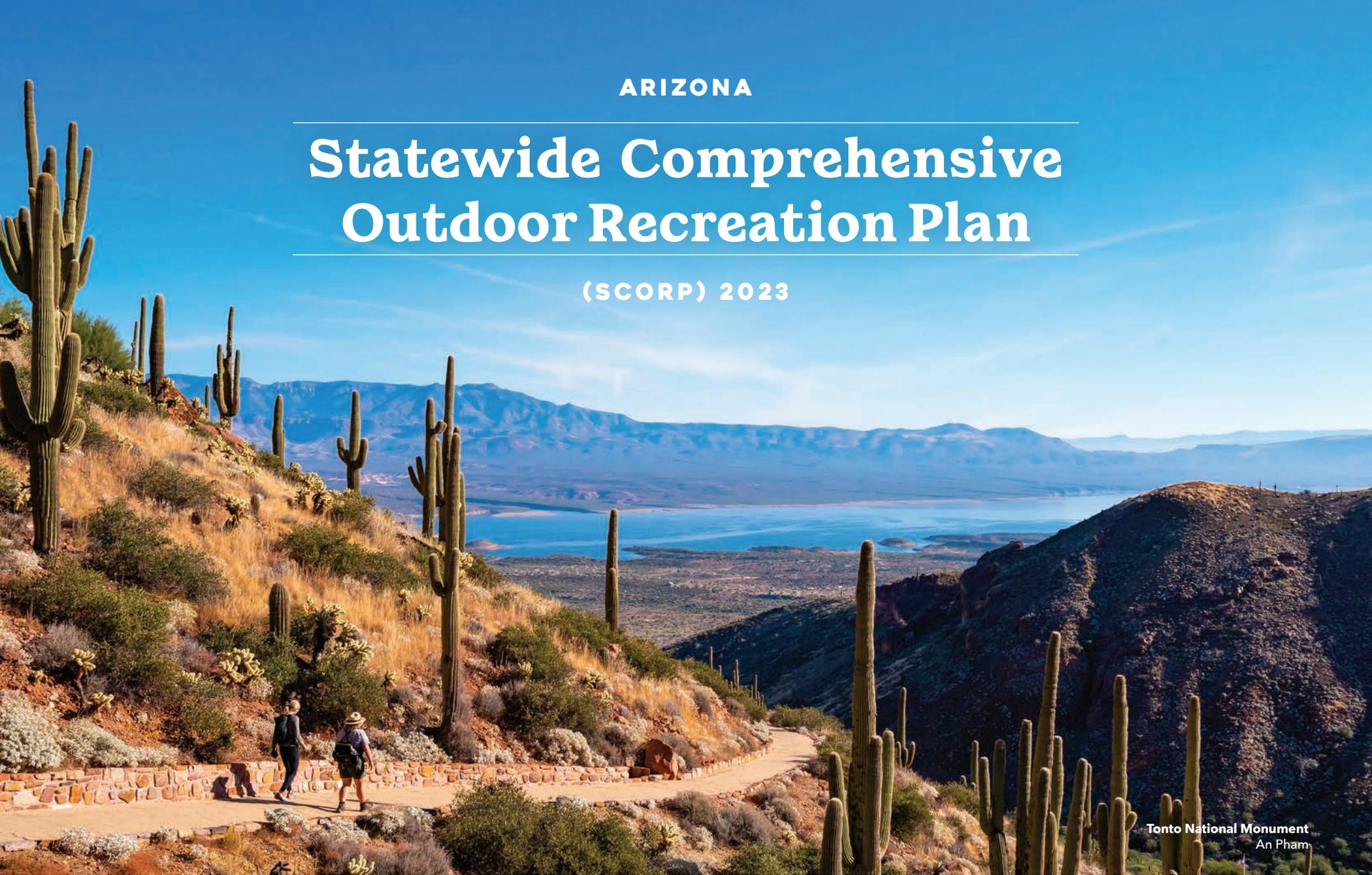


ARIZONA

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

(SCORP) 2023



Tonto National Monument
An Pham

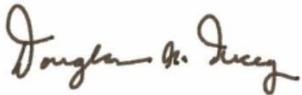


Foreword

Arizona continues to be a source of adventure, recreation, and relaxation for those who call the Grand Canyon State home and for visitors from around the globe. From the cool pines of the north to the desert landscapes of the south, Arizona is a land of opportunity, natural beauty, and cultural wonders.

Now more than ever, Arizona residents and visitors alike are finding new adventures in exploring the outdoors, hiking, fishing, camping, biking, swimming, and stargazing—and they are rediscovering why they fell in love with Arizona in the first place.

I commend the Arizona State Parks and Trails for their efforts to develop a comprehensive strategy that not only engaged Arizona stakeholders, residents, and outdoor recreation providers throughout its development, but invites continued engagement and collaboration to deliver meaningful results.



Douglas A. Ducey
Governor of the State of Arizona



Awaiting Arizona’s residents and tourists are endless outdoor adventures, from lakeside shorelines and rushing rivers to wandering mountain trails and cultural preserves, from community parks and recreational sites to exploring nature and seeing wildlife.

It is my pleasure to share with you Arizona’s 2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The plan addresses how we, as a state, are all stewards of Arizona’s unique natural and cultural resources and together can enhance the outdoor recreation experiences for residents and visitors alike.

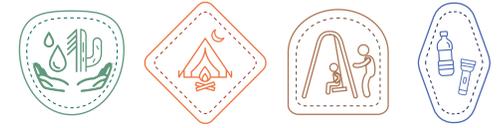
This SCORP effort was a collaboration among stakeholders from across the state who represented the public and private sectors; local, state, tribal, and federal agencies; and advocacy organizations. Also, more than 6,500 Arizona residents provided feedback regarding their outdoor recreation experiences and priorities going forward.

We look forward to continuing to partner with stakeholders and residents from across the state to use this plan to further our shared values and contribute to our goal of enhancing Arizona’s outdoor recreation experiences.



Bob Broscheid
Executive Director, Arizona State Parks and Trails





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It has taken a village to produce Arizona's 2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Thanks to the following people, whose combined efforts and talents, along with many others who helped in equally important ways, made it happen.

Arizona State Parks and Trails

Bob Broscheid, Executive Director
Brittany Hudson, Legislative and Tribal Liaison
Michelle Thompson, Public Information Officer & Chief of Communications
Neil Large, Digital Marketing Coordinator
Elisabeth Haugan, Communications Coordinator
Bonnie Sposato, Administrator, Office of Continuous Improvement
Ken Silwa, Community Relations Administrator
Dawn Collins, Project Manager
Katharine Schinzel, Business Analyst
Mickey Rogers, Chief of Grants and Trails
Jeff Schmidt, Grant, GIS and Intern Coordinator

Arizona State University (ASU)

Dr. Gyan Nyaupane, Professor and Associate Dean of Research, Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions
Dale Larsen, Professor of Practice, School of Community Resources and Development
Connor Clark, Doctoral Candidate, School of Community Resources and Development
Tanner Caterina-Knorr, Doctoral Candidate, School of Community Resources and Development

Partners In Brainstorms, Inc.

Debra Pryor, President & CEO
Dawn Volkman, Research Manager
Deborah Meyers, Senior Writer and Editor
Jami Pomponi Alire, Principal, Fervor Creative
Andrew Vagner, Visual Designer

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Charles Hofer, State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator
Ginger Ritter, Project Evaluation Program Supervisor

Thanks to all the Arizonans—including over 6,500 members of the public and over 100 outdoor recreation providers—who participated in surveys and interviews and answered questions on the Arizona State Parks and Trails website. In addition, we extend our appreciation to those who took part in stakeholder sessions and focus groups, and served as working group members, collaborating with ASU to aggregate and prioritize stakeholder information. Below are the organizations represented by working group members:

Ability 360
American Conservation Experience
Arizona State Land Department
Arizona Wildlife Federation
Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department
Navajo Nation Government
Northern Arizona University, Economic Policy Institute
Nogales-Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce
Outdoor Afro
Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation
Tonto National Forest Supervisor's Office
University of Arizona, School of Natural Resources and the Environment



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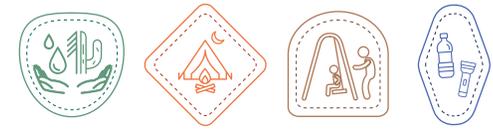


Tanque Verde Ranch
Visit Tucson

ARIZONA SCORP 2023

Executive Summary

Arizona's outdoor recreation opportunities call out to residents and visitors alike. The Grand Canyon State provides unique and finite natural and cultural resources, open spaces, parks, trails, lakes, and rivers to enjoy a range of outdoor activities. The natural beauty of Arizona beckons people outdoors, and they spend countless hours and dollars pursuing their outdoor recreation activities. In return, Arizona's residents gain greater appreciation for conserving and sustaining the state's outdoor resources now and for generations to come.



STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP)

Every five years, Arizona State Parks and Trails (ASPT) leads the development of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to maintain eligibility for funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) consistent with the requirements of the LWCF Act (54 U.S.C. § 200305(f)(3)) and to inform additional investments from other federal, state, local, and private programs. However, given the significance of outdoor recreation in the state, this plan is much more than a federal requirement for funding. This plan addresses how we, as a state, across boundaries and jurisdictions, can protect and enhance the outdoor recreation assets that help to sustain our health, our economy, and our livelihoods—and support opportunities for residents and visitors alike. It also outlines a strategy to ensure our outdoor recreation experiences remain resilient amid environmental pressures and growing use and demand.

THE POWER OF COLLABORATION: TURNING SHARED LEARNING INTO ACTION

As one considers what has happened in outdoor recreation since 2020, it could be said that it has been “the best of times and the worst of times.” While there have been more people recreating outdoors than ever before and short-term funding given to support outdoor recreation, Arizona also has had to address a pandemic and growing environmental challenges, including a record-setting drought, wildfires, low water levels in lakes and rivers, and increased usage that directly affects its natural resources. With these challenges have come opportunities: Some providers reported increased collaboration, shared learning, and greater agility out of necessity in responding to these ever increasing and evolving challenges. Outdoor recreation providers, programs, and projects continue to experience these challenges in their pursuit to help Arizona’s residents and visitors access and engage with the outdoors while protecting the state’s natural resources.

“The last two years have felt like 20, but there has been key learning that I can use in continually moving forward. As a land manager, you need to manage external forces, including the impact of the drought, rising temperatures, wildfires, along with overcrowding, funding, and staffing issues. I am not alone—these same challenges are being experienced across Arizona and the western states. However, working together with other land managers and our local, state, and federal agencies, we shared best practices—what is working and not working. We learned, adapted, and moved forward, and that collaboration has been instrumental in our ability to better serve our visitors. That is also why the SCORP is such a great resource.”

—Arizona Outdoor Recreation Provider Survey, January 2022

Arizona’s 2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) was developed in close collaboration with a wide range of partners to provide a shared vision for the future of Arizona’s outdoors. This SCORP considers both conservation and recreation together as values that are closely intertwined. In addition, the SCORP looks at current and changing demographics and recreation trends to help the outdoor recreation sector be culturally relevant and agile in responding to future shifts. The SCORP does not focus on any agency or individual recreation uses. Rather, it supports all outdoor recreation-providing organizations and user groups and seeks broad engagement of outdoor recreationists and conservationists while including community voices in solutions and action.

Executive Summary

PLANNING AND COORDINATION FOR SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Arizona has the second fastest growing population in the country, with a current population of 7.3 million projected to jump to 10 million people by 2050. Between now and 2030, the projected population growth rate is 1.4% per year over the next decade (twice the national average). More residents and a growing number of tourists means public recreation areas will be facing crowding and maintenance backlogs, while balancing traditional and emerging outdoor recreation pursuits. Increased use and year-round activity can affect natural landscapes and native wildlife. These are challenges that can be best addressed with thoughtful planning, collaboration, and coordination with a wide range of stakeholders throughout the state.

PUBLIC VOICES – OVER 6,500 PARTICIPANTS

To assure voices of the public, invested outdoor recreationists, and providers were represented in the SCORP, surveys and interviews were conducted across Arizona. One of the largest public studies ever conducted for the state’s SCORP was completed. For this demographically-representative study of Arizona residents, a total of 5,444 surveys and interviews in Spanish and English were completed online, by phone, and on mobile devices. An additional 1,324 online surveys were completed by invested outdoor recreationists through Arizona State Parks and Trails and other partners’ communication channels.

INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

While 72% of Arizona residents participated in outdoor recreation within the last year, when asked if they are planning to participate in at least one outdoor recreation activity in the next 12 months, 97% responded yes. It is essential to understand the needs of these outdoor recreation users, as well as the providers of outdoor recreational experiences, to successfully plan for the future of conservation and recreation in Arizona. As part of the 2023 SCORP development process, stakeholders participated in focus groups and listening sessions. These stakeholders along with working group members were essential in sharing experiences and challenges of outdoor recreation users and providers. The statewide surveys involving Arizona residents and invested users answered a series of questions that looked at why Arizona residents are motivated to take part in outdoor recreation, what barriers stand in their way, and their perspectives on outdoor recreation, funding priorities, and the relationship between outdoor recreation and conservation.

Key Motivators — Health and Wellness and Social Connections

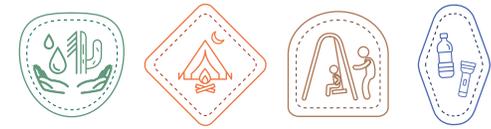
Those who recreate outdoors had a variety of motivations, the most popular being to promote a healthy lifestyle through physical activity, followed closely by improving mental health, and opportunities for family interaction. The most common recreational activity statewide and regionally is visiting a local park; walking, jogging, or running on trails or at a park; followed closely by day hiking

Rank	Top 10 Activities
1	Visiting a local park
2	Walking, jogging, running on trails or at park
3	Day hiking
4	Picnicking / gathering outdoors
5	Visiting a natural/wilderness area
6	Attending outdoor events
7	Visiting a historical site
8	Swimming outdoors
9	Bird / wildlife watching
10	Fishing

Barriers to Outdoor Recreation — Need for Increased Access, Equity, and Facilitating Connections

The top five barriers to Arizonans’ recreation participation were COVID/pandemic, too busy, do not have the equipment, fees are too high, and do not have companions or people to go with. These responses are very telling, including how one defines outdoor recreation and some misconceptions. These barriers were considered in developing strategies to support access and equity and to facilitate further connections with others, existing groups, and the outdoors.

Also, when looking at outdoor recreation characteristics over the last five years, the public perceived that they had all stayed the same, including recreation opportunities, and services related to use of parks and recreation facilities. However, according to providers these two categories of outdoor recreation in Arizona had increased. This may show a need for more targeted communication strategies to keep the public informed about the available opportunities.



Public Support for Funding to Increase Access to Trails and Facilities and Protect Natural Settings

The public’s recreation priorities focus on **providing more walking trails and pathways; increasing easy/convenient access points to trails, pathways, waterways, and facilities; and protecting and encouraging more natural settings at outdoor recreation areas and facilities.** Having the ability to recreate close to home remains popular in terms of current activity participation (e.g., walking or jogging outdoors) and preferences for future opportunities (e.g., walking trails and paths, playgrounds, etc.) among Arizona residents.

OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDERS

A total of 112 surveys were completed by agencies and organizations involved in providing outdoor recreation, including representatives from federal, state, county, town/city, tribal, and non-government organizations. When surveyed, outdoor recreation providers named the activities/conditions that often negatively affect recreation users, including **littering / vandalism, noise, and mixed-use areas or trails causing conflicts among users,** followed by **crowding.**

According to providers, the programs that are offered most often are for **adults, older adults, and families.** While providers are looking to offer expanded and specialized programming, most noted the challenges in making that happen are due to **staffing shortages** and **lack of financial support.**

SHARED FOCUS ON CONSERVATION AMONG THE PUBLIC, INVESTED OUTDOOR RECREATIONISTS, AND PROVIDERS

When asked to rate their level of concern about issues that can affect their outdoor recreation experience, the public and providers agree—the top three issues are **drought, wildfires that threaten outdoor recreation areas, and water levels in lakes and rivers.**

These concerns are also affecting a shift in funding priorities, while **maintaining existing trails and outdoor recreation and cultural facilities** is still the top response, a close second and third are **protecting natural and cultural resources** and **providing habitat, preservation, and restoration.**

Arizona’s future focus should be in the use of public lands, the public and providers agree that the focus should be divided about equally between conserving natural resources with providing outdoor recreation opportunities. A combined 43% of the public believes the focus should be somewhat more or almost entirely on conserving natural resources.

Arizona’s Future Focus in Use of Public Lands Among those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months	Arizona Public N=5,274	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=112
Future focus should be almost entirely on providing outdoor recreation opportunities	14.7%	4.8%	2.7%
Future focus should be somewhat more on providing outdoor recreation opportunities	7.4%	7.2%	5.4%
Future focus should be divided about equally between the two	33.1%	49.7%	64.3%
Future focus should be somewhat more on conserving natural resources	21.8%	25.1%	21.4%
Future focus should be almost entirely on conserving natural resources	19.9%	13.2%	6.3%



Did You Know?

Approximately 82 percent of Arizona’s land comprises national forests, national parks, recreation and wilderness areas, wildlife preserves and Indian reservations.

Executive Summary

Through a collaborative and inclusive SCORP process, the following four priority areas have been identified for the next five years.



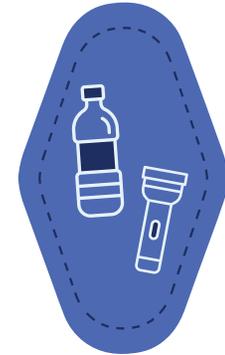
Conservation and Environmental Stewardship



Sustainable Outdoor Recreation



Connection, Community, and Economic Vitality



Pathways to Health and Wellness

These priorities reflect the current trends, opportunities, and challenges facing Arizona's outdoor recreation resources today. Each priority includes a primary goal, followed by specific objectives and actionable strategies. The interconnected priorities are critical components to achieving a future vision where Arizona's outdoors continues to provide rich recreation experiences while conserving natural and cultural resources.

Arizona State Parks and Trails looks forward to continuing to partner with stakeholders and residents from across the state to use the SCORP 2023 to further our shared values and contribute to our goal of enhancing Arizona's outdoor recreation experiences now and for future generations.



Kartchner Caverns
Arizona State Parks and Trails



Arizona State Parks and Trails



City of Peoria



Usery Mountain Regional Park
Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department



Arizona State Parks and Trails



Verde River
Arizona State Parks and Trails



Tonto National Forest
National Forest Service



Did You Know?

The Sonoran Desert is the most biologically diverse desert in North America.

Executive Summary



PRIORITY 1

CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Goal: Engage in responsible stewardship of Arizona's unique and finite natural and cultural resources, open spaces, parks, lakes, and rivers, while continuing to address environmental factors to achieve a balance between conservation and recreation.

1 Foster sustainable outdoor recreation through conservation and stewardship.

Strategy 1: Provide consistent messaging and educational materials around environmental stewardship and associated actions for agencies, organizations, and the public.

Strategy 2: Advocate for public-private partnerships to enhance education on stewardship, including promoting Appreciate AZ and Leave No Trace principles.

Strategy 3: Identify and seek to address gaps in communication (between agencies, from agencies to groups and individuals, individuals and groups to agencies, and individuals and groups to each other) to help mitigate potential negative environmental impacts.

Strategy 4: Leverage Arizonans' interest in conservation and stewardship by engaging the public to support and participate in the implementation of statewide, regional, and local strategies.

2 Optimize resources (financial, human, and other) through partnerships to fund and execute activities that address the balance between conservation and recreation.

Strategy 1: Leverage individual and organization resources to address environmental, social, and individual factors that affect the balance between conservation and recreation.

Strategy 2: Optimize current funding and seek new funding opportunities through public-private and cross-sector partnerships.

3 Advance regional and statewide alliances that address the balance between conservation and outdoor recreation.

Strategy 1: Coordinate with public agencies and private organizations to identify and act to protect critical habitat and at-risk resources (e.g., lakes and rivers) across jurisdictions, plans, etc.

Strategy 2: Engage in collaborative multi-agency and individual resource and visitation planning to reduce negative impacts.

Strategy 3: Amplify tribal voices in outdoor recreation planning efforts. Develop a collaborative strategy with tribal members for planning, managing, interpreting, and educating the public on their traditional cultural properties and resources.

PRIORITY 2

SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR RECREATION

Goal: Create and expand upon a sustainable outdoor recreation network that ensures Arizonans and visitors feel invited, welcome, and safe, and have access to these resources.

1 Develop multi-organization, sustainable outdoor recreation plans that may include conservation, restoration, maintenance, and visitor use management efforts to support outdoor recreation spaces.

Strategy 1: Update and review outdoor recreation facilities and site asset information from federal, state, county, local, and tribal outdoor recreation providers.

Strategy 2: Identify gaps between the supply and demand in outdoor recreation in Arizona. Assess and monitor outdoor recreation spaces for proactive management.

Strategy 3: Develop short-, medium- and long-term goals, objectives, and strategies for multi-organization, regional, and statewide plans.

2 Pursue sustainable funding to support the operation, programs, and maintenance of existing outdoor recreation spaces, as well as the acquisition and development of new outdoor recreation spaces to ensure that Arizona's growing population continues to have access to high-quality outdoor experiences.

Strategy 1: Identify grants and other funding strategies available to support multi-organization, regional or statewide goals related to outdoor recreation and protecting natural and cultural resources.

Strategy 2: Propose sustainable funding mechanisms that provide support outside of grants and current agency budgets.

Strategy 3: Evaluate funding sources to close the current gap that limits underrepresented populations from taking part in outdoor recreation in the state.

3 Maintain, manage, and improve existing infrastructure to meet the needs of Arizonans.

Strategy 1: Maintain existing trails, outdoor recreation, and cultural facilities.

Strategy 2: Improve access for visitors of all abilities (physical and cognitive).

Strategy 3: Provide an integrated network of outdoor recreation opportunities that supplies different options where Arizonans and visitors feel invited, welcome, and safe.





PRIORITY 3

CONNECTION, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC VITALITY

Goal: Provide high-quality recreation experiences that help to connect individuals and families with their communities and to each other, while supporting outdoor recreation as an important economic driver in communities across Arizona.

1 Broaden outreach, education, and information available.

Strategy 1: Connect individuals of all ages and families to the land and the natural and cultural resources of Arizona through existing relationships with organizations, clubs, and educational institutions.

Strategy 2: Create communication channels and education opportunities for people of all ages—from children to older adults—to further expand their knowledge and experiences with outdoor recreation.

Strategy 3: Increase the use of technology, online resources, and mobile devices (e.g., apps, GPS, websites, and social media) to promote and connect people to the outdoors.

Strategy 4: Assure communication materials and signage are easy to understand, and use language and images that are inclusive and representative of the population.

2 Encourage outdoor recreation providers to build new and strengthen existing partnerships with other organizations and individuals to provide a network that addresses community connection and recreation opportunities.

Strategy 1: Improve community-to-community outdoor recreation connectivity using multi-scale planning and multi-modal transportation infrastructure.

Strategy 2: Use universal design to ensure that outdoor recreation spaces are accessible to the widest possible range of visitors.

Strategy 3: Partner to address community concerns, such as emergency response, litter, and misuse of outdoor recreation spaces to ensure that these spaces are inviting, welcoming, and safe for visitors.

3 Cultivate community vibrancy and economic vitality through healthy lands, lakes, and rivers that support sustainable outdoor recreation.

Strategy 1: Collaborate with communities to identify local and regional outdoor recreation opportunities that provide community and economic benefit.

Strategy 2: Coordinate community and regional efforts to address identified outdoor recreation needs.

Strategy 3: Identify opportunities for multiple funding streams.

PRIORITY 4

PATHWAYS TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Goal: Expand pathways to health and wellness for Arizonans through outdoor recreation with access to open spaces, natural areas, parks, and recreation sites.

1 Improve access and entry points to outdoor recreation for its health and wellness benefits.

Strategy 1: Identify and aid in the development, expansion, and maintenance of recreational facilities within easy access to population centers and economically disadvantaged and underrepresented areas.

Strategy 2: Improve connectivity and access to recreation facilities.

Strategy 3: Provide tools to help connect individuals and groups to outdoor recreation opportunities, programs, and sites (e.g., an integrated resource for visitors to find recreation opportunities to fit their needs and capabilities).

2 Create a safe and welcoming environment that will enhance participation in and enjoyment of the health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation.

Strategy 1: Build relationships with organizations and individuals to better understand and address barriers and access issues for diverse populations.

Strategy 2: Develop or aid in the development of initiatives, programs, and projects that help to mitigate conflicts between people using the same trails, parks, etc.

Strategy 3: Engage directly with diverse populations with health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation messaging.

3 Advance collaborative efforts among community groups, schools, and health and recreation providers to increase nature-based education, recreation, and other policies and practices that promote outdoor recreation for improving public health and wellness.

Strategy 1: Leverage investment in outdoor recreation projects that advance the health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation.

Strategy 2: Identify and pursue cross-sector funding opportunities.

Strategy 3: Foster public-private partnerships. Partner with businesses to support workplace health promotion programs and connect them with outdoor recreation opportunities.





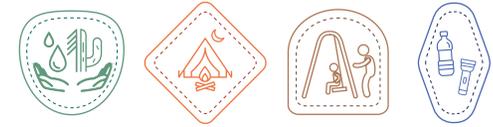
Dead Man's Trail
Sedona Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau

ARIZONA SCORP 2023

Introduction

What Is the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)?

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) serves as a guide for all public outdoor recreation and addresses how we, as a state, across boundaries and jurisdictions, can protect and enhance the outdoor recreation assets that help to sustain our health, our economy, and our livelihoods and support opportunities for residents and visitors alike. It also outlines a strategy to ensure our outdoor recreation experiences remain resilient amid environmental pressures and growing use and demand. Every five years, Arizona State Parks and Trails (ASPT) leads the development of the SCORP. The SCORP is required of every state to be eligible for the federal Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) Program guided by the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (54 U.S.C. § 200305(f)(3)).



LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND IN ARIZONA (LWCF)

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) federal matching grants are available to states, counties, local, and tribal governments for outdoor recreation enhancement, developing and acquiring land and water areas, natural resource protection, and conservation. The LWCF grants increase recreational opportunities for Arizona's residents and its visitors through cooperation and collaboration among the public and private sectors; local, state, tribal, and federal agencies; and advocacy organizations.

Since 1965, Arizona has received approximately \$84 million through the LWCF to fund over 750 outdoor recreation projects. The LWCF has two parts, the "state-side," which funds state and local projects, and the "federal-side," which funds federal land purchases.

Arizona State Parks and Trails is responsible for receiving and allocating LWCF funding. ASPT administers the "state-side"—state and local portion of the LWCF. ASPT also holds the authority to represent and act for the state to work with the Department of the Interior for the LWCF Act.

The goals for the LWCF State Assistance Program are:

- A. Meet state and locally identified public outdoor recreation resource needs to strengthen the health and vitality of the American people.
- B. Increase the number of protected state and local outdoor recreation resources and ensure their availability for public use in perpetuity.
- C. Encourage sound planning and long-term partnerships to expand the quantity—and to ensure the quality—of needed state and local outdoor recreation resources.

This SCORP has been a collaborative effort among a broad range of stakeholders and outdoor recreation providers, as well as the voices of the public, to develop a concise and actionable plan.



Did You Know?

Arizona is the only state which includes a part of each of the four deserts found in North America: the Sonoran Desert (our largest), the Mohave Desert, the Great Basin and the Chihuahuan Desert.



Cholla Cove Park
Arizona State Parks and Trails

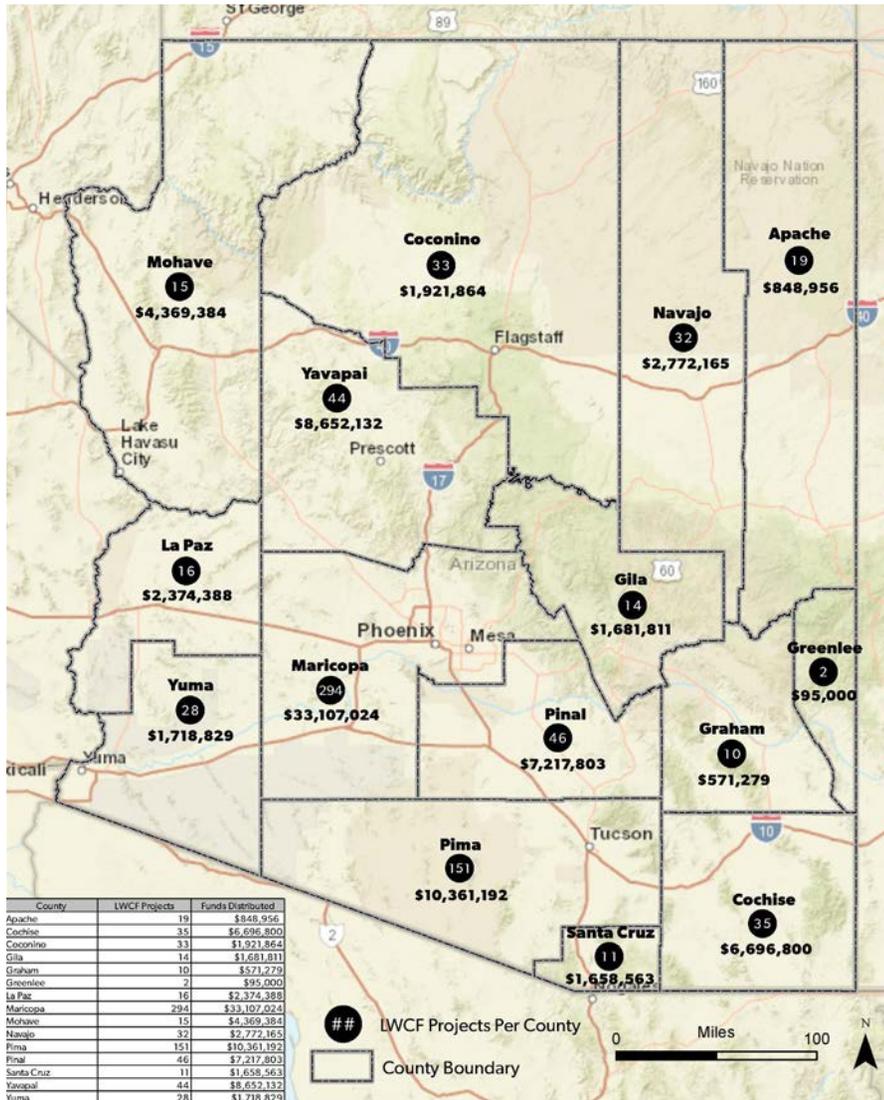
HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Several features of this SCORP are designed to help you use the document more efficiently.

