



NORTH DAKOTA

2023-2027 STATE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

STATE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN



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The mission of the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department is to provide and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities through diverse parks and programs that conserve the state's natural diversity.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Abundant outdoor recreation is available to all North Dakota citizens and visitors. A comprehensive plan for infrastructure improvements and enhancements to recreational facilities is necessary to ensure citizens and visitors have continued access to activities and facilities that improve North Dakota’s quality of life, the health and well-being of its citizens, the conservation of its land, and the growth of its economy.

The *2023-2027 North Dakota State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)* was prepared by the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department (NDPRD) as a guide to assist providers in managing and developing the state’s nonconsumptive outdoor recreation infrastructure. It was financed in part by a planning grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, under the provisions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965 (PL 88-578, as amended), with additional funding provided by the Recreational Trails Program and the state of North Dakota.

In 2022, households and outdoor recreation providers were surveyed to determine the demand for and supply of nonconsumptive outdoor recreation in North Dakota. Ninety-seven percent of households responding to the survey reported outdoor recreation is important. Seventy percent of public providers in North Dakota report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply. Based on analysis of the demand for and supply of outdoor recreation in North Dakota, categories of facilities are prioritized for outdoor recreation grant funding at the state level for 2023 to 2027.

NDPRD, with input from the state’s public outdoor recreation stakeholders, has identified an overarching goal with three supporting strategies guiding development of North Dakota’s outdoor recreation infrastructure for the next five years. The goal is to identify and address outdoor recreation needs across the state to ensure diverse, affordable and accessible opportunities for citizens and visitors.

The strategy:

- Identify outdoor recreational needs.
- Expand outdoor recreation opportunities to meet unmet needs.
- Ensure existing facilities/infrastructure/programs are maintained and, where necessary, updated.

By identifying outdoor recreational needs of North Dakotans, and expanding those opportunities to meet the demands of North Dakota’s citizens and visitors, we can ensure our facilities, infrastructure and programs are of high quality, affordable and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts.

Statewide Facility Priorities

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Non-Motorized Trails	Canoe/Kayak Facilities	Shooting Sports Facilities
Campgrounds	Winter Sports Facilities	Sports Courts/Fields
Parks/Open Space	Recreational Boating Facilities	Motorized Trails
Parks/Recreational Areas	Swimming/Water Facilities	



OVERVIEW



OUTDOOR RECREATION IN NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakota's abundant outdoor recreation opportunities and unique landscapes offer an array of outdoor experiences, as diverse as the rugged Badlands in the west to the forested hills in the north and the tallgrass prairie in the east. Distinct seasons allow for a variety of outdoor experiences for those who enjoy spring flowers, summer sun, fall foliage, or winter snow.

Outdoor recreation is essential to quality of life in North Dakota. It is not only good for our physical well-being but plays a significant role in our state's economy. It is a major driver of tourism, North Dakota's third-largest industry. In addition, attraction and retention of the 21st century workforce as articulated in North Dakota's Main Street Initiative, depends on the ability to offer a variety of quality recreational and lifestyle opportunities at both the community and state levels. Healthy, vibrant communities depend on adequately distributed, well-designed and well-maintained parks, trails, recreational facilities and other open spaces providing the stage for active and passive recreation, community gathering and community connections. Ideally, parks and recreational facility investments should reflect documented needs as outlined in this 2023-27 SCORP, provide multi-season opportunities, build upon existing civic infrastructure, be accessible, serve a diverse demographic and complement conservation goals.

As North Dakota's population grows and changes, its recreational needs change as well and the need to update, upgrade and expand offerings increases. A comprehensive plan for North Dakota's outdoor recreation infrastructure is vital to ensure citizens and visitors have accessible and affordable opportunities to recreate in the state's diverse outdoors.

PLANNING

Nonconsumptive outdoor recreation infrastructure across North Dakota consists of hundreds of parks and facilities maintained by local, state and federal government agencies or nonprofit or for-profit providers. That includes trails, playgrounds, campgrounds, swimming pools, and athletic fields. Planning is critical to meet current and future outdoor recreation needs, not only to ensure a high quality of life for North Dakotans but also to grow the state's tourism economy

The NDPRD is charged with developing long-range policies and plans for the state's outdoor recreation infrastructure. As part of this responsibility, the NDPRD must prepare a SCORP every five years. The 2023-27 SCORP marks the state's 11th update of this publication, first prepared by the NDPRD in 1970.

Through the SCORP development process, the NDPRD evaluates the demand for and supply of outdoor recreation activities and facilities. With input from stakeholders, the NDPRD sets statewide and regional priorities for outdoor recreation infrastructure, which are used to determine allocation of state and federal grant funds. The SCORP establishes a guide for managing and developing North Dakota's outdoor recreation base – from land acquisition to infrastructure development – over a five-year period.

Planning Requirements

Federal Law

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (Public Law 88-578, as amended) was enacted "... to assist in preserving, developing and assuring accessibility to all

citizens of the United States of America of present and future generations and visitors ... such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation in such recreation and to strengthen the health and vitality of the citizens of the United States by (1) providing funds for and authorizing Federal assistance to the States in planning, acquisition and development of needed land and water areas and facilities ...”

Further, as outlined in Section 6(d) of the act, “A comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan shall be required prior to the consideration by the Secretary of financial assistance for acquisition or development projects.”

To maintain eligibility for the Recreational Trails Program, the Federal Highway Administration, the program’s administrator, requires states that receive grant funding to complete a statewide trails plan that addresses recreational trails. The SCORP’s companion publication, *Recreational Trail Needs*, fulfills this requirement.

State Law

According to North Dakota Century Code (NDCC), the NDPRD shall “plan and coordinate government programs encouraging the full development and preservation of existing and future parks, outdoor recreation areas, and nature preserves.” More specifically, NDCC 55-08-03.1 requires the NDPRD to:

- Undertake the development of broad recreation policies for the state as a whole and a long-range plan for their implementation.
- Initiate a continuing appraisal of the total state recreation resources, potentials, and needs and the adequacy of current efforts to meet the demands.
- Provide for the coordination and appraisal of related programs administered by all levels of government and by private enterprise.”



FUNDING

Resources supporting maintenance and expansion of North Dakota’s outdoor recreation infrastructure are critical to meeting user demands and diversifying the economy. While user fees and taxes provide resources to develop outdoor recreation infrastructure, key grant programs are necessary to meet the state’s outdoor recreation needs.

Federal Support

Land and Water Conservation Fund

In 1965, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program was created by Congress to stimulate a nationwide action program to assist in preserving, developing and assuring all United States citizens and visitors have access to quality outdoor recreation resources. It is funded by Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) mineral leasing receipts. The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (GOMESA) established permanent sharing of federal revenues from oil and natural gas leasing and production on the Gulf of Mexico OCS with a portion of the funds allocated to LWCF starting in fiscal year 2017. The LWCF program provides funds to states and through states to local governments through 50/50 matching grants for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation sites and facilities. The NDPRD manages North Dakota’s LWCF program. Completion of the SCORP every five years is required to remain eligible for the LWCF grant program.

Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a program through which states can acquire 80/20 matching federal grant money for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trails. Established by the federal highway bill, the RTP is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration managed by the NDPRD. The program is funded from the Federal Highway Trust Fund, specifically from a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use, including fuel used for off-highway recreation by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-highway light trucks.

Open Project Selection Process (OPSP)

The NDPRD has developed an OPSP to assure equal opportunity of eligible project sponsors across the entire state. The OPSP utilizes the SCORP to identify priority recreation needs as selected by the residents of North Dakota.

54 U.S.C. § 200305

The LWCF Act at 54 U.S.C. § 200305(d) requires a SCORP from each state prior to consideration by the Secretary of the Interior for financial assistance for acquisition and development projects. Each state must have a “State Liaison Officer” (SLO) appointed by the governor or designated by the state legislature to administer the LWCF program at the state level. The Governor of North Dakota has appointed the North Dakota Parks and Recreation as the SLO.

State Support

OHV Recreation Grant Program

Funded through state off-highway vehicle (OHV) registration fees, the OHV Recreation Grant Program is an 80/20 matching grant program offered through the NDPRD for construction, improvement or renovation of OHV recreation facilities throughout North Dakota, including trail signage and new development or renovation of OHV trails, bridges, trailhead facilities, and trail linkages. A 100% grant is available for law enforcement agencies needing financial assistance to enforce OHV laws.

Community Grant Program

Established in 2009, the state Community Grant Program is modeled after the federal LWCF program and funded periodically through legislative appropriation. Managed by the NDPRD, the 50/50 matching grant program provides funds to political subdivisions for the development or renovation of outdoor recreation facilities, as well as tapered funding for recreation program development.

Park District Facility Renovation Grant

The Park District Facility Renovation Grant was established in 2022 as a \$5 million 50/50 matching grant to help park districts with renovation, upgrade and/or repair of existing facilities. It is provided to the state through the American Rescue Plan Act.

Outdoor Heritage Fund

The North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund, established in 2013, receives up to \$40 million per biennium from the state’s oil and gas production tax. The fund, under the oversight of the North Dakota Industrial Commission, provides 75/25 matching grants to state agencies, tribal governments, political subdivisions, and nonprofit organizations, with higher priority given to projects that enhance conservation practices in this state by:

- Directive A – Providing access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen;
- Directive B – Improving, maintaining and restoring water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and by supporting other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;
- Directive C – Developing, enhancing, conserving, and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and
- Directive D – Conserving natural areas and creating other areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas.

Other State Agency Grant Programs

Other state agencies provide grants and additional resources to support development and promotion of outdoor recreation opportunities, including but not limited to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, North Dakota Forest Service, North Dakota Department of Transportation, North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism Division, and North Dakota Council on the Arts.

Other Support

Local government agencies, nonprofit organizations and foundations support outdoor recreation infrastructure in North Dakota, including but not limited to United States Tennis Association Northern, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District and local sports associations.



DEMAND AND SUPPLY

OUTDOOR RECREATION IN NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakotans consistently acknowledge the importance of outdoor recreation opportunities across the state. At the same time, public providers of the state's nonconsumptive outdoor recreation infrastructure have strived to provide high-quality, affordable and accessible opportunities to meet the needs of both citizens and visitors.

ASSESSMENT OF NEED

To determine the demand for and supply of nonconsumptive outdoor recreation in North Dakota, two distinct surveys were undertaken in 2021-22.

First, a survey of North Dakota households was conducted to assess interest in outdoor recreation activities and to identify the perceived quantity and quality of facilities for these activities. From December 2021 to April 2022, 1,261 North Dakotans over the age of 18 were surveyed online, resulting in a 95% confidence level with a maximum margin of error of $\pm 2.8\%$.

Second, a survey of North Dakota's public outdoor recreation providers was completed to assess perceived demand for facilities, to inventory the quantity and condition of existing facilities and to solicit input on future needs for facilities. From December 2021 to April 2022, 175 North Dakota providers completed the online survey, resulting in a 95% confidence level with a maximum margin of error of between $\pm 3.9\%$ and $\pm 6.4\%$.

North Dakota's outdoor recreation infrastructure – parks, campgrounds, trails, and other facilities – have different levels of amenities or support facilities. For both the household and provider surveys, the following definitions were utilized:

- Modern: Amenities such as restrooms, electricity and running water are available.
- Semi-modern: Limited amenities such as restrooms without electricity or running water are available.
- Primitive: No amenities are available.

