Land Activities	
Activity	Percent Participating
Walk for pleasure	88.3
Family gathering	76.1
Gardening or landscaping for pleasure	67.9
Driving for pleasure	62.6
Picnicking	59.2
Yard games, e.g., horseshoes	50.6
Bicycling	38.9
Attend outdoor concerts, plays, etc.	37.5
Horseback riding (any type)	11.9

Participation in Viewing and Learning Activities	
Activity	Percent Participating
View/photograph natural scenery	76.1
Visit nature centers, etc.	62.6
View/photograph wildflowers, trees, etc.	61.7
View/photograph other wildlife	61
Sightseeing	60.7
Visit historic sites	50.4
Gather berries, mushrooms, etc.	44.2
View/photograph birds	40.1
Visit a farm or agricultural setting	37.9
View/photograph fish	31.3
Visit prehistoric/archaeological sites	26.4

Participation in Water-Based Activities	
Activity	Percent Participating
Swimming in lakes, streams, etc.	45.5
Boating (any type)	42.9
Swimming in an outdoor pool	37.9
Freshwater fishing	35.1
Visit other waterside (besides beach)	33.7
Motorboating	29.4
Coldwater fishing	29.1
Warmwater fishing	14.2
Rafting	13.5
Salmon fishing	13.3

Participation in Snow and Ice-Based Activities	
Activity	Percent Participating
Snow/ice activities (any type)	38.3
Sledding	24.8
Downhill skiing	11.3
Snowboarding	7.8
Snowmobiling	7.8
Cross country skiing	5.2
Snowshoeing	5.1
Ice skating outdoors	4.1
Ice fishing	2

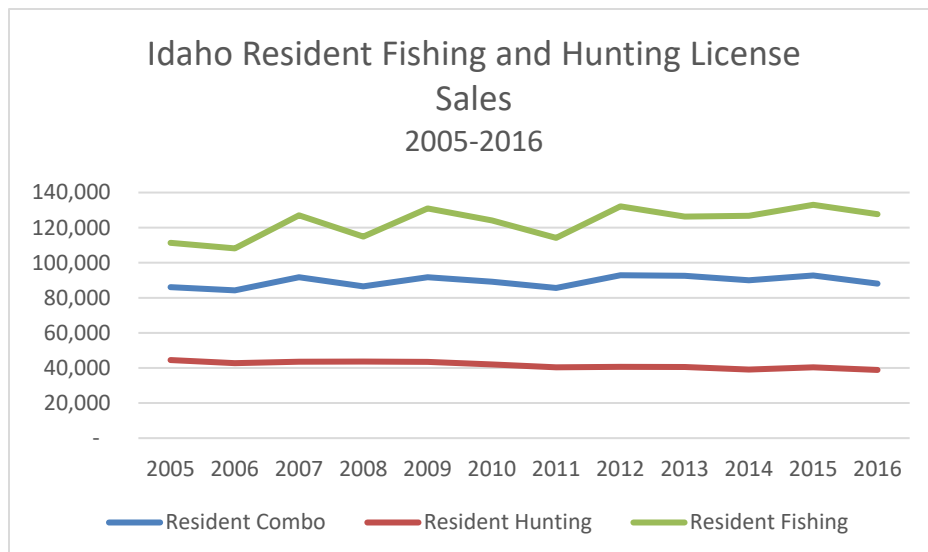
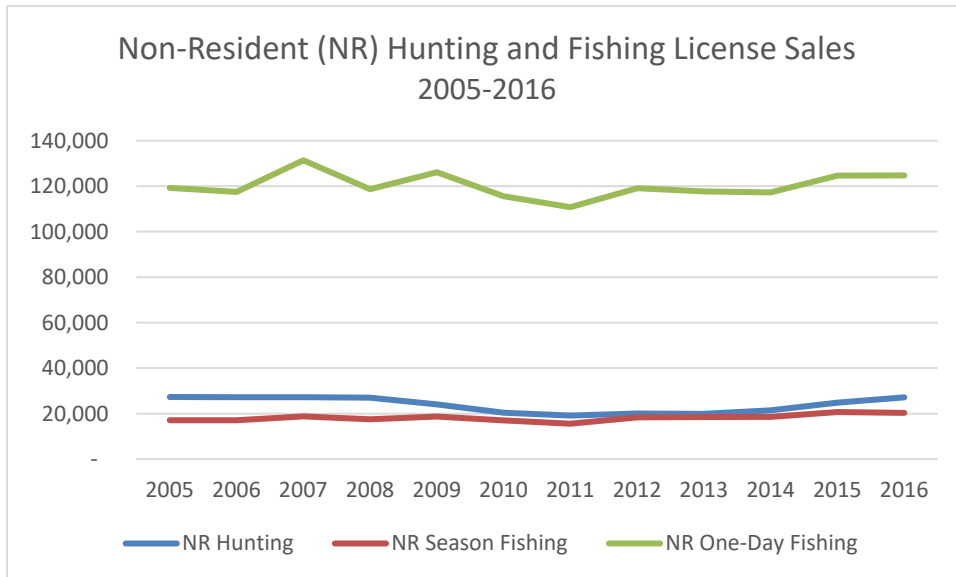
Participation in Outdoor Sports	
Activity	Percent Participating
Attend outdoor sporting events	63.8
Running or jogging	37.6
Golf	14.1
Handball or racquetball outdoors	12.2
Tennis outdoors	9.6
Inline skating	3.2