1. A section was developed for each of the four priorities. This is to help you navigate the document and find the information that is most relevant to you.
2. Each priority has a featured case study of communities, organizations, and programs that were funded with LWCF funds, and a topic-focused guest-authored piece.
3. To make the SCORP easy to read, some material, including documents related to the grant application process, and additional resources are included in the appendix.
4. Look for the "Did You Know?" interesting and fun facts about Arizona and outdoor recreation.

Introduction

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) PROJECTS AND FUNDING FROM 1965 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2022



THE GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT, AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA), AND ARIZONA LWCF GRANTS

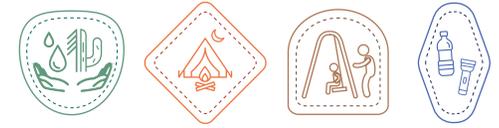
On August 4, 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) was signed into law, authorizing \$900 million annually in permanent funding for LWCF. Prior to the passage of GAOA, funding for LWCF relied on annual Congressional appropriations. In addition, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law approximately one year later on March 11, 2021, and provides \$350 billion in additional funding for state and local governments, some of which is being used on parks deferred maintenance and infrastructure.

LWCF state-side grants can be used for a range of projects from acquiring land for and building, hiking and biking trails; improving community parks, playgrounds and baseball fields; providing public access to rivers, lakes, and other water resources; protecting historic and cultural sites; to conserving natural landscapes.

Arizona’s state-side LWCF share is based on a formula comprised of land area and population factors. As Arizona’s population has increased over the years so has the need for outdoor recreation resources. LWCF state-side is a 50:50 matching program. Since the beginning of the LWCF in Arizona, more than 750 LWCF grants have been awarded totaling \$84,275,753 with a leveraged amount of \$145,358,937, resulting in a significant contribution to Arizona’s outdoor recreation now and for future generations.

COLLABORATION KEY IN DEVELOPING THE SCORP

To develop Arizona’s SCORP, Arizona State Parks and Trails and its partners actively engaged a wide variety of stakeholders, outdoor recreation providers, and the public to reflect on evolving outdoor recreation and conservation challenges and opportunities. The SCORP provides the framework to strategically allocate LWCF dollars (combined with investments from other federal, state, local, and private funding programs) and support collaborations with outdoor recreation providers that promote both recreational enjoyment and thoughtful conservation of Arizona’s unique natural and cultural resources.



2023 SCORP PLANNING PROCESS

The Arizona 2023 SCORP was developed by a multi-disciplinary team of research and outdoor recreation professionals, with input from boards, advisory committees; a broad range of stakeholders representing outdoor recreation and natural resources from local, state, and federal governmental agencies; tribal communities; nonprofits; and private organizations from around the state. Participants were selected to represent diversity and a broad spectrum of perspectives about outdoor recreation and natural resource management.

Stakeholders

The three phases of research included:

- Three, two-hour stakeholder sessions took place in which participants identified outdoor recreation issues; these issues were then categorized, ranked, and discussed in more detail in small groups.
- Follow-up focus groups and short surveys were conducted with underrepresented groups, including tribal members, LGBTQ+, Black, Indigenous and/or People of Color (BIPOC) community members, and individuals with mobility challenges.
- Three working group sessions were conducted where members worked with the ASU team to analyze, aggregate, and summarize the main points discussed during stakeholder sessions and follow up data collection with underrepresented groups.

Public

- A random sample survey and interviews were conducted with Arizona's residents. The public participants were demographically representative of the state's population. The 20-minute survey was conducted online, by phone, and on mobile devices and was available in Spanish and English. A total of **5,444 surveys and interviews** of Arizona residents statewide were completed.
- Arizona residents not contacted through the random sample survey could take part in the same survey online through Arizona State Parks and Trails' website. Outreach was also done through ASPT's communication channels and partners via email, social media, conferences, and other channels. A total of **1,324 surveys** were completed online in Spanish and English.

- Arizona State Parks and Trails also included "quick questions" on its website to address some of the topics in the SCORP survey to gather additional feedback among those individuals who might not otherwise be interested in taking part in the survey. Comments also were collected throughout this process, and key findings were shared as the SCORP project progressed.

Outdoor Recreation Providers

- Agencies and organizations involved in providing outdoor recreation opportunities in Arizona took part in a 20-minute online survey. Outdoor recreation providers were throughout Arizona, with representation from federal, state, county, city or town, tribal communities, and non-government organizations. A total of **112 surveys** were completed by outdoor recreation providers statewide.

Tribal

- Arizona State Parks and Trails also sent a letter requesting tribal consultation on the 2023 SCORP to Arizona's 22 federally recognized American Indian tribes and nations.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The draft SCORP was made available on the Arizona State Parks and Trails website August 3 through September 2, 2022. Partners and members of the public were notified using various ASPT communication channels, such as email, social media, and electronic newsletters, as well as through the communication channels of partners and asked to review the document and share their thoughts and recommendations. Overall, 41 respondents submitted comments to Arizona State Parks and Trails primarily by email.

Introduction

SCORP 2023 PRIORITIES FOCUSED ON MEETING CURRENT AND PROJECTED NEEDS

In reviewing the development process of the previous SCORP 2018, the primary input was from outdoor recreation providers; whereas in 2023, there was a greater representation of the public and stakeholders in addition to outdoor recreation providers.

For both the 2018 and 2023 SCORP, findings and insights were also linked to National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and other national and state priorities. Based on insights gathered from the stakeholders, public, and outdoor recreation providers, the following three NRPA defined areas were focused on in the 2023 SCORP due to the following historical events:

- **Conservation** - Impacts of the drought, wildfires, reduction in water supply, along with the growing population and the increased use of Arizona's unique and finite natural and cultural resources, open spaces, parks, lakes, and rivers.
- **Social Equity** - Growing emphasis to engage underrepresented populations and making outdoor recreation more accessible and welcoming to all.
- **Health and Wellness** - Effects of COVID-19 and a growing focus on physical and mental health.

In 2018, the Optimizing System Vitality priority was added to address the state's implementation of the Arizona Management System.

In comparing the two SCORPs, the 2018 priorities are still represented in the 2023 SCORP; however, the majority of 2018 focus span across the four 2023 priorities and are addressed in the objectives and strategies.



Did You Know?

There are 11.2 million acres of National Forest in Arizona, and one-fourth of the state is forested.

HOW TO UTILIZE THE SCORP

This plan acts as a resource for outdoor recreation providers and organizations. All 50 states' SCORPs are recognized by local, state, and federal agencies as the primary guiding documents for outdoor recreation. The goals and recommendations should guide future planning efforts, help with grant applications, serve as the basis for coordinated action and collaboration, and be a unifying vision of outdoor recreation for the state. Specifically, applications for LWCF state-side grants should use language from this document when applying for funding. We recommend highlighting how individual projects align with SCORP priorities. The **Grant Application Process and Scoring (Open Project Selection Process)** is included in [Appendix B](#) and provides a detailed overview of the process of selecting grantees over four phases: Screening, Evaluation, Recommendation, and Final Review.



Tonto National Monument
An Pham

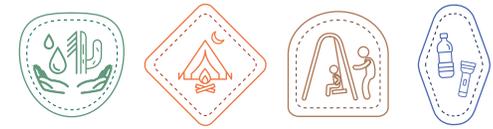


Catalina State Park
Arizona Office of Tourism



ARIZONA SCORP 2023

Snapshot of National Outdoor Recreation Trends



PARTICIPATION RATES IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

The Outdoor Foundation has developed the *Outdoor Participation Trends Report* for 15 years. The annual report examines demographics of the outdoor participant—defined as someone who participated in an outdoor activity at least one time in the past year. The following data was gathered during the 2021 calendar year.

Outdoor participation continues to grow at record levels. **More than half (54%) of Americans ages 6 and over participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2021, and the outdoor recreation participant base grew 2.2% in 2021 to 164.2 million participants.** This growing number of outdoor enthusiasts, however, did not fundamentally alter long-term declines in high frequency or “core” outdoor participation.

Additional key findings of the report include the following:

- The outdoor recreation participant base grew again in 2021. The outdoor participant base has increased 6.9% since the COVID pandemic began in early 2020. Although many of the official restrictions on indoor entertainment including restaurants, bars, and sporting events ended in 2021, outdoor recreation participation continued to grow.
- New outdoor participants are more diverse than the overall outdoor participant base and are driving increasing diversity not only by ethnicity but also across age groups.
- High frequency or “core” participation in outdoor recreation is declining. The outdoor recreation “core” participant, defined as someone who participates 51 times or more in outdoor recreation activities in the past 12 months, has declined from 71.9% in 2007 to 58.7% of the participant base in 2021. In fact, the number of core participants has declined from 99.5 million in 2007 to 96.4 million today.
- The number of participants 55 years and older increased more than 14% since 2019, and senior participants ages 65 and older were in the fastest growing age category with 16.9% growth since the COVID pandemic began in early 2020.
- Despite increases in the number of participants, the number of outdoor outings is declining significantly. The number of outings has been in decline for the past decade and the increased number of participants are not stemming the tide.

PARTICIPATION BY ACTIVITY

Overall, the top five outdoor recreation activities nationally among ages 6 and over:

Activity	Participation Total (In Millions)	Percentage of Total Population (Ages 6 and Over)
Walking	115.8	38.0%
Running	64.5	21.2%
Hiking	58.7	19.3%
Fishing	52.4	17.2%
Biking	51.4	16.9%
Camping	45.9	15.1%

The top outdoor recreation activities with the highest rate of increase nationally among those ages 6 and over include:

Activity	Rate of Increase in Participation (Over 2 Years)
Pickleball	39.3%
Skateboarding	32.3%
Camping	27.7%
Hiking (day)	18.1%
Kayaking	17.3%

Snapshot of National Outdoor Recreation Trends

IMPACT OF COVID-19

According to recent data from Penn State’s Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management in collaboration with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, nearly half of adults from across the United States now participate in outdoor recreation on at least a monthly basis. About 20% of those people are thought to be new to outdoor recreation during the pandemic.

INCREASED VISITATION OF PARKS

The National Park Service showed a 25.3% increase in visitors during 2021, as compared to 2020. While that is not quite as high as pre-pandemic levels, certain individual parks saw record-high visitation, like Utah’s Canyonlands National Park up 30%.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

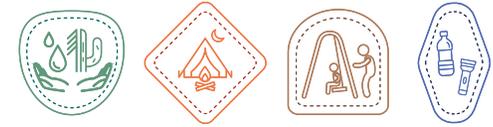
Information from the federal Bureau of Economic Analysis shows that the outdoor recreation economy accounted for 1.8% (or \$374.3 billion) of current-dollar gross domestic product (GDP) for the U.S. in 2020. It also generated \$689 billion in consumer spending, as well as 4.3 million jobs. On a regional level, the outdoor recreation economy in southwestern states and those bordering Arizona, collectively totals \$72.6 billion.



Arizona State Parks and Trails

	Arizona	California	Colorado	Nevada	New Mexico	Utah
Value Added	\$7.7 billion	\$44.5 billion	\$9.6 billion	\$4.0 billion	\$1.9 billion	\$4.9 billion
Employment (Number of Jobs)	95,183	488,755	120,063	49,501	25,916	61,890
Percent of State GDP	2.0%	1.5%	2.5%	2.3%	1.9%	2.5%
State Employment	3.2%	2.8%	4.3%	3.8%	3.1%	3.9%

Based on state-level data published on [bea.gov](https://www.bea.gov/); GDP estimates were published on October 1, 2021, and compensation and employment estimates were published on September 23, 2021.



ACCESS FOR ALL

The outdoor recreation industry has long grappled with how to attract more people to the great outdoors. Recently, traditional marketing efforts started adopting noticeably more socially-conscious messaging, driven by a lack of diversity among outdoor recreation enthusiasts. Indeed, while the pandemic attracted more outdoor participants from a variety of backgrounds, there are still disparities around race, income, and geographical location.

Research from the Outdoor Industry Association reveals new outdoor participants are largely motivated by outdoor recreation opportunities within 10 miles of their homes. However, “more than 100 million Americans do not live within walking distance of a park or green space,” notes the association. “Furthermore, underrepresented communities often lack the resources and funds to invest in outdoor areas, leaving many people three times more likely to live in nature-deprived places.”

Believing that no one should be denied the transformative experiences of the outdoors and nature, many organizations are devoting funds to improving everyone’s access to nature. These efforts run the full gamut, from infrastructure projects, like “parkifying” underpasses and transforming abandoned buildings and lots into green spaces, to creating more physical access points for visitors. Other efforts are more administrative, like hiring more diverse workforces and offering more paid internships to underrepresented youth.

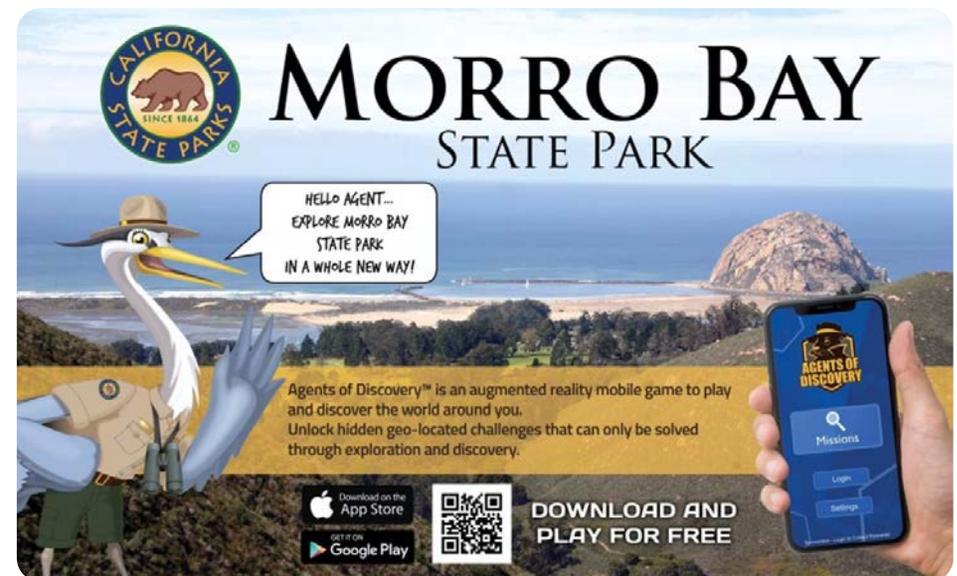


Jack Malmgren Memorial Skate Park
City of Sedona

TECHNOLOGY AND VIRTUAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Outdoor recreation providers are improving Wi-Fi connections, and setting up check-in locations or geofilters so social users can further personalize their content. The more people see their online friends enjoying the outdoors, the more likely they are to follow suit.

Programs like Agents of Discovery are being used by parks and helping parents and teachers use three-dimensional augmented reality to further highlight outdoor experiences by creating imaginative and educational missions, like scavenger hunts and activity guides.



California State Parks

Nationwide, 2021 was an excellent year for outdoor recreation participation. **Participation rates were up across demographics—positive signs included increasing participation rates for children, females of all ages, and men overall.** Interest in outdoor recreation remained high even as disruptions occurred related to the COVID pandemic in 2021. **During 2021, a record number of 164 million Americans participated in outdoor recreation.** Outdoor recreation participation continues to be a robust recreation category with 54% of Americans participating overall.



Grand Canyon National Park
Arizona Office of Tourism

ARIZONA SCORP 2023

Snapshot of Arizona

Arizona – The Grand Canyon State

Experiencing Arizona's outdoors is a highlight for many Arizona residents and visitors to the Grand Canyon State—and for good reason. Northern Arizona draws many outdoor recreationists to its pines and plateaus, while Central Arizona shows off with its red rocks and the lush Verde Valley. Not to be outdone, Southern Arizona greets guests with saguaro-filled landscapes and stunning rock formations above and below ground, and Western Arizona offers some of the best water sports and beaches in the state. Rounding out the list, Eastern Arizona offers a little bit of everything, from green forests to petrified wood and petroglyphs.



Mt. Lemmon Windy Point
Visit Tucson

PARKS AND MONUMENTS

From cactus to canyons, pine forests to sky islands, Arizona’s parks and monuments feature a wide array of scenery, history, and outdoor activities for all ages. Arizona has 34 state parks and 24 National Park Service (NPS) units, including three national parks (Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, and Saguaro), plus four national monuments administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), that offer everything from nature walks to stargazing to camping. Parks run the gamut from natural settings to those that are more developed and support specific outdoor recreation activities for residents of surrounding neighborhoods. For example, many consider municipal parks the lifeblood of their communities by offering outdoor recreation opportunities close to home, teaching new skills, encouraging healthy activities, providing sites for team sports, and making available recreational and educational programming.

LAKES AND RIVERS

Arizona beckons outdoor enthusiasts to boat, fish, float, and swim year-round with 128 lakes and five major rivers. The state’s most famous river—the mighty Colorado—is one of the longest rivers in the U.S. and is responsible not only for carving the 277-mile chasm through the Grand Canyon but also for sustaining more than 40 million people in seven states. Along Arizona’s seven other major rivers, including the Salt, Gila and Verde rivers; rafting, tubing, and kayaking provide a cool and scenic respite from the heat. Fishing is another popular pastime, with a variety of trout, catfish, tilapia, crappie, and largemouth bass.

AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBAL LANDS

Indigenous people inhabited what became Arizona more than 12,000 years ago. Today, 22 American Indian communities preserve their cultures and traditions on land that **accounts for one-quarter of Arizona**. From the Navajo Nation in the high country—the largest reservation in the United States—to picturesque areas along the fertile flood plains of the Colorado River, the forests of central Arizona and the vibrant Sonoran Desert of Southern Arizona, American Indian communities share unique cultural experiences with visitors.



Did You Know?

Out of all the states in the U.S., Arizona has the largest percentage of its land designated as American Indian lands.

Snapshot of Arizona

OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDERS

In total, approximately 82% of lands in Arizona are managed by various tribes, federal and state agencies, many of whom are responsible for providing for both the outdoor recreation needs of the state's residents as well as for the protection and preservation of land for future generations.

While many Arizonans travel away from home to enjoy the vast opportunities provided by Arizona's public lands, local governments provide most residents with daily accessible outdoor recreation opportunities and programs. Arizona's counties operate their own parks as well. These regional parks may contain lakes, recreation and aquatic centers, environmental education opportunities, miles of trails, camping, and event venues.

Nonprofit organizations and private businesses manage lands, and deliver recreational activities and programs as well. Local nonprofit organizations such as Riordan Action Network or Friends of Tubac Presidio State Historic Park, partner with government organization to manage museums and restore historic sites. The Arizona Trail Association is an example of a non-profit that manages land across ownership and jurisdictions. The Nature Conservancy and other national organizations aid in acquiring and managing more remote natural and cultural areas. Private businesses such as tour guides, outfitters, and rental companies offer a wide range of services to the recreating public.

There are many organizations, public and private, that serve to provide opportunities to recreate outdoors while protecting Arizona's scenic, special places. Some of the public land management organizations which provide recreation opportunities in the state are noted on this and the following pages.

Arizona State Parks and Trails

Mission: Managing and conserving Arizona's natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the benefit of the people, both in our parks and through our partners.

What we do: For over half a century, more than 30 exceptional parks have been preserved, enhanced, and protected for the enjoyment of locals and visitors across the state of Arizona. These lands, lakes, rivers, historic buildings, and rich natural areas offer recreational and educational opportunities to individuals, families, businesses, and communities.

Arizona State Parks and Trails not only promotes physical, spiritual, and mental health and wellness within communities and the state, but are strong economic drivers as well. Arizona State Parks and Trails secures funding for recreational and educational programs, drives increased local visitation and provides financial resources to recreational programs and partners throughout the state. Helping to drive the economy, enhance and protect local communities and cultures, Arizona State Parks and Trails represents pride throughout our state.

Arizona became the 48th State of the United States on February 14, 1912, making it one of the youngest states. This is also true for the Arizona State Parks and Trails system, established in 1957.



Alamo Lake State Park
Arizona State Parks and Trails



Arizona Department of Transportation

Mission: The mission of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is: Connecting Arizona. Everyone. Everywhere. Every Day.

What we do: The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is a multimodal transportation agency serving one of the fastest-growing areas of the country. ADOT is responsible for planning, building, and operating a complex highway system in addition to building and maintaining bridges and the Grand Canyon Airport.

The Arizona Department of Transportation

- Manages 27 scenic roads and 37 historic roads.
- Oversees a grants program related to transit and other transportation-related initiatives.
- Offers an Active Transportation program, providing information about walking and riding a bicycle in Arizona, including safety tips, laws and policies, maps and organizations.

A recent project is the 6-mile shared-use path constructed in 2020 as part of the Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway project. The path is now operated and maintained by the City of Phoenix.



Bell Rock, State Route 179, Sedona
Arizona Department of Tourism

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Mission: To conserve Arizona’s diverse wildlife resources and manage for safe, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities for current and future generations.

What we do: The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) is entrusted with managing and conserving more than 800 wildlife species. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission is responsible for establishing policies and rules for the management, preservation, and harvest of Arizona’s wildlife. The Department has 37 Wildlife Areas, consisting of 304,468 acres of deeded and managed land. AZGFD also has nine Shooting Ranges with a total of 5,806 acres.



Arizona Game and Fish Department

Snapshot of Arizona

American Indian Tribal and Nation Lands

Mission: Although missions vary by tribe, most tribal recreation departments strive to increase opportunities and safe and accessible facilities to encourage physical fitness and health for tribal community members of all ages. Many tribes also provide unique, high quality educational, cultural and recreational opportunities for visitors.

What we do: The twenty-two recognized American Indian tribes and nations have inhabited what became Arizona more than 12,000 years ago, and preserve their cultures and traditions on land that accounts for more than one-quarter (28%) of the state. These sovereign entities have long provided visitors the opportunity to learn about their unique and individual cultures through museums and outdoor events such as festivals, arts and crafts shows, and tours. While fishing and camping have been popular outdoor activities at tribally managed lakes, many tribes have also capitalized on their ability to provide other outdoor recreation such as skiing, rodeos, guided hunts, and other activities.

Access to tribal lands differs among the American Indian communities in Arizona. Many tribes welcome visitors to experience their cultural ceremonies, while others limit visitation to commercial areas. When visiting, remember the following:

- Each reservation operates under its own government and its own rules for visitors.
- Sacred areas and graveyards are restricted areas and are not open to the public.
- Alcohol is not tolerated except in designated areas such as casinos.
- Protecting the integrity of Arizona's tribal lands and iconic natural beauty is more important than ever. Follow these **seven principles** to leave no trace as you explore.

Research the tribal land you plan to visit before your trip to make sure your group respects specific regulations pertaining to taking photos and attending ceremonial events. For specific information, contact the individual tribe(s) prior to your visit.

Arizona State Land Department

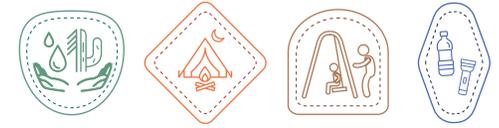
Mission: To manage State Trust lands and resources to enhance value and optimize economic return for the Trust beneficiaries, consistent with sound business management principles, prudent stewardship, and conservation needs supporting socio-economic goals for citizens here today and future generations. To act in the best interest of Trust for the enrichment of the beneficiaries and preserve the long-term value of the State's Trust lands.

What we do: Arizona has approximately 9.3 million surface acres and 9 million subsurface acres of Trust lands. Scattered throughout the State, the Trust lands are extremely diverse in character, ranging from Sonoran Desert lands, desert grasslands, and riparian areas in the southern half of the state, to the mountains, forests and Colorado Plateau regions of northern Arizona.

State Trust Lands are not public lands, but are instead the subject of a public Trust created to support Arizona's K-12 public schools and 12 other essential public service institutions. The Trust accomplishes this mission in a number of ways, including, through the lease of Trust lands for grazing, agriculture, and mineral operations, and the sale of Trust land for development or, where appropriate, open space uses. Recreationists can, however, buy permits that allow access and use of State Trust Lands for recreation purposes. Providing outdoor recreation opportunities is not the primary purpose of the State Land Department. The infrastructure, information and operations staff and management that occurs on other public lands is not available on State Trust Lands.



Watson Lake, Prescott
Arizona State Land Department



Bureau of Land Management

Mission: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for managing the nation's public lands and resources for a variety of uses such as energy development, livestock grazing, recreation, and timber harvesting while ensuring natural, cultural, and historic resources are maintained for present and future use. To do this, the BLM manages public lands to maximize opportunities for recreational, commercial, and conservation activities. This promotes healthy and productive public lands that create jobs in local communities while supporting traditional land uses such as responsible energy development, timber harvesting, grazing, and recreation, including hunting and fishing. It is the mission of the BLM to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

What we do: BLM Arizona is responsible for administering 12.1 million acres of public lands and 17.5 million subsurface acres. BLM offices across the state manage many land uses and activities to enable important economic, social, and environmental benefits for present and future generations of Americans. Through meaningful engagement with our diverse partners and stakeholders, BLM Arizona conducts responsible and balanced public land stewardship with creativity and innovation.



Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness
Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Reclamation

Mission: The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public. Reclamation's multi-purpose water projects typically include outdoor recreation facilities.

What we do: Reclamation is responsible for administering approximately 566,000 acres of public lands in Arizona. Reclamation's offices in Arizona manage nine recreation areas. Many of these sites are locally-managed through partnership agreements with city and county agencies. These sites provide recreational opportunities to the public, provide economic benefits to the partners, while also providing for the protection of natural and cultural resources. In addition, Reclamation permits recreational events such as marathons, off highway vehicle activities, large group gatherings, fishing events and other recreational activities.



Bartlett Dam
Bureau of Reclamation

Snapshot of Arizona

National Park Service

Mission: The National Park Service (NPS) preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

What we do: Since 1916, NPS has been entrusted to oversee the Nation's 423 National Park System units which include national parks, historical battlefields, historical parks and sites, monuments, lakeshores, seashores, scenic rivers and trails, preserves, recreation areas, and other designations spanning more than 85 million acres in every state and extend into territories including Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Guam. Within Arizona, the National Park Service has responsibility for 24 National Park System units. For more information see [Appendix D](#).



Petrified Forest National Park
National Park Service

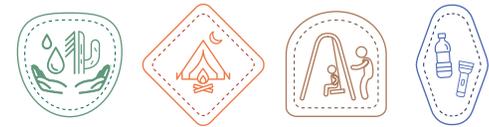
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mission: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The agency's responsibilities include managing the National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) System, which is the world's largest network of public lands dedicated to wildlife conservation; enforcing the Endangered Species Act and other wildlife laws nationally and abroad; operating fish hatcheries to propagate threatened and endangered species, and supplying game fish to federally recognized tribes; and ensuring a healthy environment for people by providing opportunities for Americans to enjoy the outdoors and our shared natural heritage.

What we do: In Arizona, FWS operates nine grant programs, distributing \$39 million to the state in 2022. The FWS fisheries program propagates Arizona's state fish, the Apache trout, which can only be caught around the White Mountains in the eastern part of the state. The agency manages nine national wildlife refuges totaling over 1.7 million acres, with four designated wilderness areas totaling over 1.3 million acres providing a variety of public outdoor recreational activities. Two major NWRs in the southwest portion of the state are the half-million-acre Kofa NWR and the 860,000-acre Cabeza Prieta NWR, both established in 1939 to protect the desert bighorn sheep.



Mohave Desert
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



U.S. Forest Service

Mission: The mission of the U.S. 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.

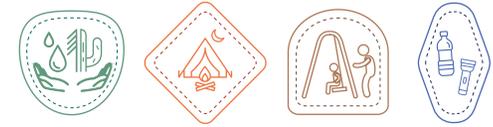
What we do: The U.S. Forest Service is a multi-faceted agency that manages and protects 154 national forests and 20 grasslands in 43 states and Puerto Rico. Boasting an elite wildland firefighting team and the world's largest forestry research organization, Forest Service experts provide technical and financial help to state and local government agencies, businesses, private landowners and work government-to-government with tribes to help protect and manage non-federal forest and associated range and watershed lands. The Forest Service augments their work through partnerships with public and private agencies that help plant trees, improve trails, educate the public, and improve conditions in wildland/urban interfaces and rural areas, and also promotes sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation internationally.

Arizona lies within U.S. Forest Service Southwestern Region which totals 20.5 million acres. There are six national forests in Arizona totaling 11.1 million acres. The agency is focused on shared stewardship, a collaborative approach to land management that builds on a long history of partnerships with other agencies, communities and other partners to manage the nation's recreational assets.

See USFS land and resource management plans that are available in the resources section in [Appendix H](#).



Coconino National Forest
U.S. Forest Service



ARIZONA TOURISM AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Guest Author: Colleen Floyd, Director of Research

Organization: Arizona Office of Tourism

Arizona's iconic landscapes and outdoor recreation opportunities call out to residents and visitors alike. The tourism industry brings billions of dollars into the Arizona economy each year (\$25.5 billion in 2019), and the state's outdoor recreation opportunities are a key driver of visitation and economic growth. Arizona is the sixth most-visited state in the U.S. for trips specifically taken to spend time outdoors.¹ More than half (54%) of Arizona's domestic visitors participate in outdoor activities on their trips, which is significantly higher than the national average (42% of domestic trips).

The Arizona Office of Tourism's mission is to stabilize and strengthen local economies, protect environmental and cultural resources, create meaningful visitor experiences, and enhance the quality of life for Arizonans through tourism collaboration, promotion, and development. The things that make Arizona such an amazing place to visit are the same that make it an amazing place to live: beautiful weather, cultural experiences, incredible food and, of course, our landscapes.

In our marketing research, one trend is abundantly clear: Arizona is the outdoors. The state is known as "great for visiting state/national/tribal parks," and agreement with this phrase is correlated to higher visitation.² As a result, Arizona landscapes feature heavily in the Office of Tourism's marketing.

ECONOMIC VITALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

**Meet our Guest Author:
Colleen Floyd**

I grew up in western Colorado and spent a lot of time camping with my parents and sister in the mountains and Utah. My first camping trip to Arizona was on my 13th birthday. We stopped for a night at the Grand Canyon, just as it started snowing. The inversion obscured any view of the canyon, so that time, I had to settle for the IMAX view. Since then, I've been back to the canyon multiple times and taken my own family camping up there.

