

An aerial photograph of a river winding through a lush, green forest of rolling hills. The river is the central focus, flowing from the upper left towards the lower right. The surrounding hills are covered in dense trees, with some showing early autumn colors. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds.

Outdoor Recreation, Community Health, Economic Development

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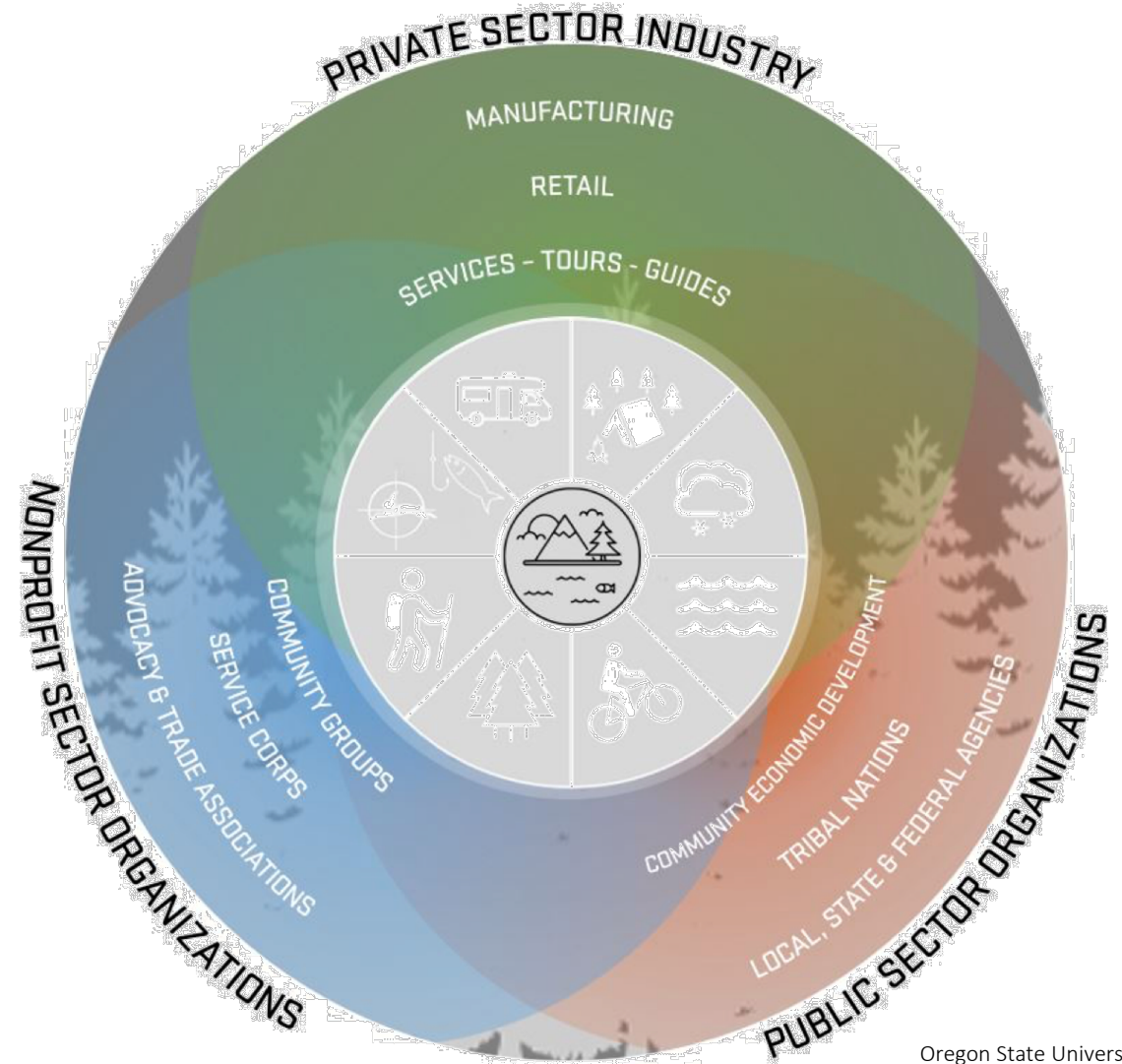


What is outdoor recreation?