Source: National Survey on Recreation and the Environment. Regional data includes results from Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming

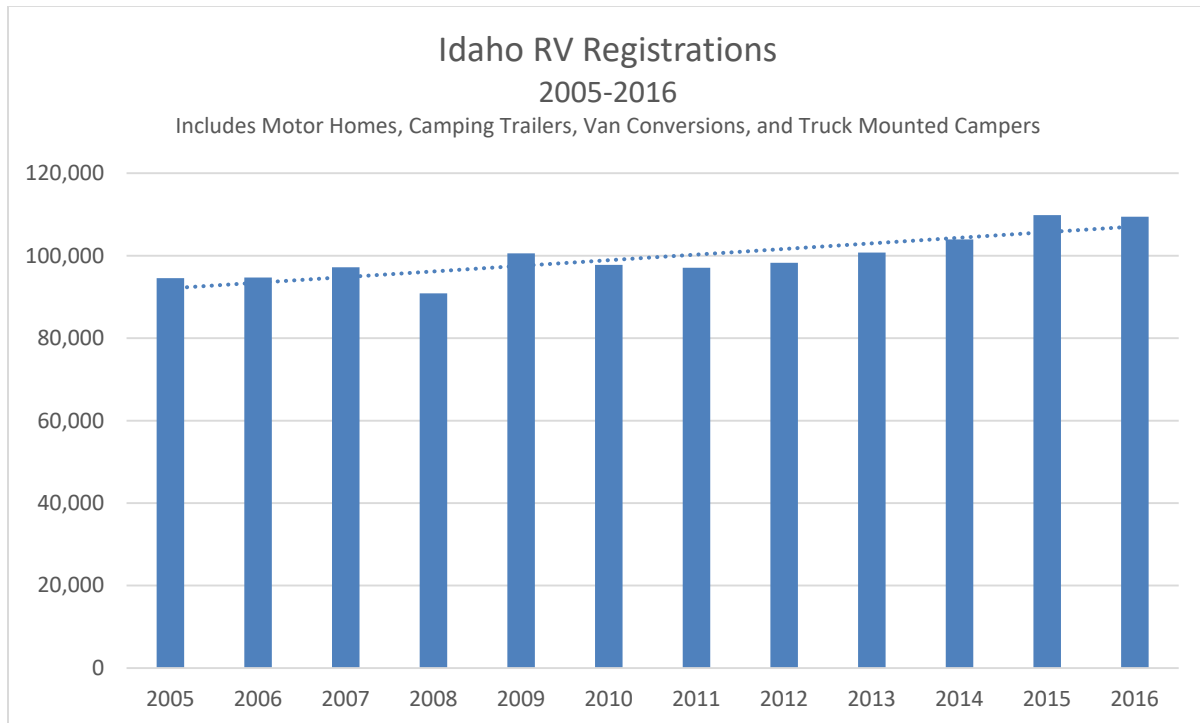
Analysis of Registration and License Sales

For select activities, registration or licenses are required to participate. Reviewing this information gives an idea of trends in participation, and shows perspective in terms of relative growth or decline. In Idaho, registration is required for recreational vehicles/campers, off-highway vehicles, snowmobiles and motorized boats. Licenses are required for fishing and hunting. These fees go back into the respective activities for facility/trail maintenance and development, resource management and education.