Both my parents were experienced campers, which made it a wonderful experience for my sister and me. Now that I have my own family, I am slowly figuring out how to be



the one in charge! We have made lots of newbie mistakes (open tent flaps during an afternoon rainstorm, forgotten fuel for the stove... the list goes on). But my kids often ask me when they get to go camping next, so I must be doing OK! My oldest likes to meditate by water, and my youngest likes to roll in dirt. Everybody wins!

¹Longwoods International, U.S. domestic overnight trips between 2017 and 2020

²FY19 Advertising Effectiveness Research, Strategic Marketing and Research Insights, June 2019

Snapshot of Arizona

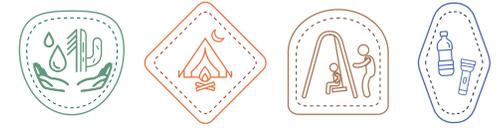
ARIZONA TOURISM AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Guest Author: Colleen Floyd, Director of Research

Organization: Arizona Office of Tourism

% OF DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT TRIPS, 2017-2020

Activities Participated on Trip	U.S. Norm	Arizona	West Coast Region	Northern Region	North Central Region	Phoenix & Central Region	Tucson & Southern Region
Outdoor activities	42	54	59	65	67	42	44
Landmark/historic site	12	16	12	20	20	14	19
National/state park	9	16	10	23	22	13	18
Hiking/backpacking	8	15	11	22	22	14	17
Camping	5	8	10	10	10	4	7
Fishing	5	6	8	7	6	3	3
Beach/waterfront	13	6	8	4	5	3	3
Biking	4	5	7	6	6	4	4
Boating/sailing	4	5	8	4	5	2	2
Mountain climbing	2	5	5	5	7	3	3
Nature tours/wildlife viewing/birding	2	4	4	6	5	3	4
Local parks/playgrounds	3	4	4	4	4	3	3
Motorcycle touring	1	3	4	3	4	1	2
Hunting	2	3	5	4	4	1	1
Off-roading (ATV/OHV)	2	4	5	5	5	2	3
Rafting	1	3	5	3	3	1	1
Glamping	1	3	5	3	4	1	2
Skiing/snowboarding	2	3	4	3	3	1	1
Horseback riding	1	2	2	2	2	1	1
Kayaking/paddleboarding	1	2	3	3	2	1	1



ARIZONA TOURISM AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Guest Author: Colleen Floyd, Director of Research

Organization: Arizona Office of Tourism

Additionally, our outdoor recreation spaces provided an important means to relieve stress and remain active during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there was less travel overall to Arizona in 2020, the percentage of trips specifically to spend time outdoors increased from 8% in 2019 to 13% in 2020.³ As a result, many of the communities near state and national parks experienced unprecedented visitation.

Given our mission to attract visitors who use the outdoors and our parks, the Office of Tourism takes our role in educating our residents and visitors on how to enjoy our state responsibly very seriously. In 2020m the Office of Tourism created

Appreciate AZ, a program aimed at preserving and protecting Arizona’s natural and cultural resources through education. As part of that effort, we partnered with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics to create a customized, research-driven educational campaign to teach visitors and residents the seven principles of Leave No Trace.

While this program is still in its infancy, the Office of Tourism hopes to increase resident and visitor awareness of responsible recreation, thus preserving our beloved outdoors for generations.



³Longwoods International, U.S. domestic overnight trips between 2017-2020

Snapshot of Arizona

EFFECTS OF DROUGHT ON ARIZONA'S PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Arizona's residents, invested outdoor recreationists, and outdoor recreation providers all agreed the top issue they were most concerned about affecting outdoor recreation experiences in Arizona is the drought. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), "the western United States is currently mired in an expansive and deep drought that stretches from the southern to the northern border. In Arizona, drought conditions are particularly poor, by most measures the worst in a century." The second and third highest level of concerns are directly affected by the drought and include wildfires that threaten outdoor recreation areas and lower water levels in Arizona's lakes and rivers.

"As a native of Arizona, for over 50 years, our family has been boating on Lake Mead. Recently, they have had to close launch ramps due to low water levels. If this drought continues, I'm not sure how much longer our family tradition will continue."

—Arizona Resident Survey (Northern Region), December 2021

In addition, outdoor recreation providers and stakeholders, including the Arizona State Parks Board members, voiced a desire to have a better understanding of the effects and impact of the drought on Arizona parks and outdoor recreation now and in the future. The following is a guest-authored piece prepared by Dr. George Frisvold, Professor and Extension Specialist for the University of Arizona's Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, and his team. The article addresses the drought and impact on outdoor recreation, including implications for the management of public lands and for local economies.

See [Appendix F](#) for more information about the status of the drought and [Appendix G](#) about the drought's impact on forests in Arizona.

TOP ISSUES THAT CAN IMPACT OUTDOOR RECREATION EXPERIENCES

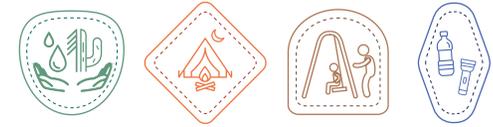
Please rate your level of concern about the following issues that can impact outdoor recreation experiences in Arizona, using the scale of (1) **Not at all concerned to (7) Extremely concerned.**

Arizona Public
N=5,274

Invested Users
N=1,322

Providers
N=112

	Arizona Public N=5,274	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=112
Drought	5.62	6.26	6.29
Wildfires that threaten outdoor recreation areas	5.60	6.22	5.93
Water levels in lakes and rivers	5.54	6.20	5.90
Availability of groundwater/potable water supply	5.23	5.69	5.52
Changes in climate – e.g., increased temperatures	5.14	5.34	5.62
Threats to historical, cultural, or archaeological sites	5.13	5.54	5.07
Water pollution from cities, roads, etc.	5.03	5.05	4.69
Air pollution from cities, roads, etc.	4.98	4.95	4.37
Light pollution – defined as excessive or obtrusive artificial outdoor light from cities, roads, etc.	4.75	4.06	4.68
Pandemic	4.72	4.98	4.36



EFFECTS OF DROUGHT ON ARIZONA'S PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Guest Authors: Dari Duval, Economic Impact Analyst; Ashley Bickel, Economic Impact Analyst; and George Frisvold, Professor and Extension Specialist
Organization: University of Arizona, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics

Arizona's state and national parks provide outstanding opportunities for outdoor recreation. They attract visitors to Arizona from around the world. Many of the state's national and state parks are in rural areas where spending by park visitors provides an important source of income and jobs. Recent estimates of park visitor spending and the ripple of economic activity it supports in the state economy highlight the importance of state and national parks to Arizona. Arizona's national parks had a combined economic impact of \$2 billion (about \$6 per person in the US) in sales and 10,300 jobs in Arizona in 2019. Meanwhile, Arizona's state parks contributed \$449 million in sales and 4,200 jobs to the state economy in fiscal year 2020.

Tourists visiting Arizona expect to experience desert landscapes and dry weather in most areas of the state. Though Arizona is known for its arid climate, drought can still affect the outdoor recreation experience. Distinct types of droughts may affect outdoor recreation visits in diverse ways. To understand the difference in these effects, it is best to start by understanding the diverse types of droughts.

Drought is defined as an unusually dry period compared with the typical climate of an area. One way to measure drought is by measuring **rainfall**. When an area's rainfall measures well below average over a certain period, this is considered a drought. Drought can be **short-term** (say, a couple of months) or **long-term** (a year or more). Another way to measure drought is by looking at the **levels of lakes, rivers, and streams**. When stream flow or lake levels fall below normal, this too can be considered a drought. Whereas a brief period of low or below-normal rainfall may not have much effect on rivers, streams, or lakes, once conditions have been dried for long enough, it begins to affect water levels. In this way, these two types of droughts are connected.

The same applies for measuring drought in terms of stress on **vegetation and wildlife**. High temperatures can make dry conditions more intense by increasing evaporation of water from water bodies and the soil. When rainfall and bodies of water are not sufficient to support plants and animals, this is another type of drought. While short-term drought does not usually affect Arizona's arid-adapted plants and animals, long-term drought can begin to affect vegetation and wildlife and increase the risk of wildfire.

CONSERVATION, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR RECREATION

**Meet our Guest Authors:
Dari Duval, Ashley Bickel,
and George Frisvold**

The Extension Regional Economic Analysis Program (EREAP) is involved in research to quantify the importance of the state's natural resources and amenities, including research related to outdoor recreation, environmental and natural resource valuation, and tourism. When not researching these topics, team members enjoy outdoor activities like hiking, camping, backpacking, trail running, and sharing time with their families outdoors.



Snapshot of Arizona

EFFECTS OF DROUGHT ON ARIZONA'S PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Guest Authors: Dari Duval, Economic Impact Analyst; Ashley Bickel, Economic Impact Analyst; and George Frisvold, Professor and Extension Specialist

Organization: University of Arizona, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics

How, then, does drought affect outdoor recreation visits to Arizona's national and state parks? **Long-term drought negatively affects park visits** in Arizona. This starts to occur for periods of below-average rainfall lasting about one year or more. Meanwhile, short dry periods are associated with more visits. Though we usually do not think of drought as a good thing, rainy conditions can be less than ideal if you are a camper or a hiker. So, **short-term drought positively affects park visits in Arizona**, if the dry period does not last too long and begins to affect water bodies, vegetation, and wildlife—things that visitors enjoy. Also, when vegetation is affected by drought, there is a direct correlation to an increased risk of wildfires. High fire risk can lead to preemptive closures of public lands, and when fire incidents do occur, visits to nearby parks tend to decrease during the month that the fire occurs. This can be due to closures or due to smoke and other hazards.

Many of Arizona's parks offer water-based recreation in lakes, rivers, or streams. When drought conditions extend for lengthy periods of time, these bodies of water may be affected, leading to lower water levels, affecting water quality, or even cutting off access to facilities like boat ramps or marinas.

Recent research has shown that visits to Lake Mead and Lake Powell have decreased as water levels have fallen below key thresholds where visitors can launch boats or visit certain attractions.

A drop in Lake Mead levels from 1,075 feet (the Drought Contingency Plan Tier 1 threshold) to 1,050 feet (the Tier 2 threshold) is projected to reduce visitor spending by more than \$9 million. With fewer people visiting these lakes, there is less visitor spending in the surrounding communities. The potential economic impacts of low lake levels can range into tens of millions of dollars in lost sales and hundreds of fewer jobs in regional economies.

Much like rainfall, temperature too can affect park visits and in diverse ways. Research has shown that **visits tend to increase as the average temperature increases—but only up to a point**—once the average temperature gets high enough, visits start to decrease again. In other words, visits tend to be



Lake Mead
National Park Service

highest when temperatures are optimal—not too cold and not too hot. Higher temperatures and more frequent and more intense droughts are expected to occur in the Southwest U.S. due to climate change. In some areas of the state with colder climates, an increase in temperature could lead to more visitors overall, while hotter, arid locations might expect to see fewer visitors for much of the year. In other locations, the most popular time to visit a park might be during spring or fall months, when the temperature is “just right.” As temperatures increase, though, that window of perfect weather might shift earlier in the spring or later in the fall. This could affect the timing of high-demand seasons in some parks.

The effects of drought and climate change on outdoor recreation at state and national parks in Arizona can vary. Short-term drought can have positive effects on visits, while long-term drought tends to have negative effects. Temperature also affects the timing of outdoor recreation visits, and peak seasons may shift depending on a park's location and climate. These effects have implications for the management of public lands and for local economies.



ARIZONA'S GROWING AND DIVERSE POPULATION – A SNAPSHOT

Arizona has the second fastest growing population in the country, with a population in **2021 of 7.3 million, which is projected to jump to 10 million people by 2050**. Between now and 2030, the projected annual population growth rate per is 1.4% per year over the next decade (twice the national average). Other key facts include:

- Arizona's population grew 15.8% from the 6.4 million people who lived here in 2010 to 7.2 million in 2020. For comparison, the U.S. population grew 6.5% during that period.
- Between 2010 and 2020, the state grew by an average of 1.5% per year.
- Among counties in the United States, Maricopa County, Arizona had the largest growth with 753,898 more people.
- In 2020, Arizona was more diverse than it was in 2010. In 2020, the white (non-Hispanic) group made up 53.8% of the population compared with 57.9% in 2010.
- Between 2010 and 2020, the share of the population that is Hispanic/Latino grew the most, increasing 2.2 percentage points to 31.9%. The white (non-Hispanic) population had the largest decrease dropping 4.1 percentage points to 53.8%.
- Among the U.S. Census' six age groups, the 65+ age group was the fastest growing between 2010 and 2020 with its population increasing 54.5%.
- Currently, 13% of Arizonans have a disability, with the most common disability being ambulatory. Ambulatory disability, described as having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs, is the most common reported at 7% in Arizona.



Did You Know?

Arizona's disparate climate can yield both the highest temperature across the nation and the lowest temperature across the nation in the same day.



Jack's Trail

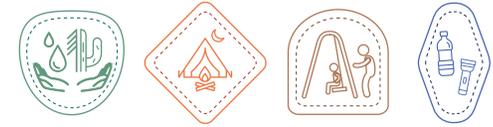
Sedona Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau



ARIZONA SCORP 2023

Key Research Findings and Shared Priorities

Chiricahua National Monument
Mark W. Lipczynski



Three major groups informed the SCORP process.

STAKEHOLDERS

Total: 96 participants

- Three stakeholder sessions (77 participants) were completed.
- Follow-up focus groups and short surveys were conducted with underrepresented groups, including tribal members, LGBTQ+, Black, Indigenous and/or People of Color (BIPOC) community members, and individuals with mobility challenges (19 participants).
- Three working group sessions.

PUBLIC

Total: 6,768 participants

- **Arizona households:** A total of 5,444 random sample surveys and interviews (demographically representative of the state's population) were completed.
- **Invested users:** Includes outdoor recreationists who participated in the survey through outreach efforts by Arizona State Parks and Trails and their partners. Various outreach channels were used including websites, newsletters, social media, email communications, and word of mouth. A total of 1,324 surveys were completed.

OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDERS

Total: 112 participants

- A total of 112 surveys were completed by agencies and organizations involved in providing outdoor recreation opportunities in Arizona.
- Participants were from federal, state, county, town/city, tribal, and non-governmental organizations.



Did You Know?

The Tonto National Forest is one of the most-visited "urban" forests in the United States with 3 million visitors annually.

Key Research Findings and Stakeholder Engagement

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR SCORP

The stakeholder engagement study for the Arizona 2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) was conducted by Arizona State University (ASU)'s Watts College of Public Solutions, School of Community Resources & Development. The purpose of this collaboration was to facilitate widespread stakeholder involvement in the development of the 2023 Arizona SCORP to help identify the state's outdoor recreation priorities. This information was used, in combination with data collected from the statewide public survey and outdoor recreation providers, in developing the 2023 Arizona SCORP.

ASU, in collaboration with ASPT, gathered insights from governmental, municipal, non-governmental, private sector, conservation organizations, underrepresented groups, and individual participants during three phases of research to identify key principles, focus areas, and their associated recommended approaches. Each phase of this research allowed for a better understanding of the stakeholders' issues and proposed solutions associated with outdoor recreation in Arizona. The stakeholder discussions resulted in the identification of the following focus areas and key approaches.

Key Principles

1. Recreate the Outdoor Experience
2. Respect and Inclusivity
3. Restore and Sustainability

Focus Areas

1. Providing Quality Outdoor Experiences to the Public
2. Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
3. Conserving and Minimizing Environmental Impacts

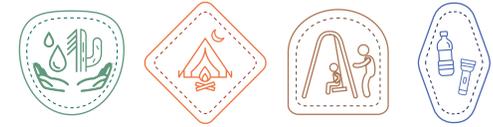
Key Approaches

1. Funding
2. Adaptive Collaboration
3. Communication and Education
4. Sustainable and Accessible Infrastructure



Visit Tucson

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN KEY PRINCIPLES, STAKEHOLDER FOCUS AREAS, AND KEY APPROACHES			
Key Approaches	Key Principles		
	Recreate the Outdoor Experience	Respect and Inclusivity	Restore and Sustainability
Funding	Stakeholder Focus Area 1 Providing Quality Outdoor Experience to the Public	Stakeholder Focus Area 2 Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Stakeholder Focus Area 3 Conservation and Minimizing Environmental Impacts
Adaptive Collaboration			
Communication and Education			
Sustainable and Accessible Infrastructure			



KEY PRINCIPLES

Three primary themes framed the 2023 SCORP—Recreate, Respect, and Restore. These themes were integrated with information collected from stakeholders, which focused on *The Outdoor Experience*, *Inclusivity*, and *Sustainability*. Together, this information forms the three Key Principles used to describe and understand the stakeholder engagement results: *Recreate the Outdoor Experience*, *Respect and Inclusivity*, and *Restore and Sustainability*.

Recreate the Outdoor Experience

Beginning in 2020 and continuing into the present we saw many new and returning users to Arizona outdoor spaces. This created a need to understand different perspectives to more appropriately guide the future goals of Arizona outdoor recreation. This is especially emphasized by underrepresented voices of those with mobility, cognitive, and sensory challenges and those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC). Redefining the recreational experience to include all perspectives requires the understanding that the meaning, types of activities, and cultural associations within outdoor spaces in Arizona differs between diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups. Recreating the outdoor experience so that it is welcoming for all individuals regardless of ability, age, race, or ethnicity can have very positive ramifications for these groups across the state.

Respect and Inclusivity

There is a clear cross-over between these first two principles: Respect and intentional inclusivity leads to a better user experience in Arizona's outdoor spaces because all users feel welcomed. Respect, as mentioned by the participants, can be produced by indigenous land acknowledgments, stewardship, signage that tells the story of the place from different cultural viewpoints, diverse representation in marketing and advertising campaigns, and an understanding that many individuals require accommodations to move through the space to obtain a fun and freeing outdoor experience. It is not enough to engage with communities once every five years, but there should be a concerted effort to include as many voices in the conversation as possible on a regular basis. This goes beyond individual groups as well and should include elected officials from all levels of governance, the private sector, the educational system, conservationists, and recreationists.

Restore and Sustainability

It is an ongoing challenge to balance the needs of nature, people, and economics in the face of shifting weather patterns and associated environmental impacts. Sustainability is needed to maintain this intricate balance while regeneration and restoration are needed to improve areas experiencing environmental degradation from increases in use and the inability to effectively manage visitation impacts among other factors. Intentionally assessing, planning, and monitoring outdoor recreation resources can assist and support this endeavor.



Did You Know?

Rising to a height of 12,643 feet, Mount Humphreys north of Flagstaff is the state's highest mountain.

Key Research Findings and Shared Priorities

FOCUS AREAS

The three following focus areas are derived from the various stages of research. These focus areas are seen as the primary ways to accomplish the three key principles using the key approaches.

- **Providing Quality Outdoor Experiences to the Public** includes the types of constraints and opportunities associated with creating a favorable outdoor experience, such as issues related to crowding, overuse, and accessibility.
- **Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** includes underrepresented groups and how to respectfully address challenges of access, accessibility, and collaboration—it rests in the middle of the three focus areas because it overlaps with both other focus areas.
- **Conservation and Minimizing Environmental Impacts** supports the sustainable supply, maintenance, and management of outdoor recreational spaces.

Focus Area 1: Providing Quality Outdoor Experiences to the Public

While many visitors to natural spaces in Arizona have experienced traffic, parking, and crowding issues, there are also specific challenges faced by underrepresented populations and the integration of these voices into the management conversation. Those with mobility challenges and disabilities face the issues of inaccessibility when attempting to participate in outdoor recreation activities in Arizona. Those who identify as BIPOC are concerned about the inclusivity of outdoor spaces, and the potential alienation and perceived rejection from outdoor “public” spaces. Indigenous communities are the original stewards of their ancestral homelands, but the lack of acknowledgment of their relationship with the lands, in addition to uses of lands that do not take into account their cultural values remains an issue. This area contributes to the key principle of *Recreate the Outdoor Experience*.

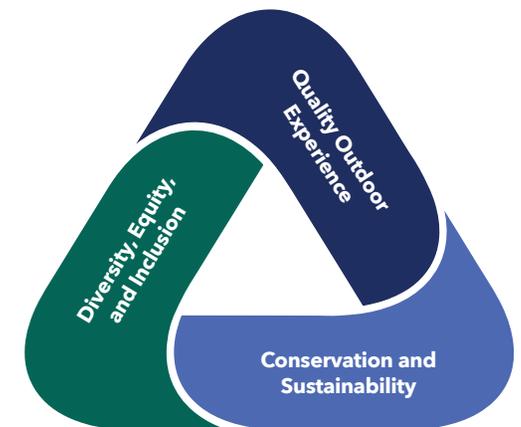
Focus Area 2: Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

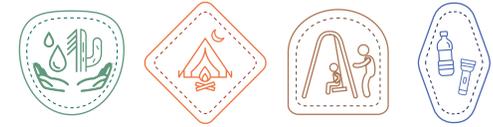
Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion complements the key principle of Respect and Inclusivity and overlaps with other focus areas. This focus area is both associated with the demand and supply sides of outdoor recreation in Arizona. It is associated with the demand side because diverse recreationists must be included in the conversation to obtain equity within outdoor recreation. It is associated with the supply side because there is a need to manage various forms of outdoor recreation resources by recognizing that natural space means different things for different groups of people. Diverse perspectives are needed to address perceived physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual exclusions within outdoor recreation opportunities in Arizona.

Focus Area 3: Conserving and Minimizing Environmental Impacts

There is a need to protect the natural assets that provide settings for Arizona outdoor recreation. This is especially true because of the state’s droughts and the overuse of these spaces, specifically because of, but not limited to, the emergence of COVID-19. National parks and other public lands in Arizona have seen an increase in users over the past two years, so mechanisms to maintain and regenerate these spaces are crucial to uphold both their intrinsic value for humans and their critical link to the survival of flora, fauna, and wildlife within their ecosystems. Issues of various uses within these spaces were discussed in several participant sessions, and the perception of a lack of staffing and management within outdoor spaces was clear. The long-term supply of natural spaces is critical to support outdoor recreation in Arizona; thus, this focus area advances the key principle of *Restore and Sustainability*.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOCUS AREAS





SCORP STUDY PARTICIPANTS – THREE DISTINCT GROUPS

The following table briefly summarizes the three groups surveyed to provide further insights in developing the priorities, goals, and strategies for the Arizona Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The surveys and interviews were conducted from October 2021 through March 2022.

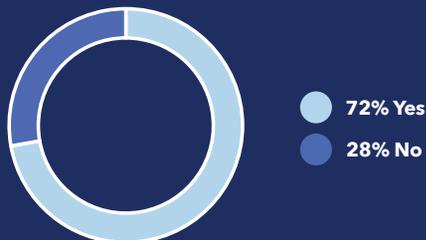
ARIZONA PUBLIC

5,444

3,914 Recreated Last 12 Months

5,274 Plan to Recreate Outdoors in Next 12 Months

- Statewide, stratified random sample of Arizona adults, ages 18 years and older, mirrors Arizona demographics.
- Survey conducted online, by phone, on mobile devices. Available in Spanish and English.
- Percentage who participated in outdoor activities in last 12 months:



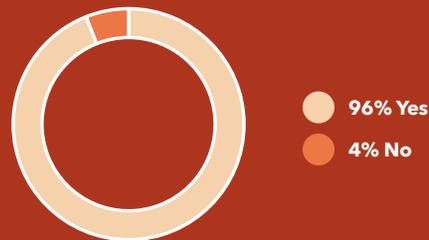
INVESTED USERS

1,324

1,248 Recreated Last 12 Months

1,322 Plan to Recreate Outdoors in Next 12 Months

- Invested participants, outreach through ASPT communication channels and partners.
- Demographically less diverse, older, smaller households, higher education and household income. Available online in Spanish and English.
- Higher percentage who participated in outdoor activities in last 12 months:



OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDERS

112

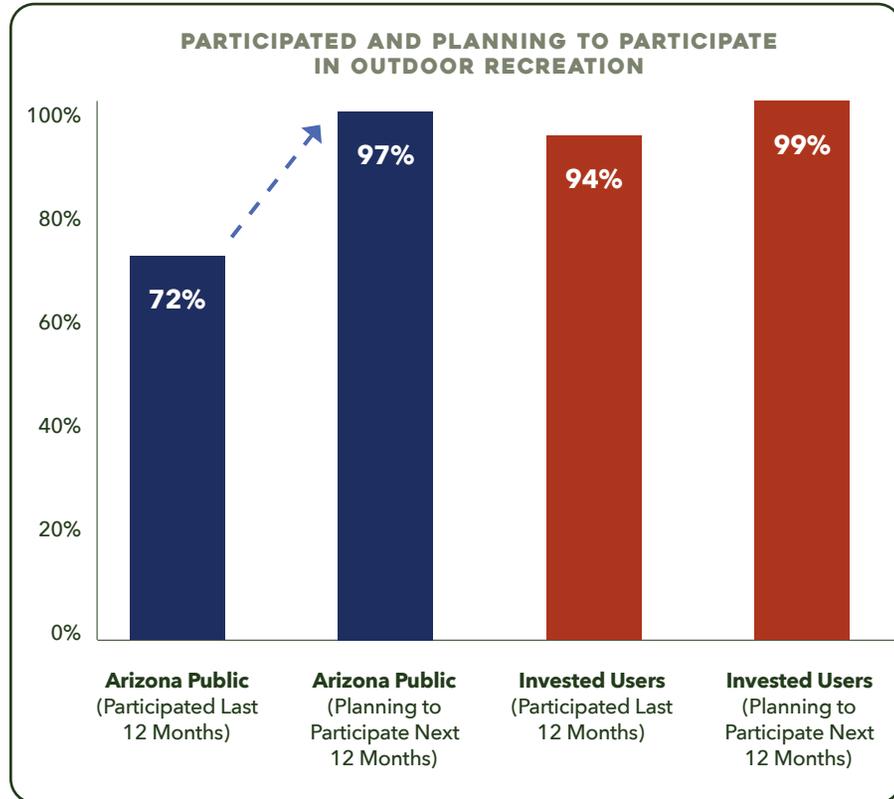
112 Providers Providing Outdoor Recreation in Arizona

- Agency/organization involved in providing outdoor recreation opportunities in Arizona – included managing recreation sites, providing activities, applying for grants supporting outdoor recreation, etc.
- Representatives from federal, state, county, town/city, tribe, and non-government organizations.
- Manage open spaces in natural settings, nature-oriented parks, large developed parks in urban areas, small neighborhood parks and private/commercial areas.
- Range of years serving in outdoor recreation and at current agency or organization.

Key Research Findings and Shared Priorities

HIGH LEVEL OF OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION

Among the Arizona public, 72% took part in outdoor recreation within the last 12 months, as compared with 94% of invested outdoor recreationists.



Participant: A survey respondent who reported participating in at least one outdoor activity within the last 12 months. Participants often reported undertaking multiple activities multiple times throughout the year.

Participation Rate: The proportion of a group that participated in outdoor recreation or in an outdoor activity. For example, if 5 in 10 adults hiked, their hiking participation rate was 50 percent.

PARTICIPATION BY REGION

The highest participation rate is in the North Central Region including in all four outdoor recreation categories including Active (most notably OHV), Water, Snow-Based, and Other Outdoor Activities.



Phoenix & Central Region
Maricopa and Pinal counties



Tucson & Southern Region
Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, and Santa Cruz counties



North Central Region
Gila and Yavapai counties



Northern Region
Apache, Coconino, and Navajo counties



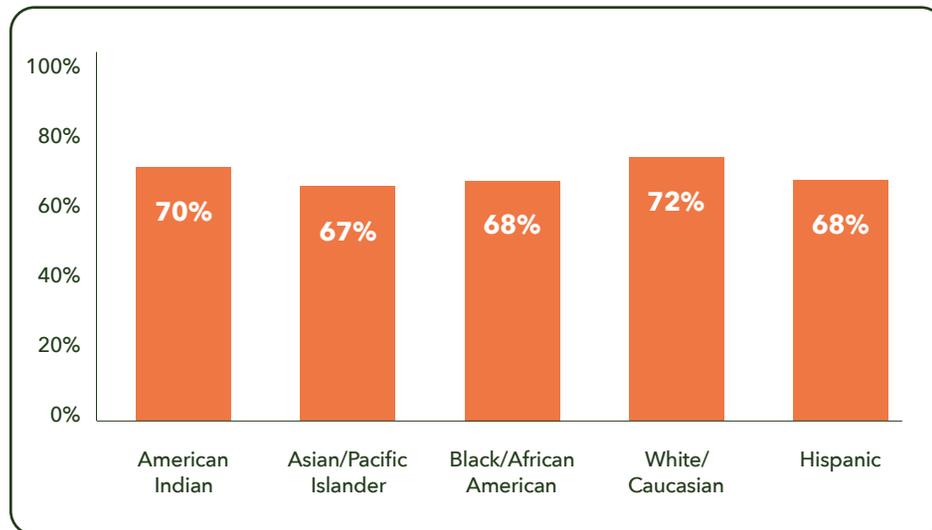
West Coast Region
La Paz, Mojave, and Yuma counties



OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPANT SNAPSHOT

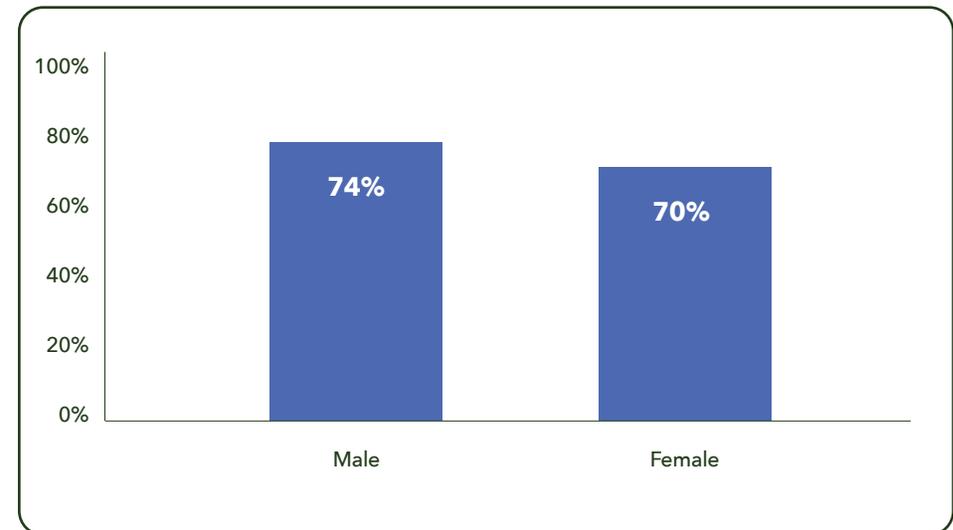
Race and Ethnicity Participation Rate

In comparison to the nation at 54%, Arizona has higher participation rates across all racial and ethnic groups primarily due to the number of outdoor recreation opportunities within the state.