USER PERSPECTIVES

Seven out of every 10 North Dakota households (71%) report outdoor recreation is very important, while 97% report it is important. Five years ago, 60% of North Dakota households felt outdoor recreation was very important.

Importance of Outdoor Recreation

Very Important	70.8%
Important	25.9%
Not Important	3.2%
Not Sure	0.1%

Highest Interest Outdoor Recreation Activity Categories

The following broad categories of outdoor recreation activities offered at parks, sports complexes and recreation areas are of most interest to North Dakota households:

- Using designated trails for walking, running, bicycling, or horseback riding (89.8%).
- Camping in a tent, camper or RV (88.5%).
- Going to a park, recreation area, natural area, or green space to play, have fun, use a playground, enjoy nature, relax, star gaze, watch birds and wildlife, or visit an interpretive center (80.9%).
- Canoeing or kayaking (69.9%).
- Picnicking at a park, recreation area or natural area (67.7%).
- Skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating, sledding, or similar winter activities (63.1%).
- Renting a cabin, yurt or permanent tent or teepee in a park or campground (61.9%).
- Swimming outdoors, going to an outdoor splash or wave pool or playing at an outdoor spray pad (59.8%).
- Using boats, pontoons or other personal watercraft for recreational boating other than fishing (54%).
- Using an outdoor rifle, pistol or shotgun range (49.6%).

Highest Interest Outdoor Recreation Activities

North Dakota households are most interested in the following specific types of outdoor recreation activities:

- Camping in a modern campground (81.8%), in an RV or camper (67.5%) and in a group campsite (53.3%).
- Using a designated unpaved hiking trail (77.8%), using a modern trail with restrooms and running water (74.1%), using a designated unpaved walking, jogging or bicycle trail (72.3%), using a designated paved walking, jogging or bicycle trail (69.2%), or using a semi-modern trail with bathrooms but no running water (65.0%).
- Visiting a modern park, recreation area or natural area with electricity, running water and restrooms (74.1%) or a semi-modern area with a bathroom but without running water and electricity (50.9%) to go stargazing or enjoy nature (66.3%).
- Canoe or kayak (69.9%) from a semi-modern launch area with some amenities (57.2%) or from primitive launch to a lake or river (54.6%).
- Rent a modern cabin, yurt or permanent tent or teepee with electricity, water, bathroom, and refrigerator at a campground or park (54.7%).
- Rent a canoe or kayak (54.4%).
- Going to a designated swimming beach on a lake or river (52.3%).

Willingness to Travel for Outdoor Recreation Activities

Visitors to North Dakota spent \$298 million in North Dakota in 2020, accounting for 14.1% of total visitor spending. North Dakota households also are willing to travel to participate in select outdoor recreation activities. North Dakota households are willing to travel more than an hour to:

- Camp in a tent, RV or camper (92%).
- Rent a cabin, yurt, permanent tent, or teepee in a park or campground (89.8%).
- Use designated trails for riding snowmobiles (63.0%).
- Use designated trails for riding ATVs, dirt bikes or side-by-sides (60.0%).
- Canoe or kayak (59.0%).
- Recreational boating other than fishing (58.9%).
- Go skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating, sledding, or other outdoor winter activity (50.8%).
- Use a designated walking, running, bicycling, or horseback trail (48.2%).
- Use a park, natural area or green space to play, have fun, relax, stargaze, watch birds or wildlife, or visit an interpretive center (42.1%).

- Rock climb, rope challenge course or another adventure facility (41.3%).
- Golf (39.3%).
- Picnic at a park or recreation area (35.0%).
- Geocache (34.0%).

On the other hand, the largest proportion of “at least interested” North Dakotans would travel only 10 minutes or less to:

- Use a skateboard park (32.2%).
- Use a dog park or pet exercise area at a park (31.6%).
- Use an outdoor disc or Frisbee gold course (15.6%).
- Exercise or play a sport outdoors at a park or sports complex – other than a school team (13.3%).

Highest-Rated Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Of those North Dakota households interested in participating in a specific outdoor recreation activity, the following facilities rate the highest (excellent or very good in both quality and quantity):

1. Park areas or green spaces to play games, toss Frisbee or relax (46.8%).
2. Playgrounds (45.3%).
3. Baseball fields (44.9%).
4. Large group picnic shelters (41.6%).
5. Smaller semi-modern family picnic sites (39.6%).
6. Golf courses (34.1%).
7. Modern parks or natural areas with electricity, running water and restrooms (31.3%).
8. Areas for stargazing or simply enjoying nature and the outdoors (31.0%).
9. Softball fields (30.9%).
10. Paved walking, jogging or bicycle trails (30.7%).

In contrast, the following outdoor recreation facilities rank lowest (poor in both quality and quantity, meaning it must be greatly improved or replaced) among those North Dakota households interested in participating in a specific activity:

1. Outdoor rock climbing or traversing walls (84.4%).
2. Outdoor rope challenge courses (81.6%).
3. Outdoor hard surface volleyball courts (76.0%).
4. Exercise trails with exercise machines or equipment at stations (73.3%).
5. Lighted outdoor sports fields or courts that can be used in the evening (72.8%).
6. Designated downhill skiing or snowboarding areas (71.8%).
7. Outdoor rifle and pistol ranges (71.4%).
8. Designated swimming beaches on a lake or river (70.0%).
9. Motorized unpaved trails (67.7%).

10. Outdoor trap, skeet, sporting clay ranges (67.3).
11. Canoe and kayak rentals (65.7%).
12. Full-service modern cabin, yurt, permanent tent, or teepee with Wi-Fi, air condition, linen and towel service, and other hotel-like amenities (65.1%).

PERSPECTIVES FROM PROVIDERS

Public providers of outdoor recreation facilities in North Dakota include government agencies at the local, state and federal levels, federally recognized tribes and nonprofit organizations. Thirty-one percent of reporting providers serve a geographic area with less than 1,000 people, while 22% serve a geographic area larger 35,000. Many providers from smaller areas do not have any full-time employees.

Overall, 70% of outdoor recreation providers report demand for facilities and activities exceeds supply for their users. A majority of providers across all activities and facilities report that demand exceeds supply, sometimes by a large margin.

Outdoor Recreation Facilities Where Demand Exceeds Supply

The facilities for which the highest proportion of providers say demand exceeds supply include:

1. Modern campgrounds (61%), RV/camper sites with 50-amp (54%), RVs larger than 35 feet (50%), group camping sites (46%), RVs under 35 feet (45%), campgrounds with RV dump stations (44%).
2. Unpaved multi-use trails (53%), paved multi-use trails (52%), modern trails (42%), semi-modern trails (41%).

3. Modern general purpose parks and recreation areas (51%).
4. Hiking trails (45%).
5. Off-highway vehicle (ATV, dirt bike or side-by-side) trails (43%).
6. Playgrounds (42%).
7. Spray pads with no pools (42%).
8. Unpaved mountain biking, electric bike trails (42%).
9. Pickleball courts (41%).
10. Semi-modern canoe and kayak launch areas (41%).

Providers were asked to indicate the conditions of their outdoor recreation facilities.

Outdoor Recreation Facilities in Good Condition

Providers report the following existing outdoor recreation facilities are in good condition, meaning 25% or fewer are in need of expansion, upgrading or major improvements within the next five years:

1. OHV trails (ATV, dirt bikes, side-by-sides) (100%).
2. Snowmobile trails (100%).
3. Primitive campgrounds (73%).
4. Horse RV/camper sites (69%).
5. Semi-modern campgrounds (67%).
6. Adult non-regulation, youth soccer fields (67%).
7. Designated natural areas (66%).
8. Fat-tire bike trails (64%).
9. General natural areas (63%).
10. Disc or frisbee golf courses (62%).



Outdoor Recreation Facilities in Poor Condition

Providers report the following existing outdoor recreation facilities are in poor condition, meaning 51% or more are in need of expansion, upgrading or major improvements within the next five years:

1. Outdoor archery ranges (100%).
2. Nine-hole golf courses (70%).
3. Geocaching (63%).
4. Outdoor riding arenas (63%).
5. Regular outdoor swimming pools (63%).
6. Outdoor specialty pools (60%).
7. Outdoor rifle or pistol target ranges (60%).
8. Full-service camping rentals (60%).
9. Primitive or semi-modern camping rentals (57%).
10. Canoe and kayak rental facilities (56%).
11. Swimming bathhouses (56%).

User Experience Enhancement at Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Statewide providers report improving, expanding or adding the following amenities would most enhance users' experiences at their outdoor recreation facilities in multiple regions:

1. Canoeing and kayaking facilities (100%).
2. Shooting sports facilities (100%).
3. Trail conditions and support facilities (67%).
4. Horseback riding facilities (50%).
5. Parking areas (33%).
6. Walkways between facilities and activity areas (33%).

Keeping Pace with Demand for Outdoor Recreation

Of public outdoor recreation providers, 26% report a minimum of a 10% annual increase in operating and capital expenditures is needed each year for the next five years to keep pace with anticipated needs.

EXPENDITURE INCREASES	OPERATING	CAPITAL
No annual increase needed	9.7%	11.4%
1% to 3% increase per year	21.1%	17.1%
4% to 6% increase per year	26.9%	18.3%
7% to 9% increase per year	12.0%	10.9%
10% or more increase per year	18.3%	26.3%



Not taking into account the current inflationary environment, providers estimated that over the next five years, the total additional amount needed to fulfill the existing unmet capital needs reported by 134 public outdoor recreation providers is \$360 million.

Nonfunding Obstacles Prohibiting Expansion, Improvement

Other than funding, staffing and time are the largest obstacles (28%) preventing organizations from providing outdoor activities or facilities needed to meet demands. Land, spaces and green spaces (12%); lack of volunteers and time (11%); and planning, organizing, management, leadership, and marketing (9%) are also major factors.

RECOMMENDATIONS



OUTDOOR RECREATION IN NORTH DAKOTA

The demand for outdoor recreation is surging across North Dakota, adding to the stress on existing infrastructure and activities. Ninety-seven percent of the households in North Dakota believe outdoor recreation is important. With limited funding sources, it is important to prioritize needs to make sure the state and North Dakotans are getting the best return on their investments. Through SCORP, we get an overview of what users deem important and providers believe meets demands or needs attention.

97%	Importance of outdoor recreation	North Dakota households
49%	Demand for facilities and activities exceeds supply	North Dakota providers

The NDPRD, with input from the state’s public outdoor recreation stakeholders, is developing strategies to prioritize the development of North Dakota’s outdoor recreation infrastructure over the next five years.

Active partnerships are essential to meet outdoor recreation needs in North Dakota. At the core of the state’s outdoor recreation community are local, state, federal, and nonprofit providers and federally recognized tribes that offer infrastructure to support healthy, active lifestyles. All must engage to advance the goal of enhancing outdoor recreation across the state by:

- Identifying outdoor recreation needs.
- Expanding outdoor recreation opportunities to meet unmet needs.
- Ensuring existing facilities/infrastructure/programs are maintained and, where necessary, updated.

By identifying the outdoor recreational needs of North Dakotans, and expanding those opportunities to meet the demands of North Dakota’s citizens and visitors, we can ensure our facilities, infrastructure and programs are of high quality, affordable and accessible to outdoor enthusiasts.

IDENTIFYING OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS

North Dakotans are eager to take advantage of the outdoor recreation opportunities and the positive impacts that come with them, including:

- Building healthy communities by providing places to improve physical and mental health and bring people together.
- Contributing to the economy by supporting tourism, employment and higher property values
- Protecting our natural world by conserving the diversity of our landscapes and the variety of life, along with supporting clean air and water.