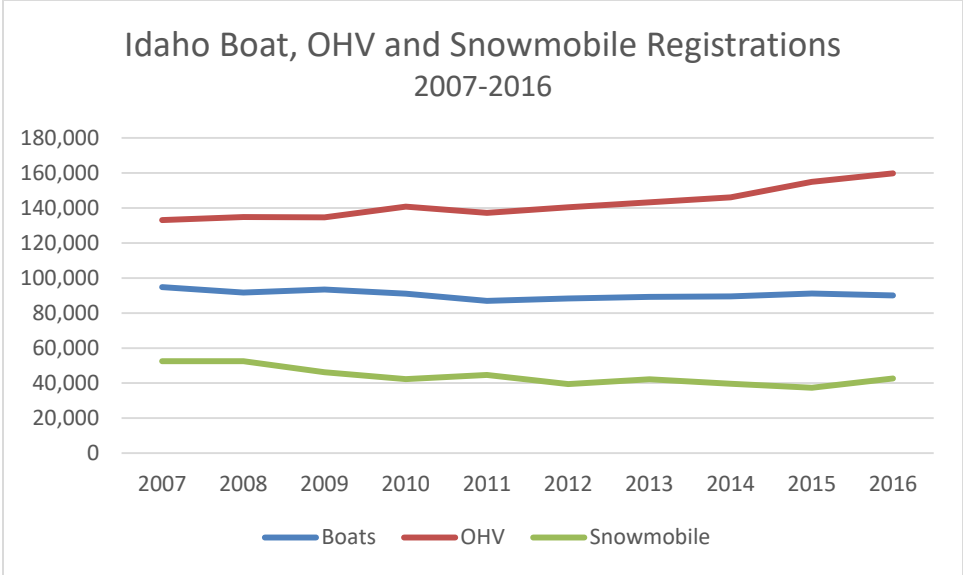
Hunting and fishing license sales are managed by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. The charts below provide an overview of hunting and fishing license sales between 2005 and 2016. In general, resident hunting license sales have seen a slight reduction, while resident fishing and combo (hunting and fishing) licenses have seen an increase. The most significant growth in sales have come from resident fishing licenses. Non-resident license sales show overall growth, with the most popular being the one-day fishing license.



Idaho recreational vehicle (RV) registrations have shown a steady growth over a ten year period. The Idaho Visitor Report (2015) determined that travelers in Idaho are more likely to use an RV/camper than the national average. A combination of public and private campgrounds are located throughout the state of Idaho, many of which provide a combination of power, water and sewer hookup services to accommodate RV users. Additionally, there are abundant opportunities for undeveloped/dispersed camping on US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands. Demand for developed campgrounds fluctuates seasonally, but campgrounds in popular summer areas are often full, with many booking-up months in advance. IDPR, through its state parks, is the primary provider of publicly managed campgrounds with full hookups (water, sewer and electric).



Motorized boat and snowmobile registrations in Idaho have seen a slight overall decline in total registrations over the past 10 years. Trends suggest that registrations began falling around the time the United State experienced the Great Recession (2007-2009) and have not fully recovered. Additionally, snowmobile registrations may be impacted by winter snow conditions. Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) registrations have slowly grown over the past ten years, but have had a considerable increase in registrations (nearly 20,000) between 2014 and 2016.



Summarizing Outdoor Recreation Demand

To better understand outdoor recreation needs, IDPR worked with recreation providers, public land managers and the general public through a series of focus groups and surveys. Outdoor recreation needs vary greatly from community to community, and this analysis is intended to reflect outdoor recreation as a whole and should not necessarily be applied to particular communities. The best way for communities to understand their needs is through working directly with the population they serve. The needs reflected in this section represent ongoing needs and recent trends that should be addressed over the next five years.

Outdoor Needs and Trends as Identified by Providers

IDPR conducted a survey of local, state and federal land managers and recreation providers to inform this plan. It should be noted the responses and sample were not randomized, and this information should not be considered statistically valid. However, it reflects much of the input IDPR received during the regional focus groups, and provides a pulse on the perceived recreational needs across the state.

As part of the survey, public recreation providers and land managers were given a list of outdoor recreation facilities and asked to compare the supply (existing facilities) to the demand (use of facilities) in their region. The table below gives the top facilities which providers determined that the demand exceeded the supply. The second table shows the top activities in terms of increase in participation. To help differentiate between their roles in the provision of outdoor recreation, this list is separated between local and state/federal providers.

