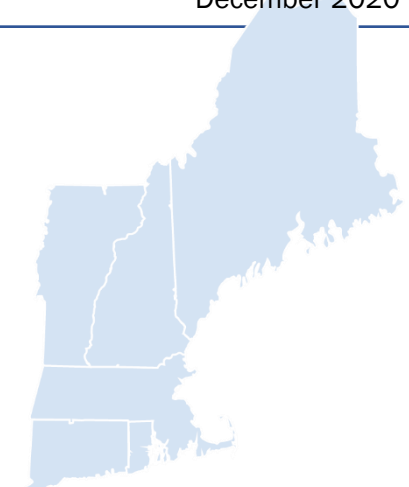




Industry Overview

According to the [2017 National Recreation Economy Report](#), the outdoor recreation sector is one of the United States' largest economic sectors, and provides livelihoods to millions of U.S. citizens. Annually, the US outdoor recreation economy generates \$887 billion in consumer spending, 7.6 million American jobs, \$65.3 billion in federal tax revenue, and \$59.2 billion in state and local tax revenue. Investments in outdoor recreation on public lands and waters earn compounding returns in the form of healthier communities, economies, and citizens. The activities that make up the outdoor recreation economy include camping, fishing, hunting, motorcycling, off-roading, snow sports, trail sports, water sports, wheel sports, and wildlife viewing. The outdoor recreation economy drives commerce – each year, U.S. consumers spend more on outdoor recreation than they do on pharmaceuticals and fuel combined. The impact of outdoor recreation on the U.S. economy is nearly as big as the impact of hospital care. Consumer spending on outdoor recreation (\$887 billion) includes outdoor recreation products such as gear, apparel, footwear, equipment, and vehicle purchase (\$187.5 billion), as well as trip and travel spending including airfare, fuel, lodging, groceries, lift tickets, guides, lessons, and more (\$702.3 billion). Additionally at the federal level, outdoor recreation generates enough federal tax revenue to pay the annual wages of an estimated 1.3 million firefighters, 1.1 million police officers, 1.1 million librarians, 1.2 million kindergarten teachers, 1.1 million registered nurses, and 920,000 high school teachers. As this report was published in 2017, it is likely that these figures will be even higher for 2020, given the rise in outdoor participation during the pandemic.



In New England, the outdoor recreation economy is responsible for \$51.5 billion in spending, 432,000 jobs, \$4.1 billion in federal tax revenues, and \$3.5 billion in state and local tax revenues. Four of the six states in New England have state offices of outdoor recreation, or outdoor recreation task forces. Of all 50 states, Vermont's GDP benefitted second most in the country and saw the second highest value-added from outdoor recreation as a percentage of state GDP, at 5.2%, according to the report. The 2017 National Recreation Economy Report underscores the need for the federal government to address the outdoor recreation economy in the same manner it would address other major sectors.

Sector Impact Media Coverage and Reports

[Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economy Resources \(VOREC\)'s Special Report to the Governor on COVID-19](#)

This report provides a snapshot of the impacts that COVID-19 is having and is projected to have on each sector of VOREC, followed by recommendations, needs and insights for Governor Scott and the Vermont Legislature as they move through the Vermont economy's phased reopening.

The main points of the report highlight the need for cross-sector coordination between outdoor recreation state and nonprofit managers to ensure safe reopening and avoid potential case spikes. The report states that Vermont must strike a balance between the exemplary safety measures they have instituted since the onset of the Pandemic with the need to keep the economy competitive. It concludes that the current situation is not like Hurricane Irene or Sandy which struck Vermont. It is a long-term problem that needs long-term focused solutions while still acknowledging the short-term impacts to the state. (2020, May 5).

[Travel & Tourism: In a winter unlike any other, Vermont's ski resorts face the unknown](#)

According to a Benchmark Study of Tourism in Vermont done by the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, in 2017 total tourism brought \$2.8 billion into Vermont, up from \$2.6 billion in 2015.

According to Ski Vermont, \$1.6 billion of that is due to the ski and snowboarding industry.

“Winter makes Vermont unique,” says the study. “Vermont sees strong economic activity during the winter that neighbors like New York and New Hampshire do not.”

It's not only lift tickets that bring money to the state, but the sale of equipment, clothing, gasoline, restaurant meals, hotel bookings, gift items, local events, and a host of other economic drivers. Also, it's mainly tourists who can fill the vacant coffers of the state's rooms and meals tax.

In terms of jobs, according to Ski Vermont, the ski business alone supports around 12,000 direct jobs and an additional 22,000 indirect positions.