Public outdoor recreation providers like the NDPRD, local park districts, federal agencies such as the National Park Service, United States Forest Service, United States Army Corps of Engineers, and recreation associations have the primary responsibility for making sure the infrastructure is in place to meet the demand. The North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism Division and local convention and visitors bureaus play essential roles in marketing outdoor recreation, particularly to potential out-of-state visitors. Finally, health and wellness and physical activity advocates, such as the North Dakota Department of Health and the state’s health care systems, are essential partners in promoting the benefits of outdoor recreation in North Dakota.

North Dakotans who understand the diverse opportunities for and benefits of outdoor recreation are more likely to actively engage in outdoor recreation activities and support necessary infrastructure investments across the state.

EXPANDING OUTDOOR RECREATION TO MEET MET NEEDS

North Dakotans and visitors engage in outdoor recreation in countless ways. Hiking, walking, biking, or kayaking are popular activities statewide, but interest is growing in other, non-traditional activities like pickleball, electric biking, exercise trails, and geocaching. It will take a concentrated effort by elected and appointed officials and parks and recreation professionals, as public providers of outdoor recreation, to expand existing infrastructure and develop emerging infrastructure to serve the public need. Active partnerships that engage diverse sectors are critical, as are opportunities to share knowledge, experience, best practices, and resources.

Volunteers are needed to contribute time, expertise and funds to help expand and maintain outdoor recreation infrastructure as public providers do not have all of the resources necessary to meet outdoor recreation needs. Supporters are essential to build a strong stewardship ethic across the state and unite allies from all sectors of communities, including policymakers, business leaders and the public, to invest North Dakota's outdoor recreation infrastructure.

ENSURING INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATED/MAINTAINED AS NECESSARY

The information collected through SCORP provides the foundation for planning, funding and developing the state's outdoor recreation infrastructure and ensuring it meets the needs of North Dakotans and visitors alike. While this publication outlines overall recommendations, planning at all levels is critical to meeting needs.

Through coordinated planning with partners at the local, regional, state, and federal levels, funding from state and local taxes, user fees, grants, and private contributions help ensure diversification and expansion of outdoor recreation opportunities. A robust outdoor recreation infrastructure in North Dakota depends not only on the acquisition and conservation of land, but also on the development and maintenance of parks, natural areas and facilities.

Prioritization for this infrastructure is outlined in the section of this publication entitled "Facility Priorities: Outdoor Recreation in North Dakota." These outdoor recreation facility priorities will be utilized as part of the NDPRD's allocation of grant funds for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and Recreational Trails Program from 2023 to 2027.



FACILITY PRIORITIES



OUTDOOR RECREATION IN NORTH DAKOTA

Across much of North Dakota, demand for outdoor recreation opportunities exceeds the supply of accessible, high-quality infrastructure. Based on analysis of the demand for and supply of outdoor recreation in North Dakota, categories of facilities are prioritized for grant funding at the state level, as well as in the state’s eight legislatively determined planning regions, for the five-year period from 2023 to 2027.

It is important to note the foremost priority for the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, one of the largest sources of publicly supported grants for outdoor recreation in North Dakota, is the acquisition of public parks and recreation land.

Definitions

For both the household and provider surveys, the following definitions were utilized to identify different levels of amenities or support facilities available at parks, recreation areas or natural areas, trails, and campgrounds:

- Modern: Amenities such as restrooms, electricity and running water are available.
- Semi-modern: Limited amenities such as restrooms without electricity or running water are available.
- Primitive: No amenities are available.

The specific types of facilities included in the prioritized general categories of outdoor recreation facilities include:

- Campgrounds: group campsites, tent/RV/camper sites with and without electricity/water hookups, RV/camper dump stations, cabin/yurt rentals.
- Canoeing/kayaking facilities: launch ramps, docks, paddling trails.
- Golf courses: 18-hole courses, 9-hole courses, driving ranges, pitching/putting ranges.
- Motorized trails: off-highway vehicle (ATV, dirt bike or side-by-side), electric bike, snowmobile.

- Non-motorized trails: paved multi-use (walking, jogging, bicycling) trails, unpaved multi-use trails, unpaved hiking trails, unpaved mountain biking trails, exercise trails, horseback riding trails.
- Playgrounds/picnic areas/open space parks: group picnic shelters, family picnic sites, playgrounds, natural areas, multi-purpose open green space or playfields, amphitheaters.
- Recreational boating facilities: launch ramps without docks/slips, launch ramps with docks only, launch ramps/marinas with both docks and slips.
- Shooting sports facilities: rifle/pistol/trap/skeet ranges, archery ranges.
- Specialty facilities: dog parks, pet exercise areas, disc golf courses, horseshoe pits.
- Sports courts/fields: baseball fields, softball fields, football fields, soccer fields, tennis courts, pickleball courts, basketball courts, volleyball courts, track facilities, lighted fields/courts.
- Swimming/water facilities: swimming pools, specialty pools such as splash pads, swimming beaches, swimming bathhouses.
- Winter sports facilities: cross-country skiing/snowshoeing trails, fat-tire biking trails, ski/snowboard slopes, ski lifts, ski jumps, sledding/tubing hills, ice rinks.

STATEWIDE PRIORITIES

- 96.7% of North Dakota households report outdoor recreation is important.
- 70% of providers report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply.

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Non-motorized Trails	Canoe/Kayak Infrastructure	Shooting Sport Infrastructure
Campgrounds	Winter Sports Infrastructure	Lighted Courts/Fields
Parks/Recreational Areas	Recreational Boating Infrastructure	OHV Trails

Primary Needs

Ninety percent of North Dakota households are interested in using trails for walking, running, bicycling, or horseback riding. Households also expressed interest in using modern trails (74%), paved multi-use trails (69%), unpaved hiking trails (78%), unpaved multi-use trails (72%), and semi-modern trails (65%). While popular, semi-modern trails, hiking trails, modern and unpaved multi-use trails are primary weaknesses statewide. Households indicate a desire for expanded paved and unpaved non-motorized trails in parks and recreation areas. The following percentage of providers report demand exceeds supply: 53% for unpaved multi-use trails; 52% for paved multi-use trails, 45% for hiking trails, and 42% for mountain biking trails.

Eighty-nine percent of North Dakota households are interested in camping in a tent, camper or recreational vehicle. Eighty-two percent are interested in modern campgrounds with electricity, running water, restrooms, and showers and 68% prefer the use of a camper or RV. Sixty-three percent are interested in group camping in clusters of three to six sites with families and friends. Households want to see expanded and improved camping facilities. Rental cabins or yurts at campgrounds or parks are of interest to 62% of households in North Dakota, but they are seen as a primary weakness. Sixty-one percent of providers report demand for modern campgrounds exceeds supply.

Eighty-one percent of North Dakota households are interested in going to a park, natural area or green space to play on a playground, have a picnic, enjoy nature, or relax. Seventy-four percent are interested in visiting a modern park or natural area with electricity, running water and restrooms. Sixty-six percent are interested in visiting natural areas to enjoy nature and the outdoors. Of providers, 51% report demand exceeds the supply for modern parks, natural areas or green spaces. Forty-two percent see a need for more playgrounds.

Secondary Needs

Canoeing and kayaking are of interest to 70% of households, with 55% interested in using a primitive launch to get into and out of a river or lake. Fifty-seven percent would be interested in using a semi-modern launch area with amenities, and 55% would be interested in renting a canoe or kayak at a park or natural area on a lake or river. Fifty-three percent are interested in designated paddle trails.

Sixty-three percent of households statewide are interested in skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating, sledding, or similar winter activities.

Swimming outdoors is of interest to 60% of North Dakota households, while designated swimming beaches on lakes or river are of interest to 54%, such beaches are primary weaknesses statewide.

Using a boat, pontoon or personal watercraft for recreational boating other than fishing is of interest to 54% of North Dakota households. Sixty-four percent of households rate the number and quality of marinas and slips fair or poor, making it a secondary weakness.

Tertiary Needs

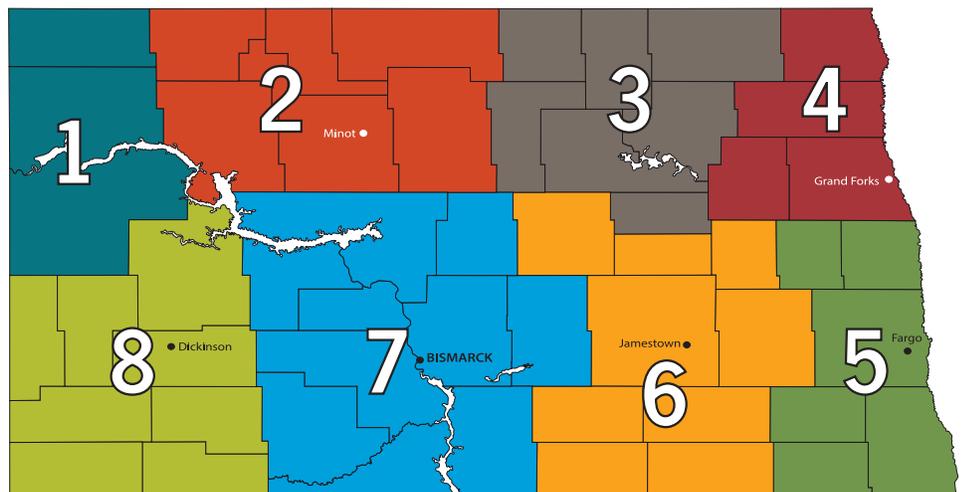
Using outdoor rifle or pistol ranges is of interest to 50% of North Dakota households, and archery ranges (secondary) and rifle or pistol ranges are (primary) weaknesses statewide.

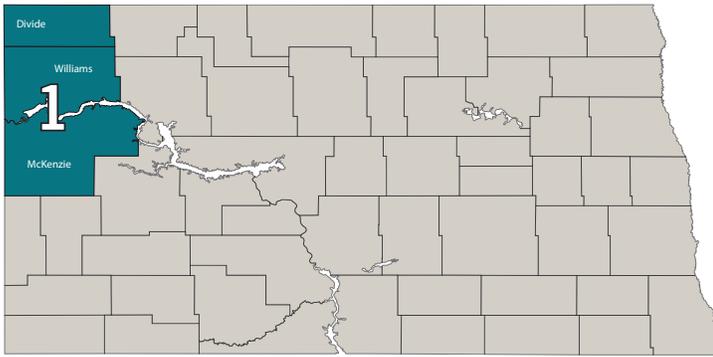
Playing a sport outdoors (other than for a school team) is of interest to 42% of North Dakota households. Lighted outdoor fields or courts are a secondary weakness.

Sixty-seven percent of households report demand exceeds supply for off-highway vehicle (ATV, dirt bike or side-by-side) trails.

PRIORITIES BY REGION

Recreational needs vary by region across North Dakota. Regions with significant urban populations have different resourcing opportunities and challenges than those in rural areas. Supply/demand, priorities and interests are summarized by region on the following pages to emphasize the infrastructure and activity needs around the state.