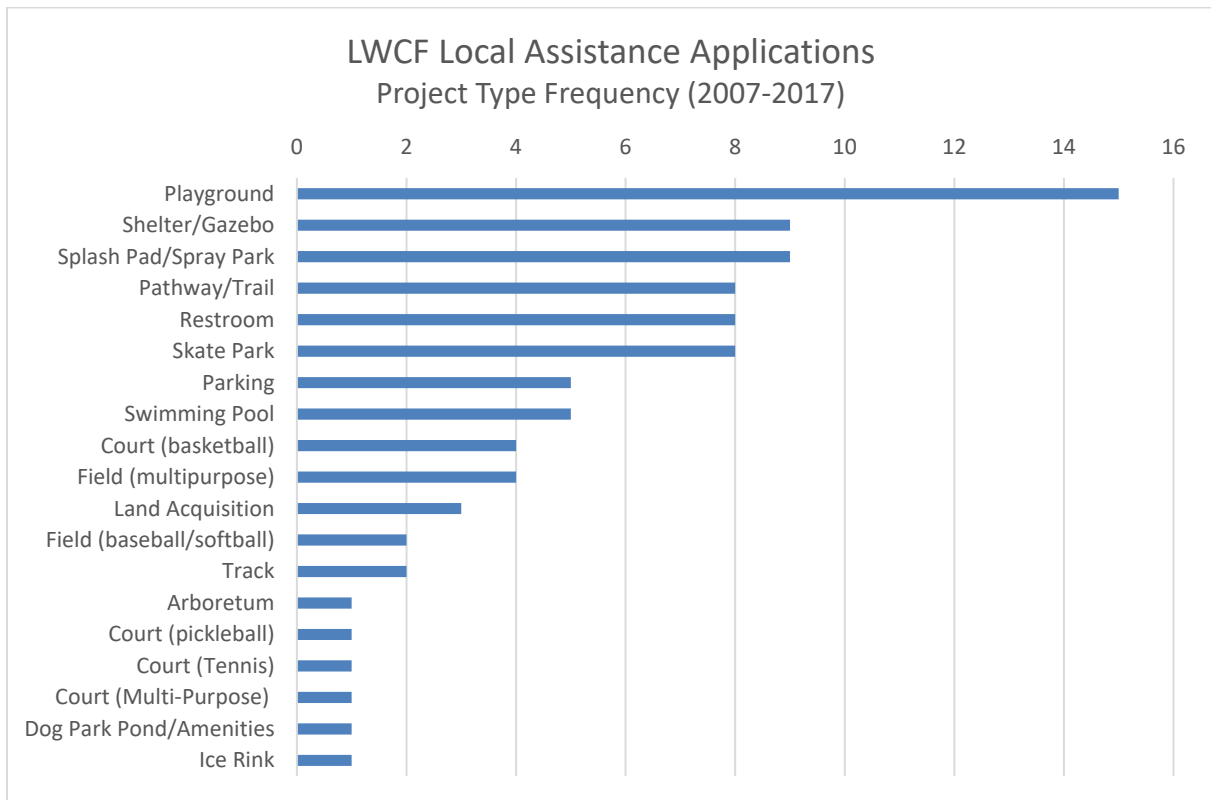
Top Results: Facility Demand Exceeds Supply	
Local Providers	State/Federal Providers
1. Mountain biking trails (unpaved)	1. Mountain biking trails (unpaved)
2. Developed trailheads (parking, restrooms and information)	2. Multi-use trails (unpaved, non-motorized)
3. Dog parks	3. UTV/Jeep Trails
4. Multi-use trails (paved, non-motorized)	4. ATV trails
5. Picnic shelters	5. Hiking trails (unpaved)
6. Hiking trails (unpaved)	6. Outdoor shooting ranges
7. Playgrounds	7. Multi-use trails (paved, non-motorized)
8. Docks or boardwalks for fishing	8. Motorbike trails (singletrack)
9. Multi-use trails (unpaved, non-motorized)	9. Cabins or yurts
10. Skate parks (outdoor)	10. Outdoor archery ranges

Top Results: Activities Increasing in Participation (past 5 years)	
Local Providers	State/Federal Providers
1. Pickleball	1. ATV riding
2. Walking/jogging on paved trail	2. Mountain biking
3. Biking (paved surfaces)	3. UTV/Jeep riding
4. Disc golf	4. RV/Camper Camping
5. Swimming in lakes or rivers	5. Hiking

Source: 2017 Idaho Outdoor Recreation Provider Online Survey; see Appendix B for full results

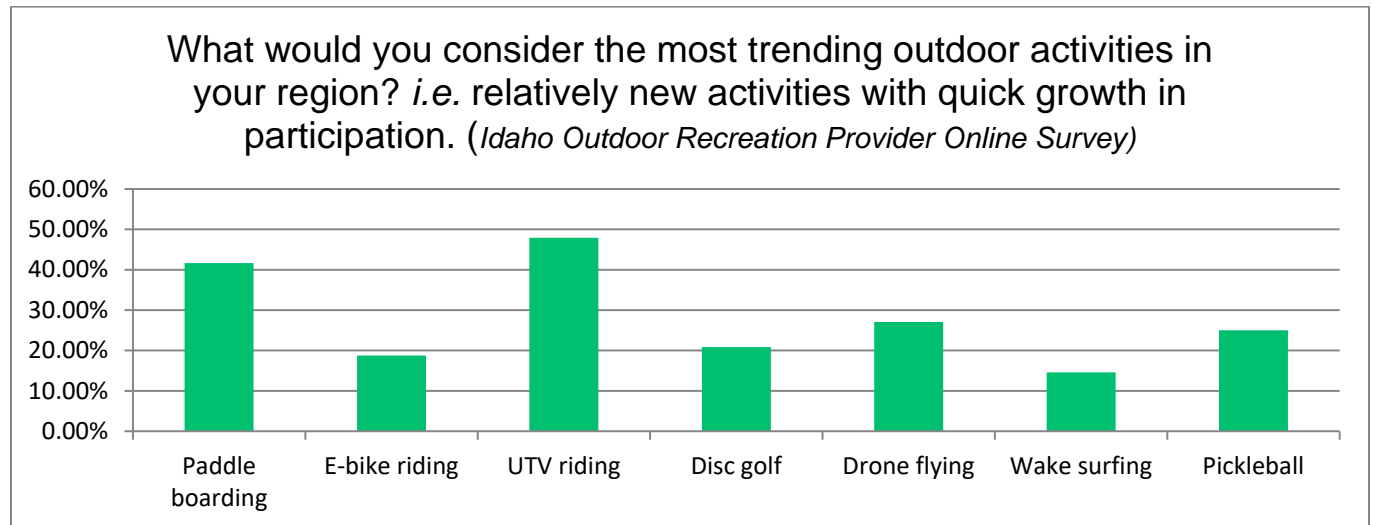
Land and Water Conservation Fund Projects