Outdoor recreation is an **experience** that combines motivations, activities, and settings to deliver **benefits** to people.

Outdoor recreation is a **system** of

- People participating in activities
- Lands, waters, trail, facilities, etc.
- Institutions, organizations, services, goods, etc.
- Benefits and impacts



Oregon State University

0%
Outdoor
Recreation



100%
Outdoor
Recreation



A group of children, mostly girls, are gathered on a paved surface, possibly a bike path or street. They are all wearing white bicycle helmets and are smiling and waving their hands. Some are sitting on their bicycles, which are blue and black. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the group and the outdoor setting.

Economic development

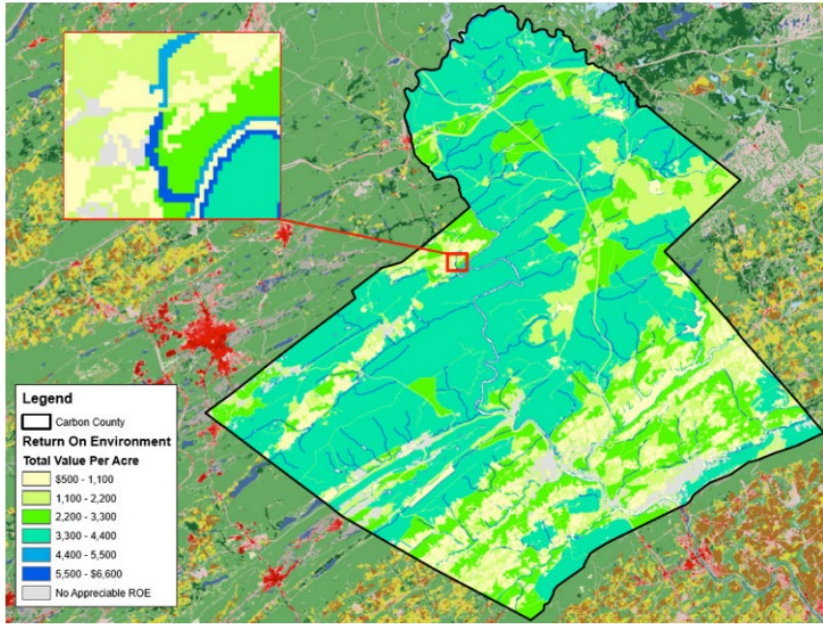
Vibrant communities

Physical & mental health

Environmental conservation

**Benefits of
Outdoor
Recreation**

FIGURE 06 // CARBON COUNTY ROE MAP

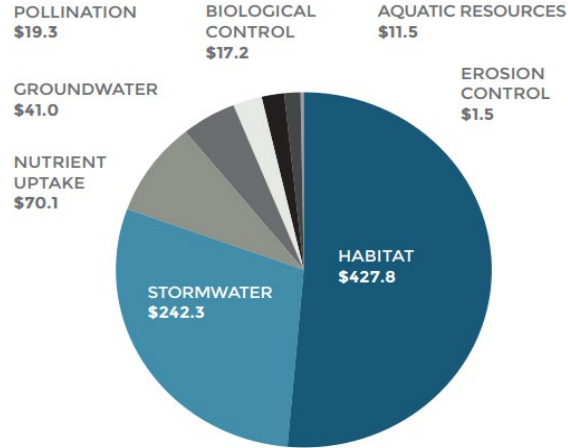


While difficult to see from a map at this scale, the highest ROE is in green corridors along streams and creeks, with the second highest being ridges and slopes. See the map cutout.

\$830.6 MILLION IN ANNUAL SAVINGS

NATURAL SYSTEM SERVICES 💧

Source: Costanza et al (2006)



Lehigh Valley
Return on Environment

Outdoor Infrastructure is Green Infrastructure

- Stormwater management
- Temperature regulation
- Habitat connectivity
- Air & water purification



The Economic Value of Protected Open Space
in Southeastern Pennsylvania



Return on Environment

- Ecosystem services
- Property values
- Tourism & commercial opportunities
- Health & healthcare

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light grey t-shirt and dark pants, is sitting on a rocky outcrop. She is looking out over a wide river that flows through a lush, green forested valley. The sky is bright and clear. The woman has a green backpack on her back. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic, suggesting a natural outdoor setting.