Gender Participation Rate

The difference between the male and female participants has been inching toward parity over the past two decades. Gender differences are largely attributed to the specific activity.



Age Participation Rate

The Arizona statistics seem to mirror the nation. The number of participants 55 years and older increased more than 14% since 2019, and senior participants ages 65 and older were in the fastest-growing age category, with 17% growth since the pandemic began.

Average age of an adult participant in Arizona:

49.4
YEARS OLD



Families with Children

Typically, families participate at higher rates than adults with no children. For example, households with children had a rate of participation of 76%.



Household Income

The median household income of outdoor participants is \$70,992, about \$5,000 more than the median household income for Arizona.

Key Research Findings and Shared Priorities

The following are reasons for not participating in outdoor recreation over the last 12 months, with the pandemic being the top reason given by both the general public and the invested outdoor recreationists.

Rank	Reasons for Not Participating in Outdoor Recreation (Last 12 months); Scale of (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree	Arizona Public N=1,530	Invested Users N=76	Phoenix & Central N=700	Tucson & Southern N=326	North Central N=101	Northern N=153	West Coast N=250	American Indian N=64	Asian/ Pacific Islander N=82	Black/ African American N=132	White/ Caucasian N=1,182	Hispanic N=532
1	COVID, pandemic	3.25	3.35	3.25	3.24	3.24	3.30	3.25	3.28	3.26	3.22	3.24	3.24
2	Too busy with other activities (work or leisure)	3.23	2.46	3.18	3.11	3.16	3.35	3.35	3.23	3.63	2.97	3.20	3.12
3	Fees are too high (for admission, camping, etc.)	3.20	2.58	3.16	3.09	3.16	3.29	3.38	3.24	3.50	2.85	3.19	3.08
4	Don't have the equipment	3.19	2.34	3.19	2.98	3.05	3.27	3.49	3.23	3.56	2.75	3.21	3.02
5	Don't have companions/people to go with	3.21	2.63	3.16	3.06	3.00	3.19	3.46	3.29	3.40	2.91	3.19	3.00
6	Recreation areas are too crowded	3.20	3.20	3.09	3.12	3.28	3.24	3.40	2.92	3.36	2.77	3.21	3.07
7	Don't have the skills	3.17	2.28	3.13	2.95	2.89	3.34	3.34	2.96	3.58	2.83	3.13	2.93
8	Don't know where to go for specific activities, activities at my skill level, etc.	3.15	2.42	3.14	2.99	2.65	3.20	3.32	3.12	3.45	2.73	3.13	3.00
9	Recreation areas are too far away	3.07	2.32	3.09	2.84	2.79	3.33	3.25	3.28	3.44	2.80	3.07	2.93
10	Health issues , don't have physical ability, etc.	3.07	2.45	2.98	3.01	2.85	3.25	3.35	3.11	3.25	2.65	3.14	2.79
11	Lack of interest	3.05	1.68	2.97	2.93	2.93	3.18	3.23	2.89	3.30	2.61	3.05	2.91
12	Lack of organized programs and events	3.00	2.21	2.90	2.84	2.82	3.29	3.34	3.09	3.44	2.75	3.00	2.94
13	Activities I am interested in are not provided	2.98	1.97	2.89	2.83	2.77	3.19	3.30	2.96	3.18	2.88	2.96	2.88
14	Lack of transportation to recreation areas	2.97	1.99	2.85	2.81	2.85	3.30	3.31	3.13	3.44	2.75	2.94	2.92
15	Afraid of getting hurt (by animals, other people, etc.)	2.90	1.92	2.82	2.72	2.65	3.25	3.09	2.96	3.27	2.79	2.87	2.77
16	Areas have too many rules	2.84	2.05	2.69	2.62	2.79	3.37	3.12	3.08	3.37	2.60	2.84	2.73
17	Don't feel welcome	2.74	1.84	2.62	2.51	2.77	3.11	3.12	2.88	3.17	2.70	2.73	2.71



PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR RECREATION KEY CATEGORIES

The respondents were asked to identify which outdoor activities they participated in over the previous 12 months. Active land-based activities were the dominant category. Participation levels directly correlate to how close the respondents reside near natural settings, mountains, lakes and rivers, and snow-based activity areas.

Participation in Outdoor Recreation Activities Among those who participated in last 12 months	Arizona Public N=5,444	Invested Users N=1,248
Active land-based activities Such as walking or jogging, hiking, bicycling, camping, using an off-highway vehicle, playing sports, hunting, horseback riding, etc.	58.8%	97.6%
Other outdoor activities Such as picnicking; visiting local park or playground; attending concerts, fairs, etc.; participating in education or volunteer activities related to nature, conservation, etc.; visiting cultural or historical area; bird or wildlife watching or photography, etc.	45.1%	80.5%
Water-based activities Such as swimming, boating, fishing, etc.	35.1%	50.1%
Snow-based activities Such as sledding, skiing, snowmobiling, etc.	11.8%	15.2%



Tempe Beach Park
Tempe Tourism



Arizona Snowbowl
Visit Phoenix



Did You Know?

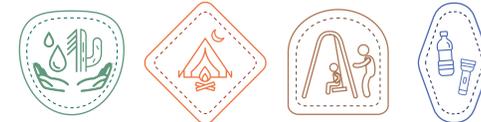
Six National Forests are in Arizona: Apache-Sitgreaves, Coconino, Coronado, Kaibab, Prescott, and Tonto National Forests.

Key Research Findings and Shared Priorities

PARTICIPATION IN SPECIFIC OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITY BY CATEGORY

The following table shows the previous 12 months of participation by specific activities for the Arizona public, invested users, and by the five Arizona regions and the race and ethnicity of the Arizona public survey participant.

Rank	Reasons for Not Participating in Outdoor Recreation (Last 12 months); Scale of (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree	Arizona Public N=5,444	Invested Users N=1,324	Phoenix & Central N=2,437	Tucson & Southern N=1,127	North Central N=523	Northern N=605	West Coast N=752	American Indian N=211	Asian/ Pacific Islander N=252	Black/ African American N=430	White/ Caucasian N=4,176	Hispanic N=1,666
1	Visiting a local park	41.9%	69.6%	43.9%	43.6%	48.0%	35.1%	34.1%	42.1%	35.9%	28.7%	42.4%	36.6%
2	Walking or jogging on trails or at park	40.3%	69.3%	41.2%	42.8%	45.6%	36.9%	31.0%	43.5%	36.2%	27.1%	40.6%	33.2%
3	Day hiking	40.3%	79.5%	40.1%	42.8%	52.0%	41.5%	28.0%	34.8%	34.7%	22.1%	41.7%	32.1%
4	Picnicking with family, friends, etc.	40.2%	68.4%	41.8%	42.7%	44.5%	34.9%	33.2%	40.9%	33.5%	26.9%	40.5%	35.9%
5	Visiting a natural or wilderness area	39.1%	74.3%	40.1%	42.9%	46.2%	35.4%	28.3%	40.1%	33.8%	24.3%	39.7%	31.9%
6	Attending outdoor events	35.9%	57.9%	37.3%	37.0%	41.6%	30.7%	29.9%	39.3%	27.9%	25.2%	36.0%	32.3%
7	Visiting a cultural or historical site	34.2%	66.9%	34.6%	37.5%	42.4%	31.7%	24.3%	34.9%	31.4%	21.3%	34.1%	27.4%
8	Swimming outdoors	30.0%	32.3%	28.6%	25.0%	35.0%	37.0%	32.7%	30.4%	22.0%	21.1%	30.3%	31.3%
9	Bird or wildlife watching, photography	26.4%	53.5%	24.6%	30.8%	35.1%	28.0%	18.1%	26.1%	25.9%	20.1%	26.3%	20.9%
10	Fishing	25.6%	30.8%	22.8%	21.4%	33.1%	36.1%	27.2%	24.4%	15.5%	20.6%	25.1%	26.8%
11	Participating in environmental activities	25.3%	49.7%	24.4%	29.2%	32.8%	25.2%	17.7%	27.3%	24.2%	20.8%	24.8%	21.2%
12	Bicycling	25.2%	34.6%	25.5%	25.9%	25.0%	29.0%	20.7%	28.5%	27.5%	22.7%	23.8%	24.6%
13	Non-motorized boat - kayak, canoe	23.5%	32.6%	20.3%	20.2%	32.9%	34.5%	23.3%	18.8%	19.2%	22.2%	23.2%	23.7%
14	Conservation volunteer activities	22.0%	45.2%	20.5%	24.0%	31.0%	25.6%	14.8%	22.6%	21.8%	18.0%	21.4%	18.3%
15	Tent camping	21.1%	38.4%	21.1%	20.6%	22.3%	29.6%	14.1%	22.2%	14.1%	20.1%	21.0%	20.3%
16	Motorized boat or personal watercraft use, jet-ski	20.1%	19.9%	16.9%	15.9%	24.0%	29.1%	26.3%	16.4%	14.8%	18.2%	19.9%	21.7%
17	4-wheel driving - dirt bikes, ATVs, etc.	18.9%	37.5%	16.6%	15.3%	29.3%	23.3%	21.1%	16.9%	12.8%	14.1%	18.8%	16.6%
18	River or whitewater rafting	16.3%	10.4%	13.7%	12.7%	22.8%	26.4%	17.2%	13.9%	13.8%	14.1%	15.7%	20.6%
19	Vehicle-based camping - RV	16.1%	41.0%	13.0%	15.8%	23.5%	24.2%	14.9%	13.2%	6.8%	11.2%	16.5%	11.2%
20	Waterskiing, wakeboarding, using motorized boat	15.8%	8.7%	12.7%	12.8%	20.2%	25.0%	19.9%	11.6%	13.7%	12.2%	15.2%	19.9%



IMPORTANCE OF ARIZONA RECREATION SETTINGS – PREFERENCE FOR OPEN SPACES IN NATURAL SETTINGS

Arizonans were asked to rate on a scale of (1) Not at all important to (7) Extremely important, how important each of the following Arizona recreation settings are to them and other people in their household.

Rank	Importance of Arizona Recreation Settings Those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months; Scale of (1) Not at all important to (7) Extremely important	Arizona Public N=5,274	Invested Users N=1,322
1	Open spaces in natural settings with very little development – Such as national forests or other recreation areas managed by government agencies	5.65	6.58
2	Large, nature-oriented parks – Primarily used for hiking, picnicking, or camping, with only a few facilities – such as some regional, state, or national parks	5.58	6.25
3	Small neighborhood parks – Have only a few facilities – such as playgrounds, common areas in housing complexes, etc.	4.95	4.53
4	Large, developed parks in urban areas – With many facilities and uses – such as parks with community centers, event spaces, ball fields, etc.	4.93	4.48
5	Private/commercial recreation areas	4.18	3.30



Did You Know?

There are more wilderness areas in Arizona than in the entire Midwest. Arizona alone has 90 wilderness areas, while the Midwest has 50.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH OUTDOOR RECREATION

Arizonans were provided a list of benefits that are associated with outdoor recreation. They were asked to think about each benefit within the following statement: “Recreation and cultural areas, parks, and open spaces benefit communities in Arizona because they ...” They were asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree with each of the statements, using the scale of (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree. Based on previous research and national studies, the increase in health-related benefits—physical, mental, and social—increased an average of 10% to 15% over previous years, largely attributed to the impact of COVID-19.

Rank	Benefits Associated with Outdoor Recreation Among those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months; Scale of (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree	Arizona Public N=5,274	Invested Users N=1,322
1	Promote a healthy lifestyle through physical activity	4.30	4.63
2	Promote mental health	4.27	4.61
3	Provide opportunities for family interaction	4.21	4.60
4	Make cities and regions better places to live	4.20	4.52
5	Provide constructive activities for youth	4.19	4.45
6	Protect natural and cultural resources	4.18	4.22
7	Educate people about the environment	4.03	4.27
8	Increase community pride	4.02	4.23
9	Educate about culture and history of Arizona and American Indian tribes	3.98	4.22
10	Attract tourists to the region	3.97	4.02
11	Help local and regional economic development	3.91	4.03
12	Increase property values	3.85	4.00
13	Prevent urban sprawl	3.79	3.90
14	Attract new business and retain jobs	3.78	3.76
15	Increase understanding and tolerance of others	3.74	3.71

Key Research Findings and Shared Priorities

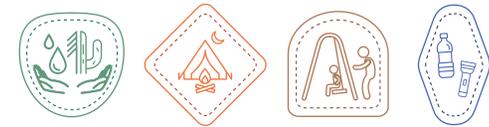
THREE DISTINCT VOICES: THE ARIZONA PUBLIC, INVESTED OUTDOOR RECREATIONISTS AND PROVIDERS

Survey questions were strategically written to address outdoor recreation use and experiences from both the public (Arizona residents) and invested outdoor recreationists and to compare their answers with those of the providers surveyed regarding outdoor recreation areas, facilities, and programming. The following tables provide further insight and comparisons among the three groups and by region, race and ethnicity.

HELP SUPPORT HEALTH GOALS: PROVIDE MORE WALKING TRAILS AND PATHWAYS AND INCREASE ACCESS

When asked how outdoor recreation areas and facilities in Arizona could help in achieving their goals or priorities related to physical and mental health and fitness, all three groups agreed on their top recommendations.

Rank	Support for Outdoor Recreation Areas/ Facilities to Help Achieve Health Goals Among those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months	Arizona Public N=5,444	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=122	Phoenix & Central N=2,437	Tucson & Southern N=1,127	North Central N=523	Northern N=605	West Coast N=752	American Indian N=211	Asian/ Pacific Islander N=252	Black/ African American N=430	White/ Caucasian N=4,176	Hispanic N=1,666
1	(Provide more) walking trails and pathways	57.8%	70.7%	87.5%	60.9%	59.8%	56.6%	49.4%	52.6%	54.5%	55.5%	49.1%	58.5%	54.6%
2	(Increase) easy/convenient access points to trails, pathways, waterways, and facilities	54.3%	70.1%	76.8%	55.5%	55.1%	58.4%	42.9%	55.6%	51.9%	50.1%	44.3%	55.5%	51.6%
3	(Protect and encourage more) natural settings at outdoor recreation areas and facilities	53.3%	82.0%	83.0%	51.3%	54.8%	60.3%	57.1%	49.8%	49.8%	51.4%	40.4%	54.4%	47.8%
4	(Support) health and fitness community events (e.g., running and bicycling races; yoga, tai chi, other fitness and exercise programs; adventure races; etc.)	41.8%	41.3%	53.6%	41.5%	43.6%	42.6%	40.3%	40.5%	52.1%	44.6%	51.3%	40.6%	46.3%
5	(Support) community projects and activities that connect people to each other and the environment	41.0%	56.3%	58.9%	39.9%	43.0%	46.3%	41.6%	37.8%	40.6%	43.2%	37.6%	41.3%	39.6%
6	(Provide more) programs aimed at specific groups, such as older adults, families with young children, etc.	38.5%	42.4%	51.8%	40.2%	42.0%	36.9%	27.6%	37.4%	42.6%	34.2%	33.6%	38.8%	37.5%
7	(Provide more) fitness and exercise stations at outdoor areas and facilities	35.0%	22.1%	38.4%	34.8%	36.8%	30.4%	33.0%	37.9%	34.9%	36.5%	36.4%	34.8%	43.9%
8	(Provide) informative and educational health-related signs and information	32.1%	24.8%	28.6%	29.7%	31.8%	32.2%	37.5%	36.3%	30.9%	35.9%	42.2%	31.6%	37.5%
9	(I don't have health or fitness goals or priorities)	4.5%	1.7%	N/A	5.7%	4.2%	3.3%	2.0%	4.0%	7.7%	2.1%	4.5%	4.4%	4.5%



OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES PERCEIVED AS ADEQUATE IN ARIZONA

Arizonans and providers were asked how much they agree or disagree with various statements about outdoor recreation opportunities in Arizona, using the scale of (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree. Overall, they perceive current outdoor recreation opportunities as adequate. However, they were clear that facilities are not adequate for those with disabilities. Also, there were distinct differences in responses based on their proximity and ease of access to the outdoor recreation opportunity, whether it is a park, space, or experience.

Rank	Perceptions of Outdoor Recreation Opportunities in Arizona Among those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months; Scale of (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree	Arizona Public N=5,274	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=112	Phoenix & Central N=2,350	Tucson & Southern N=1,093	North Central N=512	Northern N=598	West Coast N=721	American Indian N=206	Asian/ Pacific Islander N=245	Black/ African American N=420	White/ Caucasian N=4,047	Hispanic N=1,616
1	Access to the public outdoor recreation spaces in my area is adequate.	3.64	3.60	3.23	3.59	3.59	3.64	3.86	3.67	3.51	3.63	3.63	3.66	3.67
2	I am satisfied with the number of parks, open spaces, natural areas, and playgrounds in my area.	3.46	3.27	2.81	3.40	3.36	3.58	3.79	3.49	3.32	3.58	3.62	3.48	3.47
3	I am satisfied with the variety of outdoor recreation experiences available in my area.	3.45	3.40	3.13	3.35	3.36	3.64	3.85	3.48	3.29	3.46	3.63	3.48	3.41
4	There is a lack of recreation opportunities in my area for people with special needs.	3.44	3.12	3.57	3.35	3.45	3.44	3.63	3.60	3.51	3.68	3.56	3.43	3.56
5	My outdoor recreation experiences are often negatively impacted by other recreation users.	3.10	3.02	3.29	2.97	3.04	3.16	3.44	3.29	2.93	3.32	3.33	3.09	3.19
6	Conflicts between homeowners and recreation users are a problem in my area.	3.05	2.85	3.33	2.84	2.98	3.39	3.48	3.21	2.98	3.45	3.41	3.01	3.13

Key Research Findings and Shared Priorities

LITTERING, CROWDING, AND NOISE NEGATIVELY IMPACTING OUTDOOR RECREATION EXPERIENCES

Arizonans and invested users who identified that their experiences are often negatively affected by other recreation users were asked to name the factors they have personally experienced in Arizona that have negatively impacted their outdoor recreation experiences. Providers noted those factors that they had personally witnessed or are aware of as negatively impacting outdoor recreation experiences.

Rank	Negative Impact by Outdoor Recreation Users Among those who selected outdoor recreation experiences are often negatively impacted by other recreation users	Arizona Public N=1,988	Invested Users N=467	Providers N=44
1	Littering, vandalism	61.5%	85.2%	95.5%
2	Crowding, too many people	55.5%	74.1%	59.1%
3	Noise (e.g., vehicle noise, loud music)	47.9%	60.2%	81.8%
4	Pets	31.0%	30.0%	52.3%
5	Target shooting	30.2%	31.3%	43.2%
6	Dust	28.5%	28.5%	38.6%
7	Mixed-use areas or trails causing conflicts among users	23.4%	52.0%	72.7%
8	Other	7.5%	25.1%	25.0%



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COMMUNICATION CHANNELS USED

Preferred communication channels to be used for information about outdoor recreation opportunities are also the most used by the public overall.

Rank	Communication Channels Used Among those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months	Arizona Public N=5,444	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=122	Phoenix & Central N=2,437	Tucson & Southern N=1,127	North Central N=523	Northern N=605	West Coast N=752
1	Word-of-mouth (such as friends, family)	46.7%	84.8%	N/A	48.3%	50.7%	52.8%	37.9%	38.4%
2	Social media	43.4%	48.1%	89.3%	44.7%	44.2%	39.0%	40.6%	43.4%
3	Mobile devices	38.7%	51.4%	N/A	38.2%	39.0%	40.8%	38.1%	39.2%
4	Park and recreation agency websites	36.2%	73.5%	82.1%	36.7%	39.7%	40.8%	34.0%	28.2%
5	Visited before	35.8%	70.0%	N/A	36.3%	38.2%	42.7%	32.6%	28.5%
6	Printed materials (such as brochures, flyers, posters)	33.2%	47.4%	86.6%	31.6%	35.8%	35.0%	37.4%	30.1%
7	Print or digital media (such as magazines, newspapers, etc.)	33.0%	56.3%	61.6%	30.0%	36.8%	40.9%	37.0%	28.2%
8	Maps (printed or digital)	30.1%	62.1%	75.0%	25.7%	31.4%	41.6%	39.8%	26.3%
9	Broadcast media (such as radio, television)	29.0%	27.5%	31.3%	29.4%	28.3%	26.8%	30.0%	29.4%
10	Road signs	27.6%	37.6%	59.8%	25.0%	28.4%	29.0%	35.0%	28.3%
11	Local visitor's center, tourist center, Chamber of Commerce, etc.	24.4%	35.9%	53.6%	22.0%	24.5%	30.5%	24.3%	27.8%
12	Travel guides (such as Fodor's or AAA)	21.0%	21.9%	10.7%	19.7%	20.6%	21.5%	25.0%	21.9%
13	Apps	18.7%	29.1%	26.8%	17.9%	19.1%	21.7%	22.1%	16.0%
14	User-generated content on websites	14.7%	28.3%	8.0%	16.3%	13.4%	15.9%	10.9%	13.9%



Did You Know?

Arizona has 3,928 mountain peaks and summits—more mountains than any one of the other Mountain States (Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming).

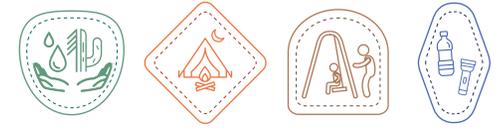


Key Research Findings and Shared Priorities

OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS

The lower the number, the greater the need is to address that type of program, such as low-cost or free programs, programs that promote inclusion and diversity, and for individuals with disabilities.

Rank	Outdoor Recreation Needs – How Well Are They Being Met Those who previously identified programs needed; Among providers if program is offered; Scale of (1) Not met at all to (7) Fully met	Arizona Public N=4,898	Invested Users N=1,186	Providers N=112	Phoenix & Central N=2,157	Tucson & Southern N=1,018	North Central N=482	Northern N=560	West Coast N=680	American Indian N=194	Asian/ Pacific Islander N=229	Black/ African American N=402	White/ Caucasian N=3,746	Hispanic N=1,509
1	Programs for children	4.88	4.33	61.6%	4.83	4.82	4.95	5.11	4.83	4.89	4.73	4.97	4.91	4.92
2	Programs for families	4.76	4.44	63.4%	4.69	4.62	4.72	5.20	4.89	4.73	4.93	4.94	4.78	4.73
3	Facilities to support large gatherings or parties	4.74	4.27	58.0%	4.67	4.68	4.73	5.02	4.83	4.50	4.69	4.96	4.79	4.72
4	Programs for teens	4.71	3.92	48.2%	4.58	4.64	4.72	5.36	4.64	4.56	5.30	5.13	4.69	4.76
5	Programs for adults	4.70	4.62	75.0%	4.65	4.59	4.74	5.09	4.73	4.57	4.83	4.85	4.72	4.63
6	Programs for older adults/seniors	4.58	4.28	65.2%	4.50	4.41	4.67	4.99	4.69	4.64	4.92	4.94	4.58	4.71
7	Programs for Native American tribes	4.46	3.48	31.3%	4.25	4.18	4.53	4.95	4.95	4.11	4.78	4.52	4.56	4.50
8	Programs for ethnically diverse groups	4.42	3.66	49.1%	4.31	4.32	4.56	4.89	4.47	4.33	4.45	4.64	4.50	4.40
9	Low-cost or free programs	4.41	4.13	52.7%	4.30	4.30	4.51	4.83	4.53	4.56	4.62	4.77	4.43	4.50
10	Programs that promote inclusion and diversity	4.39	3.71	53.6%	4.31	4.20	4.39	4.90	4.52	4.41	4.77	4.68	4.41	4.48
11	Programs for individuals with disabilities	4.32	3.70	28.6%	4.23	4.10	4.48	4.82	4.44	4.21	5.30	4.73	4.30	4.45



MOST CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMPACT OF DROUGHT, WILDFIRES, AND LOW WATER LEVELS

All three groups were asked to rate their level of concern about the following issues that can impact outdoor recreation experiences in Arizona, using the scale of (1) Not at all concerned to (7) Extremely concerned. In the open-ended comments, many voiced a concern about the growing impact of the drought and the number and intensity of wildfires and lower water levels in lakes the rivers that are directly impacting their outdoor recreation experiences now and most likely in the future.

Rank	Top Issues That Can Impact Outdoor Recreation Experiences Among those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months; Scale of (1) Not at all concerned to (7) Extremely concerned	Arizona Public N=5,274	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=112
1	Drought	5.62	6.26	6.29
2	Wildfires that threaten outdoor recreation areas	5.60	6.22	5.93
3	Water levels in lakes and rivers	5.54	6.20	5.90
4	Availability of groundwater/potable water supply	5.23	5.69	5.52
5	Changes in climate—e.g., increased temperatures	5.14	5.34	5.62
6	Threats to historical, cultural, or archaeological sites	5.13	5.54	5.07
7	Water pollution from cities, roads, etc.	5.03	5.05	4.69
8	Air pollution from cities, roads, etc.	4.98	4.95	4.37
9	Light pollution—defined as excessive or obtrusive artificial outdoor light from cities, roads, etc.	4.75	4.06	4.68
10	Pandemic	4.72	4.98	4.36

GROWING PRIORITIES ON CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES

The following two tables look at the use of public lands from a current and future perspective. When asked what Arizona’s future focus should be in the use of public lands, the public and providers agree that the focus should be divided between conserving natural resources with providing outdoor recreation opportunities.

Arizona’s Current Focus in Use of Public Lands Among those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months	Arizona Public N=5,274	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=112
Current focus is almost entirely on providing outdoor recreation opportunities	16.7%	9.2%	14.3%
Current focus is somewhat more on providing outdoor recreation opportunities	13.8%	26.3%	30.4%
Current focus is divided about equally between the two	33.7%	45.8%	33.9%
Current focus is somewhat more on conserving natural resources	21.2%	13.8%	15.2%
Current focus is almost entirely on conserving natural resources	14.6%	5.1%	6.3%



Key Research Findings and Shared Priorities

FUTURE FOCUS ALSO ON CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES

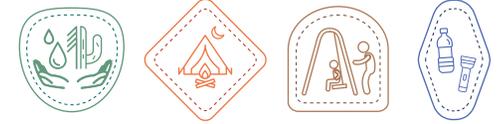
A combined 43% of the public believe the future focus should be somewhat more or almost entirely on conserving natural resources.

Arizona's Future Focus in Use of Public Lands Among those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months	Arizona Public N=5,444	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=112	Phoenix & Central N=2,437	Tucson & Southern N=1,127	North Central N=523	Northern N=605	West Coast N=752
Future focus should be almost entirely on providing outdoor recreation opportunities	14.7 %	4.8 %	2.7 %	12.0 %	14.0 %	14.1 %	21.9 %	18.7 %
Future focus should be somewhat more on providing outdoor recreation opportunities	7.4 %	7.2 %	5.4 %	7.4 %	7.7 %	6.9 %	7.6 %	7.0 %
Future focus should be divided about equally between the two	33.1 %	49.7 %	64.3 %	34.2 %	35.7 %	35.1 %	25.2 %	30.5 %
Future focus should be somewhat more on conserving natural resources	21.8 %	25.1 %	21.4 %	22.5 %	21.1 %	24.9 %	21.2 %	19.3 %
Future focus should be almost entirely on conserving natural resources	19.9 %	13.2 %	6.3 %	20.3 %	18.3 %	16.9 %	22.9 %	20.3 %



Did You Know?

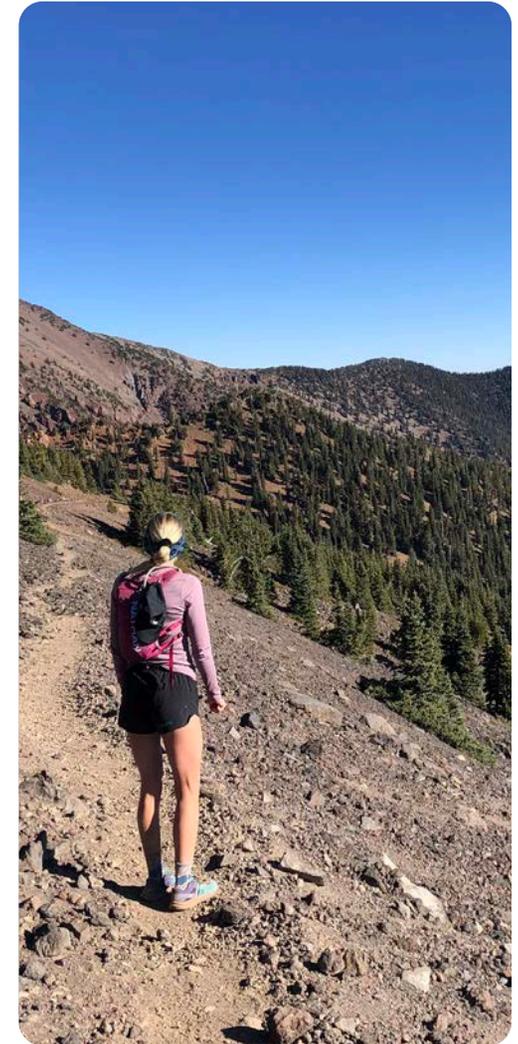
Mount Lemmon, in the Santa Catalina Mountains, is the southernmost ski resort in the United States.



FUNDING PRIORITIES FOCUSED ON MAINTAINING, PROTECTING, AND RESTORING

All three groups agree on the top three funding priorities, which also supports their earlier priorities around themes of maintaining, protecting, and preserving.