The Land and Water Conservation Fund, managed in Idaho by IDPR, is made available to local government entities every other year. The project applications received from these entities reflects the needs of the communities they serve, and provide insight into the demands and needs at a local level. A review of all applications determined some trends in recreational facilities. The most frequently requested amenities were playgrounds, followed by shelters, splash pads/spray parks, pathways, restrooms and skate parks. Additionally, these amenities were requested from regions across the state and by cities of all sizes, showing trends that are not specific to a certain region or population base. The requested projects on this list generally correspond with the facilities which local providers considered demand to be exceeding supply.



Emerging Activities and Trends

One of the more difficult challenges for recreation providers and suppliers is keeping up with trends in activities and predicting the emergence of new activities. Focus group discussions indicated a relative consensus on some of the emerging activities in Idaho, and a follow-up survey of recreation providers offered the following results on popularity of these activities (see results below).



Utility Task Vehicle (UTV)

UTVs are one of the fastest growing segments of the off-highway vehicle industry. The emergence of UTVs, or side-by-sides as they are sometimes referred as, have quickly proliferated on Idaho's backcountry roads and trails. However, many of these vehicles exceed the 50" inch maximum width requirement the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management mandate for trails designated for ATV use. This caused confusion and discontent when UTV riders were not able to ride these types of trails, and only allowed on wider roads and jeep trails. Manufacturers have responded to this issue with the production of "trail legal" UTVs which are within the 50" width and can be ridden on trails designated for ATV use.

Drones

Drones are becoming relatively common, especially as the market grows and costs reduce. They are popular recreationally for their photography and videography uses, providing the ability for drone pilots to capture pictures/video from heights and perspectives never before available to amateurs and hobbyists. However, concerns over issues like privacy, noise impacting visitor experience and negative impacts on wildlife and natural resources have led public land managers to reconsider their use in public places. In 2014, the National Park Service prohibited the use of unmanned aircraft systems (drones) in all national parks until they agency finalizes a policy on their use. Drones will continue to be an issue for public land managers and recreation providers, and policy will likely need to be developed to address their use.

Electric Bikes

Electric bikes, or e-bikes, are another emerging trend that are spurring management and policy discussions in cities and counties across the state. E-bikes employ an electric motor to assist with powering the bicycle forward. Many are pedal assist, meaning that a combination of human and non-human power are involved, but also have the option of being powered fully by the motor, using a throttle. As the technology has advanced, many e-bikes are relatively indistinguishable from regular bicycles. The bikes also provide new opportunities for individuals with health or physical limitations to participate in the activity. E-bikes are in a grey area between non-motorized and motorized, and managers of paved and unpaved trails are considering the conditions of their use. However, states and local governments around the country have begun allowing the use of electric bikes with restrictions on maximum speed and power output.

Paddle boarding

Participation in stand up paddleboarding, often abbreviated as SUP, has increased significantly in Idaho. The activity is relatively easy to learn, and Idaho's abundance of lakes, ponds and rivers allow for ample opportunities. Additionally, recreation providers can accommodate the activity without having to add additional facilities, provided they have existing access to water bodies they manage. Many park concessionaires and retailers provide rental boards, allowing for a cost-effective introduction into the activity.