[Vermont's Ski Season, on the Brink: Just as winter was about to start, the state instituted a stricter quarantine and test requirement for visitors, and the snow-sports economy is bracing for the impact.](#)

In some ways, it looked as though the pandemic could be good for Vermont's ski season. With international destinations out of reach and domestic air travel feeling risky, the state had the biggest ski market in the nation – New York and the Northeast corridor – at its doorstep. “For the very first time Vermont and New England have access to the full Northeast market share,” said Brian Maggiotto, general manager at the [Inn at Manchester](#) in southern Vermont. Then last week, Gov. Phil Scott announced newly tightened quarantine rules for anyone visiting the state. They either had to commit to a 14-day quarantine (at home or in state), or a quarantine of seven days followed by a negative Covid-19 test. But the governor's announcement last Tuesday of virus-containment measures, combined with a huge spike in cases across the Northeast, triggered a wave of cancellations at hotels and inns and fear among tourism-dependent businesses that travelers would shun Vermont this winter because of the pandemic. “There's been a pretty consistent flow of cancellations since that day,” Mr. Maggiotto said. The Vermont economy depends on winter ski-season visitors who spend more than \$1.6 billion a year in the tiny state, according to the [Vermont Ski Areas Association](#). Vermont is something of a crown jewel of Eastern skiing, annually recording the most skier-day numbers in the East, around 4 million per season, a figure that rivals Utah. New Hampshire, by comparison, sees a little over 2 million per winter.

[October 14, 2020 Northern Border Regional Commission – U.S. Economic Development Administration Joint Awards Announced](#)

Through a Northern Border Regional Commission Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Economic Development Administration to amplify both agencies' economic development impact in Northern Border communities a \$526,375 grant was made to the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission to enhance the Velomont Trail and Hut Network. The project will support the construction of key sections (10 mi) of the Velomont Trail within the Towns of Chittenden, Rochester, and Hancock, as well as a new year-round ADA accessible backcountry hut in Chittenden. The Velomont Trail and Hut Network will be a statewide, multi-use, non-motorized trail for mountain biking, hiking, and skiing.

[NH Delegation Announces More Than \\$467K through NBRC & USDA to Support Granite State Outdoor Recreation & Forest Economies](#)

New Hampshire was awarded \$467,410 from the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support the state's outdoor recreation and forest economies. Specifically, \$290,056 was awarded to the Appalachian Mountain Club to deliver trail building, stewardship and recreation management skills trainings annually to 200 Granite Staters, allowing them to meet the workforce needs of the New Hampshire's outdoor recreation economy. \$177,354 was awarded to the Northern Forest Center, allowing

the organization to provide technical and market development assistance to wood products businesses in the NBRC region through the COVID-19 pandemic.

[New Maine ADVENTURE Plate Aims to Strengthen Maine's \\$3B Outdoor Recreation Economy While Inspiring More Opportunities for Outdoor Recreation](#)

Launched this month by Maine Outdoor Brands, the *ADVENTURE specialty plate* provides a way for Maine vehicle owners to show their support for Maine's growing outdoor recreation industry – including all the outdoor gear manufacturers, outfitters, youth trip leading organizations and more – whose products and services enable more Mainers to get outdoors. Maine Outdoor Brands (MOB) is a non-profit alliance of more than 125 members from across the state and is sponsoring the ADVENTURE plate. A portion of the proceeds from the plate will be used to support education, marketing and workforce development for Maine's outdoor industry.

[Maine's \\$2.9B Outdoor Recreation Industry Still Going Strong, National Report Shows](#)

Maine's \$2.9 billion outdoor recreation industry ranks among the country's top five in terms of its contribution to the state's economy, and supported more than 40,000 jobs in 2019. Those are among findings in a new report by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis, detailing the sector's role in each state's economy. Findings were similar to the agency's first report released *last year*. Similar to the previous report, Maine ranks near the top in terms of the industry's importance to the state economy. The latest figures show that outdoor recreation makes up 4.2% of Maine's economy. That's double the 2.1% national average and puts Maine behind only Hawaii (5.8%), Vermont (5.2%), Montana (4.7%) and Florida (4.4%), and on par with Wyoming (also 4.2%).

[State Grants Available for Outdoor Recreation Projects](#)

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) announced that funds are available for outdoor recreation grants via the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). These funds will be available to municipalities around the state to conserve lands and develop infrastructure dedicated to outdoor recreation. Since 1964, the LWCF program has granted more than \$50 million in projects and provided more than 27,000 acres of land for outdoor recreation in Vermont. "Outdoor recreation is a crucial component of Vermont's economy and quality of life," said FPR Commissioner Michael Snyder. "We are pleased to offer this opportunity to communities across the state to preserve and improve their recreation experience."