Physical Health

- Outdoor recreation keeps us active and helps our bodies be strong and healthy.

Mental Wellbeing

- Outdoor recreation reduces stress and induces happiness.

Public Health

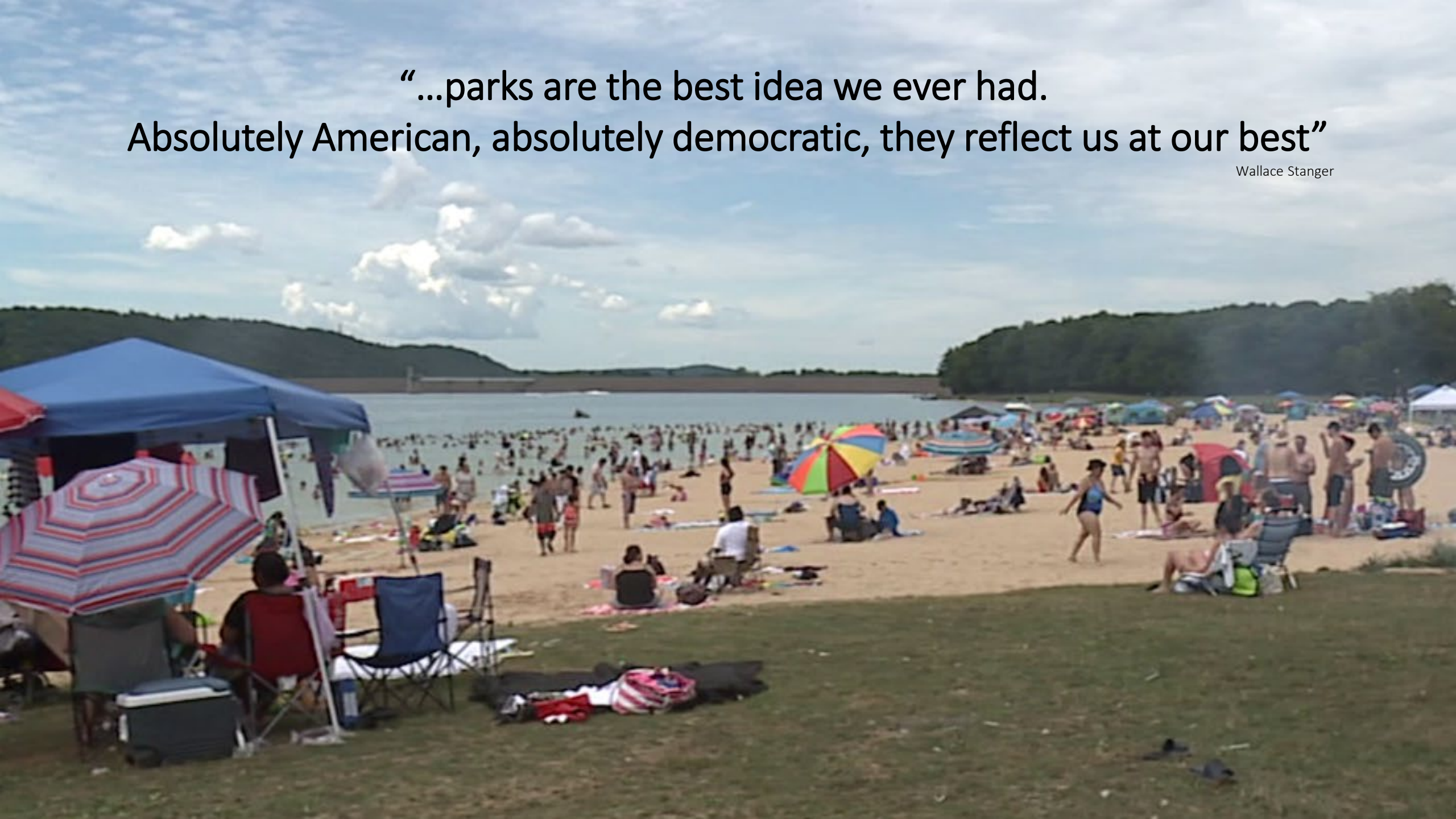
- Individual benefits aggregate to create public health benefits.