Disc golf

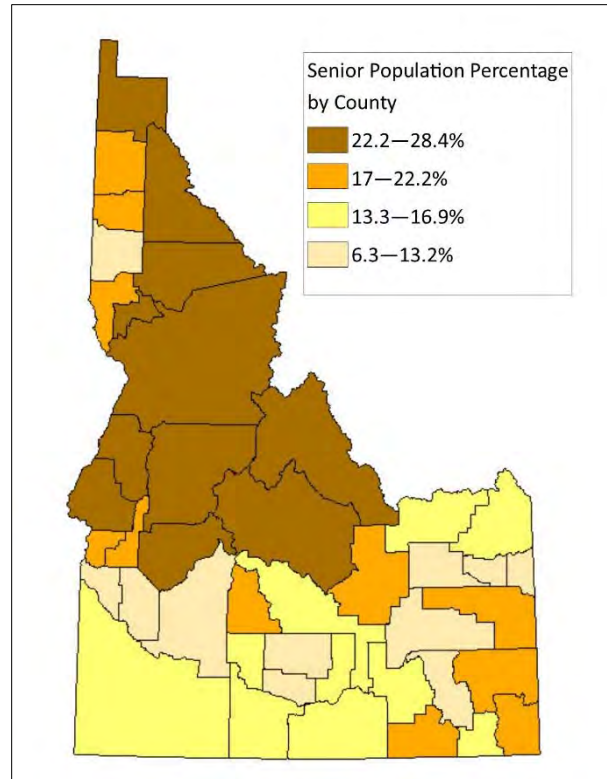
Disc golf is not a new activity, but has seen consistent growth in Idaho. Disc golf courses are relatively inexpensive to install, and can easily be removed or reconfigured if needed. In Idaho, courses are typically provided by municipalities and the state park system. Participation in the activity is affordable and access is improving as course construction continues across the state. According to the Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA), there are currently 75 courses in Idaho, which almost doubles the number of courses available in 2011 (40).

Wake surfing

Wake surfing is a new and rapidly growing water-based activity. Unlike wakeboarding, wake surfers stand atop the board (not strapped in) behind the stern of the boat. The goal is to catch and ride the wave created by the boat's wake without holding on to the tow rope. In a response to the popularity of this activity, manufacturers have begun making boats specifically designed for wake surfing with mechanized flaps that create larger waves for riders. The activity is popular in many age groups, and the slower speeds of the ride make injury less likely than other tow sports. However, the larger wakes required for this activity can cause conflict with other recreationists on the water, including non-motorized boaters and other tow-sport participants. Larger wakes could also cause shoreline resource damage due to increased wave action.

Pickleball

Pickleball is an emerging activity that combines elements of tennis, badminton and ping-pong. Pickleball is played on a hard surfaced court, like a tennis court, using a perforated plastic ball and wood or composite paddles. Pickleball has especially caught on in the senior community, considering it is easy to learn and less physically demanding than other racquet sports, but participation will likely grow into other age groups. In order to accommodate increased demand, many communities are retrofitting underutilized tennis and basketball courts to provide pickleball opportunities, a cheaper alternative to designing and constructing a new court. The map to the right shows the percentage of senior population (ages 65+) in each county. Counties with a high percentage of seniors, and counties with larger populations may be likely to experience more demand for pickleball.



Snow sports

Means and methods of over-snow travel continually evolve in Idaho. Such recent trends include (non-motorized) fat tire bikes and motorized snow bikes. Use of fat tire bikes has grown on Idaho's groomed cross-country and snowmobile trails, with the bicycle's wide and knobby tires facilitating traction and travel over packed snow. Motorized snow-bikes, similar to a dirt bike but with a ski for the front wheel and track (like a snowmobile) on the rear, are also a growing winter trend. These vehicles can operate on groomed and non-groomed snow, and due to their narrowness and navigability, can access terrain that is typically inaccessible by snowmobile. As a continuation of this trend, Harley Davidson recently released a trackless motorized snow bike (pictured below) which debuted at the 2018 Winter X Games in a new event called the Snow Hill Climb. Idaho must continue to monitor and account for these new uses, particularly where the provision and maintenance of trails and parking areas are paid for by the user through registration fees (like snowmobiles and off-highway vehicles).



Snow Hill Climb at 2018 Winter X Games

Photo credit: Harley Davidson

Skate parks

The installation of skate parks has been increasingly popular in cities across the state. This trend has been noted in an increase in Land and Water Conservation Fund applications from local governments to construct these facilities in public parks and spaces. Skateboarding is particularly popular with younger generations, and skate parks provide a needed opportunity to increase youth participation in outdoor recreation. In addition to skateboarding, skate parks provide opportunities for inline skating, biking and scooter riding.

Chapter 4: Outdoor Recreation Issues and Recommendations

This chapter outlines goals and objectives to help providers adapt to emerging trends and to address issues impacting outdoor recreation. IDPR determined the recommendations in this chapter through input received from the SCORP steering committee, meetings with outdoor recreation providers, research of nationwide and regional trends and issues, and online surveys.

While Idaho has an abundance of public lands, the management of these lands requires a balance between offering outdoor recreation opportunities and sustaining the state's natural, cultural and historical resources. This requires a coordinated system of delivery, ensuring that a broad range of recreation facilities, programs and resources are made available to all of Idaho's citizens and visitors for generations to come.