REGION 1 PRIORITIES

DIVIDE, WILLIAMS AND MCKENZIE COUNTIES

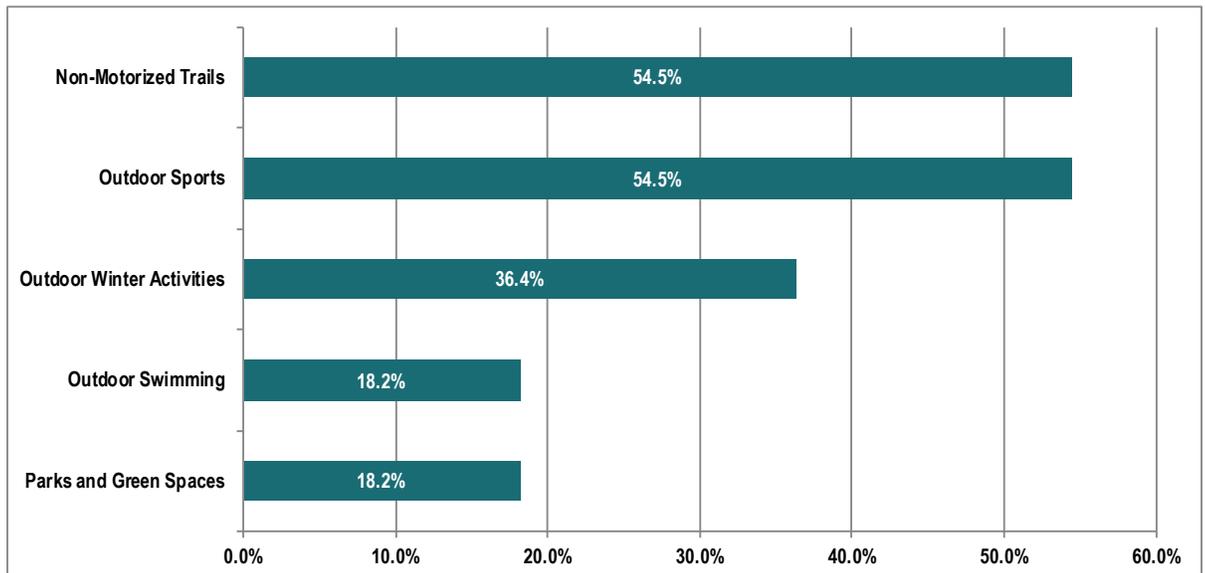
- 97% of Region 1 households report outdoor recreation is important.
- 91% of providers report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply.

Primary Needs

Camping in a tent, camper or RV is interesting to 100% of the households responding to the survey, while park usage is 84%. Interest in camping and parks increases based on amenities offered. Modern camping with full amenities is interesting to 95% of respondents; modern cabins and yurts 64%; and tent camping 39%. Ninety-eight percent of tenters, RVers and camper users, and those staying in modern cabins and yurts, are willing to drive more than 31 minutes to get to their destination. Seventy-four percent of providers in Region 1 report the demand for modern campgrounds exceeds supply, while between 41% and 73% report the same for all manners of camping.

Region 1 Provider Needs

The region's outdoor activities, areas or facilities that respondents felt their organization most needs to improve, expand, or add to better meet the needs of the population(s) they serve were combined into these categories.



Parks offering modern facilities were preferred by 84% of those surveyed. While popular, only 9% believe there is adequate numbers and quality of modern parks and 16% semi-modern parks. Providers indicate a large need (73%) to address a lack of modern parks and semi-modern picnic sites (64%). Roughly half (46%) say demand exceeds supply in natural areas for enjoying nature, and 73% see a need for more multi-purpose open green spaces or playfields.

Designated walking, biking, hiking, and jogging trails feature prominently in the survey, with 83% indicating interest in those activities. Of those, 71% preferred paved but only 22% felt the number of trails and quality of paved trails were adequate. Providers see paved and unpaved multi-use trails for walking, jogging and biking as an opportunity, and 82% see demand exceeding supply. Hiking (64%) and mountain biking (64%) are also needed. Sixty-four percent of providers say demand in modern trails exceeds supply.

Secondary Needs

Water activities like boating, kayaking and canoeing are important in Region 1. Using a boat, pontoon or personal watercraft for activities other than fishing was important to 75% of respondents, and canoeing and kayaking designated paddle trails was important to 66%. Boaters prefer a ramp (55%) over a marina (39%) to launch. Just 16% believe there is adequate primitive launching areas for kayaks and canoes. Providers agree across the board that primitive and semi-modern launch area demand exceeds supply, as does the need for marinas, docks and slips for recreational boaters.

Niche activities like geocaching and pickleball are growing in popularity, and more locations and courts will be needed in the future. Twenty-three percent of households are interested in geocaching and 29% feel the need for locations is being met. Among those interested in pickleball, 31% believe there are adequate courts, but providers are seeing more demand than supply (67%).

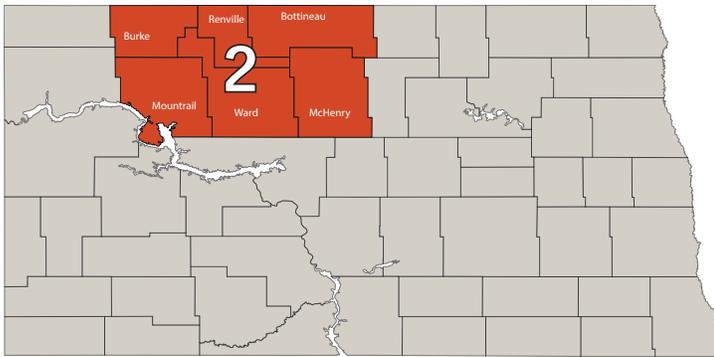
Tertiary Needs

Fifty-seven percent of households are interested in outdoor rifle, pistol or shotgun shooting ranges, while providers don't see demand exceeding the supply of facilities. Archery facilities are interesting to 31% of households.

Winter sports have a niche following in the region based on activities. Overall, 50% of households are interested in winter activities like skiing, sledding, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and ice skating. Eighty-two percent of providers say demand exceeds supply for cross-county skiing and snowshoes trails.

Sixty-two percent of households are interested in outdoor swimming pools and designated swimming beaches on rivers or lakes. Providers indicate demand exceeds supply for outdoor pools (55%), outdoor spray pads with no pool (64%) and swimming beaches (73%).

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Campgrounds	Water Recreation Infrastructure	Shooting Sports Infrastructure
Non-motorized Trails	Niche Sports (Pickleball, Geocaching)	Winter Activities Infrastructure
Modern Parks	Canoe/Kayak Infrastructure	Swimming/Specialty Pools



REGION 2 PRIORITIES

BOTTINEAU, BURKE, MCHENRY, MOUNTRAIL, RENVILLE, AND WARD COUNTIES

- 97% of Region 2 households report outdoor recreation is important.
- 59% of providers report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply.

Primary Needs

Ninety-four percent of households in Region 2 are interested in camping in tents, RVs and campers. Modern camping is preferred by 90%, while 68% are interested in cabins and yurts. Sixty-four percent prefer group camping, but across the board, campers believe quantity and quality of facilities are lacking. In Region 2, 94% of respondents are willing to travel more than an hour to get to their camping location. Region providers indicated supply is sufficient for demand for primitive (41%) and semi-modern campgrounds (35%)

but demand exceeds supply in modern campgrounds (71%) and RV and camper sites with 50-amp hookups (65%).

Eighty-two percent of households in Region 2 are interested in going to a park, natural area or green space to play or relax. Modern parks are preferred by 79%, and 74% are interested in picnicking in a park or recreation area. Providers indicate the supply of primitive (47%) and semi-modern (53%) is sufficient to meet demand. But 59% indicate demand exceeds supply for modern areas. Forty-seven percent of providers indicate the supply of multi-purpose parks and green spaces to picnic, play and relax meets the region's demands. Eighty-two percent feel it is important to improve the region's condition and maintenance of general purpose parks, recreation areas and natural areas.

Paved and unpaved trails are important, as 79% of households show an interest in paved walking, jogging and biking trails and 79% are interested in those with modern amenities. Seventy-six percent enjoy unpaved trails, while 37% use trails for horseback riding, more than any other region in the state. Eighty-two percent of providers in the region indicate demand exceeds supply for multi-use walking, jogging and biking trails and unpaved multi-use trails. Fifty-three percent feels the same way about non-motorized trails.

Secondary Needs

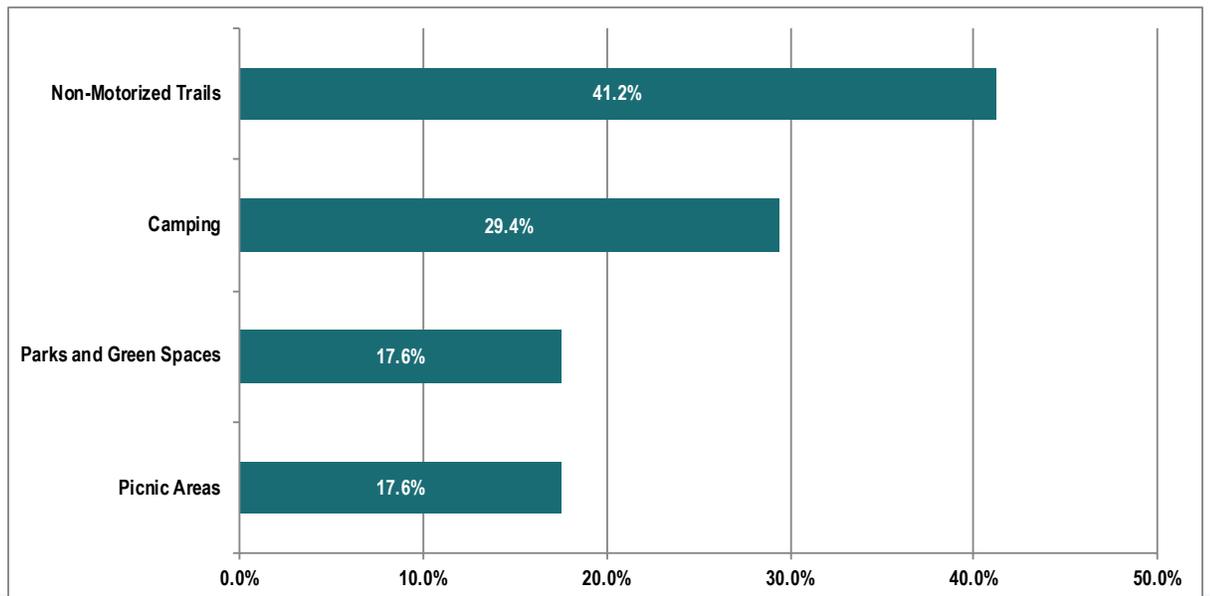
Seventy-four percent of households in the region are interested in canoeing and kayaking and it doesn't matter whether the launch areas are primitive (60%) or semi-modern (61%) or if they own or rent (62%) canoes or kayaks. Paddle trails and rental facilities are perceived as lacking in the region. Excluding rental facilities, of which 35% of providers believe demand exceeds supply, kayak infrastructure is adequate for the need.

Boating and using personal watercraft are interesting to 73% of the households in the region. Sixty percent are interested in using boat ramps but only 49% are interested in marinas. Seventy-two percent of households are interested in swimming, with 63% interested in outdoor pools, 65% in splash and spray areas and 66% in lakes and rivers. Providers indicate infrastructure supply meets the demand.

Skiing, snowshoeing, sledding, tubing, and other winter activities are of interest to 65% of respondents, with sledding and tubing drawing the most interest at 52%. Providers indicate supply mostly meets the demand in most winter activities.