Rank	Funding Priorities Among those planning to recreate outdoors in next 12 months; Scale of (1) Not at all important to (7) Extremely important	Arizona Public N=5,274	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=122	Phoenix & Central N=667	Tucson & Southern N=311	North Central N=96	Northern N=146	West Coast N=239
1	Maintaining existing trails, outdoor recreation, and cultural facilities	5.90	6.41	6.58	5.86	6.02	6.02	5.91	5.77
2	Protecting natural and cultural resources (both those open to the public and those that are not)	5.80	6.3	6.55	5.74	5.90	5.95	5.88	5.66
3	Providing habitat and ecosystem preservation and restoration	5.74	6.28	6.25	5.68	5.89	5.85	5.78	5.61
4	Maintaining existing levels of recreation and cultural education programs	5.59	5.77	6.15	5.53	5.67	5.69	5.64	5.55
5	Connecting trails to other points of interest, including other trails, parks, waterways, and communities	5.41	5.48	5.84	5.38	5.47	5.36	5.43	5.48
6	Acquiring more land for parks, trails, open space, natural, cultural, and recreation areas	5.29	5.82	5.39	5.25	5.36	5.30	5.37	5.23
7	Developing new outdoor recreation and cultural facilities	5.17	5.01	5.55	5.07	5.22	5.17	5.39	5.26
8	Developing new outdoor recreation and cultural education programs	5.09	4.77	5.66	4.96	5.11	5.12	5.35	5.23
9	Providing alternative ways to access recreation areas, such as shuttle vehicles, public transportation, bicycle	5.04	4.46	4.86	4.93	5.19	5.02	5.09	5.14
10	Improving technology at outdoor recreation and cultural facilities	4.88	4.07	4.97	4.83	4.97	4.66	4.91	5.00



Weatherford Trail
Arizona Office of Tourism

PRIORITY 1

Conservation and Environmental Stewardship



“One of the best investments we can make is in stewarding the lands and waters that sustain us and the generations to come.”

Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland as she announced the 2022 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LCWF) grant winners



PRIORITY 1

CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Goal: Engage in responsible stewardship of Arizona’s unique and finite natural and cultural resources, open spaces, parks, lakes, and rivers, while continuing to address environmental factors to achieve a balance between conservation and recreation.

1 Foster sustainable outdoor recreation through conservation and stewardship.

Strategy 1: Provide consistent messaging and educational materials around environmental stewardship and associated actions for agencies, organizations, and the public.

Strategy 2: Advocate for public-private partnerships to enhance education on stewardship, including promoting Appreciate AZ and Leave No Trace principles.

Strategy 3: Identify and seek to address gaps in communication (between agencies, from agencies to groups and individuals, individuals and groups to agencies, and individuals and groups to each other) to help mitigate potential negative environmental impacts.

Strategy 4: Leverage Arizonans’ interest in conservation and stewardship by engaging the public to support and participate in the implementation of statewide, regional, and local strategies.

2 Optimize resources (financial, human, and other) through partnerships to fund and execute activities that address the balance between conservation and recreation.

Strategy 1: Leverage individual and organization resources to address environmental, social, and individual factors that affect the balance between conservation and recreation.

Strategy 2: Optimize current funding and seek new funding opportunities through public-private and cross-sector partnerships.

3 Advance regional and statewide alliances that address the balance between conservation and outdoor recreation.

Strategy 1: Coordinate with public agencies and private organizations to identify and act to protect critical habitat and at-risk resources (e.g., lakes and rivers) across jurisdictions, plans, etc.

Strategy 2: Engage in collaborative multi-agency and individual resource and visitation planning to reduce negative impacts.

Strategy 3: Amplify tribal voices in outdoor recreation planning efforts. Develop a collaborative strategy with tribal members for planning, managing, interpreting, and educating the public on their traditional cultural properties and resources.

SHARED PRIORITY AMONG STAKEHOLDERS, OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDERS, AND ARIZONA RESIDENTS

Conservation and environmental stewardship are supported among all three key groups. The stakeholders focused on three areas: conservation of natural assets and their associated management; balance between social, environmental, and development needs; and misuse and degradation of natural spaces. When asked to rate their level of concern about issues that can impact their outdoor recreation experience, the public and providers agree—the top three issues are **drought, wildfires that threaten outdoor recreation areas, and water levels in lakes and rivers.**

These concerns are also impacting a shift in funding priorities. While **maintaining existing trails and outdoor recreation and cultural facilities** is still the top response, a close second and third are **protecting natural and cultural resources, and providing habitat, preservation, and restoration.**

When asked what Arizona’s future focus should be in the use of public lands, the public and providers agree it should be divided between conserving natural resources with providing outdoor recreation opportunities. A combined 43% of the public believe the focus should be somewhat more or almost entirely on conserving natural resources. Included in **Appendix C** is the Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan. All wetlands found in Arizona are considered eligible for acquisition or other protection under the LWCF program.

ARIZONA’S FUTURE FOCUS IN USE OF PUBLIC LANDS

Which of the following do you think best represents what Arizona’s future focus should be in the use of public lands?	Arizona Public N=5,274	Invested Users N=1,322	Providers N=112
Future focus should be almost entirely on conserving natural resources	20.6%	13.2%	6.3%
Future focus should be almost entirely on providing outdoor recreation opportunities	14.3%	4.8%	2.7%
Future focus should be somewhat more on conserving natural resources	22.3%	25.1%	21.4%
Future focus should be somewhat more on providing outdoor recreation opportunities	7.3%	7.2%	5.4%
Future focus should be divided about equally between the two	35.5%	49.7%	64.3%

PRIORITY 1

Conservation and Environmental Stewardship

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP?

Environmental stewardship refers to the responsible use and protection of the natural environment through active participation in conservation efforts and sustainable practices by individuals, groups, nonprofit organizations, communities, and government organizations—and shaped by unique environmental, social, and economic interests.

Outdoor recreation is the portal for understanding and caring for natural resources and public lands. It provides opportunities and motivation to advance from the enjoyment of one's neighborhood park as a child, to outdoors education and understanding, to a role of citizen stewardship—one of "giving back" and supporting natural resources.



Arizona State Parks and Trails

TRIBAL VOICES IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

In the community of tribal nations' stakeholder focus groups, several topics and issues related to outdoor recreation were discussed among the participants. Arizona's tribal indigenous communities' relationship to the land is fundamental to their beliefs. It is imperative that leadership at the council level is engaged in the process and that meaningful consultation and communication occur at the onset and "not just consultation to check the box." There are also larger structural and existing trust issues—"the moral relationship is different from the transactional relationship."

It is important to integrate and amplify tribal voices in outdoor recreation planning efforts and develop a collaborative strategy with tribal members and affiliations for managing, interpreting, and sharing the value of Arizona's critical heritage, cultures, and historic sites. Federal, state, and local agencies and organizations need to continue to support preservation of historic sites and resources, including tribal lands and cultural sites. Tribal voices are integral in statewide outdoor recreation planning efforts, and the SCORP looks to supply the framework to further increase dialogue and develop pathways for funding, planning, and addressing tribal outdoor recreation needs.



Havasupai Indian Reservation
Arizona Office of Tourism



FEATURED PROJECT

Pinal County, Peralta Regional Park

Awarded Amount: \$2,051,203

The following project is an example of a new regional park that demonstrates responsible stewardship of Arizona's unique and finite natural resources and open spaces, while continuing to address environmental factors and use that seeks to maintain the balance between conservation and recreation.



The project develops a new regional park that includes a dynamic range of recreational opportunities for picnickers, non-motorized trail users, rock climbers, night-sky watchers, and tent campers. The Peralta Regional Park's proximity to the Superstition Wilderness and Peralta Trailhead coupled with the nearness of the metropolitan Phoenix area helps to ensure access of the state's

largest population to this regional park and numerous outdoor recreation opportunities. Additionally, Pinal County has closely collaborated on this project with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) on a Recreation and Public Purposes Act application, an approved Environmental Assessment and a Plan of Development, resulting in an executed lease and a planning process that includes a focus on conservation.

The vision outlined in the Peralta Regional Park Master Plan highlights the most important values in park development. They are:

- Maintain the biological integrity of the site
- Be very thoughtful about access and connectivity to, within, and from the site.
- Include opportunities for interpretation signage and education about the site, the natural desert, uses at the site and other information that promotes responsible public stewardship by all users of the site.
- Proposed users should respect and safeguard the special nature of this site while providing unique and relevant outdoor recreation opportunities to attract new demographics and users and underrepresented populations.
- Conserve wildlife resources and maintain a natural network of connected landscapes described by the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Conservation and Environmental Stewardship

ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT (AZGFD): YOUR PARTNER IN CONVERSATION

Guest Authors: Charles Hofer, State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator

Organization: Arizona Game and Fish Department

From hunting and fishing to hiking and birdwatching, outdoor recreation is a key component of our mission at the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD). To that end, AZGFD, Arizona State Parks and Trails (ASPT) and other outdoor recreation providers and land managers in the state are vital partners in conserving our state's fragile landscapes. By working together, our agencies and organizations help provide public access to safe outdoor experiences for Arizonans to enjoy the stunning landscapes and unique wildlife that make our state so special.

Unfortunately, wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation are not always compatible. The disturbance created and footprint left behind from outdoor recreation can degrade habitat, alter wildlife behavior, introduce invasive species, and even cause direct mortality. As our state continues to grow, our recreation footprint will expand and put tremendous pressures on Arizona's natural communities. Planning and partnerships that help protect our natural environment are more important than ever.

Effective wildlife conservation starts with a strategic plan, one that lays out goals and objectives while providing the information and tools necessary to meet those conservation goals. This year, AZGFD will complete its latest iteration of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), a 10-year strategic vision to conserve and protect our most vulnerable wildlife species. As a long-term strategic plan, the SWAP helps guide our limited conservation dollars by prioritizing our most vulnerable nongame species, known as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). From the highlands of northern Arizona to our southern borderlands region, Arizona is home to more than 500 SGCN, from rare or endangered species such as the southwestern willow flycatcher or Gila topminnow, to more common wildlife, such as the cactus wren, pronghorn, or burrowing owl. The SWAP is a conservation roadmap that identifies threats to wildlife and their habitats, while also offering actions that can help reduce or eliminate these threats. As a long-term conservation strategy, the SWAP helps us—and our vital partners—prioritize conservation efforts in order to “keep common species common.”



Patagonia Lake State Park
Arizona State Parks and Trails

In the fall of 2022, AZGFD will complete the latest revision of our SWAP and with it comes exciting new changes to our vision for conserving Arizona's wildlife. This latest iteration of the SWAP will form the backbone of the **Arizona Wildlife Conservation Strategy (AWCS)**, an innovative and comprehensive long-term strategy that focuses on the conservation of our most vulnerable nongame wildlife species and their habitats. The AWCS will be presented on its own website, offering online tools, interactive maps, a data viewer, and more. This interactive, web-based platform will vastly improve the public's engagement with AZGFD's long-term conservation strategies.



ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT (AZGFD): YOUR PARTNER IN CONVERSATION

Guest Authors: Charles Hofer, State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator

Organization: Arizona Game and Fish Department

One main focus of the AWCS is improved coordination and collaboration with our many partners, from small nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and recreation groups to state and federal agencies. To meet this challenge, we've created an exciting component of the AWCS called Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs), which are geographic areas we've identified that possess high conservation value and potential for successful project outcomes. These COAs will help prioritize on-the-ground conservation by identifying specific locations on the landscape where investments are most likely to lead to substantial gains for wildlife.

To identify COAs, AZGFD's team of species and habitat experts utilized the latest data and expertise and also garnered considerable input from outside organizations, agencies, and the general public during our two-year SWAP revision process. Some of the criteria for identifying COAs included:

- Areas where threatened and endangered species have been documented
- Areas with high wildlife diversity including SGCN
- Areas that contribute to a known movement corridor

The AWCS consists of more than 130 terrestrial COAs, with more than 20 of them overlapping or immediately adjacent to State Parks' properties, for example. Some COAs are identified to help the conservation of a specific species; others might provide increased connectivity between habitats or provide a buffer around an existing protected area.

In the AWCS, each COA will have a detailed profile, including information such as threats to the habitat, SGCN species that occur there, conservation actions, potential partners, and much more. These COAs offer a tremendous opportunity for AZGFD and ASPT to collaborate with other partners to protect wildlife and their habitats and help ensure continued recreational opportunities for generations to come.

By providing a platform for prioritized conservation actions, the AWCS will help build partnerships by identifying common goals and shared priorities. Our collective efforts will result in greater benefits for wildlife, healthier ecological systems, and diverse recreational opportunities for all citizens.

Meet our Guest Author: Charles Hofer

Charles Hofer has been living in Tucson for more than a decade now after spending much of his life on the east coast. Charles is an avid hiker and outdoor photographer, and enjoys exploring the seemingly endless opportunities on public lands throughout the state.



Did You Know?

At over 2.9 million acres, the Tonto National Forest is the largest national forest in Arizona, and the sixth largest national forest among 154 USDA National Forests.

PRIORITY 2

Sustainable Outdoor Recreation



“With a growing population and increased use, we need to maintain our current trails while looking at opportunities of developing new and connecting existing trails to allow for greater controlled access and visitor management.”

Outdoor Recreation Provider Survey

San Tan Mountain Regional Park
Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department



PRIORITY 2

SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR RECREATION

Goal: Create and expand upon a sustainable outdoor recreation network that ensures Arizonans and visitors feel invited, welcome, and safe, and have access to these resources.

1 Develop multi-organization, sustainable outdoor recreation plans that may include conservation, restoration, maintenance, and visitor use management efforts to support outdoor recreation spaces.

Strategy 1: Update and review outdoor recreation facilities and site asset information from federal, state, county, local, and tribal outdoor recreation providers.

Strategy 2: Identify gaps between the supply and demand in outdoor recreation in Arizona. Assess and monitor outdoor recreation spaces for proactive management.

Strategy 3: Develop short-, medium- and long-term goals, objectives, and strategies for multi-organization, regional, and statewide plans.

2 Pursue sustainable funding to support the operation, programs, and maintenance of existing outdoor recreation spaces, as well as the acquisition and development of new outdoor recreation spaces to ensure that Arizona's growing population continues to have access to high-quality outdoor experiences.

Strategy 1: Identify grants and other funding strategies available to support multi-organization, regional or statewide goals related to outdoor recreation and protecting natural and cultural resources.

Strategy 2: Propose sustainable funding mechanisms that provide support outside of grants and current agency budgets.

Strategy 3: Evaluate funding sources to close the current gap that limits underrepresented populations from taking part in outdoor recreation in the state.

3 Maintain, manage, and improve existing infrastructure to meet the needs of Arizonans.

Strategy 1: Maintain existing trails, outdoor recreation, and cultural facilities.

Strategy 2: Improve access for visitors of all abilities (physical and cognitive).

Strategy 3: Provide an integrated network of outdoor recreation opportunities that supplies different options where Arizonans and visitors feel invited, welcome, and safe.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR RECREATION?

Sustaining outdoor recreation opportunities requires a clear vision and a bold strategy to meet the environmental, social, and economic needs of present and future generations. The objectives and strategies outlined will help to unite diverse interests, create and strengthen partnerships, focus scarce resources on mission-driven priorities, connect recreation benefits to communities, provide for a growing and changing population, and most importantly, sustain and expand the benefits to Arizonans that quality recreation opportunities provide.

When asked what Arizona's future focus should be in the use of public lands, the public and providers agree that the focus should at least equally divided between conserving natural resources with providing outdoor recreation opportunities. A combined 43% of the public believe the focus should be somewhat more or almost entirely on conserving natural resources.

COLLABORATION IS KEY TO A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Sustainable outdoor recreation cannot occur without collaboration, planning across boundaries and jurisdictions, with the ultimate goal of improving outdoor recreation experiences for all. It is true, one cannot be all things to all people in all places—the mix of outdoor recreation opportunities will change over time as providers respond to changing public preferences and shifts in financial capability. The only real solution is to work together and share ownership in the challenges, collective skills and lessons learned, and work collaboratively to define a sustainable future.

DEVELOPING MULTI-ORGANIZATION SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANS

Multi-organization sustainable outdoor recreation plans often involve the ongoing participation and collaboration of federal, state, county, local, tribal, and other outdoor recreation partners. Based on insights shared by stakeholders, outdoor recreation providers, and the public during the 2023 SCORP process, the following were identified as key priorities for a sustainable outdoor recreation plan: conservation, restoration, maintenance, and visitor use management to support outdoor recreation spaces. What was learned during the pandemic is the growing need for adaptive planning and management. By leveraging multi-organization sustainable plans already in place, land managers and recreation providers can more easily adapt to address safety and the maintenance of outdoor spaces, trails, and facilities; while also serving a growing number of outdoor recreationists with limited staffing and funding.

PRIORITY 2

Sustainable Outdoor Recreation

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

To implement the proposed strategies that support the four outdoor recreation and conservation priorities, a primary element is required—funding. Arizona’s parks, outdoor recreation areas, and open spaces are a key part of public infrastructure that helps improve economic development, property values, and public health. They also support environmental health because healthy ecosystems provide clean air and water; help to preserve our forests, lakes, and rivers; and much more.

Land conservation, trail and park development, maintenance of facilities and related recreation, and conservation programs require stable funding in order to be implemented. Current funding for these efforts in Arizona includes the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), Recreational Trails Program, State Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Fund, Heritage Fund, and the State Lake Improvement Fund (SLIF), and through investments by private entities such as nonprofits and recreation organizations.

As Arizona’s population is projected to grow at a rate of 1.4% per year over the next decade (twice the national average), the costs of land leases or acquisitions increase as land values go up. The need for additional facilities and maintenance of existing facilities rises along with increased recreational participation. Finding new and creative ways to encourage funding collaborations and partnerships, empower outdoor stewardship, and foster conservation ethics in future generations is essential.



Did You Know?

Located on Arizona’s western border, Parker Dam is the deepest dam in the world at 320 feet.



Visit Mesa



Arizona Game and Fish Department



FEATURED PROJECT

City of Avondale, Donnie Hale Park Renovation

Awarded Amount: \$577,216

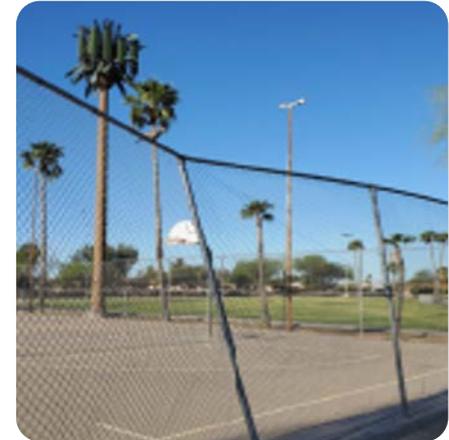


Donnie Hale Park is a 5.3-acre neighborhood park in the Cashion District of Avondale. With a central location, mature trees, and its location within a family-friendly neighborhood, the park is a natural gathering place for Cashion District residents. Residents of the Cashion District are 90% Hispanic with a median household income just over \$35,211 with 51% or more of the households earning less than 80% of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Department’s defined area median income. In addition, 77% to 90% of the local school students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunch.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant will allow the City of Avondale to complete renovations to the park as one project instead

of phasing in the improvements. These improvements include ballfield renovations including fencing, shade canopies for players and spectators; basketball court surfaces and equipment; a playground and surfacing; three picnic ramadas and picnic tables, concrete walkways and plaza, site amenities, electrical services, area lighting, and sport court lighting. Renovations will also address safety concerns and improve ADA compliance.

The Cashion District is rich in history, and active residents enjoy frequenting Donnie Hale Park. The proposed renovations, which will make the park even more accessible to residents of all abilities, provide structures to combat increasing heat and support and enhance local opportunities to participate in healthy outdoor recreation activities like team sports.



Sustainable Outdoor Recreation

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND OUTDOOR RECREATION ON PUBLIC LANDS

Guest Author: Erin Davis, Archaeological Compliance Specialist

Organization: Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

People have lived in Arizona for more than 12,000 years, and Arizona’s public lands (both federal and state) contain tens of thousands of historic and prehistoric archaeological sites documenting this habitation. Evidence of past land use can be seen in the remnants of prehistoric houses and artifact scatters, as well as historic-period wagon road tracks, and ranching features—to name just a few. For example, almost all of Arizona’s State Parks include archaeological sites, from small prehistoric artifact scatters at Alamo Lake State Park, to the large habitation room blocks at Homolovi State Park, to the below ground remains of the original historic prison at Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park.

In addition, State Parks such as Tombstone Courthouse, Riordan Mansion, and Tubac Presidio highlight the early historic settlement of Arizona. Visitors to the State Parks can observe large prehistoric room blocks such as those at Homolovi State Park, rock art (petroglyphs) such as those seen at Lyman Lake State Park, as well as countless less visible prehistoric archaeological sites. If you hike Roper Lake State Park or Lyman Lake State Park, you may see pieces of pottery (called “pot sherds” by archaeologists) from ceramic pots or pieces of chipped stone that are the results of making arrowheads or spear heads (what archaeologists call “projectile points.”) These artifacts were made by the ancestors of the modern-day Native American tribes who live in all areas of Arizona today. It is important not to disturb sites like these and the artifacts they contain, as they are links between the past and present and are considered by Arizona’s tribal communities to be an essential part of their traditional religious and cultural practice.

Because the locations of artifacts can be important to the interpretation of a site, the public can look at and admire artifacts, but should return them to where they were found. Rock walls should never be “rebuilt,” and artifacts should never be hidden or piled. These activities can actually result in the loss of data from the site, as archaeologists study the patterns of fallen walls to determine how high they may have been and depend on the locations of artifacts to indicate where activities may have taken place.

Archaeological sites on public lands have been identified largely as a result of compliance with the State and National Historic Preservation Acts. These laws require agencies to identify cultural resources within a project area prior to constructing new trails, buildings, parking lots, or other amenities. For example, to date, we estimate that roughly 33% of Arizona’s State Parks have been surveyed by professional archaeologists in advance of various projects and more than 500 archaeological sites have been identified. The Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) recommends that these archaeological sites be avoided by construction and ground-disturbing projects.

Protecting these sites from disturbance is important, but an integrated effort among agencies to preserve sites and allow the public to respectfully recognize and appreciate them is possible and rewarding. Cultural resources, such as archaeological sites and historic buildings, are attractive cultural assets for visitors who wish to know more about Arizona’s past. Sites can be preserved on public recreational lands by providing interpretive signs that offer information on the past and current cultures associated with the sites. QR codes on signage can provide links to more detailed information about the site’s broader historical and geographical context.





CULTURAL RESOURCES AND OUTDOOR RECREATION ON PUBLIC LANDS

Guest Author: Erin Davis, Archaeological Compliance Specialist

Organization: Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Responsible management and use of public lands require acknowledgment of the presence and respect for the preservation of archaeological sites. With proper stewardship, archaeological sites can provide educational and inspirational experiences for visitors who are already enjoying the natural beauty of Arizona. Land managers are responsible for ensuring the sites are not damaged by intentional trail construction and maintenance or by the development of informal “social trails.” The recreational public is tasked with following basic guidelines of archaeological site etiquette which includes not removing artifacts, creating ground disturbance, building cairns or markers, or causing any other form of damage.



Archaeological sites that are subject to increased visitation are at higher risk for inadvertent damage. Efforts must be taken to periodically monitor these sites to ensure that both inadvertent and intentional damage is recorded. The Site Steward Program (SSP), housed within the State Historic Preservation Office at Arizona State Parks and Trails, currently monitors around 2,400 sites on both state and federal lands in Arizona. Site stewards are

volunteers who undergo formal training to routinely monitor sites and report any human-caused damage or natural changes (such as erosion). The partnership between the SSP and land-managing agencies leverages volunteer resources to assist public land managers with the identification of sites that may require additional protection or interpretation to prevent disturbance.

For more information about archaeological site etiquette and the site steward program please visit our website: azstateparks.com/archaeological-site-etiquette and azstateparks.com/arizona-site-stewards-volunteer-program.

Meet our Guest Author: Erin Davis

Prior to my current position as an Archaeological Compliance Specialist at the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), I was a field archaeologist participating in surveys and excavations, helping to piece together the prehistoric and historic record across the state of Arizona. As I learned more about why the archaeology was being conducted (for transportation projects, developments, etc.), I became more interested in the background laws and practices that dictated the need for considering the effects a project would have on Arizona’s non-renewable archaeological resources.

I enjoy assisting agencies in figuring out ways to avoid sites that would be impacted by a project or, if they can’t be avoided, the best



ways to coordinate with Tribal partners to responsibly mitigate—through excavation, production of informational videos, or other means—any adverse effects the project may cause. I feel I am helping to protect archaeological sites so that the people of Arizona can learn from them and appreciate the extensive civilizations who lived on this land for centuries.

PRIORITY 3

Connection, Community, and Economic Vitality

“Wish there were more opportunities for my family and community to experience the outdoors and participate in related activities and educational programs closer to home.”

Public Survey, Phoenix and Central Region
(translated from Spanish)





PRIORITY 3

CONNECTION, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC VITALITY

Goal: Provide high-quality recreation experiences that help to connect individuals and families with their communities and to each other, while supporting outdoor recreation as an important economic driver in communities across Arizona.

1 Broaden outreach, education, and information available.

Strategy 1: Connect individuals of all ages and families to the land and the natural and cultural resources of Arizona through existing relationships with organizations, clubs, and educational institutions.

Strategy 2: Create communication channels and education opportunities for people of all ages—from children to older adults—to further expand their knowledge and experiences with outdoor recreation.

Strategy 3: Increase the use of technology, online resources, and mobile devices (e.g., apps, GPS, websites, and social media) to promote and connect people to the outdoors.

Strategy 4: Assure communication materials and signage are easy to understand, and use language and images that are inclusive and representative of the population.

2 Encourage outdoor recreation providers to build new and strengthen existing partnerships with other organizations and individuals to provide a network that addresses community connection and recreation opportunities.

Strategy 1: Improve community-to-community outdoor recreation connectivity using multi-scale planning and multi-modal transportation infrastructure.

Strategy 2: Use universal design to ensure that outdoor recreation spaces are accessible to the widest possible range of visitors.

Strategy 3: Partner to address community concerns, such as emergency response, litter, and misuse of outdoor recreation spaces to ensure that these spaces are inviting, welcoming, and safe for visitors.

3 Cultivate community vibrancy and economic vitality through healthy lands, lakes, and rivers that support sustainable outdoor recreation.

Strategy 1: Collaborate with communities to identify local and regional outdoor recreation opportunities that provide community and economic benefit.

Strategy 2: Coordinate community and regional efforts to address identified outdoor recreation needs.

Strategy 3: Identify opportunities for multiple funding streams.

Creating the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts and conservationists require actively reaching out to youth, families, and other social groups to get outdoors. It can be as simple as providing that first fishing opportunity, coordinating hiking or biking clubs, providing hands-on nature education experiences, mentoring a first hunt, and more. These “connecting” activities can open the door to an active outdoor recreation lifestyle.

Providing opportunities for Arizonans to participate in outdoor activities in close-to-home parks, trails, and open spaces is a way to get youth and families connected to the outdoors and foster an appreciation of the benefits of outdoor recreation. However, these opportunities also benefit businesses and may bring visitors into a community as well.

There is a saying that goes, “You can’t be what you can’t see.” For a child, teen, or adult, especially from underrepresented communities of color, there is the desire to see others “like me” as hikers, skiers, boaters, anglers, and participating in the many other outdoor recreation activities here in Arizona. Building relationships with underrepresented groups is essential in making them feel invited, welcomed, and safe in public parks and recreational areas. Outdoor recreation providers can work together to expand their connections with diverse audiences, to share contacts with leaders and influencers in underrepresented communities, and to coordinate outreach efforts. These community connections may include Outdoor Afro, Latino Outdoors, HECHO (Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting and the Outdoors), school and church groups, Boys & Girls Clubs, and scouting organizations to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in public parks, and outdoor recreational activities.

Access as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association is...“The just and fair quantity, proximity and connections to quality parks and green space, recreation facilities, as well as programs that are safe, inclusive, culturally relevant and welcoming to everyone. When people have just and fair access, our health and social wellbeing improve, and our communities can protect and better recover from environmental, social and economic challenges.” **Accessibility** primarily addresses accessible facilities—including wheelchair-accessible trails and campsites, along with services. Accessibility challenges range from pathways that are not wide enough for a wheelchair to ensuring that braille is provided on all trail signage so that blind or low vision hikers do not have to depend on others to learn about the trail features.

According to Kaitlyn Verfuert and Laurie Singer with Ability 360, which advocates for personal responsibility—by, and for, people with disabilities—as a means to independence and promotes outdoor recreation through their 360Outdoors program, the “disability community is the only minority group that 100% of the population will experience or be affected by at one point in their life or another.”

PRIORITY 3

Connection, Community, and Economic Vitality

Outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences should be available to all Arizonans. Currently, 13% of Arizonans have a disability, with the most common disability being ambulatory. Ambulatory disability, described as having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs, is the most common reported in Arizona at 7%. The percentage of Arizonans with a disability will increase over the next few decades as the average age of Arizona's population continues to increase. The prevalence of disabilities will be much higher among older age groups—the 65+ age group was the fastest growing between 2010 and 2020 with its population increasing 55%. Outdoor recreation providers will need to increase their investments for accessibility improvements to keep pace with Arizona's growing need for facilities and opportunities that accommodate, and are welcoming for, people with disabilities.

OUTDOOR RECREATION: AN IMPORTANT ECONOMIC DRIVER IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS ARIZONA

According to a recent economic impact study, the statewide economic contribution of visitor spending in and around Arizona's state parks was \$449 million in 2020, and an estimated 4,200 jobs statewide are directly tied to Arizona's state parks. The majority of Arizona's state parks are located in rural areas and are positive economic contributors for those communities.

Overall, the tourism industry brings billions of dollars into the Arizona economy each year (\$25.5 billion in 2019), and the state's outdoor recreation opportunities are a key driver of visitation and economic growth. Arizona is the sixth most-visited state in the U.S. for trips specifically taken to spend time outdoors. More than half (54%) of Arizona's domestic visitors participate in outdoor activities on their trips, which is significantly higher than the national average (42% of domestic trips).



Did You Know?

Arizona has the largest contiguous stand of ponderosa pines in the world stretching from near Flagstaff along the Mogollon Rim to the White Mountains region.



Bartlett Lake
Arizona Adaptive Watersports



Kartchner Caverns
Arizona State Parks and Trails



Arizona State Parks and Trails

FEATURED PROJECT

City of Prescott, Granite Creek Corridor
Awarded Amount: \$1,003,930

The City of Prescott completed a master plan of the Granite Creek Corridor and Greenway Trail. This is a beautiful natural corridor through the urbanized downtown and is about a 1.2-mile stretch that provides access to shopping, dining, and entertainment, as well as natural amenities and connects to another trail system.

The plan focuses on several improvements, including access points to the trail, lighting for improved visibility and security, trail surface, retaining walls, vegetation control, enhancing creek crossings, and adding amenities such as benches and a ramada. The Granite Creek Corridor project will also serve Mile High Middle School, whose students use it to arrive at school every day as a safer alternative to walking or biking on busy streets. Overall, this will be a benefit to all who take advantage of it.

With these improvements, the Granite Creek Corridor project will fill the demand to have outdoor recreation in downtown Prescott that connects to other areas and trails. The trail will increase connectivity to other trails and points of interest and retain the sense of a natural setting that is apart from the City of Prescott's highly urbanized landscape.