Common Themes

Throughout the process of developing this plan, the following common themes emerged as current and potential areas of concern over the next five years:

- Loss of public lands, including federal land transfers
- Loss of motorized trail access due to administrative closures, and non-motorized trail access due to lack of funding for maintenance
- Balancing population growth, increased participation and natural resource protection
- Engaging youth in outdoor recreation
- Maintaining existing facilities and infrastructure
- Improving communication between providers and the public
- Funding for programming and interpretation
- Improving education and stewardship/respect for natural resources
- Building new and unique partnerships
- Adapting to changes in activities and emerging activities; staying relevant
- Blending technology with outdoor recreation
- Connecting with new users, including minority and underserved populations
- Improving access for people with disabilities

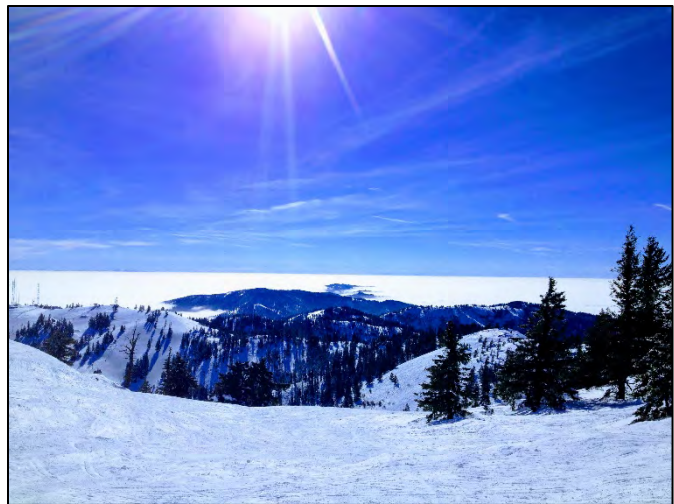
These themes are addressed in this section as part of three overarching issue areas: access, experience, and stewardship.

This section intends to meet the LWCF requirements for an implementation plan. Additionally, LWCF applications will be rated partially by their ties to these themes and issues through the Open Project Selection Process (Appendix A).

SCORP Focus Areas 2018-2022

1. Access

In regards to this plan, “access” refers to the overall availability of a recreational opportunity. Idaho must continue to provide access to opportunities for its citizens and visitors, ensuring that public lands and parks remain open to a variety of recreational uses throughout the state. There are many challenges in meeting this task, including funding for maintaining and developing facilities, adapting to trends and changes in activities, and balancing access with conservation of resources.



Goals

- A. Public agencies and non-profit entities should pursue the acquisition, preservation and development of urban open space, parks, trails and corridors.
- B. Public land managers in and adjacent to communities should develop connecting trails between communities and recreation opportunities.
- C. Community leaders and stakeholders should encourage goals that help create close-to-home, everyday recreation opportunities.
- D. IDPR should develop a method, process, or program to enhance awareness about the loss of trail access to the motorized recreation community.
- E. IDPR should continue to partner with Federal land managers in maintaining and improving motorized recreational trails and mitigating factors that may lead to closure.
- F. IDPR and Federal land managers, and other stakeholders should continue efforts to identify dedicated funding sources for development, maintenance and management of non-motorized trails on public lands.
- G. Public agencies and community leaders should keep public lands open and accessible, and work with large private land holders to allow or retain recreational access.
- H. Public agencies should strengthen partnerships with the Idaho Association of Counties and the Association of Idaho Cities so that access issues are considered in comprehensive planning.
- I. IDPR should coordinate with local, state and federal partners to inventory boat ramps statewide and identify those in need of repairs and upgrades.
- J. Public land managers should recognize that there are limits on the number of recreationists and types of recreation our finite public lands can accommodate and still offer a quality experience.
- K. Land management agencies should consider the role of recreation in landscape scale vegetation and natural resource plans, ensuring the plans document the balance between recreation and restoration.

Spotlight on Loss of Trail Access and Opportunity

Idaho multi-use trails not only provide opportunities for off-highway motorized recreation on all-terrain vehicles, utility type vehicles, and motorcycles, but also support non-motorized access for equestrian use, mountain biking, hiking, hunting, fishing, photography, or just walking out to enjoy the amazing scenery that Idaho has to offer. Each year more people participate in motorized recreation on Idaho trails. At the same time, Idaho is experiencing a consistent loss in motorized trail-based opportunities. Specifically, from 2012 to 2016, registrations for off-highway vehicles increased 5% (from 139,429 to 159,756), yet the number of trail miles open to motorized use on federal lands decreased by 11% (from 9,975 to 8,871). If this trend remains constant, the remaining multi-use trails will experience additional strain on the natural resource, increased crowding, and diminished recreation experiences.