Region 2 Provider Needs

The region's outdoor activities, areas or facilities that respondents felt their organization most needs to improve, expand or add to better meet the needs of the population(s) they serve were combined into these categories:

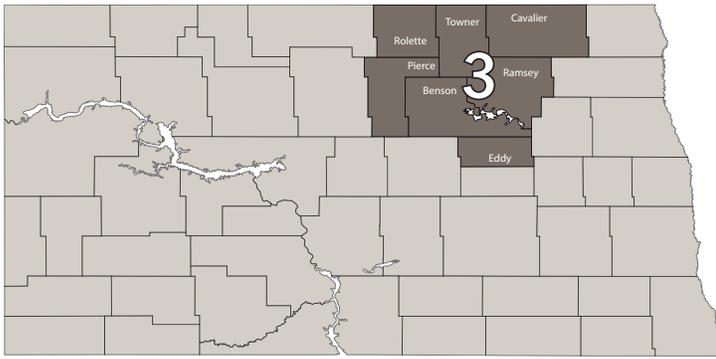


Tertiary Needs

Forty-eight percent of households in the region are interested in lighted playgrounds that can be used later into the evening, and 81% see that as a weakness in the region.

Sixty-four percent of households are interested in outdoor shooting ranges, including rifle and pistol (57%), shotgun (51%) and archery (47%). Providers indicate supply mostly meets the demand.

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Campgrounds	Water Recreation Infrastructure	Lighted Playgrounds
Non-motorized Trails	Canoe/Kayak Infrastructure	Shooting Sports Infrastructure
Parks and Natural Areas	Winter Activities Infrastructure	Outdoor Archery Infrastructure



REGION 3 PRIORITIES

BENSON, CAVALIER, EDDY, PIERCE, RAMSEY, ROLETTE, AND TOWNER COUNTIES

- 95% of Region 3 households report outdoor recreation is important.
- 77% of providers report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply.

Primary Needs

Ninety-five percent of the households in Region 3 are interested in camping, with modern campgrounds favored by 95%, 62% preferring to stay in campers or RVs and 49% interested in group camping. Semi-modern, offering amenities except running water, is interesting to 50% of households. Those interested in renting cabins, yurts, permanent tents, or teepees (69%) prefer primitive or semi-modern (55%) over modern (49%) or full-service (36%). Excluding group camping sites and modern cabins, households in the region rate the quantity and quality of the camping facilities excellent to good. Sixty-nine percent

of providers indicate demand for modern campgrounds exceeds supply, with the most indicating the gap is largest in group camping site (54%) and sites for campers under 35 feet (54%).

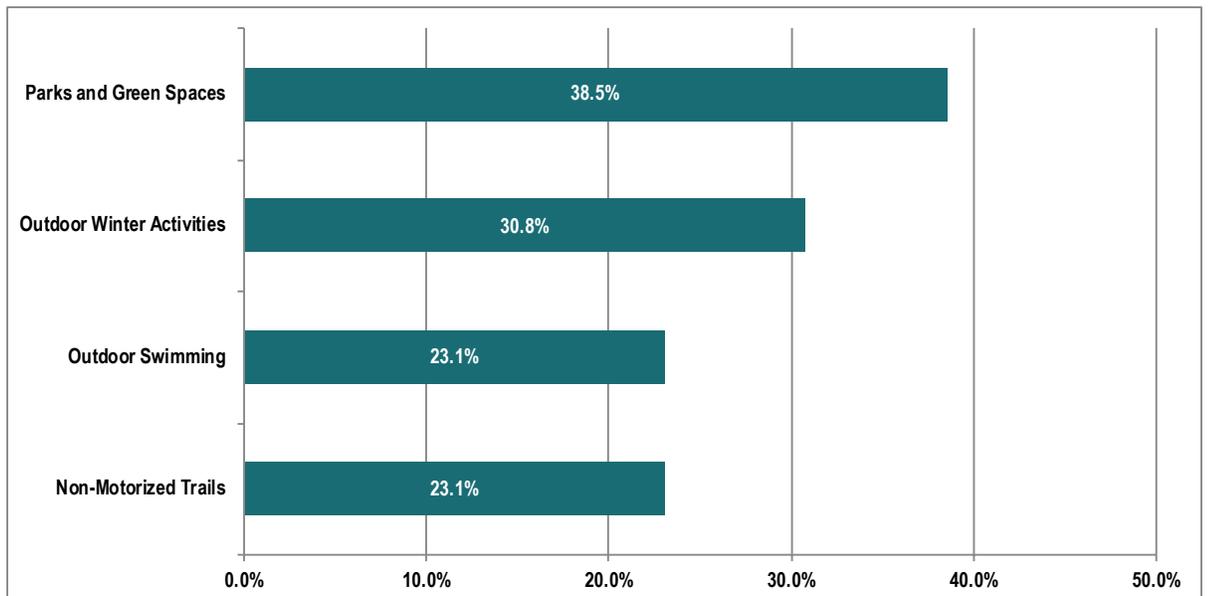
Ninety-one percent of Region 3 households are interested in using designated trails for walking, running, bicycling, or horseback riding, and 60% are interested in doing so on an unpaved trail. Seventy-eight percent are interested in unpaved hiking trails, and 59% are interested in paved hiking trails. Modern trails are of interest to 71% of households, while primitive trails are interesting to 61%. Fewer than 50% of providers believe demand for trails in the region exceeds supply.

Canoeing and kayaking is interesting to 72% of the households in the region. Seventy percent are interested in renting a canoe or kayak to use on an area river or lake. Thirty-eight percent would follow a designated paddling trail, and sixty-three percent are interested in launching from a primitive site or a semi-modern site.

Sixty-six percent of households in the region are interested in going to a park, recreation area or natural area to play, watch wildlife, enjoy nature, and relax. Fifty-three percent are interested in birding and watching wildlife. Visiting recreation areas with modern amenities interests 66% of households in the region. Forty-one percent of households are interested in geocaching. Park access and quality is a strength in this region.

Region 3 Provider Needs

The region's outdoor activities, areas or facilities that respondents felt their organization most needs to improve, expand or add to better meet the needs of the population(s) they serve were combined into these categories.



Secondary Needs

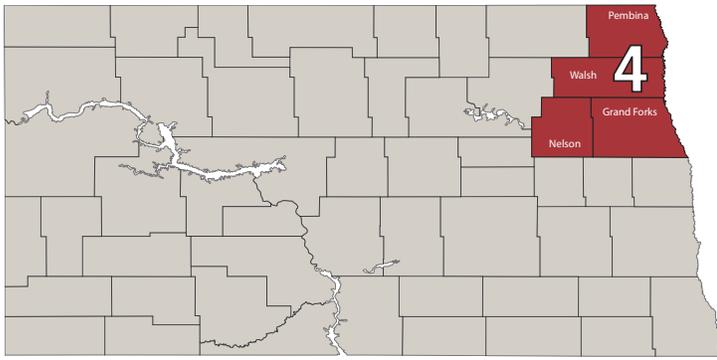
Winter activities are interesting to 57% of households in Region 3. Forty-two percent are interested in cross-country snowshoe trails, while 35% are interested in tubing and sledding and 32% in ice skating and hockey. Sixty-four percent of households are interested in snowmobile trails. Fifty-three percent of providers indicate demand for cross-country skiing and snowshoe trails exceeds supply.

Forty-seven percent of households in the region are interested in using an outdoor rifle or pistol range, while 51% are interested in trap, skeet or sporting clays. Fifty-four percent of providers indicate a need for more rifle and pistol ranges and archery ranges.

Tertiary Needs

Forty-two percent of households are interested in ATV, dirt bike or side-by-side trail riding and 41% are interested in geocaching.

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Campgrounds	Water Recreation Infrastructure	OHV Trails
Non-motorized Trails	Winter Activities Infrastructure	Geocaching
Parks and Natural Areas	Shooting Sports Infrastructure	
Canoe/Kayak Infrastructure		



REGION 4 PRIORITIES

GRAND FORKS, NELSON, PEMBINA, AND NELSON COUNTIES

- 95% of Region 4 households report outdoor recreation is important.
- 67% of providers report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply.

Primary Needs

Ninety-three percent of households in Region 4 are interested in using a designated trail to walk, bike, jog, or ride a horse. Eighty-one percent are interested in modern trails and another 81% would enjoy hiking on designated unpaved trails. Designated paved walking, jogging or biking trails are interesting to 80% of households, but less than 40% of respondents believe the quantity and quality of modern, semi-modern or primitive trails are sufficient. Providers indicate the demand exceeds supply in most types of trails: paved multi-use (40%), unpaved multi-use (60%), hiking (53%), mountain biking (60%), and ATV, dirt bike or side-by-side (53%). Forty-seven percent see demand exceeding supply in primitive, semi-modern and modern trail.

Eighty-seven percent of region households have an interest in visiting a park, recreation area or natural space to play, enjoy nature, watch wildlife, or relax. Sixty-nine percent prefer stargazing or just watching nature and 77% lean toward modern parks with full amenities. The majority of those surveyed believe the region's quantity and quality of parks meets or exceeds the region's needs.

Seventy-five percent of households have an interest in camping and lean toward modern camping with all amenities (67%) in an RV or camper (54%), while providers (60%) indicate demand exceeds supply. Tenting is interesting to 45% of households but less than 20% of respondents believe the region has adequate quantity and quantity of primitive campgrounds. Fifty percent of households are interested in staying in a modern yurt, cabin or similar structure, but only 15% believe the region has an adequate number of quality facilities.

Winter activities are interesting to 78% of households in the region. Fifty-seven percent show interest in sledding and tubing and 53% in cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Ice skating and hockey are of interest to 43%, but households rate facilities 74% adequate in quality and quantity for skating and hockey and 63% for cross-country and snowshoeing trails. Most providers do not see a large gap between demand and supply.

Secondary Needs

In Region 4, 71% of households are interested in canoeing and kayaking, with 53% interested in semi-modern launches and 52% interested in primitive launches. Fifty-two percent would paddle a designated paddle trail and 55% are interested in renting a canoe or kayak to use in a lake or river. Providers do not see a large gap between demand and supply.

Sixty-six percent of households in the region are interested in some form of outdoor swimming, with 58% interested in outdoor swimming pools. Households also are interested in specialty pools like wave pools and splash pools (55%) and spray pads without pools (46%). Swim beaches and lakes and rivers are interesting to 56% of households.