Social Wellbeing

- Outdoor recreation connects us with each other and builds a sense of shared community.

“...parks are the best idea we ever had.
Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best”

Wallace Stanger



Macroeconomics

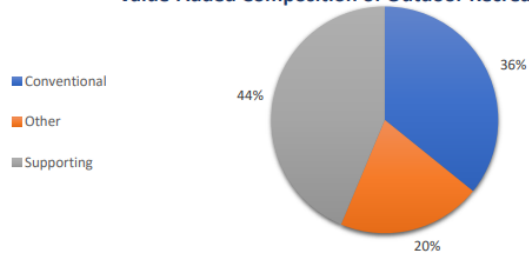


2021—Pennsylvania

Value added [gross domestic product]		Employment		Compensation	
ORSA total	Share of state	ORSA total	Share of state	ORSA total	Share of state
\$13.6 billion	1.6%	151,531 jobs	2.5%	\$6.8 billion	1.4%

Value Added by Select ORSA Activity [Thousands of dollars]				
Activity	2019	2020	2021	State rank
RVing	530,383	601,746	704,840	7
Boating/Fishing	511,816	575,553	555,122	19
Hunting/Shooting/Trapping	307,121	327,553	354,052	8
Motorcycling/ATVing	333,887	302,381	304,423	6
Equestrian	210,094	199,663	223,026	8
Snow Activities	228,288	185,467	184,620	8
Climbing/Hiking/Tent Camping	121,337	129,192	166,527	9
Bicycling	122,152	147,589	141,985	5
Recreational Flying	24,280	21,312	21,341	10

Value-Added Composition of Outdoor Recreation Activities



Conventional ORSA activities include traditional outdoor activities, such as camping, hiking, boating, and hunting.
Other ORSA activities include those that take place outside, such as gardening and outdoor concerts.
Supporting ORSA activities are those that contribute to the core activities and include such things as construction, travel and tourism, local trips, and government expenditures.