Connection, Community, and Economic Vitality

BUILDING CONNECTIONS WITH NATURE AND THE OUTDOORS

Guest Author: Mary Warren, Director of Community Engagement

Organization: Desert Foothills Land Trust (DFLT)

As society becomes increasingly more dependent on technology in daily life, the disconnect between humans and nature continues to grow. This disconnect is not localized; it has become a multi-generational and global concern as humans, especially children, are becoming more prone to physical and mental health issues. In fact, multiple studies conducted worldwide suggest that human connection to a healthy environment can have a substantial, positive effect on our overall physical health and psychological well-being.

On this premise, Desert Foothills Land Trust (DFLT) began developing a program for use in our Sonoran Desert community, and hopefully beyond, to build a healthier society through a connection with nature. While we recognized that there were multiple programs with similar goals already being implemented throughout the country, we didn't find one that focused on identifying and connecting those who may be reluctant to spend time in nature. Through the development process we discovered that accessibility was not limited to ambulatory limitations, but might also be due to financial means, location and transportation issues, a lack of environmental education or experience, and anxiety. Not everyone knows nature or feels comfortable getting out and enjoying its benefits. Conclusively, many programs are serving only people who already know how to make a connection with nature.

Engaging healthcare professionals seemed like the next natural step to reach the reluctant or underrepresented, who may need a connection to nature the most, through a suggested or prescribed use of the program. We also needed to redefine our interpretation of what nature is—to some it might be a walk along a tree-lined sidewalk where the user is still comfortably connected to the world they know, while for others it could be getting “lost” deep in the forest in complete solitude, far away from civilization. Hence, the program became a series of “paths” (trails) rated in accordance with difficulty, starting with the most user friendly and accessible. As a part of the program, a map and description are designed for each

path/trail and include photos of landmarks that the user can easily recognize as well as useful information such as where to park, available facilities, length of the trail, whether it's pet friendly, etc., so that even a novice will feel comfortable choosing a path/trail suitable to their needs.

For the evaluation of the program, DFLT enlisted the help of a core group of healthcare professionals, our “champions,” to start using the program in their practice and help us collect usable data. Professionally printed brochures with a map and information on the “easiest” rated paths/trails were produced and provided to the champions for distribution and implementation. The pilot program launched in December 2019 with plans to also involve our champions in community engagement



Ursey Mountain Regional Park
Visit Phoenix



BUILDING CONNECTIONS WITH NATURE AND THE OUTDOORS

Guest Author: Mary Warren, Director of Community Engagement

Organization: Desert Foothills Land Trust (DFLT)

events to further promote the program. In March 2020, the Governor of Arizona issued a COVID-19 “stay at home” order. The continued health concerns, COVID-19 government-issued directives, and CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) healthcare guidance and protocols had and continue to have a direct impact on the Prescription for Nature program and quantitative results.

Another issue that we have encountered, even without the role COVID-19 has played, is the discovery that healthcare providers, particularly medical doctors, are limited on the amount of time they can spend with each patient and are not likely to use that dedicated time to discuss the program with their patient. However, all the medical professionals that we have spoken with strongly agree with the benefits a connection with nature provides and support the program. Consequently, we have now expanded our focus on connecting with community healthcare services and healthcare professionals who may provide services in both individual and group settings. For example, a group that meets regularly to heal from PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), substance abuse, or obesity may be ideal candidates to benefit from the program and more likely to participate as a group.

Though we have experienced some setbacks the program continues to evolve into one that encourages more inclusive use of trails, open lands and recreation areas for better overall mental and physical well-being through a connection with nature.

More information about the program can be found on the DFLT website at www.dflt.org/rxfornature or by contacting Mary Warren at info@dflt.org with inquiries.

Meet our Guest Author: Mary Warren

My deep connection with nature began at 8 years old with a move from the city to country life. At every opportunity I would explore the woods around our family farm for hours. To this day, my inner child still can't wait for any chance to pull on my boots, find a trail and rekindle that sensation I only get from nature.



PRIORITY 4

Pathways to Health and Wellness

“Personally, it was getting outdoors and experiencing nature that kept me going through the pandemic. I found a sense of peace that I was missing.”

Public Survey, North Central Region





PRIORITY 4

PATHWAYS TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Goal: Expand pathways to health and wellness for Arizonans through outdoor recreation with access to open spaces, natural areas, parks, and recreation sites.

1 Improve access and entry points to outdoor recreation for its health and wellness benefits.

Strategy 1: Identify and aid in the development, expansion, and maintenance of recreational facilities within easy access to population centers and economically disadvantaged and underrepresented areas.

Strategy 2: Improve connectivity and access to recreation facilities.

Strategy 3: Provide tools to help connect individuals and groups to outdoor recreation opportunities, programs, and sites (e.g., an integrated resource for visitors to find recreation opportunities to fit their needs and capabilities).

2 Create a safe and welcoming environment that will enhance participation in and enjoyment of the health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation.

Strategy 1: Build relationships with organizations and individuals to better understand and address barriers and access issues for diverse populations.

Strategy 2: Develop or aid in the development of initiatives, programs, and projects that help to mitigate conflicts between people using the same trails, parks, etc.

Strategy 3: Engage directly with diverse populations with health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation messaging.

3 Advance collaborative efforts among community groups, schools, and health and recreation providers to increase nature-based education, recreation, and other policies and practices that promote outdoor recreation for improving public health and wellness.

Strategy 1: Leverage investment in outdoor recreation projects that advance the health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation.

Strategy 2: Identify and pursue cross-sector funding opportunities.

Strategy 3: Foster public-private partnerships. Partner with businesses to support workplace health promotion programs and connect them with outdoor recreation opportunities.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, more Americans turned to the outdoors, some for the first time and others for the first time in many years, with the majority motivated by health and mental wellness. Nationally, these outdoor participants are more likely to be female (56% vs. 49%), younger (average age 45 vs. 54), slightly more ethnically diverse (66% white vs. 71%), more likely to live in urban areas, and in a slightly lower income bracket. These health-and-wellness-focused, new outdoor participants represent an unprecedented opportunity to grow and diversify the outdoor recreation community.

In 2021 and 2022, when Arizona residents were asked about the benefits associated with outdoor recreation and cultural areas, parks, and open spaces, the top three benefits identified included:

- 87% - healthy lifestyle through physical activity
- 83% - improving mental health
- 83% - social benefits, opportunities for family interaction

Research examining the connection between outdoor recreation and health has helped identify the value provided to communities. Parks and trails can promote physical activity and community engagement—and provide both environmental and mental health benefits. Outdoor recreation can improve health in several ways, including:

- Increased physical activity - walkable access to appropriate sites motivates people to participate in physical activity and to do so more frequently
- Improved mental health - serves as a venue for stress reduction
- Environmental benefits - reduces air and water pollution, protects hazard areas from inappropriate development, and mitigates urban heat islands
- Community interaction - provides meeting places and expands connections within the community
- Reduce injury - provides safe spaces for people to play and exercise, away from busy streets and commercial zones

Pathways to Health and Wellness

FEATURED PROJECT

Yuma County, Foothills Park

Awarded Amount: \$584,433

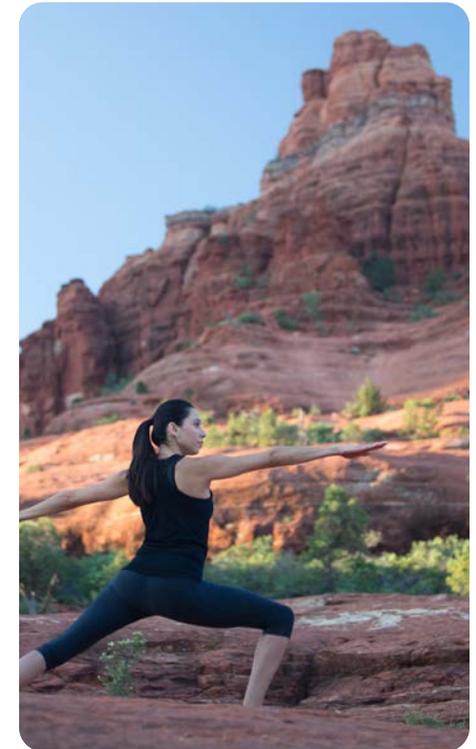


Yuma County plans to develop land next to the Foothills Library into a family-friendly park. This project will be completed in phases. The first phase consists of putting in an irrigation system, a new grass area, a concrete/gravel walking path, ramada and picnic tables, a grill, and a few trash receptacles. The second phase includes the construction of a new asphalt parking lot. The new Foothills Park will provide recreation opportunities not currently available in this neighborhood.

The circumstances that brought this project to the forefront were residents who noticed a lack of recreational spaces close by. Currently, there are no public parks available to residents without having to travel more than 15 miles into town. The urgency

for outdoor spaces has grown since the COVID-19 pandemic. Residents were homebound with little to no travel and started seeking open spaces close to home. The Foothills area population has been growing steadily since 2010, and according to the new 2020 Census data, it now has 29,955 residents. The number of total households in the area is 13,688 with 8,998 or two-thirds of the homes belonging to families.

The importance of parks goes beyond adding green space to beautify the community. The Foothills Park's purpose is defined to meet community-based activity, structured recreational needs, and preservation of unique landscapes and open spaces while providing a place for organized activity.



Bell Rock
Arizona Office of Tourism

Did You Know?

Arizona is home to several of the world's "sky islands," which are mountains surrounded by valleys that boast wide-ranging ecosystems of plant and animal life.





PATHWAYS TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Guest Author: Jacques Watson

Organization: Arizona Department of Health Services

Get Out and Get Active

There are numerous benefits to recreation, particularly when it is outdoors. Sitting for long periods of time isn't good for one's health. Something as simple as taking a brief walk outside can impact your health in a positive way. Social, mental, and physical benefits can come with just being out in nature or having contact with our natural environment. Whether it's a hot, cold, or cloudy day, being in green space can have a positive impact on our health.

Mental Health

Due to the pandemic, many people faced weeks on lockdown and experienced various mental health struggles. Exercising outdoors has a greater positive impact on mental and physical health than doing the same activities indoors. The mental health benefits of being in a green space can enhance one's mood, reduce stress, improve self-esteem, promote relaxation, and increase our motivation to become active. Taking a walk in a green space can also improve memory by more than 20%. Studies show that in healthy participants, a brief nature experience, such as a 45- to 90-minute walk in a natural setting, decreases negative brain activities.

Physical Health

Being outdoors in a green space has been shown to increase life expectancy, improve quality of sleep, and reduce the chances of cancer. Outdoor recreation can also lead us to develop new hobbies and interests that support a healthy lifestyle. Other benefits include improved brain function, concentration, creativity, and mental clarity. Improvements in vision are also associated with outdoor physical activity, such as reducing blurred vision caused by computers, smart phones, and tablets. Being outdoors in sunlight also provides a natural dose of vitamin D, which helps bone health in children and osteoporosis in older adults.

It is clear that green spaces are the place to be for easy access to natural health benefits. No exercise is needed to reap the benefits of being outdoors but engaging in activities that require some bodily movement can increase healthy outcomes for your mental and physical wellbeing. Some movements are better than no movement. The Arizona Department of Health Services, AZ Health Zone has a number of tips and resources on being active outdoors along with a few guides on places to be active around Arizona such as trails, parks, and gardens. Learn more at: www.azhealthzone.org/be-active/

Meet our Guest Author: Jacques Watson

Hello, I'm Jacques, originally from Phoenix, but had the opportunity to grow up in many different places. Living and traveling overseas ignited my love for nature and outdoor recreation at an early age. As a kid, running, backwoods biking on trails, collecting insects and lizards, and playing sports were everyday things. Combining my love and passion for helping people, physical activity, and mental health led me to my career in public health as an Active Living Specialist for AZ Health Zone.

The most rewarding aspect of my career is being able to help people



improve their physical and mental health through bodily movement. I find continued fulfillment in making an impact on someone's life and giving them the tools to help them improve their future.



Grand Canyon National Park
Arizona Office of Tourism

ARIZONA SCORP 2023

Looking Forward: Implementing Arizona's SCORP



ONGOING AND FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

Ultimately, the SCORP is an ongoing, iterative tool that supports Arizona in making optimal decisions and providing exceptional opportunities for outdoor recreation in Arizona. Synergistic efforts are at the heart of successful and sustainable outcomes. The SCORP offers opportunities for ongoing and future engagement, including increased coordination between sustainable outdoor recreation and conservation partners, education and outreach, and opportunities to leverage resources.

CALL TO ACTION

More than ever before, the 2023 SCORP highlights Arizona’s need for—and interest in—outdoor recreation and provides a framework of priorities, goals, and strategies for how to meet those needs over the next five years. The plan reflects the shared vision and commitment of outdoor recreation and conservation partners to advance opportunities for all people to enjoy Arizona’s natural beauty, unique environments, and the benefits of outdoor recreation here. The four overarching themes of this SCORP offer a framework and strategies for collective action on sustainable and responsible outdoor recreation in Arizona.

The SCORP provides a roadmap, based on extensive public, outdoor recreation providers and stakeholder input that can help guide Arizona to actively engage in and support the growth of outdoor recreation in our state.

No single entity can address all the challenges and opportunities outdoor recreation faces in Arizona. Successful achievement of the goals outlined in this plan will come from working collaboratively across interests, sectors, agencies, and organizations to implement projects supporting meaningful outdoor experiences statewide.

“I so enjoy the outdoors and wish there were more accessible trails that I and my family and friends could enjoy throughout the state.”

Public Survey, Northern Region



Did You Know?

Arizona has 26 peaks that are more than 10,000 feet in elevation.



ARIZONA SCORP 2023

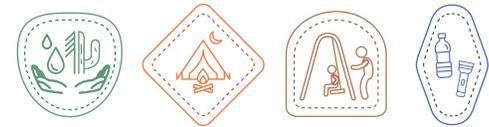
Appendices

Appendix A	Acronyms
Appendix B	Grant Application Process and Scoring (Open Project Selection Process)
Appendix C	National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan
Appendix D	Arizona Outdoor Recreation Map and Public Partners
Appendix E	Public Comment Summary
Appendix F	Drought Conditions Report, Arizona Department of Water Resources
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Appendix H	Resources and Supporting Documents



Appendix A

Acronym	Definition	Acronym	Definition
ADA	American with Disabilities Act	DFLT	Desert Foothills Land Trust
ADEQ	Arizona Department of Environmental Quality	DOI	Department of the Interior
ADOT	Arizona Department of Transportation	DOT	United States Department of Transportation
ADPAR	Arizona Drought Preparedness Annual Report	EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ADS	Aerial Detection Survey	ESA	Endangered Species Act
ADWR	Arizona Department of Water Resources	EWRA	Emergency Wetlands Resources Act
AFFM	Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management	FHP	Forest Health Protection
AIRES	Arizona Institute for Resilient Environments and Societies	FSA	Farm Service Agency
AORCC	Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Commission	IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
AOT	Arizona Office of Tourism	LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
ASLO	Alternate State Liaison Officer	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
ASPT	Arizona State Parks and Trails	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ASU	Arizona State University	NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
ATV	All-Terrain Vehicles	NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
AWCS	Arizona Wildlife Conservation Strategy	NPS	National Park Service
AZGFD	Arizona Game and Fish Department	NWPCP	National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan
BLM	Bureau of Land Management	OPSP	Open Project Selection Process
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	RSS	Random Sample Survey
COA	Conservation Opportunity Area	RV	Recreational Vehicle
CPC	Climate Prediction Center		



Acronym	Definition
SCORP	Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
SGCN	Species of Greatest Conservation Need
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SLIF	State Lake Improvement Fund
SLO	State Liaison Officer
SSP	Site Steward Program
SWAP	State Wildlife Action Plan
UA	University of Arizona
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WY	Water Year

Appendix B

OPEN PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS (OPSP)

The process of selecting local grantees includes four phases: Screening, Evaluation, Recommendation and Final Review.

Phase 1: Screening

Phase 1 serves to assess a project's eligibility and application completeness. It is conducted solely by Arizona State Parks and Trails (ASPT) grant staff. Applications that fail the initial screening will not be forwarded to the State Liaison Officer (SLO, ASPT's Executive Director), Alternate State Liaison Officers (ASLO, Chief of Grants and Trails), or State Parks Board for further review. Eligible project applications must include the following:

- Both the subrecipient (government agency applying for these funds) and project must meet the eligibility requirements of the most current National Park Service (NPS) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Manual.
- A pre-site visit with ASPT grant staff is required prior to grant submission.
- A pre-application with project description and general budget is required.
- Applications must be completed and submitted prior to the application deadline.
- Adequate control and tenure of lands must be established, including the project site as well as lands within the LWCF project boundary area. Control and tenure may be demonstrated by:
 - Fee simple ownership of all project lands without encumbrances
 - A lease from the federal government with a remaining term of 25 years or more.
 - Subrecipients may also have partial ownership (e.g., conservation easement) provided the ownership arrangement mandates and maintains appropriate outdoor recreation use in perpetuity.
 - Deed restrictions stipulating the terms and legal requirements of the LWCF program are required of all LWCF projects.

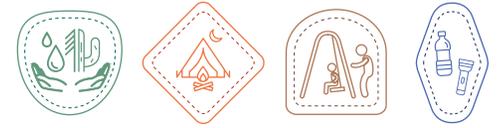
Phase 2: Evaluation

Project applications that include all required elements will move to phase two for evaluation by the Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Commission (AORCC). Subrecipients will be invited to attend the AORCC review. Projects will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in the next section. ASPT grant staff will use the approved scoring criteria (also known as the Open Project Selection Process or OPSP) to determine the score of all submitted projects. The final score awarded to each project will determine the overall project ranking.

The amount of LWCF funds available will play a role in the number of projects that receive funding. As funds are committed to the highest-ranking projects, the available LWCF funds decrease. At some point, available funds will drop below the requested amount for a given application. At that point, ASPT grant staff and the subrecipient will work to adapt the project to available funds.

Also note: each project must meet federal legal requirements as they pertain to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and other relevant laws. All legal requirements must be met by the subrecipient prior to submission of the application. ASPT grant staff will provide technical assistance to subrecipients regarding all clearance and compliance issues. However, ASPT does not guarantee project clearance or compliance in any way—final responsibility ultimately rests with the subrecipient.

Once NEPA and NHPA clearances are obtained for projects selected for funding, they are then forwarded to the NPS for review prior to formal submission in Grants.gov, an online grant database.



Phase 3: Recommendations to the Arizona State Parks Board

After completing Phases 1 and 2, ASPT grant staff will provide staff and AORCC recommendations to the Arizona State Parks Board (“Board”). Subrecipients will be notified of the date, time, and location of the Board meeting where the final grant award decisions will be made.

Phase 4: NPS Regional Office Review and Project Submittal

After Board approval, ASPT grant staff will send all required LWCF documents for each project to the NPS regional office for their review. ASPT grant staff will work with the NPS regional office to finalize all required forms, and once approved, documents will be submitted to the NPS via Grants.gov. NPS may at that point either issue final approval and award LWCF funding or request additional information about the project to confirm eligibility status. Once funding is awarded to ASPT by NPS, binding agreement documents are then issued to each subrecipient for signature. Finally, ASPT grant staff will send a formal Notice to Proceed to each subrecipient once project agreements have been signed and executed.

Appendix B

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

This section describes the review criteria for evaluating LWCF project applications. Four general areas are represented: project need, project quality, alignment with SCORP priorities, and subrecipient history.

I. Project Need

(3 criteria, maximum possible score of 10 points)

Subrecipients must clearly explain how their project would address an outdoor recreation need in Arizona. Subrecipients are expected to describe the specific need, explain how their project provides a solution, and demonstrate how conditions would be improved upon completion of the project.

The specific criteria are:

A. Inclusion in Current Planning Documents

Is the proposed project identified in a finalized, active planning document? Such documents may include (but are not limited to): state, regional, or municipal master plans; strategic planning documents; open space plans; or park specific development plans. Natural resource studies, economic reports, public health reports, or other studies commissioned by public entities may be included as supporting documentation.

Subrecipient will provide:

Narrative description of the project's role in current, accepted planning documents. Subrecipient may include supporting documents identifying specific sections as deemed appropriate. Subrecipients should also demonstrate how their planning documents complement the current SCORP.

Scoring Rubric

- 4 Project is specifically identified as a priority within an existing plan.
- 3 General project type is identified as a priority.
- 2 Project not mentioned in a plan, but compelling justification is provided.
- 1 Project not mentioned, nor is project fully justified, given other outdoor recreation priorities.

B. Project Activity That Best Represents the Application

Is the proposed project identified in a finalized, active planning document? Such documents may include (but are not limited to): state, regional or municipal master plans, strategic planning documents, open space plans, or park specific development plans. Natural resource studies, economic reports, public health reports, or other studies commissioned by public entities may be included as supporting documentation.

Scoring Rubric

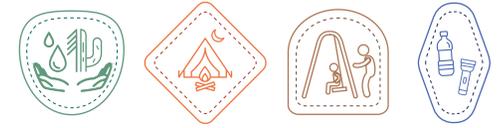
- 3 Renovation of an existing facility.
- 2 Combination of renovation and development.
- 1 Combination of acquisition and development.

C. Impact on Outdoor Recreational Opportunities

How will the proposed project expand upon or otherwise improve the outdoor recreation opportunities available to a community? Projects should demonstrate an ability to either bring new outdoor recreation options to an underserved area or underrepresented population or improve upon existing facilities so that more users can access them. This includes adapting facilities to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as any other elements that improve accessibility and reduce barriers to outdoor recreation.

Subrecipient will provide:

Narrative description of a project's ability to enhance recreation options, especially those for an underserved area or population. Subrecipient may include supporting documents as deemed appropriate.



Scoring Rubric

- 3 Project introduces an entirely new outdoor recreation opportunity to an area or population.
- 2 Project improves an existing opportunity so that accessibility is increased.
- 1 Project improves an existing opportunity but does not expand its impact.

II. Project Quality

(6 criteria, maximum possible score of 19 points)

While it is important to establish the need for a project, it is also necessary to determine the ability of a project to fulfill that need. This section assesses a subrecipient's project implementation strategy and ability to accomplish their stated goals.

The specific criteria are:

A. Project Readiness/Preparedness

Is the project "shovel-ready"? No piece of a project needs to be in place at the time of application, but a clear schedule must be established, logistics must be addressed, and contingencies planned for. Note: This criterion also considers environmental (NEPA) and cultural (NHPA/Section 106) compliance. Although not required, it is highly recommended that all clearances are completed prior to application submittal to avoid project delays.

Subrecipient will provide:

- Documentation that confirms project schedules, implementation strategies, and contingencies.

- For NEPA compliance, subrecipient must provide one or more of the following documents: Record of Decision, Floodplain Map, Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) planning tool, Fish and Wildlife Letter (if required), Finding of No Significant Impact, or Categorical Exclusion.
- For NHPA compliance, subrecipient must provide evidence of concurrence with the Finding of Effect, provided by the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and include a current cultural survey of the proposed area of disturbance.

Scoring Rubric

- 3 Project implementation can begin within three months of a finalized award agreement.
- 2 Project implementation can begin within six months of a finalized award agreement.
- 1 Project implementation will take longer than six months following finalization of the award agreement.

B. Partnerships

Does the subrecipient have commitments from other agencies/ organizations that will assist in project implementation and timely completion? This criterion assesses the level of coordination between the subrecipient and those who have committed to functional roles in the project. Partnerships can be established for various aspects of planning, management, funding assistance/leveraging resources, volunteered labor, sponsorships, in-kind donations, underserved community engagement, and post-completion facilities/site maintenance.

Appendix B

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

This section describes the review criteria for evaluating LWCF project applications. Four general areas are represented: project need, project quality, alignment with SCORP priorities, and subrecipient history.

Subrecipient will provide:

Narrative description of how partnerships will contribute to accomplishing shared project goals, and evidence that the relationship(s) are formalized or otherwise confirmed (e.g., contract, memorandum of understanding/agreement, letter of commitment, or other signed documentation).

Scoring Rubric

- 3 Subrecipient will complete project with two or more partners.
- 2 Subrecipient will complete project with one partner.
- 1 Subrecipient will complete project without partners.

C. Public Involvement

A key to a successful LWCF project is public involvement where the subrecipient seeks and integrates public input prior to finalizing the grant application. Public involvement may include (but is not limited to): workshops, surveys, and in-person or virtual public meetings.

Subrecipient will provide:

Documentary evidence of both the scope and substance of public involvement (e.g., meeting notes, survey results, letters of endorsement from community groups and other citizens). Subrecipient must specifically describe how they addressed:

- Engagement of underserved populations and populations facing barriers to outdoor recreation access.
- Concerns raised by the public that are specific to the project and responses to those concerns.
- Engagement of youth.

Scoring Rubric

- 3 Clear evidence of public involvement and comprehensive attention to public concerns.
- 2 Public involvement was solicited, but concerns were either inadequately addressed or not addressed at all.
- 1 Public involvement not solicited or otherwise lacking in scope and thoroughness.

D. Innovation and Best Practices

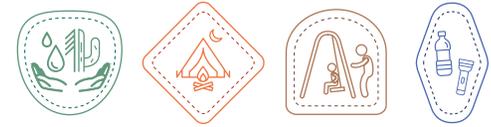
Will the project implement new innovations and/or adhere to broadly accepted best management practices? Innovations do not need to be completely new to an industry or sector, but might be new to Arizona, a particular community, the subrecipient's organization, or the site. Creative solutions can be applied to any aspect of the project: planning, design, construction, funding, partnerships, underserved community engagement, etc. Best practices should be utilized in all aspects of the project.

Subrecipient will provide:

Narrative description of innovative solutions and/or the degree to which current best practices will be implemented across all aspects of the project. Subrecipient may include supporting documents identifying specific sections as appropriate.

Scoring Rubric

- 3 Project utilizes innovative solutions and best practices in all phases.
- 2 Project utilizes innovative solutions and best practices in some phases.
- 1 Project does not utilize innovative solutions or best practices.



E. Budget

Are project cost estimates thorough, detailed, reasonable and well supported by recent estimates? In addition, is the source of the required match amount clear and committed to the project? Subrecipients often assume that lean budgets are preferred. However, with the lag time between project submission and final approval, budgets must be realistic and designed to absorb cost contingencies, avoid future delays and adapt to unforeseen changes. Matching funds must be secured by the time applications are submitted, so that they are a settled/confirmed element of the budget.

Subrecipient will provide:

Documentation of detailed cost estimates and a narrative rationale for budgetary line items. The status of matching funds must be documented with evidence that the arrangement is confirmed (e.g., contract, memorandum of understanding/agreement, letter of commitment, or other signed documentation).

Scoring Rubric

- 4 Cost estimates are realistic, and a match is secured.
- 3 Match is secured, but cost estimates are not realistic.
- 2 Cost estimates are realistic, but a match is not secured.
- 1 Match is not secured, nor are cost estimates realistic.

F. Connectivity

Is the project providing connectivity with another recreational facility or filling a gap in recreation?

Scoring Rubric

- 3 Project connects directly to another trail or recreation facility.
- 2 Project does not connect directly but fills a gap in recreation within the service area.
- 1 Project does not connect or fill a gap in recreation within the service area.

III. Alignment with SCORP Priorities & Goals

(4 criteria, maximum possible score of 60 points)

Determining the degree to which a project aligns with Arizona's SCORP is crucial to the project evaluation process. The current SCORP identifies four prominent Outdoor Recreation priorities and goals to guide project selection and development. Each priority is further expanded upon through a series of objectives and strategies. The current SCORP provides extensive detail on each of these elements. The scoring matrix will be posted on the AzStateParks.com/publications webpage and will also guide the SCORP Implementation Plan, which will be generated and tracked in collaboration with the public and partners. The matrix is particularly useful for evaluating how closely project applications align with Arizona's outdoor recreation needs. Both subrecipients and reviewers are encouraged to review the scoring and implementation matrix and to use it as a guide for project applications and reviews.

Subrecipient will provide:

Narrative explanation of how the project aligns with each SCORP priorities. Subrecipients must describe how their project addresses SCORP priorities/goals and which objectives and strategies will be addressed during project planning and implementation.

Appendix B

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

This section describes the review criteria for evaluating LWCF project applications. Four general areas are represented: project need, project quality, alignment with SCORP priorities, and subrecipient history.

Priority: Conservation and Environmental Stewardship

Goal: Engage responsible stewardship of Arizona’s diverse outdoor recreation while addressing environmental factors and use that to influence the balance between conservation and recreation.

Priority: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation

Goal: Create and expand upon a sustainable outdoor recreation system.

Priority: Connection, Community and Economic Vitality

Goal: Providing high-quality recreation experiences that connect individuals and families with their communities while supporting outdoor recreation as an important economic driver in Arizona.

Priority: Pathways to Health and Wellness

Goal: Expand pathways to health—both mental and physical wellness—through outdoor recreation.

Scoring Rubric

Each narrative response will be rated on a scale based on the number of goals, objectives, and strategies that are addressed, with zero representing “no alignment” with a particular theme, 1-5 representing “low alignment,” 6-10 representing “moderate alignment,” and 11-15 representing “significant alignment.” ASPT grant staff and AORCC reviewers may rate a response anywhere within its weighted range to reflect completeness of narrative answers, degree of theme alignment, and the ability of the project to address goals, objectives, and strategies.

Priority	Significant Alignment	Moderate Alignment	Low Alignment	No Alignment
Conservation and Environmental Stewardship	11-15	6-10	1-5	0
Sustainable Outdoor Recreation	11-15	6-10	1-5	0
Connection, Community and Economic Vitality	11-15	6-10	1-5	0
Pathways to Health and Wellness	11-15	6-10	1-5	0

IV. Project Management & Subrecipient History

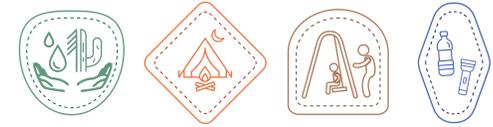
(4 criteria, maximum possible score of 11 points)

In addition to explaining the fundamental need for a project, justifying the plan for meeting that need, and detailing a project’s alignment with Arizona’s SCORP, subrecipients must be able to demonstrate a successful project and grant management record.

The specific criteria are:

A. Grant Management History

What are the subrecipient’s experiences with grant management? A general record of successful grant oversight is necessary. Previous experience with LWCF grants is preferred, but not required.



Subrecipient will provide:

Narrative description of grant management experience in order to establish an adequate sense of the subrecipient's capability. This section should emphasize the grant management experience of current personnel who will be involved with the project under consideration. Please note: This description must include not only successful instances of grant management, but also the challenges faced by the subrecipient and their response to project adversity.