Tertiary Needs

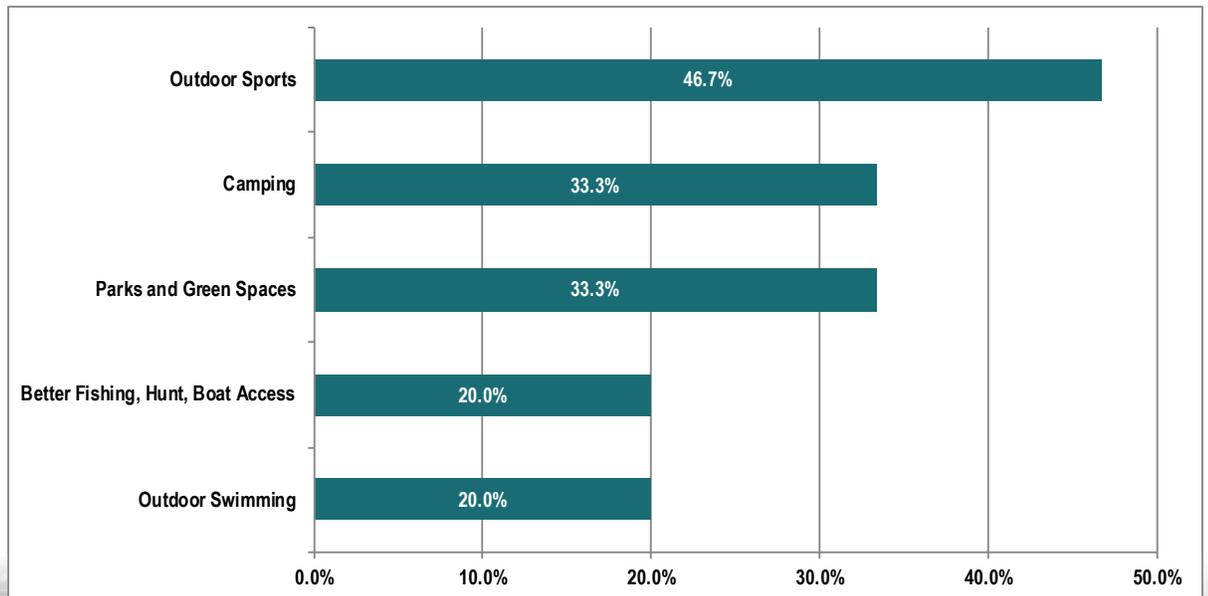
Fifty-three percent of households in Region 4 are interested in boating, personal watercrafts and pontoons for recreation other than fishing. Only 28% are interested in a boat ramp or landing to launch and 18% are interested in marinas or slips.

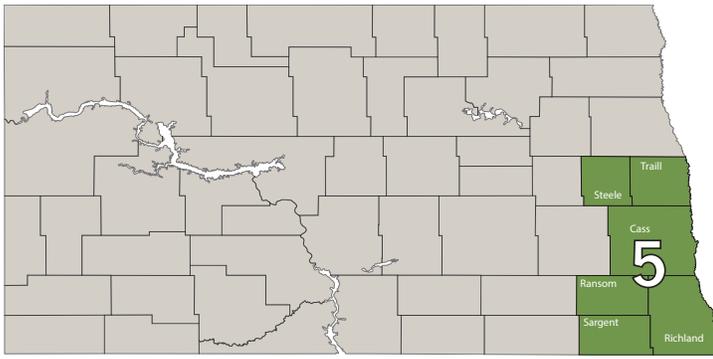
Forty-seven percent of households have an interest in outdoor shooting ranges. Clay, skeet and trap shooting are interesting to 54% of household, rifle and pistol to 39% and archery to 38%. Fifty-four percent of providers say demand exceeds supply in rifle, pistol and archery ranges.

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Campgrounds	Canoe/Kayak Infrastructure	Water Recreation Infrastructure
Non-motorized Trails	Swimming/Specialty Pools	Shooting Sports Infrastructure
Parks and Natural Areas	Lake/Beach Infrastructure	Outdoor Archery Infrastructure
Winter Activities Infrastructure		

Region 4 Provider Needs

The region's outdoor activities, areas or facilities that respondents felt their organization most needs to improve, expand or add to better meet the needs of the population(s) they serve were combined into these categories:





REGION 5 PRIORITIES

CASS, RANSOM, RICHLAND, SARGENT, TRAILL, AND STEELE COUNTIES

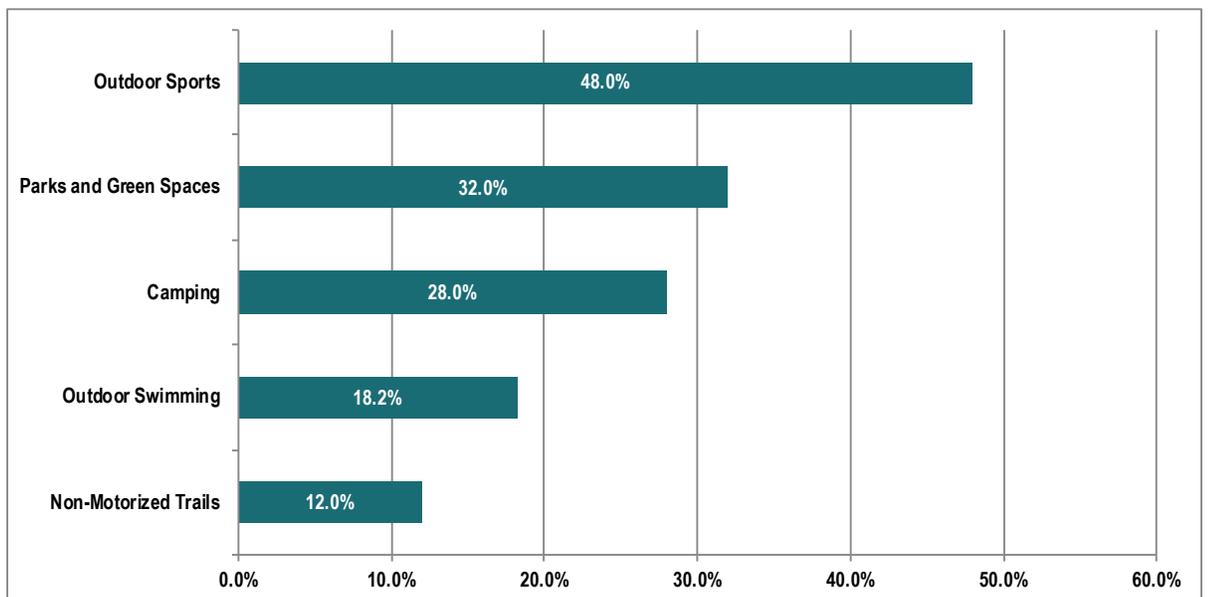
- 98% of Region 5 households report outdoor recreation is important.
- 56% of providers report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply.

Primary Needs

Eighty-nine percent of households have an interest in camping and lean toward modern camping with all amenities (78%) in an RV or camper (62%). Tenting is interesting to 56% of households, but only 24% of respondents believe the region has adequate quantity and quality of primitive campgrounds. Fifty-one percent of households are interested in staying in a modern yurt, cabin or similar structure, but only 22% believe the region has an adequate number of quality facilities. Providers believe supply meets the demand in all but modern campgrounds, where 56% indicate the opposite. Demand also exceeds supply in group campsites for three to six sites (52%) and large and small (under 35 feet) RVs. Fifty-seven percent of households indicated an interest in renting a cabin, yurt, permanent tent, or teepee.

Region 5 Provider Needs

The region's outdoor activities, areas or facilities that respondents felt their organization most needs to improve, expand or add to better meet the needs of the population(s) they serve were combined into these categories:



Eighty-six percent of households in the region are interested in using a designated trail to walk, bike or jog or ride a horse. Seventy percent are interested in modern trails and another 81% would enjoy hiking on designated unpaved trails. Designated paved walking, jogging or biking trails are interesting to 55% of households. Only 24% believe the region's modern trails are of sufficient quality and number. But less than 40% of respondents believe the quantity and quality of modern, semi-modern or primitive trails are sufficient. More than half of providers indicate demand exceeds supply for unpaved (52%) and paved (52%) multi-use trails.

Eighty-two percent of region households have an interest in visiting a park, recreation area or natural space to play, enjoy nature, watch wildlife, or relax. Seventy-one percent prefer stargazing or just enjoying nature and 51% are interested in an educational element. Seventy-three percent are interested in modern areas with full amenities.

Secondary Needs

In Region 5, 68% of households are interested in picnicking at a park or natural area, with 94% wanting a table in a shaded area.

Sixty-seven percent of households are interested in canoeing and kayaking, with 58% interested in semi-modern launches and 52% interested in primitive launches. Fifty-two percent would rent a canoe or kayak to use on a lake or river and 50% would paddle a designated paddle trail. Providers are equally divided about the demand and supply issue, with 52% believing demand is the same as supply for primitive launch areas and 48% feeling the same way about semi-modern launches.

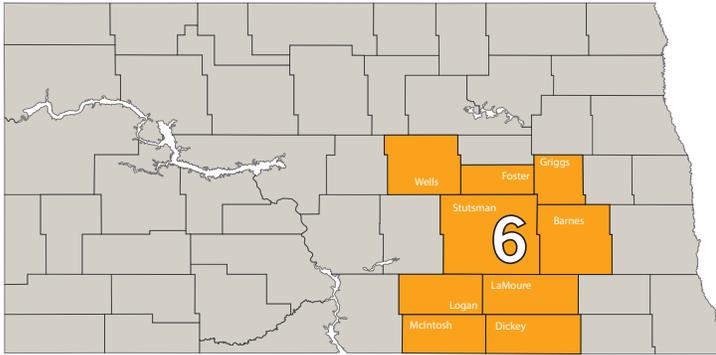
Winter activities are interesting to 60% of households in the region. Thirty-nine percent show interest in sledding and tubing and 38% in cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Ice skating and hockey are of interest to 24% and households rate facilities 64% adequate in quality and quantity for skating and hockey and 44% for cross-country and snowshoeing trails. Providers consider the region's supply adequate for demand.

Tertiary Needs

Fifty-four percent of households in the region are interested in some form of outdoor swimming, with 40% interested in outdoor swimming pools. Households also are interested in specialty pools like wave pools and splash pools (36%) and spray pads without pools (24%). Swim beaches and lakes and rivers are interesting to 47% of households. Providers see demands exceeding supply in spray pads (52%), splash pads (48%) and outdoor swimming pools (36%).

Using an outdoor shooting range is interesting to 43% of the region's households, with 42% interested in archery, 40% in rifle and pistol ranges and 29% in trap, skeet or clay shooting ranges. Providers are equally split (32%) between demand exceeding supply and supply equaling demand.

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Campgrounds	Canoe/Kayak Infrastructure	Swimming/Specialty Pools
Non-motorized Trails	Picnicking Areas	Lake/Beach Infrastructure
Parks and Natural Areas	Winter Activities Infrastructure	Shooting Sports Infrastructure



REGION 6 PRIORITIES

BARNES, DICKEY, FOSTER, GRIGGS, LAMOURE, LOGAN, MCINTOSH, STUTSMAN, AND WELLS COUNTIES

- 91% of Region 6 households report outdoor recreation is important.
- 76% of providers report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply.

Primary Needs

Ninety-four percent of the households in Region 6 are interested in using designated trails for walking, running, biking, and horseback riding. Seventy-six percent are interested in paved walking, jogging and biking trails, while 68% are interested in unpaved trails. Seventy-two percent of those interested in hiking are most interested in unpaved hiking trails. Modern campgrounds are most interesting (73%). Providers indicate demand exceeds supply in paved (64%) and unpaved (60%) multi-use trails, hiking trails (60%) and mountain biking and motorized trails (48%). Demand exceeds supply in primitive trails (60%), semi-modern (48%) and modern (48%) trails.

Camping in a park or recreation area in a tent, camper or RV is interesting to 85% of the respondents in Region 6, with a vast majority (79%) interested in staying in an RV or camper in a modern (80%) campground. Of those interested in camping, only 24% were interested in tent camping and camping in a primitive campground. Group camping with three to six campers is interesting to 62% of households. Sixty-two percent would be interested in a cabin or yurt. Providers report demand exceeds supply mostly in modern campgrounds (56%), group sites (48%), campsites for campers over 35 feet (52%), up to 35 feet (44%), and RV/camper sites with 50-amp service (68%).