Motorized recreation in Idaho creates funding for significant trail maintenance and access through-out the state through off-highway vehicle registrations and a percentage of the gas tax. Currently there is no similar dedicated funding source to support trail maintenance for non-motorized use. Therefore, once the motorized use is disallowed, those funding sources are no longer available, and without funding, the trails (in most cases) are no longer maintained. Downed trees, water damage, landslides, and wildfire damage become major impediments to enjoyable and safe travel on Idaho's trails.

Idaho, in coordination with federal land managers and select user groups and other special interest groups, needs a solution to improve access to motorized and non-motorized trails. Trail based opportunities are essential to outdoor recreation in Idaho, and losing these opportunities will be detrimental to the state's economy, tourism and quality of life. IDPR will work towards addressing these issues, in part by implementing items 1D, 1E and 1F above and working with partners to implement 3C and 3E below.

2. Experience

Beyond the provision of facilities and management of land, recreation providers also facilitate participation for Idaho's citizens and visitors. By offering programs, classes and educational opportunities, providers can better connect people to parks and public lands and instill life-long skills to allow for continued participation.

Goals

- A. Public agencies should seek partnerships with local school districts and non-profits to provide and fund environmental education opportunities outside of the classroom.
- B. All recreation providers should support the Idaho Environmental Literacy Plan by working with stakeholders to incorporate environmental education into school practices based on Idaho education standards.
- C. Public agencies should seek to identify, understand and provide programs and opportunities for underserved populations, particularly senior citizens and ethnic minorities.
- D. Public agencies should seek partnerships with outfitters and retailers in providing first time experience programs to encourage new participants.
- E. Recreation providers should continue to improve and provide facilities and programs accessible to all people, regardless of physical or mental disabilities.

- F. Recreation providers should enhance access and improve experiences by providing appropriate signing, maps, websites and other information dissemination methods in keeping with advancing technologies.
- G. Public recreation providers should communicate and partner with businesses in the outdoor recreation industry to understand and adapt to trends and changes in activities.
- H. IDPR should continue to maintain the *Trails Idaho* internet tool and seek ways to enhance it with the inclusion of additional information on outdoor recreation of all types.

3. Stewardship

In order to ensure the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities, those entrusted with maintaining Idaho's public lands must continue to care for these important resources. At the same time, it is important that current and future generations understand the value and benefits of the state's natural, cultural and historic resources.

Goals

- A. Recreation providers should ensure the rehabilitation and renovation of existing outdoor facilities and related infrastructure.
- B. Public, private and non-profit entities should work with community leaders and stakeholders to provide community service projects for high schoolers with an environmental focus.
- C. Public agencies should foster and grow partnerships with user-groups and other non-profits to maintain and preserve opportunities and resources.
- D. State and Federal land managers should continue the effective *Stay on Trails* campaign
- E. Federal land managers should partner with outfitters and guides to assist in maintaining motorized and non-motorized trails.
- F. Public agencies should determine and promote the economic impact of the outdoor recreation opportunities they provide.
- G. IDPR should conduct a statewide study on outdoor recreation to help understand participation rates, trends, motivations and barriers for participation.
- H. Recreation providers should seek new ways to recruit, train and retain the next generation of outdoor recreation leaders.
- I. Public agencies should seek new funding opportunities through partnerships and sponsorships to improve funding for programs and facilities.
- J. Recreation providers should seek opportunities to partner with state and county health departments and health-based companies to promote the physical and mental benefits of outdoor recreation.
- K. Public land managers should work with service organizations that employ young adults and teenagers to maintain and improve outdoor recreation facilities and resources.
- L. Public agencies should use interpretation including both personal presentations and non-personal media to inspire stewardship of our natural, cultural and historic resources.
- M. Public recreation providers should seek to provide a trail system that is sustainable from a social, economic and resource perspective.

Chapter 5: Moving Forward

Outdoor recreation in Idaho is continually evolving, as trends in participation, new technology, and changes in demographics and tourism impact the demand for facilities and resources. Recreation providers and land managers are challenged with balancing access while protecting resources, and ensuring that opportunities are available for present and future generations. In order to achieve this, cooperation and communication between public, private and non-profit entities must take place to ensure a collaborative and connected system of lands and opportunities are made available to the people of Idaho and its visitors.

IDPR, as the developer of this plan, should serve as a leader in facilitating the implementation of the goals outlined in this plan. By reaching out and working with partners such as public and private health organizations, leaders of minority or underserved populations, school districts, land management agencies and recreation and environmental advocates, IDPR can help improve outdoor recreation access, experience and stewardship across the state.





The Idaho Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is produced by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. For additional inquiries regarding this plan, please contact IDPR at (208) 334-4199.