[Vermont Congressman Discusses Economic Stability of Outdoor Recreation Industry](#)

The Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance recently held its annual membership meeting. The virtual session featured comments from the state's at-large Congressman who talked about federal pandemic support and the recently passed Great American Outdoors Act. The *Outdoor Business Alliance* is a group of 70 businesses and organizations representing outdoor recreation businesses across Vermont. An *October report* the group submitted to the Governor's office notes that in May most businesses in the sector "...had experienced full or partial closure, significant losses in revenue, increased costs due to precautionary measures, and shifts in workforce, supply chain and operations." Even with those difficulties amid the pandemic the report adds: "Vermont's outdoor recreation economy enters fall in a much stronger financial position."

FEMA's Role

FEMA Region 1 established the COVID-19 Long-Term Recovery Task Force under the [National Disaster Recovery Framework](#) (NDRF), which promotes effective recovery from large-scale incidents and enables coordinated, orchestrated support to impacted states, tribes and local jurisdictions.

The NDRF focuses on how best to restore, redevelop and revitalize the health, social, economic, natural and environmental fabric of the community as well as build a more resilient nation.

This COVID-19 Long-Term Recovery Task Force works in tandem, but separately from other FEMA Short-Term Recovery Support programs such as Public Assistance and Individual Assistance. The Long-Term Recovery Task Force coordinates access to funding from federal agencies but does not provide direct funding.

About this Resource Guide:

This Resource Guide was developed to provide information to those seeking to support businesses and organizations in the outdoor recreational economy sector.

The Guide presents a summary of federal agency partners, and how they may be able to assist with businesses and employment, and the resources available (funding and technical assistance) to support a more resilient recovery. It also includes links to examples of best practices deployed around the nation.

Intended Audience:

This Resource Guide is meant to provide useful information and resources for the following targeted audiences.

Sub-Sector Overview (list is representative, not comprehensive)

State and Tribal Agencies:

- Dept. of Economic Development
- Dept. of Environmental Conservation
- Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
- Dept. of Forests, Parks, and Recreation
- Dept. of Labor

Industry Associations

[Outdoor Industry Association](#)

[Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance](#)

[Green Mountain Club](#)

[Vermont Outdoor Guide Association](#)

[Massachusetts Outdoor Industry Association](#)

[Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation](#)

[New Hampshire Outdoors](#)

Businesses

- Ski mountains
- Outdoor recreation activity company owners/operators
- Gear shops
- Hospitality/tourism and restaurants in popular areas

Federal Agency Partner Overview

[U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development \(USDA-RD\)](#)

USDA provides leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition and related issues. One of the agency's strategic goals is to facilitate rural prosperity and economic development. USDA's rural business programs further this goal through partnerships with public and private community based organizations

and financial institutions to provide capital, equipment, space, job training, and entrepreneurial skills that can help start and/or grow a business.

Types of support:

[Recreation Economy at USDA: Economic Development Resources for Rural Communities](#)

USDA's Forest Service (FS), Rural Development (RD), and the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) have developed this resource guide for rural communities to identify resources that develop the recreation economy.

[Rural Development Overview of All Programs](#)

[Rural Development Summary of Major Program Matrix](#)

[Rural Business Investment Program](#) provides a Rural Business Investment Company (RBIC) license to newly develop capital organizations to help meet the equity capital investment needs in rural communities. This program works with for-profit development capital funds.

[Rural Business Development Grants](#) provides technical assistance and training for small rural businesses (fewer than 50 new workers and less than \$1 million in gross revenue). Enterprise grants must be used on projects that benefit small and emerging businesses in rural areas.

[Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program](#) improves the economic condition of rural areas by helping individuals and businesses start, expand, or improve rural cooperatives in mutually owned businesses through Cooperative Development Centers.

[ReConnect Loan and Grant Program](#) loans and grants to for the cost of construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service in eligible rural areas.

[Small Business Association \(SBA\)](#)

SBA helps small business owners and entrepreneurs through loans, investment capital, disaster assistance, surety bonds, and grants. The SBA works with lenders to provide loans to small businesses. The agency sets guidelines for loans made by its partnering lenders, community development organizations, and micro-lending institutions. SBA provides an array of financing for small businesses from microlending to substantial debt and equity in investment capital.

[Loans](#) The SBA works with lenders to provide loans to small businesses. The agency sets guidelines for loans made by its partnering lenders, community development organizations, and micro-lending institutions. The SBA reduces risk for lenders and makes it easier for them to access capital. That makes it easier for small businesses to get loans.

[Investment Capital](#) An SBIC is a privately owned company that's licensed and regulated by SBA. SBIC's invest in small businesses in the form of debt and equity. The SBA doesn't invest directly into small businesses, but it does provide funding to qualified SBICs with expertise in certain sectors or industries. Those SBICs then use their private funds, along with SBA-guaranteed funding, to invest in small businesses.

[Disaster Assistance](#) SBA provides low-interest disaster loans to help businesses and homeowners recover from declared disasters.