Seventy-five percent of households are interested in going to a park, recreation area or nature area to play, relax, watch wildlife, and just have fun. Seventy-one percent are interested in parks with modern amenities so they can enjoy nature (52%) or relax or learn about the history and culture of the area (51%).

Secondary Needs

Sixty-five percent of households in the region are interested in kayaking and canoeing, although just 38% are interested in paddling a designated paddle trail. Forty-six percent are interested in renting a canoe or kayak to use on a lake or river.

Outdoor swimming pools, splash pads, wave pools, and spray grounds are interesting to 62% of the households in the region. Fifty-one percent are most interested in pools and 50% are interested in specialty pools and swim beaches on lakes and rivers.

Tertiary Needs

Fifty-nine percent of Region 6 households are interested in boating, pontoons and personal watercraft for purposes other than fishing.

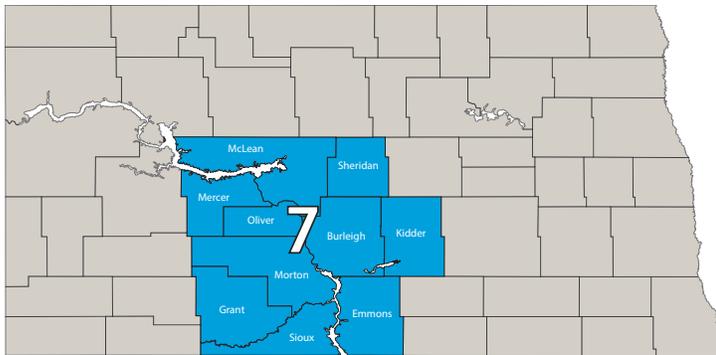
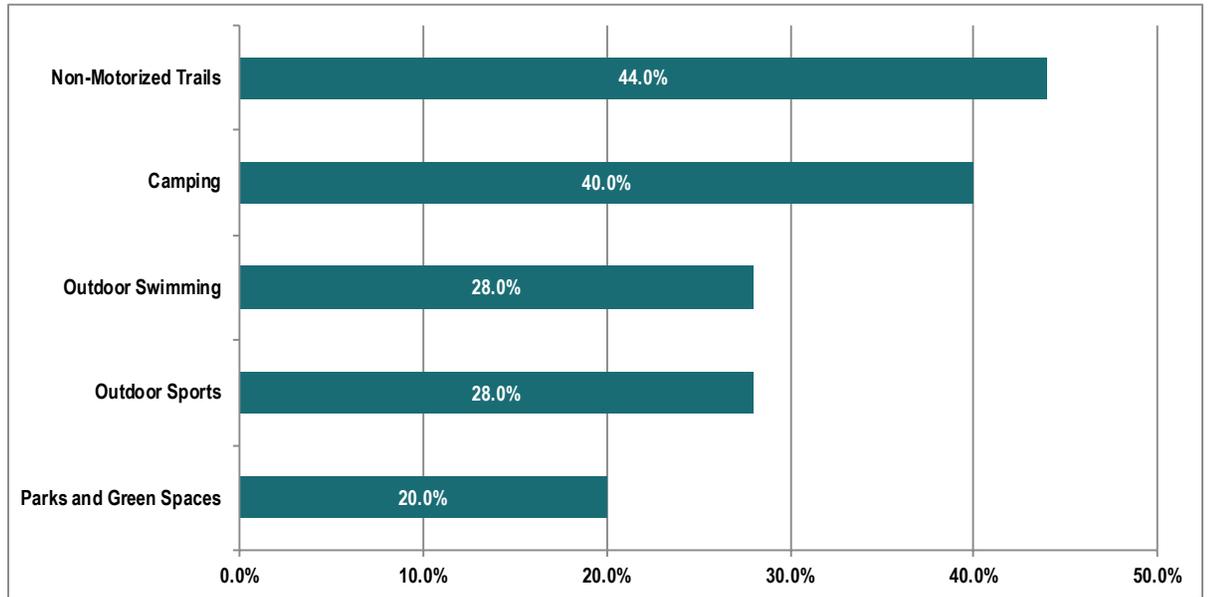
Fifty-two percent of Region 6 households are interested in winter activities like sledding and tubing (32%), downhill skiing and snowboarding (24%), cross-country skiing and snowshoeing (23%), and ice skating and hockey (16%). Providers indicate supplies are equal to demand.

Shooting ranges interest 44% of the region's households, with 37% interested in rifle and pistol ranges and 33% in trap, skeet or sporting clays. Forty-eight percent of providers say demand exceeds supply.

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Campgrounds	Canoe/Kayak Infrastructure	Recreational Boating Infrastructure
Non-motorized Trails	Swimming/Specialty Pools	Winter Activities Infrastructure
Parks and Natural Areas	Lake/Beach Infrastructure	Shooting Sports Infrastructure

Region 6 Provider Needs

The region's outdoor activities, areas or facilities that respondents felt their organization most needs to improve, expand or add to better meet the needs of the population(s) they serve were combined into these categories.



REGION 7 PRIORITIES

BURLEIGH, EMMONS, GRANT, KIDDER, MERCER, MCLEAN, MORTON, OLIVER, SHERIDAN, AND SIOUX COUNTIES

- 97% of Region 7 households report outdoor recreation is important.
- 72% of providers report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply.

Primary Needs

Ninety-two percent of the households surveyed are interested in using designated trails for walking, running, biking, or horseback riding. Seventy-eight percent are interested in unpaved hiking trails, and 76% in designated walking, jogging or biking trails, while 68% prefer designated unpaved walking, jogging or biking trails. Respondents rate the quantity and quality of trails in the region among the best in the state, with unpaved hiking trails rating 56%, unpaved walking trails 60% and paved trails 69%. Seventy-eight percent of households are most interested in trails with modern facilities. Providers are split in assessing demand and supply of paved multi-use trails (50%), and most believe other trails are adequate.

Camping is of interest to 87% of households in the region, with 81% interested in modern campgrounds with all amenities; 66% interested in camper or RV camping; and 54% showing interest in group camping with between three

and six other camping groups. The number drops to 40% interested in primitive camp. Sixty-eight percent of households are interested in renting a cabin, yurt or similar permanent structure, with 59% most interested in modern facilities. Fifty-six percent of providers indicate demand of modern campgrounds exceeds supply and 50% percent feel the same about sites suitable for RVs longer than 45 feet.

Eighty-three percent of household in Region 7 are interested in going to parks, recreation areas or natural areas to play, enjoy nature, relax, and watch wildlife. Seventy-four percent are interested in modern parks with all amenities where they could enjoy nature (63%), play games and relax (53%), visit an interpretive center to learn the history and culture of the area (53%), and learn more about Native American culture (49%). Fifty-three percent of providers indicated demand for playgrounds exceeds supply.

Secondary Needs

Kayaking and canoeing are of interest to 75% of households in the region. The majority (62%) are interested in semi-modern launch areas, while 59% are interested in primitive launches. Sixty percent are interested in designated paddle trails, and 57% would rent a canoe or kayak for use on a lake or river.

Picnicking at a park, recreation area or natural area is interesting to 67% of the people, most of whom prefer the site have a table (93%), garbage cans (89%) and shade (78%). Eighty-one percent of households believe the region has adequate quantity and quality of semi-modern picnic sites.

Fifty-eight percent of Region 7 households are interested in outdoor swimming, splash pads, wave pools, or spray grounds and 50% are interested in swimming beaches on a lake or river. The only segment providers feel that demand exceeds supply is in swim beaches on rivers or area lake (47%).

Shooting at a rifle, pistol or shotgun range is interesting to 51% of households. Providers see sufficient supply to meet demand.

Tertiary Needs

Fifty-six percent of households in Region 7 are interested in boating, personal watercrafts and pontoons for recreation other than fishing. Only 43% are interested in a boat ramp or landing to launch and 25% are interested in marinas or slips.

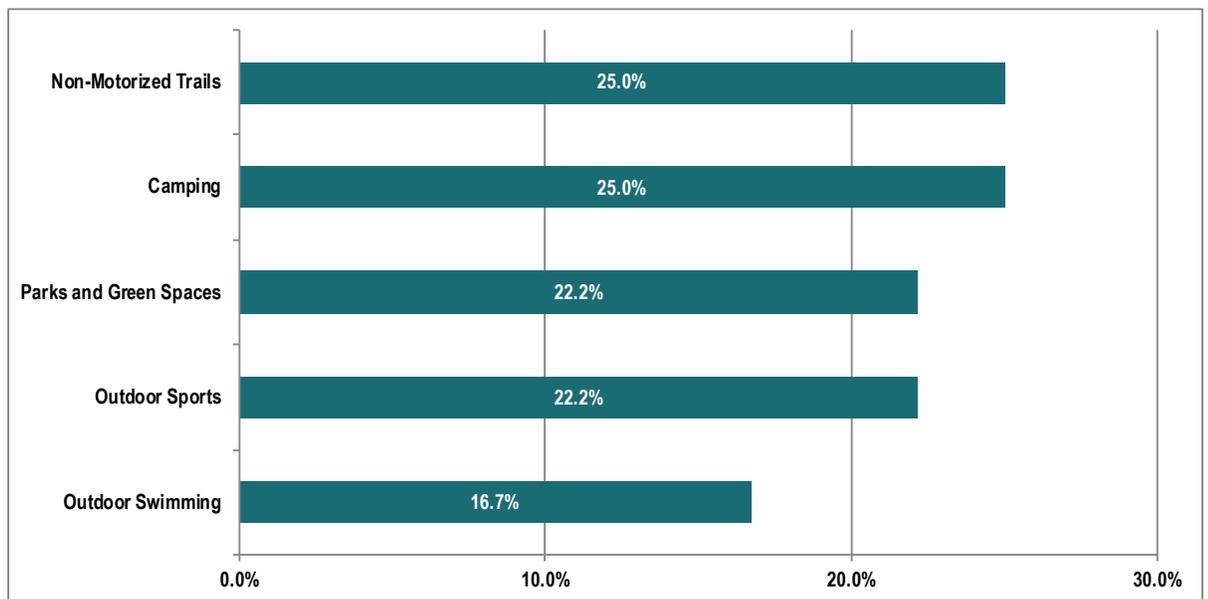
Winter activities are of interest to 52% of households, with skating and snowshoeing of interest to 52%, sledding and tubing to 45%, and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing to 43%. Ice skating interested 52%.

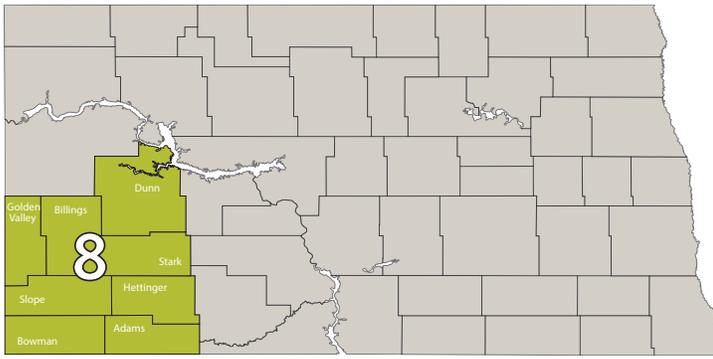
Thirty-nine percent are interested in golfing, 34% in geocaching and 33% in disc golfing.