6th
Largest OR economy in the US

1.6%
of PA's economy

\$14 billion
value added to PA's GDP

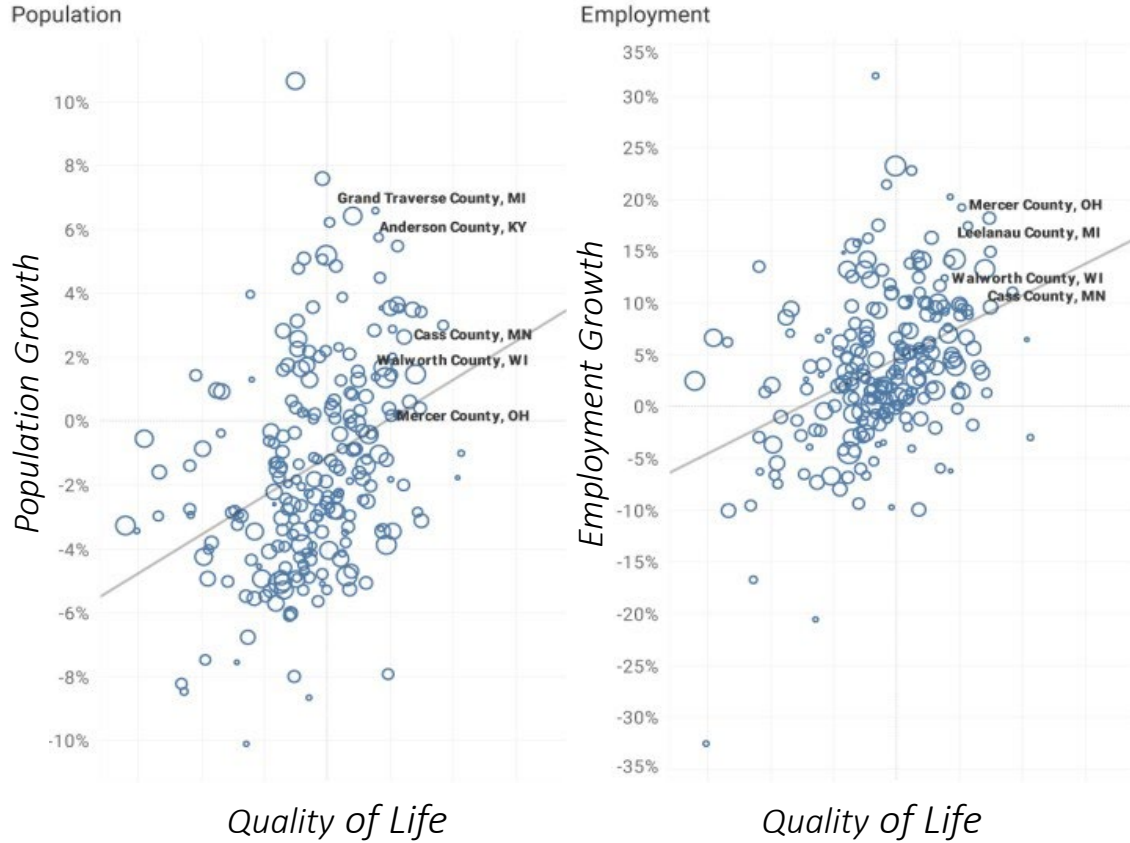
150,000
FTEs employed directly in OR

Macroeconomics

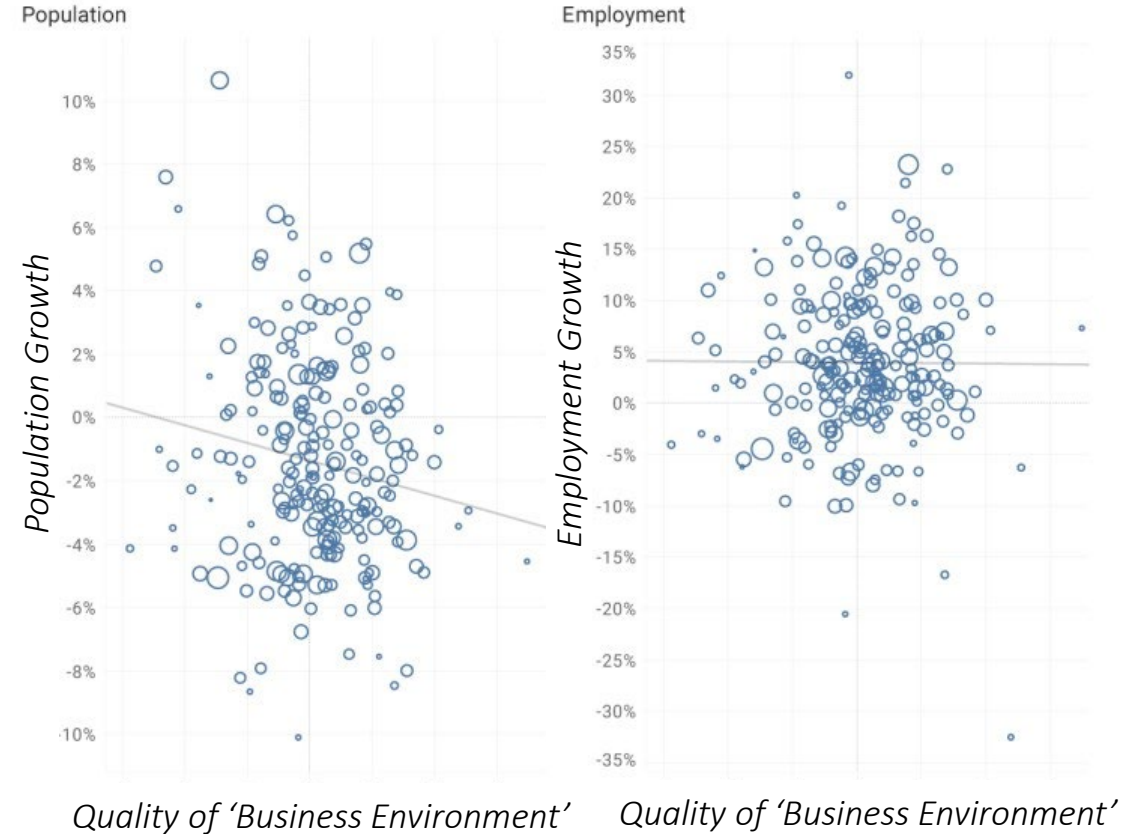
Pennsylvania's Economy (2021)	\$ Billion	% PA GDP
Agriculture, forestry, commercial fishing & hunting	\$3.5	0.4%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	\$12.7	1.5%
Outdoor Recreation	\$13.6	1.6%
Utilities	\$13.8	1.7%
Arts, entertainment, accommodation, food services	\$25.0	3.0%
Transportation, warehousing	\$30.9	3.7%
Construction	\$31.0	3.8%
Retail trade	\$43.4	5.3%
Wholesale trade	\$48.1	5.8%
Information	\$49.6	6.0%
Government	\$78.5	9.5%
Manufacturing	\$100.1	12.1%
Educational services, health care, social assistance	\$104.1	12.6%
Professional and business services	\$115.9	14.0%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, leasing	\$156.5	18.9%
All Included Industries	\$826.7	100.0%