Scoring Rubric

- 3 Subrecipient demonstrates consistent success in management of LWCF grants.
- 2 Subrecipient has not managed LWCF grants but demonstrates consistent success in management of other grant projects.
- 1 Subrecipient demonstrates no management or inconsistent management of grants.

B. Maintenance Capacity

Does the subrecipient have the capability to perpetually maintain the facility once the project is complete? All property acquired or developed with LWCF assistance must be maintained perpetually in public outdoor recreation use (per the NPS). Past results may not be a reliable indicator of future performance. Subrecipients must emphasize the planning strategies that will ensure perpetual maintenance and use going forward.

Subrecipient will provide:

Evidence of their institutional ability to maintain projects over the long term, from project completion forward. Documentation may include but is not limited to operations and maintenance plans, programmatic agreements, memoranda of understanding/agreement, or charters.

Scoring Rubric

- 3 Perpetual maintenance is very likely.
- 2 Perpetual maintenance is somewhat likely.
- 1 Perpetual maintenance is not likely.

C. Grant Compliance

Is the subrecipient in compliance with all previous LWCF sub grant agreements? When scoring this question, ASPT grant staff will consider the subrecipient's record on LWCF conversions and associated efforts to prevent and resolve these issues.

Conversions occur when any property acquired and/or developed using LWCF funds is wholly or partly converted to uses other than public outdoor recreation uses without the approval of NPS pursuant to the LWCF Act (54 U.S.C. § 200305(f)(3)) and conversion requirements outlined in regulations (36 C.F.R. § 59.3).

Subrecipient will provide:

Statement detailing the number, location, and acreage of pending LWCF conversions. Documentation may include, but is not limited to correspondence between ASPT, NPS, and the subrecipient regarding conversions; relevant maps, appraisals, planning documents, etc.

Scoring Rubric

- 3 Subrecipient has NO unapproved conversions.
- 2 Subrecipient has at least one unapproved conversion but is actively working on resolving the conversion.
- 1 Subrecipient has at least one unapproved conversion and is not actively working on resolving the conversion.

Appendix B

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

This section describes the review criteria for evaluating LWCF project applications. Four general areas are represented: project need, project quality, alignment with SCORP priorities, and subrecipient history.

D. Workshop Attendance

Arizona State Parks grant staff provides bi-monthly grant workshops. Subrecipients are highly encouraged to attend a workshop.

Scoring Rubric

- 2 Subrecipient attended ASPT grant workshop.
- 0 Subrecipient did not attend ASPT grant workshop.

Summary

Subrecipients are encouraged to do each of the following prior to starting an LWCF grant application:

- Review both the *NPS LWCF Grant Manual* and *ASPT LWCF Grant Manual*. These documents will provide detailed information about the entire LWCF grant program, from the initial planning of new projects to the long-term maintenance of past projects.
- Review the current Arizona Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).
- Review the current LWCF funding opportunity announcement and all associated application materials.

Most importantly, potential subrecipients are urged to contact ASPT grant staff during the earliest stages of planning. Staff can help assess whether LWCF funding is a good option for a project and, if a grant is pursued, help to develop application strategies.

LWCF SCORING RUBRIC

	<u>Points</u>	
Project Need		10
<i>Inclusion</i>	4	
<i>Type of Project</i>	3	
<i>Impact on Recreational Opportunities</i>	3	
Project Quality		19
<i>Project Readiness</i>	3	
<i>Partnerships</i>	3	
<i>Public Involvement</i>	3	
<i>Innovation and Best Practices</i>	3	
<i>Detailed Budget</i>	4	
<i>Connectivity</i>	3	
Conservation and Environmental Stewardship		15
Sustainable Outdoor Recreation		15
Connection, Community and Economic Vitality		15
Pathways to Health and Wellness		15
Project Management		11
<i>Grant History</i>	3	
<i>Maintenance Capacity</i>	3	
<i>Grant Compliance</i>	3	
<i>Workshop Attendance</i>	2	
Total		100



Red Rock State Park
Todd Brenneman

Appendix C

ARIZONA'S WETLAND PRIORITIES

Wetlands are transitional lands 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 must meet at least one of the following:

- At least periodically the land supports predominately hydrophytes;
- The substrates are predominately undrained hydric soil; and/or
- The substrate is non-soil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of each year.

All wetland types found in Arizona are scarce because the state's wetlands have been naturally decreasing in area and abundance in the last 140 years. Therefore, all wetland types are considered eligible for acquisition or other protection under the LWCF program. The 1986 Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (Public Law 99-645, S. 303) requires states to address wetlands protection in their five-year SCORP documents. The SCORP wetlands component must

- Be consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan developed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service;
- Be based on consultation with the state's fish and game management and wetlands protection agency(ies); and
- Include a description of priority wetlands planning and funding under the Land and Water Conservation program.

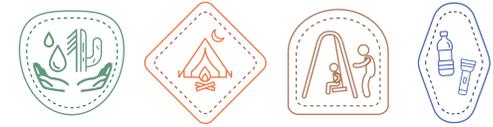
Wetlands acquisition priorities listed in this plan represent no change from those appearing in the 1988, 1994, 2003, 2008 and 2013 SCORP Wetland Addendums. These priorities are based on NPS and the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan (NWPCP) guidelines. Acquisition priorities for general wetland types in Arizona were also determined by consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and the Arizona Game and Fish Department in relation to the nation's priority listings in the NWPCP.

Priority consideration will be given to the following (all weighted equally):

- Wetland types least protected by regulation or preservation (public or private).
- Wetland types that have been destroyed, altered, or degraded within the state.
- Regions within the state with the least number of wetlands protected by regulation or preservation (public or private).
- Wetland sites subject to identifiable threat of loss or degradation.
- Wetland sites with diverse functions and values and/or high or special values for specific wetlands.
- Wetland sites that are contiguous to protected areas of public land, provide corridors, or enhance the functions and values of adjacent wetlands.

PRIORITY WETLAND TYPES		
	NWPCP	Arizona
Decreasing	Palustrine emergent Palustrine forested Palustrine scrub/shrub Estuarine intertidal emergent Estuarine intertidal forested Estuarine intertidal scrub/shrub Marine intertidal	Palustrine emergent Palustrine forested Upper Riparian Lower Riparian Palustrine scrub/shrub Upper Riparian Lower Riparian Palustrine open water* Lacustrine* Riverine
Stable	Estuarine intertidal non-vegetated Estuarine subtidal Lacustrine	
Increasing	Palustrine open water Palustrine unconsolidated shore Palustrine non-vegetated	

*Naturally occurring wetland types



TYPES OF WETLANDS IN ARIZONA

According to a 2012 Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) report, the lacustrine, palustrine, and riverine systems were evenly distributed throughout the state (<https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/SupMapInf/R02Y12P04.pdf>). Each type represents roughly a third of the total wetlands acreage of the state. Riverine wetlands were slightly more prominent representing 36% of wetlands statewide.

ARIZONA PROMINENT WETLAND SYSTEMS

Types of Wetlands	Total (Square Miles)
Lacustrine	272.79
Palustrine	289.05
Riverine	315.72
Grand Total	877.57

BENEFITS OF WETLANDS

Wetlands have long been recognized as critical to a clean, properly functioning environment and to ecosystem health. They provide a protective buffer for our towns and cities against floods and storm surges. Ecological benefits include contributions to water quality, life-sustaining habitat to hundreds of species, and aquatic and terrestrial ecosystem connections. In addition, the nation's wetlands provide economic, ecological, and cultural benefits and enable societies to continue to function and thrive.

Beyond protection of existing wetlands, wetland acreage can be increased by creating new wetlands or by restoring former wetlands lost to drainage. In many cases, the necessary soils and seed stock still exist, and wetlands flourish once more as soon as the hydrology is restored. Agencies can restore wetlands by modifying the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a wetland site.

BENEFITS OF PARTNERSHIPS FOR WETLAND PROTECTION

More than 85% of wetlands are located on privately-held land. Therefore, the effectiveness of federal efforts to improve the health, quality and use of the nation's wetlands will be greatly enhanced by expanding public-private partnerships. The array of public-private partnerships that have developed over recent years has strengthened the stewardship efforts at the federal level.

Federal wetland projects often involve partnerships of state and local governments and nongovernmental and private organizations seeking to acquire wetland habitat. These acquisitions may be incorporated into the FWS National Wildlife Refuge System or into a state's protected area system, or they may be included in holdings protected by a nonprofit conservation organization (e.g., The Nature Conservancy).

For instance, the Wetlands Reserve Easement Program, a voluntary, federal program through the Natural Resource Conservation Service, supports voluntarily protection, restoration and enhancement of critical wetlands on private and tribal agricultural land nationwide. Another example of a wetland conservation partnership is the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Wetland Program Development grant program. In 2014, the San Carlos Apache tribe was awarded nearly \$89,000 to continue development of a Wetland Program Plan, to conduct baseline monitoring of wetlands, and to develop compensatory mitigation tools. In 2012, Prescott College was awarded nearly \$150,000 to provide sub-grants for education programs for secondary schools, non-profits, etc. to teach about protecting Arizona's waters, including wetlands and riparian habitats.

WETLAND PROTECTION ACTIVITIES AND NEXT STEPS

In 2012 the ADEQ reported that Arizona had inventoried less than half of the state's wetlands. Today, all Arizona's wetlands have been fully inventoried on a database found on the [USFWS website \(USFWS, 2017\)](#). The ADEQ continues to map Arizona wetlands as a resource for protecting them. ADEQ's future work includes:

- Digital mapping of tribal areas
- Ground truth during growing season
- Further develop wetland program with goals of restoration, education, and protection of critical wetland resources.

Appendix D

ARIZONA AND RECREATING ON PUBLIC LANDS

Arizona is one of the most geographically and geologically diverse states in America. Its landscape is famously defined by red-rock canyons, cactus-studded desert and majestic buttes—but the nation’s sixth-largest state also is home to snow-capped peaks, alpine lakes and roaring rivers. Arizona is where you will find the world’s deepest dam, best-preserved meteor crater and largest contiguous ponderosa pine forest.

The majority of Arizona’s land is managed by federal, state and tribal agencies. Below is a list of agencies that can provide information about recreating on public lands in the state.

ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

The Arizona Game and Fish Department manages 35 wildlife areas and six fish hatcheries throughout the state, conserving habitat for various wildlife species and providing wildlife-watching opportunities for the public. www.azgfd.gov.

ARIZONA STATE PARKS AND TRAILS

Arizona has 34 state parks, and recreational opportunities within them include camping, hiking, watersports and fishing. Many parks preserve lands and buildings important to Arizona’s history. www.azstateparks.com.

ARIZONA OFFICE OF TOURISM

The Arizona Office of Tourism is the official resource for travelers planning or considering a visit to the Grand Canyon State. Find information about attractions, activities and events—and read articles about Arizona’s hidden gems and seasonal must-see’s—at www.visitarizona.com.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) sustains the health and productivity of public lands across the U.S. In Arizona, the BLM administers more than 12 million acres of such land, much of which is open for recreational use. For information about exploring BLM lands in Arizona, visit www.blm.gov/az.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Arizona has 24 National Park Service (NPS) units, including three national parks (Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, and Saguaro)—more than any other state in the U.S. The NPS safeguards these public lands with the help of volunteers and park partners. Find out more about Arizona’s national parks and monuments at www.nps.gov/state/az.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Arizona has six national forests, ranging from the “sky islands” along the U.S.-Mexico border to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. For information about camping, hiking, biking, birding and off-roading in the Forest Service’s Southwestern Region, visit www.fs.usda.gov/r3.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

This federal agency is responsible for conserving and managing the nation’s fish and wildlife resources. Arizona has nine National Wildlife Refuges and two National Fish Hatcheries. Learn more about both at www.fws.gov/southwest.

TRIBAL LANDS

Some of Arizona’s most beautiful scenery and iconic attractions are located on American Indian tribal lands. Each of the 22 tribes within the state establishes its own rules for visitors. Before visiting a tribal land, it’s a good idea to contact the tribe to learn about etiquette and guidelines. For general information about Tribes visit www.visitarizona.com.



Grand Canyon National Park
Visit Phoenix

Appendix E

METHODOLOGY

A draft of the 2023 SCORP was available for public comment August 3 through September 2, 2022. The draft document was posted on Arizona State Parks and Trails' website with an email contact to submit comments. The comment period was announced via a statewide press release to public media and organizations, social media, and with a notice sent to ASPT's email lists for partner organizations and outdoor recreationists who were asked to also share the information with their constituents and the public.

The public comment period drew responses from a variety of stakeholder and user groups, outdoor professionals, recreationists and other members of the public, with 41 respondents submitting comments. Most comments were submitted through email. A summary of the overarching themes that were communicated in the comments are presented below.

OVERARCHING THEMES

Support for SCORP Priorities

Public comments included support for the SCORP priorities and appreciation for the opportunity to provide feedback. Comments also included possible edits or recommended clarification with specific SCORP content.

User Group Representation – Highlighting Specific Outdoor Recreation Activities

Individuals and organizations provided comments advocating for a greater recognition of specific recreational activity including astrotourism, cycling, horseback riding and OHV use. These user groups were invited to provide resources to be included in the SCORP or on the SCORP webpage. Other comments highlighted organizations and programs that serve youth, underrepresented populations and other groups. To learn more about these programs visit azstateparks.com/scorp.

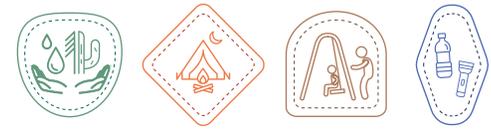
Recreation Impacts and Limits

Another theme shared in the comments was concern about outdoor recreation impacts on natural resources. In general, respondents expressed that outdoor recreation should not supersede conservation efforts. Specific comments identified increased use and damage to environmental and cultural sites on some public lands in the state, resulting in negative impacts and safety issues for other outdoor recreationists and surrounding residents.

Two comments identified decreasing access to public lands as a particular concern, due, in part, to development of private lands that once served as access points to outdoor recreation sites. One of the noted consequences of decreasing access is the concentration of users at fewer public recreation sites, resulting in damage to environmental and cultural resources and overuse. Commenters shared specific locations that may provide beneficial access, enhance or maintain recreation opportunities and conserve habitat including land north of Catalina State Park, the Granite Dells, Glassford Hill and Del Rio Springs Ranch in the Verde Valley and the Ruby Mines, managed by a private business. The Arizona Trail Association was identified as an organization that has successfully addressed issues of access with partners and an example of best practices in the state.

Collaboration and Communication

Other comments revealed ideas to possibly increase communication, programs and actions related to outdoor recreation. These comments included providing interpretive signage and signage that informs visitors about antiquities law and site etiquette at popular cultural sites, and increasing communication of federal programs and initiatives to encourage tribal members to visit public lands including state-managed sites. Another comment noted that locating information about outdoor recreation activities and opportunities can be difficult, and having a resource to communicate this information would be helpful.



State Office of Outdoor Recreation

One of the many concepts shared during the stakeholder sessions and the public comment period was the development of a state office of outdoor recreation to promote further collaboration and coordination. According to the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA), states have created offices of outdoor recreation, task forces, or policy advisors to serve as central champions for the outdoor recreation economy and its associated benefits within a state. These offices were created through a variety of pathways, including governor’s announcement, executive order, legislation, insertion into the state budget, or some combination of these methods. Several states preceded the formation of such an office with a task force of outdoor stakeholders to first identify the primary needs and problems to be addressed, and how to avoid additional bureaucracy, a concern which was also voiced during the SCORP public comment period.

Implementation

Comments included specific recommendations for implementation, including simplifying the grant process. These are and will continue to be considered as ASPT and partners work on plan implementation. The 2023 SCORP offers opportunities for ongoing and future engagement during this implementation period, including increased coordination between sustainable outdoor recreation and conservation partners, education and outreach, and identifying additional opportunities to further facilitate increased communication and collaboration. With the collaborative creation of the implementation plan and the opportunity to report on their progress related to the SCORP priorities, partners will have the opportunity to highlight their successes and efforts to address both public and outdoor recreation provider needs that were identified through the SCORP process.

Appendix F

The information in this report is adapted from the 2021 Arizona Drought Preparedness Annual Report.

Having an arid and semi-arid climate, Arizona is susceptible to drought. Drought conditions have been prevalent across the state since the mid-1990s. A Drought Emergency Declaration has been in effect in Arizona since 1999. The current declaration, PCA 99006, was issued by the Governor in June 1999 and continued by Executive Order 2007-10. The declaration maintains the state’s ability to provide an emergency response if needed and enables farmers and ranchers to obtain funding assistance through the Farm Service Agency (FSA) if they experience significant production losses due to drought.

The 2004 Arizona Drought Preparedness Plan provides the framework to improve drought resilience across the state and communities of the state by monitoring drought conditions, improving understanding of drought impacts, and determining mechanisms for limiting future vulnerability. The Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) prepares an annual report based on drought conditions and impacts that covers the drought conditions and preparedness activities for Water Year (WY) 2021, from October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021. The information in the 2021 Arizona Drought Preparedness Annual Report (ADPAR) can be used to determine drought impacts on Arizona state parks.

ARIZONA DROUGHT STATUS CHANGES

Following directives within the 2004 Arizona Drought Preparedness Plan, Arizona’s drought status is continuously evaluated and updated through the water year. The short-term drought status is monitored on a weekly basis and updated as needed monthly. The long-term drought status is monitored monthly and updated quarterly.

The U.S. Drought Monitor categorizes drought based on precipitation and environmental impacts. Different aspects of drought (hydrological, meteorological, agricultural, and ecological) are encapsulated within the U.S. Drought Monitor categories. WY 2021 experienced the largest extent of Exceptional (D4) drought recorded across the state (Figure 1).

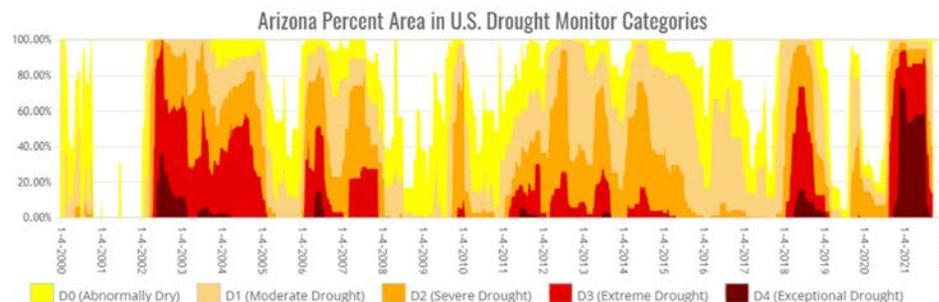


Figure 1. Exceptional (D4) drought was extensive in WY 2021.

The Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) portrays precipitation at different time scales as a means to identify aspects of short- and long-term drought. SPI values are calculated for 1-month through 60-month timescales, per each month starting January 1981 through August 2021. The SPI demonstrated the continuation of dry conditions across the state for much of WY 2021 (Figure 2).

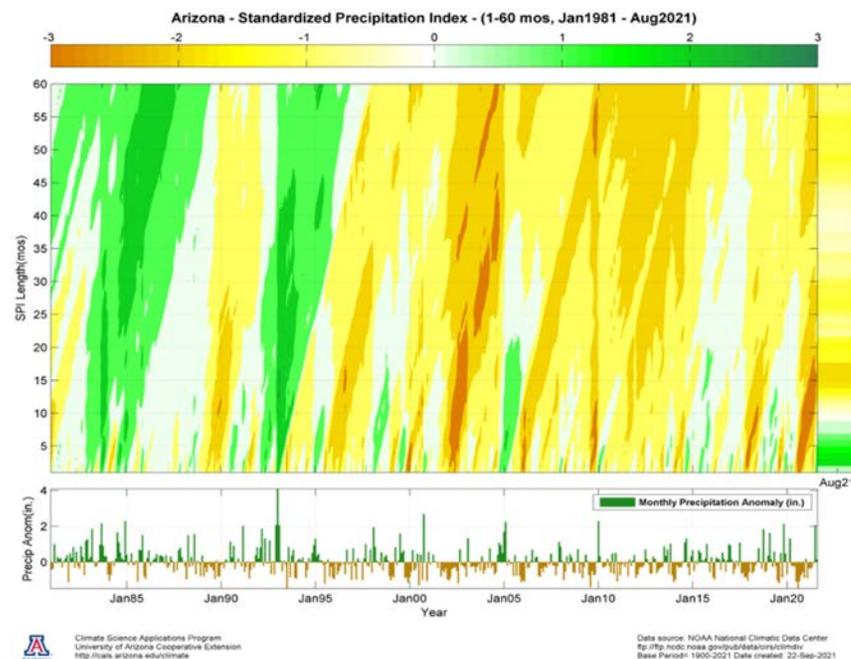
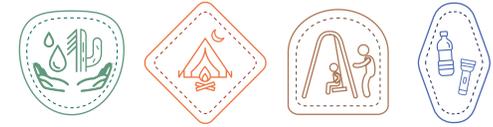


Figure 2. Standardized Precipitation Index and precipitation anomalies.



Typically, long-term drought conditions are more likely to improve following a heavy winter precipitation season because snowpack can often serve to recharge reservoirs and aquifers. While the 2021 monsoon season improved short-term meteorological, agricultural, and ecological drought conditions, long-term hydrological drought continues. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center (CPC) states an 87% chance for La Niña conditions to last from December 2021 to February 2022. La Niña typically brings drier than normal conditions during winters in Arizona.

Short-Term Drought Status

In October 2020, the entire state was in drought, with most of the state (67%) in Extreme (D3) drought (Figure 3). Exceptional (D4) drought covered 3% of the state, primarily along eastern Maricopa County, and northern Pinal County. The 2020 monsoon season was one of the driest monsoon seasons on record, contributing to short-term drought conditions at the start of WY 2021.

La Niña conditions prevailed during Winter 2020-21, largely decreasing precipitation across the state. Exceptional (D4) drought quickly escalated during November, covering 77% of the state by December. Precipitation in January 2021 was slightly above average due to winter storms bringing heavy rain and snowfall. As a result, Yuma, Yavapai, and Coconino counties experienced short-term improvement in February, dropping Exceptional (D4) drought to 54% of the state.

Following below-average precipitation in Spring 2021, roughly 85% of the state was in Extreme (D3) or Exceptional (D4) drought through June (Figure 4). Arizona had multiple wildland fires in June, along with a record-breaking heat wave. Drought conditions rapidly improved in July as multiple monsoon storms moved across the state, especially in Pima County and along the Mogollon Rim. August and September approached average precipitation amounts, further improving short-term drought conditions (Figure 5). Forage improved across the state, and stream flow increased in central and southern counties.

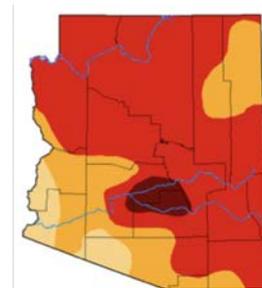


Figure 3. Sep. 29, 2020 Short-term Drought Status Map.

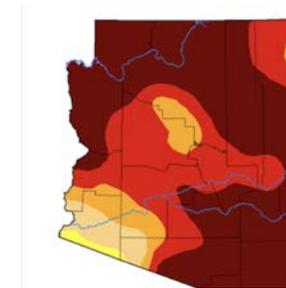


Figure 4. Apr. 27, 2021 Short-term Drought Status Map.

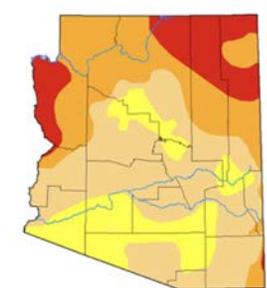


Figure 5. Sep. 28, 2021 Short-term Drought Status Map.

At the end of WY 2021, most of the state was in Moderate (D1) drought (40%) or Abnormally Dry (D0) conditions (20%). Extreme (D3) drought covered 14% of the state, largely in western Mohave County, northeastern Coconino County, and northern and central Navajo and Apache counties. There were no measures of Exceptional (D4) drought in the state at the end of WY 2021 (Table 1).

Category	Sep. 29, 2020	Apr. 27, 2021	Sep. 28, 2021
No Drought	0	0	0
D0 - Abnormally Dry	0	1	20
D1 - Moderate Drought	6	4	40
D2 - Severe Drought	24	8	26
D3 - Extreme Drought	67	29	14
D4 - Exceptional Drought	3	58	0

Table 1. Percentage of Arizona in Each Drought Category (Short-term)

Appendix F

Long-Term Drought Status

Long-term drought is evaluated using the Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI). SPEI incorporates precipitation and potential evapotranspiration as a tool for evaluating drought. Evapotranspiration is water lost in vapor form from evaporation and transpiration, and potential evapotranspiration considers temperature and wind conditions that influence aspects of water loss. Long-term drought is analyzed monthly from the previous 24-, 36-, and 48-month periods, and updated quarterly.

Extreme (D3) long-term drought was observed at the start of WY 2021 continuing largely within the northeastern counties and expanding into central and eastern counties. Very small levels of Exceptional (D4) long-term drought were present within eastern Coconino County, southern Apache County, and areas of Graham and Greenlee counties (Figure 6a). Excessively dry winter conditions in 2020-21 contributed to the expansion of Extreme (D3) long-term drought over much of the state by April 2021, with an increase of Exceptional (D4) long-term drought in northern and eastern counties (Figure 6b). At the end of WY 2021, Exceptional (D4) long-term drought remained in central Mohave County, eastern Coconino County, western and central Navajo County, and eastern Apache County (Figure 6c). Southern and central counties improved to Severe (D2) long-term drought following an active summer monsoon season.

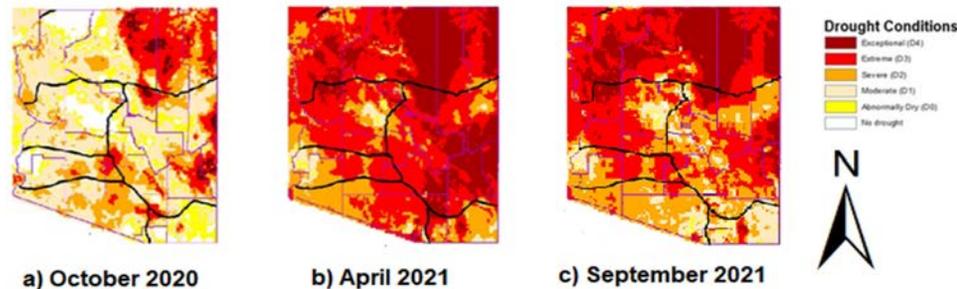


Figure 6. Quarterly SPEI long-term drought maps.

ARIZONA WEATHER OUTLOOK

Winter 2021-2022

A moderate La Niña event last winter helped contribute to much lower-than-average precipitation across the region. While the La Niña conditions relaxed during the spring and summer, with warming tropical Pacific Ocean surface temperatures, another La Niña event has materialized again this year. Weak La Niña conditions have quickly re-developed and will persist through the winter of 2021-22 before eventually decaying in the spring. While other climate mechanisms influence the weather in Arizona in shorter time scales, in the seasonal scale, the majority of La Niña events result in drier-than-normal winters. In fact, most of the driest winters recorded over the past forty years in Arizona (Figure 7) have been observed during La Niña conditions. In fifteen observed La Niña winters since 1980, only one year has experienced above-normal precipitation, while four years had near-normal and ten years had below-normal precipitation.

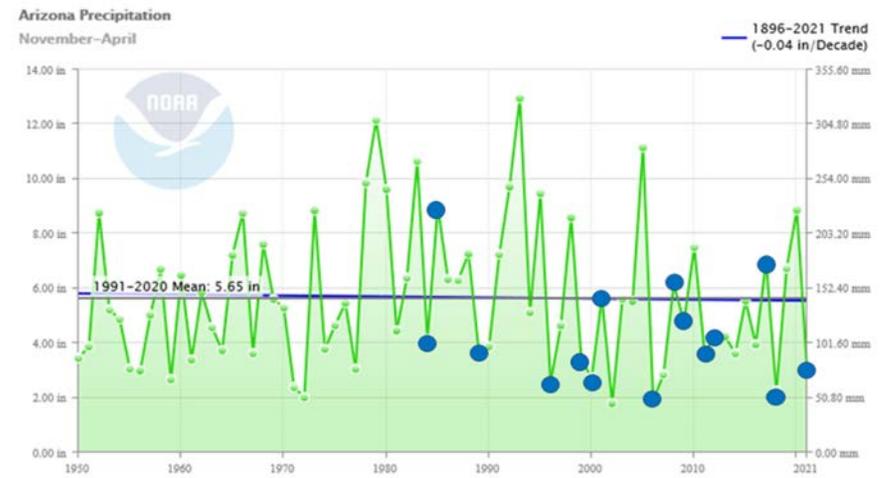
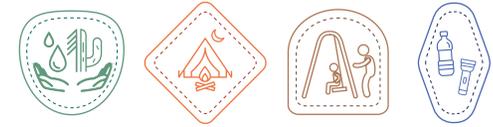


Figure 7. Historical November-April precipitation in Arizona since 1950. Blue dots are La Niña winters since 1980.



The official outlooks from the CPC (Figure 8) for January-March 2022 show a somewhat greater chance that the average temperature during this period will fall in the above-normal category. While La Niña has some influence, this forecast is primarily due to climate change and the fact that Arizona winters over the past twenty years have been steadily warming. The precipitation outlook indicates slightly better odds for below-normal precipitation over the middle of the 2021-22 Winter. This is based on a consensus of dynamic climate models along with historical precedent during La Niña winters.

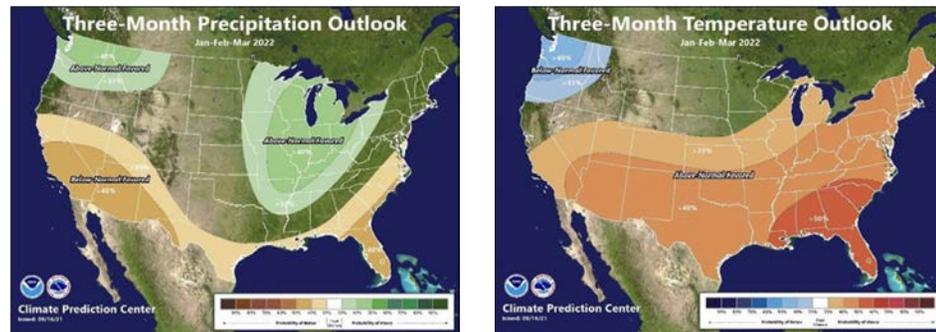


Figure 8. Climate Prediction Center outlook for temperature (left) and precipitation (right) for January-March 2022. Shading indicates the tilt in odds towards being above or below normal. Unshaded areas indicate equal chances of above, below, or near-normal temperatures and precipitation

Summer 2022

The CPC’s outlook for July-September 2022 (Figure 9) indicates the average temperature during Summer 2022 has a greater chance of falling in the above-normal range. This outlook is strongly based on trends of regional climate warming over the past twenty years versus the longer-term thirty-year average. The precipitation outlook shows no signal during this period over Arizona, and there are equal chances for the 2022 monsoon season having above, below, or near-normal rainfall. This is very common for the monsoon season where thunderstorm activity is generally not influenced by larger-scale climate patterns.