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Campgrounds	Canoe/Kayak Infrastructure	Recreational Boating Infrastructure
Non-motorized Trails	Picnicking Areas	Winter Activities Infrastructure
Parks and Natural Areas	Shooting Sports Infrastructure	Golf Courses

Region 7 Provider Needs

The region's outdoor activities, areas or facilities that respondents felt their organization most needs to improve, expand or add to better meet the needs of the population(s) they serve were combined into these categories:





REGION 8 PRIORITIES

ADAMS, BILLINGS, BOWMAN, DUNN, GOLDEN VALLEY, HETTINGER, SLOPE, AND STARK COUNTIES

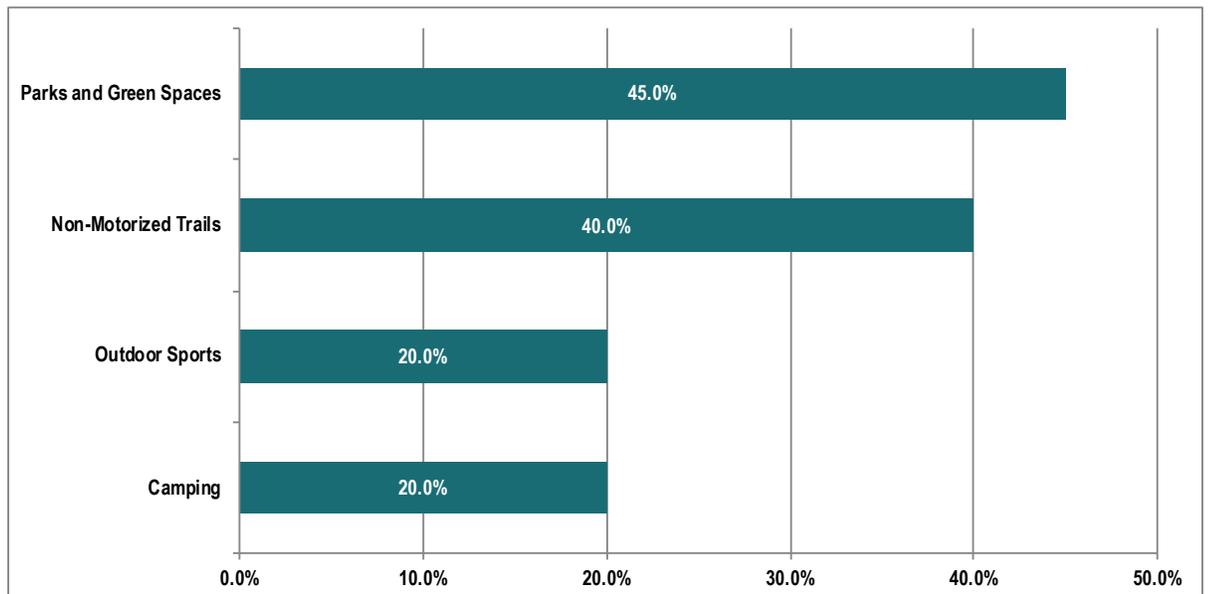
- 100% of Region 8 households report outdoor recreation is important.
- 75% of providers report demand for outdoor recreation facilities and activities exceeds supply.

Primary Needs

Ninety-six percent of households in Region 8 report they are interested in camping in a tent, RV or camper, and 55% are interested in renting a cabin, yurt or permanent tent. Seventy-five percent of those surveyed have an interest in camper or RV camping and 92% are interested in camping in a modern campground. Group camping with three to six units is interesting to 50%. Seventy-six percent of households believe the region has good quantity and quality of primitive campgrounds, and 50% feel the same about modern campgrounds. Fifty-five percent of providers indicate demand exceeds supply for modern camping rentals and modern campgrounds.

Region 8 Provider Needs

The region's outdoor activities, areas or facilities that respondents felt their organization most needs to improve, expand or add to better meet the needs of the population(s) they serve were combined into these categories.



Ninety-four percent of households in Region 8 are interested in trails for walking, running, biking, or horseback riding, with 83% interested in modern trails and 72% interested in unpaved walking, running and biking trails and 72% in unpaved hiking trails. Designated paved walking, running or biking trails draw the interest of 70% of the respondents. Thirty-four percent of households are interested in using designated ATV, dirt bike or side-by-side trails, but only 7% believe the region has adequate quality or quantity of those trails. Fifty percent of providers believe demand for paved multi-use trails exceeds supply, while 60% feel the same about exercise trails with equipment along the trail.

In Region 8, 73% of households are interested in going to a park, recreation area or natural area to play, have fun, enjoy nature, relax, watch wildlife or visit an interpretive center. Sixty-two percent are interested in being out in nature, while 49% are interested in an interpretive center. Sixty-five percent of households are more interested in visiting parks with modern amenities. More than 60% of respondents rate the quantity and quality of modern, semi-modern and primitive parks in the region as good or better.

Secondary Needs

Outdoor swimming is interesting to 69% of households in Region 8, with the majority (60%) interested in outdoor swimming pools and 64% interested in utilizing a swimming beach on a lake or river. Fifty-eight percent are interested in specialty areas like wave pools or splash pads. While 34% of region households rated their quantity and quality of outdoor swimming pools as good to excellent, just 16% rate as good their region's quantity and quality of specialty pools.



PLAN DEVELOPMENT

OUTDOOR RECREATION IN NORTH DAKOTA

In September 2021, the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department (NDPRD) contracted with Clearwater Communications, Bismarck, to perform survey and planning services to develop the 2023-2027 North Dakota State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), along with two companion publications, Recreational Trail Needs and Wetlands Priorities.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Clearwater Communications subcontracted with Winkelman Consulting, Fargo, to complete the research portion of the project, which included surveys of North Dakota households and outdoor recreation providers to determine demand for and supply of outdoor recreation facilities in the state.

Household Survey

The population for this study consisted primarily of 45,000+ individuals the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department (NDDRP) both identified as likely outdoor recreation users and had email addresses. All communication with this population was performed by NDPRD via email and its website. To supplement this population, NDPRD asked other North Dakota outdoor recreation providers to share the web survey link with the outdoor recreation users they serve. No sampling technique was used since NDPRD and other outdoor recreation providers sent the web survey link to all individuals they identified as likely outdoor recreation users and had email addresses. A total of 1,756 North Dakota and out-of-state respondents answered at least one question on the web survey, 1,539 North Dakota and out-of-state respondents were included in the “unweighted” analysis, and 1,261 North Dakota respondents were included in the “weighted” statewide analysis.

A minimum of 800 completed surveys was targeted for the “weighted” statewide sample (roughly 100 per region). The 1,261 North Dakotans included in the “weighted” statewide sample were weighted in a manner that the statewide “weighted” sample

Sixty-eight percent of households in the region are interested in winter activities, with 40% interested in sledding or tubing and 37% in cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

Canoeing and kayaking has the interest of 65% of households in Region 8. Sixty-percent are interested in semi-modern launch sites and 51% in designated paddle trails. However, only 4% of households rate the quantity or quality of paddle trails as good to excellent, while 66% rate them fair or poor.

Tertiary Needs

Fifty-seven percent of households in the region are interested in boats, pontoons and personal watercraft for purposes other than fishing and 47% in using a boat ramp to launch as opposed to a marina or slip.

Picnicking in parks and recreation areas is interesting to 63% of households. Tables (94%), garbage receptacles (95%) and shade (83%) are important factors in finding a location.

Outdoor shooting ranges are of interest to 49% of households. Ninety-three percent of those interested in shotgun ranges rate the quantity of facilities and the quality at fair to poor, as do 85% for pistol ranges and 72% for archery ranges. Forty-percent of providers indicate the rifle, pistol and shotgun ranges meet the demand.

PRIMARY NEEDS	SECONDARY NEEDS	TERTIARY NEEDS
Campgrounds	Swimming/Specialty Pools	Recreational Boating Infrastructure
Non-motorized Trails	Winter Activities Infrastructure	Picnicking Areas
Parks and Natural Areas	Canoe/Kayak Infrastructure	Shooting Sports Infrastructure

was representative of the state’s actual 2020 population distribution based on region, age, and gender. The 1,261 web surveys completed by likely North Dakota outdoor recreation users provide a 95% confidence level with an overall minimum and maximum margin of error of $\pm 1.7\%$ and $\pm 2.8\%$, respectively, in estimating the proportion of likely North Dakota outdoor recreation users who possess a certain characteristic or opinion.

All data was collected through the use of web surveys. Data collection was conducted from January 8 to March 4, 2022. Again, all communication with this population was performed by NDPRD via email and its website; and supplemented by other outdoor recreation providers. The web survey was designed by Winkelman Consulting and developed and hosted by KKBOLD.

Provider Survey

The population for this study consisted of the 1,155 North Dakotan outdoor recreation providers and stakeholders identified by NDPRD (708), Clearwater Communications (98), and Winkelman Consulting (349). Contact names, mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and/or email addresses were obtained from NDPRD and Clearwater Communications. Of the 1,155 potential respondents, an email address was provided for 962 potential respondents, a mailing address was provided for 665, and both were provided for 468. No sampling technique was employed in this study to select respondents, since all identified providers and stakeholders were asked to participate in the study. Given the expanded number of questions on the survey, the incomplete contact information provided for many potential respondents, and the large number of stakeholders in the sampling frame (for whom many questions on the survey are not relevant), a minimum response rate of 25% was targeted.

From the sample of 1,155 providers and stakeholders, 238 were “identifiable” duplicates, 204 were deemed ineligible since their email or mail surveys were returned as undeliverable; their organization simply disseminates funds to other providers in their area; or they do not own, operate or manage any recreation areas or facilities. From the remaining 713 eligible respondents, 196 at least “returned or submitted” a survey and 175 provided “responses” to the survey, resulting in a “return rate” of 27.5% and a “response rate” of 24.5%.

Data was collected through the use of web surveys and supplemented with mail surveys. Data collection was conducted from February 1 to April 16, 2022. The data collection was administered by NDPRD and Winkelman

Consulting, with NDPRD sending emails to potential respondents with email addresses and Winkelman mailing surveys or reminders to those with a mailing address.

The 175 completed questionnaires provide a 95% confidence level with an overall minimum and maximum margin of error of $\pm 3.9\%$ and $\pm 6.4\%$, respectively, in estimating the proportion of the population who possess a certain characteristic or opinion.

PUBLICATION COMPONENTS

Stakeholder Input

Input on the SCORP was solicited from 14 stakeholders identified by the NDPRD:

- Garrison Diversion Conservancy District
- Maah Daah Hey Trail Association
- North Country Trail Association
- North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism Division
- North Dakota Forest Service
- North Dakota Game and Fish Department
- Red River Riders
- State Historical Society of North Dakota
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Lake Ashtabula/Baldhill Dam
- USDA Forest Service, Grand River Ranger District
- USDA Forest Service, Little Missouri National Grassland-McKenzie Ranger District
- USDA Forest Service, Little Missouri National Grassland-Medora Ranger District
- USDA Forest Service, Sheyenne Ranger District
- National Park Service, Theodore Roosevelt National Park

Public Comment

As the final step in the development process, the SCORP was posted on the NDPRD website for a 30-day period for public comment. Recommendations received from the public were incorporated into the final draft of the SCORP.

Related Resources

Electronic versions of the SCORP companion publications, Recreational Trail Needs and Wetlands Priorities are available on the NDPRD website at www.parkrec.nd.gov. Detailed information from the North Dakota household and outdoor recreation provider surveys, including regional data, is also available online.

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