[COVID-19 EIDL](#): Small businesses, non-profit organizations, or US agricultural businesses with 500 or fewer employees that have suffered substantial economic injury as a result of COVID-19 can apply for the COVID-19 EIDL.

[Physical Damage Loans](#) Homeowners, renters, nonprofit organizations, and businesses of all sizes are eligible to apply for physical disaster assistance.

[Mitigation Assistance](#) SBA can help protect your home or business against future disasters and reduce property damage with a loan up to 20% of your verified physical damage to make mitigation improvements.

[Economic Injury Disaster Loans](#) Small businesses, small agricultural cooperative, and most private nonprofit organizations located in a declared disaster area and which have suffered substantial economic injury may be eligible for an SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL).

[Surety Bonds](#) The SBA guarantees bid, performance, and payment surety bonds issued by certain surety companies. Surety bonds help small businesses win contracts by providing the customer with the guarantee that the work will be completed. Many public and private contracts require surety bonds, which are offered by surety companies.

[Grants](#) The SBA works with different organizations to provide grants for small businesses. The federal government generally only offers grants to nonprofits, educational institutions, and state and local governments, but sometimes nonprofits and state or local governments offer economic development grants directly to small businesses.

[U.S. Department of Labor](#)

The U.S. Department of Labor fosters and promotes the welfare of the job seekers, wage earners, and retirees of the United States by improving their working conditions, advancing their opportunities for profitable employment, protecting their retirement and health care benefits, helping employers find workers, strengthening free collective bargaining, and tracking changes in employment, prices, and other national economic measurements. In carrying out this mission, the Department administers a variety of Federal labor laws including those that guarantee workers' rights to safe and healthful working conditions; a minimum hourly wage and overtime pay; freedom from employment discrimination; unemployment insurance; and other income support.

Types of support:

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

Workplace Safety: The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has resources to help employers and workers prepare for and respond to coronavirus in the workplace.

[OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#) – Developed in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to help employers respond in the event of coronavirus in the workplace.

[Temporary OSHA Guidance on Respiratory Protection Standard](#) – This guidance provides suggestions and options to help increase the availability of N95 filtering facepiece respirators for healthcare providers.

[COVID-19 Webpage](#) – Provides infection prevention information specifically for employers and workers.

Short-Term Compensation

Short-Time Compensation (STC), also known as work sharing or shared-work program, is an alternative to layoffs for employers experiencing a reduction in available work. STC preserves employees' jobs and employers' trained workforces during times of lowered economic activity. STC allows employers to reduce hours of work for employees rather than laying-off some employees while others continue to work full time. Those employees experiencing a reduction in hours are allowed to collect a percentage of their unemployment compensation (UC) benefits to replace a portion of their lost wages. STC cushions the adverse effect of the reduction in business activity on workers by averting layoffs and ensures that these workers will be available to resume prior employment levels when business demand increases. Twenty-seven states have active STC programs, including CT, RI, MA, NH, and ME.

[Unemployment Insurance](#) The DOL's unemployment insurance programs provide unemployment benefits to eligible workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own and meet certain other eligibility requirements. Unemployment insurance is a joint state-federal program that provides cash benefits to eligible workers. Each state administers a separate unemployment insurance program, but all states follow the same guidelines established by federal law.

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[Unemployment Insurance Relief During COVID-19 Outbreak](#)

[Unemployment Benefits Finder](#) To apply for unemployment benefits, select the applicable.

[Vermont Department of Labor](#) If you become unemployed and have worked in Vermont anytime in the past 18 months, you may be eligible to receive unemployment insurance.

[Environmental Protection Agency](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s mission is to protect human health and the environment. EPA works to ensure that Americans have clean air, land and water. EPA's Strategic Plan identifies the measurable environmental and human health outcomes the public can expect from EPA and describes how they intend to archive those results. Environmental stewardship is integral to U.S. policies concerning natural resources, human health, economic growth, energy, transportation, agriculture, industry, and international trade, and these factors are similarly considered in establishing environmental policy.

Types of support:

[Recreation Economy for Rural Communities](#) Recreation for Rural Communities is a new planning assistance program to help communities develop strategies and an action plan to revitalize their Main Streets through outdoor recreation.

Contact Information:

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Federal Agency Field Partners:

Economic Development Administration (EDA)
Please refer to the Philadelphia Regional Office Section for state contact information and EDA's Office of Economic Development Integration.
<https://eda.gov/contact/>
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www.rd.usda.gov/ri

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Vermont | New Hampshire

Anthony Linardos, State Director

(802) 828-6000

www.rd.usda.gov/vt

www.rd.usda.gov/nh

EPA:

Information and contacts for EPA programs in New England can be found at:

<https://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/epa-region-1-new-england>

EPA:

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<https://www.epa.gov/smartsectors>