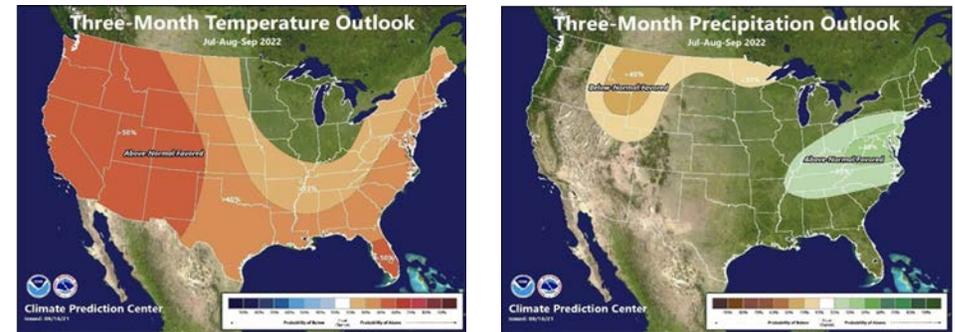


Figure 9. Climate Prediction Center outlook for temperature (left) and precipitation (right) for July-September 2022. Shading indicates the tilt in odds towards being above or below normal. Unshaded areas indicate equal chances of above, below, or near-normal temperature and precipitation.

Appendix F

FOREST HEALTH AND DROUGHT

Aerial and ground detection surveys for dead and dying trees have been conducted in Arizona for more than fifty years by the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DFFM). This survey data is used to monitor changes in forest health, as well as emerging insects and disease agents. These data and information are then provided to land managers and the public through the DFFM's annual Forest Health Conditions Report.

Arizona did not receive a typical monsoon season during the summer of 2020, which moved the state into a severely dry fall and winter. During the winter of 2020-21, the majority of the state experienced Extreme (D3) to Exceptional (D4) drought conditions. This lack in monsoonal moisture and winter precipitation led to an increase in drought stress across all Arizona forest types. As a result, competition for water and nutrients increased, which further exacerbated the trees' overall health and vigor. Increased stress weakens trees, making them more susceptible to disease and insect damage. Specifically, bark beetles are able to orient themselves to the scents of stressed trees, making it easier to locate, attack, and kill weakened host trees. During the 2021 Aerial Detection Survey season, forest health professionals saw a significant increase in the amount of tree mortality caused by bark beetles.

SUMMARY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

While WY 2021 experienced the largest extent of Exceptional (D4) drought recorded across the state, record-level amounts of precipitation during the monsoon season led to the wettest month of July on record for Arizona and to improved short- and long-term drought conditions. La Niña conditions in Arizona were observed during the fall of 2021, with a greater than 90% chance of persisting in weak to moderate levels through Winter 2021/Spring 2022. La Niña events, with limited historical exceptions, result in drier and warmer than normal conditions across Arizona, which are likely to be expected during the winter. Through aerial and ground surveys, DFFM forest health professionals observed a significant increase in the amount of tree mortality caused by bark beetles. These observations are a result of drought and may be noticed on trees throughout the state's parks.

The 2021 ADPAR offers drought status and impact, as well as preparedness information on a statewide scale. The information available may be used to determine impacts on Arizona state parks. Researchers from the University of Arizona Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics will be publishing research on the drought effects on Arizona state parks visits, visitor spending, and local economies by 2022. This research was jointly funded by ADWR and the Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA).

For more information about short- and long-term drought conditions in Arizona, preparedness activities and resources, visit the [ADWR Drought](#) webpage.



Sabino Canyon Waterfall
Nicci Radhe

Appendix G

ARIZONA FOREST HEALTH - PROTECTING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Guest Author: Aly McAlexander, Forest Health Specialist

Organization: Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

INTRODUCTION

Arizona has an incredibly diverse landscape - from the lower Sonoran desert scrub and pinyon-juniper woodland to the high elevation spruce-fir forests. Forests cover approximately 27% of the state, which is over 19 million acres. These forests are comprised of 37 species of coniferous and hardwood trees. The majority of forestland is located above the Mogollon Rim. Juniper (*Juniperus* spp.) and pinyon juniper (*Pinus edulis*-*Juniperus* spp.) woodlands are the most abundant forest type in Arizona, occupying approximately 14.8 million acres, or 20.3% of the state. The rarest and most significant in ecological terms is riparian forest, which occupies less than one-half of 1% of Arizona's land. Urban areas include forests that are typically composed of a mix of native and introduced tree species that require various management techniques. Nearly 90% of Arizona's residents live in an urban forest, which provide numerous environmental, economic and social benefits.

With such a broad diversity of forests comes a diverse group of insects and diseases; from native and non-native pine engraver beetles to introduced fungal pathogens such as white pine blister rust. Because of this diversity, annually the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management partners with the USDA Forest Service, Forest Health Protection (FHP) team, to survey millions of acres with forest and woodland resources from the air; this is called an Aerial Detection Survey (ADS). In the summer of 2021, during the ADS season, over 17 million acres were flown to identify dead, dying, or declining trees (Figure 1). The aerial surveys cover National Forest lands (50% of the area surveyed), tribal lands (32% of the area surveyed), private lands (10% of the area surveyed), state lands (6% of the area surveyed), and county lands (less than 1% of the area surveyed).

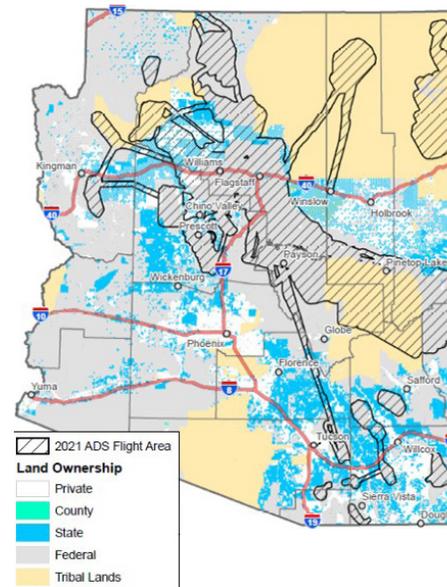
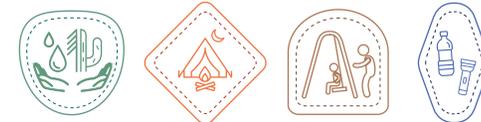


Figure 1



Juniper dieback due to drought



ARIZONA FOREST HEALTH - PROTECTING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Guest Author: Aly McAlexander, Forest Health Specialist

Organization: Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

STATEWIDE HIGHLIGHTS

Last year, over 1 million acres with damage were observed throughout Arizona. Abiotic damage was observed on more than 400,000 acres (Table 1). Abiotic disorders and damages can become entry points for pathogens, while also increasing the tree's overall stress, making it more susceptible to other insect and disease infestation. The more than 400,000 acres with abiotic damage were attributed to drought. Drought refers to a water deficit that develops when there is a lack in precipitation or changes to a watering schedule. When the water loss exceeds the rate of water absorption from the soil, chronic injury within the plant host can occur. This injury is expressed through symptoms such as a lack in growth, wilting, discoloration of the foliage, and premature leaf drop.

Estimated Acres of Observed Damage by Land Ownership for the State of Arizona						
Disease Causing Agent	County	Federal	Private	State	Tribal Lands	Grand Total
Abiotic Agents	76.75	262,741.08	60,860.77	37,649.67	44,666.57	405,994.83
Bark Beetles		409,621.24	12,530.28	8,015.08	97,942.19	528,108.79
Defoliators		3,769.07	613.04	280.48	9,783.50	14,446.09
Sap Feeders	4.91	24,385.26	2,851.11	676.17	13,807.89	41,725.35
Wood Borers		4,388.52	175.60	96.76		4,660.88
Other		13,030.69	1,190.36	84.86	9,457.78	23,763.69
Grand Total	81.67	717,935.85	78,221.17	46,803.02	175,657.93	1,018,699.63

Table 1. Estimated Acres of Observed Damage by Land Ownership for the State of Arizona

BARK BEETLE ACTIVITY

In general, Arizona has a complex of bark beetles composed of different genera and species; multiple species are often attacking the same host tree. Bark beetles live between the bark and the wood of trees and shrubs, creating egg galleries in the phloem. Bark beetle damage was observed on more than 520,000 acres (Table 1). This is a 551% increase in bark beetle caused tree mortality statewide since 2020 (when 81,000 acres were observed with bark beetle caused tree mortality). Details about the types of bark beetles, and their associated damage, can be found in the Forest Health Conditions Report for 2021.

DEFOLIATOR DAMAGE

More than 14,000 acres with defoliator damage were observed last summer (Table 1). Defoliating insects damage trees by eating their leaves/needles; by removing their photosynthetic tissue, the host trees become increasingly susceptible to attacks from other insects and pathogens. If the defoliation is severe enough, it can lead to the death of the host tree. More than half of the acres with defoliation damage were attributed to the non-native Tamarisk leaf beetle (*Diorhabda* spp.). Tamarisk leaf beetles were released as a biological control for the invasive tamarisk plant (*Tamarix* spp.), also known as salt cedar. Tamarisk leaf beetles were not expected to persist below the Arizona-Utah border; however, they have been consistently moving south along the Colorado River, and into the rivers and riparian areas of Arizona. Acres with western Spruce budworm (*Choristoneura occidentalis*) defoliation were also observed in Arizona. This insect attacks Douglas-fir, true firs, and spruce trees; defoliation by the western spruce budworm can cause growth loss, with repeated heavy defoliation leading to an extreme decrease in growth and even tree deformity. Lastly, a few acres with defoliation were attributed to sawflies. There are several species of sawflies (*Neodiprion* spp., or *Zadiprion* spp.) that infest ponderosa and pinyon pines of the southwest. Pine sawflies in the southwest typically attack trees in open areas or locations where pines are growing at low densities. Generally, their defoliation causes slowed growth, but repeated attacks can lead to top kill and eventual tree death.

Appendix G

ARIZONA FOREST HEALTH - PROTECTING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Guest Author: Aly McAlexander, Forest Health Specialist

Organization: Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

SAP FEEDER ACTIVITY

More than 41,000 acres with sap feeding activity were observed throughout Arizona (Table 1). The majority of sap feeding or sap sucking insects fall into the orders Hemiptera and Homoptera; they are small in size and directly injure the host tree by sucking its food and water supply, producing necrotic spots in the host tissue, and indirectly injuring the tree by introducing plant diseases into the host. The majority of acres with sap sucking damage were attributed to Pinyon needle scale (*Matsucoccus acalyptus*), an insect that attacks pinyon pines. Other sap sucking damage was attributed to spruce aphid (*Elatobium abietinum*), which has been affecting high elevation spruce forests in the southwest since the 1990's; this insect is a sap feeder, causing early leaf/needle drop, yellowing of foliage, and reduced growth. A few additional acres with damage were attributed to Prescott needle scale (*Matsucoccus vexillorum*), which attacks ponderosa pines. Branch flagging is the most common symptom associated with this insect, and it typically occurs in younger trees.

WOOD BORER ACTIVITY

Over 4,600 acres with wood borer damage were observed last year during the 2021 survey season (Table 1). The Juniper twig pruner (*Styloxus bicolor*) was attributed to causing more than 1,700 acres with branch flagging. The Juniper twig pruner is a bud and shoot insect that causes twig dieback on junipers and cypress trees growing throughout the southwest. The remaining 2,900 acres with woodborer damage were attributed to the Goldspotted Oak Borer (*Agrilus auroguttatus*) (GSOB). Larval feeding by GSOB causes the most extensive damage on oaks. As the larvae feed, water and nutrient uptake is disrupted, leading to the oaks eventual death.

OTHER DAMAGE

Lastly, over 23,000 acres were observed with other damage (Table 1). This other damage was mostly attributed to unknown damage. Unknown damage is a catch-all group for damage we could not identify from the air and were unable to confirm on the ground; unknown damage included crown discoloration, defoliation, general mortality or dieback, and occasionally branch flagging that was not able to be verified by ground-truthing. A few hundred acres with other damage were attributed to human activities. Human activities is a group of noninfectious disorders dedicated to observed salt and deicer damage along roadways. The uptake of salt by roots is a common issue where sodium chloride, calcium chloride, and magnesium chloride are applied to de-ice highways in the winter or for dust abatement on dirt roads in the spring/summer/fall.

Overall, the annual Forest Health Conditions Report provides land managers and the public with information on insects and diseases that are currently having significant impacts on Arizona's forested landscapes. This data can be beneficial to the public because it shares locations that are experiencing impacts from insects and disease. This data could help the public determine recreation areas of interest. Whether those are areas they would like to visit because they have minimal impacts from insects or diseases, or maybe areas they would like to see that have been severely impacted and help determine if there are management opportunities. This information can also help guide land managers in determining where insect and disease outbreaks are occurring, how severe those outbreaks are, and can even help land managers prioritize areas with specific management needs based on the presence of insects and diseases. Lastly, the information provided can help increase awareness about the types of insect and disease agents present in any given year. By being aware of the status of Arizona's insects and diseases the public and other land managers have the opportunity to be a part of the solution.

The Forest Health Conditions Report for 2021 can be found on the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management's website, or you can use the following link Forest Health Alerts and Resources.



ARIZONA FOREST HEALTH - PROTECTING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

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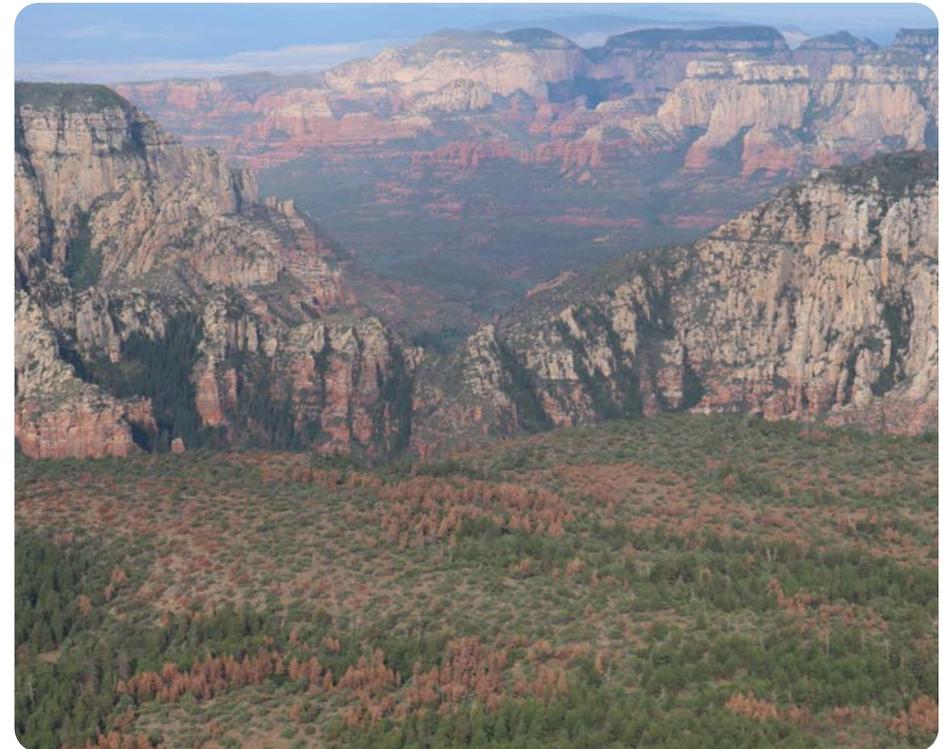
Organization: Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

CONSERVATION, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE OUTDOOR RECREATION

**Meet our Guest Author:
Aly McAlexander**

As the Forest Health Specialist, I help to identify areas of insect and disease outbreaks around Arizona. This is done through ground surveys, and aerial surveys with the help of the USDA Forest Service, Forest Health Protection Team.

It is important to understand where, and how insects and diseases are impacting Arizona, as these locations may be at or near certain parks, trailheads, and other recreational areas people are using. Thus, these insects and diseases may be impacting the look and feel of certain recreational areas.

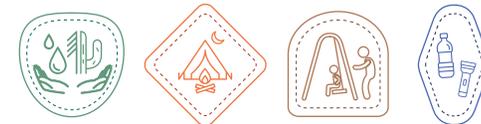


Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management

Appendix H

Arizona State Parks and Trails is in the process of creating a Resources section on their website that will include links to relevant and current outdoor recreation reports, resources, and tools for your reference.

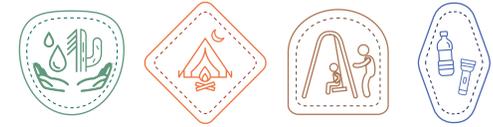
Resources	National / Regional / State / Community	Website or Document Link
American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Tourism Association (AIANTA)	National	https://www.aianta.org/
<i>Economic Impact of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiians (AIANNH)</i>	National	https://www.aianta.org/research/
American with Disabilities Act (ADA)	National	https://www.ada.gov/
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (AZDEQ)	Arizona	https://azdeq.gov/
Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (AFFM)	Arizona	https://dffm.az.gov/
<i>Arizona Forest Action Plan</i>	Arizona	https://dffm.az.gov/sites/default/files/media/2020%20Forest%20Action%20Plan%20FINAL.pdf
Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)	Arizona	https://azdot.gov/
Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWS)	Arizona	https://new.azwater.gov/
<i>2021 Arizona Drought Preparedness Annual Report</i>	Arizona	https://new.azwater.gov/sites/default/files/media/ADPAR_2021.pdf
Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD)	Arizona	https://www.azgfd.com/
Arizona Residents' Opinions on the Game and Fish Department	Arizona	https://responsivemanagement.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/AZTrendsReport.pdf
<i>Economic Impact of Various Outdoor Recreation Activities</i>	Arizona	https://www.azgfd.com/wildlife/economicimpact/
Arizona Health Zone / Benefits & Parks and Trails	Arizona	https://www.azhealthzone.org/be-active/
Arizona Land Department (ALD)	Arizona	https://land.az.gov/
Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT)	Arizona	https://tourism.az.gov/
Appreciate AZ and Leave No Trace Materials	Arizona	https://tourism.az.gov/leavenotrace/
Arizona Regional Profiles and Visitor Studies	Arizona (Counties and Regional)	https://tourism.az.gov/regional-profiles/
Arizona Travel Economic Impact Statewide and by Legislative District	Arizona and Legislative Districts	https://tourism.az.gov/economic-impact/
National Parks Visitation Monthly Reports	Arizona	https://tourism.az.gov/data-trends/national-park-visitation/
State Park Visitation Monthly Reports	Arizona	https://tourism.az.gov/data-trends/state-park-visitation/
Arizona Site Steward Program Foundation (ASSPF)	Arizona	https://www.asspfoundation.org/
Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Arizona	https://azstateparks.com/shpo
Arizona State Parks and Trails (ASPT)	Arizona	https://azstateparks.com/



Resources	National / Regional / State / Community	Website or Document Link
Grant Resources:		
ASPT Grant Programs	Arizona	https://azstateparks.com/grants
ASPT Grants Manual	Arizona	https://arizona-content.usedirect.com/storage/gallery/doc/MANUAL_2021-2022_Final_%20(7).docx
ASPT Grant Administrative Guidelines	Arizona	https://arizona-content.usedirect.com/storage/gallery/pdf/Admin%20Guidelines%201_31_2022.pdf
ASPT Grant Workshops	Arizona	https://azstateparks.com/workshops
<i>eCivis Application Guide</i>	Arizona	https://arizona-content.usedirect.com/storage/gallery/pdf/eCivis%20Help%20Doc-%20Applicant%20Version%20Revised%20October.pdf
Heritage Fund Grants	Arizona	https://azstateparks.com/heritage-fund-grants
Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Recreation Fund	Arizona	https://azstateparks.com/off-highway-vehicle-fund-grants
"Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grants (Motorized and Non-Motorized Portions)"	Arizona	https://azstateparks.com/recreational-trails-program-grants
State Lake Improvement Fund (SLIF)	Arizona	https://azstateparks.com/grants
Publications:		
<i>Arizona Boat & Watercraft Study Research Report</i>	Arizona	https://arizona-content.usedirect.com/storage/pages/20220628081211Boat%20&%20Watercraft%20Study%202021_Final%20Report_FINAL_122821_ToPost.pdf
<i>Arizona Trails Plan 2020</i>	Arizona	https://arizona-content.usedirect.com/storage/pages/20220628044955ASPT%20-%202020%20Trails%20Plan%20-%20206-29.pdf
<i>Economic Contributions and Impacts of Arizona's State Parks</i>	Arizona	https://arizona-content.usedirect.com/storage/pages/20220628105240State%20Park%20Economic%20Contribution%2006212021%20(2).pdf
<i>Economic Impact of Off-Highway Recreation</i>	Arizona	https://arizona-content.usedirect.com/storage/pages/20220628075732Final%20Report.pdf
<i>2020 Economic Value of Trails in Arizona</i>	Arizona	https://arizona-content.usedirect.com/storage/pages/20220628055146AZ%20Trails%20Economic%20Value_Exec%20Summary_03302020_FINAL.pdf

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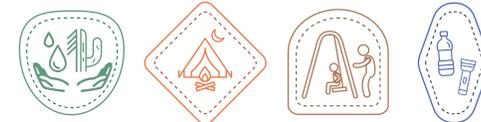
Resources	National / Regional / State / Community	Website or Document Link
Arizona Trail Association	Arizona	https://aztrail.org
Strategic Plans	Arizona	https://aztrail.org/the-ata/annual-reports-strategic-plan/
Trail, Greenway and Outdoor Recreation Terms/Definitions	National	https://www.americantrails.org/resources/trail-terms?blm_aid=19134
Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies	National	https://www.fishwildlife.org/
<i>Fish and Wildlife Relevancy Roadmap</i>	National	https://www.fishwildlife.org/application/files/2515/7547/9977/Fish_Wildlife_Relevancy_Roadmap_Final_12-04-19-lowres.pdf
Audubon Arizona	Arizona	https://az.audubon.org/
<i>Economic Impact of Arizona's Rivers and Lakes</i>	Arizona	https://az.audubon.org/
Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) / Outdoor Recreation	Arizona and National	https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	National	https://www.blm.gov/
Central Arizona Conservation Alliance (CAZCA)	Arizona	https://cazca.org/
Regional Open Space Strategy for Maricopa County	Arizona (Maricopa County)	https://cazca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CAZCA_ROSS_V2_10.16.19.pdf
Center for the Future of Arizona	Arizona	https://www.arizonafuture.org/
<i>The Arizona We Want: The Decade Ahead</i>	Arizona	https://www.arizonafuture.org/media/unfojhmh/cfa_arizona_we_want_the_decade_ahead_digital.pdf
National Resources Data Profile	Arizona	https://www.arizonafuture.org/progress-meters/natural-resources/
Civic Plus	National	https://www.civicplus.com/
<i>Inclusion in Parks and Recreation</i>	National	https://www.civicplus.com/civirec/offer/inclusion-in-parks-and-rec
Colorado College's State of the Rockies	Regional	https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/stateoftherockies/
<i>2021 Conservation in the West Polls - Arizona</i>	Arizona	https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/stateoftherockies/conservationinthewest/2022/2022-poll-results.html
Desert Foothills Land Trust (DFLT)	Arizona	www.dflt.org/rxfornature
Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (EWRA)	National	https://www.fws.gov/law/emergency-wetlands-resources-act
Endangered Species Act (ESA)	National	https://www.fws.gov/law/endangered-species-act
Friends of the Verde River / General and Comprehensive Plans	Arizona (Regional)	https://verderiver.org/general-comprehensive-plans/
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	National	https://www.doi.gov/lwcf/
<i>LWCF State Assistance Program Manual</i>	National	https://www.nps.gov/subjects/lwcf/upload/LWCF-FA-Manual-Vol-71-3-11-2021-final.pdf



Resources	National / Regional / State / Community	Website or Document Link
Leave No Trace	National	https://lnt.org/
<i>Desert and Canyons Skills and Ethics Booklet</i>	Regional	https://lnt.org/research-resources/deserts-and-canyons-skills-and-ethics-booklet/
<i>Leave No Trace Basics</i>	National	https://lnt.org/research-resources/leave-no-trace-basics/
<i>Leave No Trace COVID-19 Research</i>	National	https://lnt.org/research-resources/leave-no-trace-covid-19-research/
Maricopa County	Arizona (Maricopa County)	https://www.maricopa.gov/
National Environmental Policy Act (EPA)	National	https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-national-environmental-policy-act
National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)	National	https://www.achp.gov/digital-library-section-106-landing/national-historic-preservation-act
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	National	https://www.noaa.gov/
National Park Service (NPS)	National	https://www.nps.gov/index.htm
<i>Economic Impact of Parks (Arizona) Report</i>	Arizona	https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/research/econ-impact-toolkit-az.pdf
National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)	National	https://www.nrpa.org/
<i>2021 Engagement with Parks Report</i>	National	https://res.cloudinary.com/nrpadev/image/upload/v1631635911/docs/2021EngagementReport.pdf
<i>Advancing Community Health and Well Being</i>	National	https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/advancing-community-health-and-well-being/
<i>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Parks and Recreation Report</i>	National	https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/diversity-equity-inclusion-in-parks-and-recreation-report/
<i>Healthy Aging in Parks Survey</i>	National	https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/79223ed861564c3c9bd386a60fac473c/healthy-aging-survey-report.pdf
<i>Local Government Officials Perceptions of Parks and Recreation Agencies</i>	National	https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/local-government-officials-perceptions-of-parks-and-recreation/
<i>Park and Recreation Sustainability Practices</i>	National	https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/f768428a39aa4035ae55b2aaff372617/sustainability-survey-report.pdf

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Resources	National / Regional / State / Community	Website or Document Link
Next 100 Coalition	National	https://next100coalition.org/
<i>Economic Benefits of Public Lands</i>	National	https://next100coalition.org/
<i>Improving Health Equity Through Public Lands</i>	National	https://next100coalition.org/
Outdoor Industry Association	National	https://outdoorindustry.org/collections/research/
<i>State Offices of Outdoor Recreation</i>	National	https://outdoorindustry.org/state-offices-outdoor-recreation
<i>The Value of State Offices of Outdoor Recreation (OREC) Report</i>	National	https://recreationroundtable.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/State-Offices-Doc.pdf
<i>2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report</i>	National	https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2021-outdoor-participation-trends-report/
<i>2021 Special Report: New Outdoor Participant (COVID and Beyond)</i>	National	https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2021-special-report-new-outdoor-participant-covid-beyond/
<i>2022 Outdoor Participation Trends Report</i>	National	https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2022-outdoor-participation-trends-report/
<i>2022 Special Report on Hunting and the Shooting Sports</i>	National	https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2022-special-report-on-hunting-and-the-shooting-sports/
Pima County	Arizona (Pima County)	https://webcms.pima.gov/
<i>Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP)</i>	Arizona (Pima County)	https://ecos.fws.gov/ServCat/DownloadFile/171913
Sonoran Institute	Regional	https://sonoraninstitute.org/
<i>A Living River - Arizona Research Reports</i>	Arizona	https://sonoraninstitute.org/resources/arizona-reports/
State Outdoor Business Alliance Network (SOBAN)	National	https://soban.org/
Sun Corridor Trail Alliance	Regional	https://suncorridortrail.org/
<i>Sun Corridor Trail Alliance Action Plan</i>	Arizona (Multi-Community)	https://www.americantrails.org/resources/sun-corridor-trail-alliance-action-plan
Trust of Public Lands	National	https://www.tpl.org/
Park Score database and tool	Arizona	https://www.tpl.org/parkscore



Resources	National / Regional / State / Community	Website or Document Link
U.S. Census Bureau / Arizona Quick Facts	National and Arizona	https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/AZ
U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)	National	https://www.doi.gov/
U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)	National	https://www.transportation.gov/
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	National	https://www.epa.gov/
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)	National	https://www.fws.gov/
<i>National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey - Havasu National Wildlife Refuge</i>	Arizona	https://ecos.fws.gov/ServCat/DownloadFile/171913
U.S. Forest Service (FS)	National	https://www.fs.usda.gov/
<i>Land Management Plan for the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests</i>	Arizona (Apache, Coconino, Greenlee and Navajo counties)	https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/asnf/landmanagement/planning
<i>Land and Resource Management Plan for the Coconino National Forest</i>	Arizona (Coconino, Gila, Yavapai counties)	https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/coconino/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprdb5334655
<i>Coronado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan</i>	Arizona (Cochise, Graham, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz counties)	https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/coronado/landmanagement/planning
<i>Land and Resource Plan for the Kaibab National Forest</i>	Arizona (Coconino, Yavapai, Mojave counties)	https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/kaibab/landmanagement/planning
<i>Land and Resource Management Plan for the Prescott National Forest</i>	Arizona (Yavapai, Coconino counties)	https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/prescott/landmanagement/planning
<i>Tonto National Forest Land Management Plan</i>	Arizona (Coconino, Gila, Maricopa, Pinal, Yavapai counties)	https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/tonto/landmanagement/planning
<i>USDA Forest Service National Visitor Use Monitoring</i>	Arizona (By Region and by Forest)	https://apps.fs.usda.gov/nvum/results
<i>Connecting People with America's Great Outdoors: A Framework for Sustainable Recreation</i>	National	https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5346549.pdf
<i>Conserving While Black: Breaking Down Barriers</i>	National	https://fws.gov/story/conserving-while-black-breaking-down-barriers-conservation-community
<i>Investing in Nature: The Economic Benefits of Protecting Our Lands and Waters</i>		
Western Collaborative Conservation Network	Regional	https://collaborativeconservation.org/
Institutionalizing Collaborative-Problem Solving with Federal Natural Resource Agencies	Regional	https://collaborativeconservation.org/media/sites/142/2021/03/WCCN-Public-Policy-White-Paper-01_10_21-v.11.pdf



Coconino National Forest
Sedona Chamber of Commerce and Tourism

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Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