Pennsylvania's Outdoor Economy (2021)	\$ Million	% PA GDP
Retail trade	\$3,837.8	28.1%
Manufacturing	\$1,819.0	13.3%
Accommodation, food services	\$1,702.6	12.5%
Arts, entertainment	\$1,414.6	10.4%
Wholesale trade	\$1,245.0	9.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, leasing	\$782.3	5.7%
Transportation, warehousing	\$740.7	5.4%
Agriculture, forestry, commercial fishing & hunting	\$369.6	2.7%
Other private sector services	\$235.6	1.7%
Construction	\$192.8	1.4%
Educational services, health care, social assistance	\$138.4	1.0%
Professional and business services	\$132.4	1.0%
Information	\$80.2	0.6%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	\$33.0	0.2%
Utilities	\$0.1	0.0%
State, local government	\$835.0	6.1%
Federal government	\$85.7	0.6%

Outdoors Communities



Source: Authors' calculations using Census Bureau data



Source: Authors' calculations using Census Bureau data



Outdoor Recreation + Historic Downtown + Cultural Services = High Quality of Life

High Quality of Life = Population Growth + Employment

FUNDING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Elevating Outdoor Recreation

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION STEPS	IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS
1. Protect and expand public and private investments in outdoor recreation.	
a. Develop programs with retail businesses that enable consumers to contribute to recreation projects through donations when purchasing outdoor goods and services.	DCNR, PALTA, PPF, APA, conservation landscapes, heritage areas, land trusts, outdoor recreation businesses
b. Advocate for the increase in state and local funding to ensure outdoor recreation remains a vital public service.	PALTA, PPF, PRPS, PEC, TPL, APA
c. Advocate for the reauthorization and increased funding of the federal Recreational Trails and Transportation Alternatives programs and full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.	DCNR, PennDOT, PEC, RTC, TPL, PPF, PALTA, APA, county/local municipalities, trail organizations
d. Address the maintenance needs of our public outdoor recreation lands by increasing dedicated government funding and leveraging private philanthropy and strategic partnerships.	PALTA, PRPS, PPF, DCNR, APA, county/local municipalities, private foundations
e. Educate local governments and nonprofits through guides and web-based resources on how to leverage local investments for recreation and conservation initiatives like passing successful open space referendums.	PALTA, TPL, DCNR, DCED, APA
2. Build strategic coalitions to maximize the economic impacts of outdoor recreation in Pennsylvania.	
a. Create a Pennsylvania Office of Outdoor Recreation supported by a statewide coalition to strengthen the outdoor recreation economy.	DCNR, PEC, DCED, outdoor recreation businesses
b. Create regional coalitions with community leaders, tourism agencies, and businesses to strengthen outdoor towns and destinations.	DCED, DCNR, PennDOT, PCA, PEC, NPS, Landforce, heritage areas, conservation landscapes, DMOs (TPAs) county/local municipalities
c. Support the creation of friends groups and strategic coalitions to assist local communities in protecting and enhancing local outdoor recreation resources.	PRPS, DCNR, county/local municipalities, conservation landscapes
3. Market Pennsylvania as an outdoor recreation destination.	
a. Create a branding strategy for Pennsylvania's outdoors and provide consistent messaging about the state's outdoor assets.	DCED, DCNR
b. Increase collaboration, data-sharing, and funding among state agencies, and develop campaigns to position Pennsylvania as an international outdoor recreation destination.	DCED, DCNR
c. Improve marketing and messaging to reflect the diversity of outdoor recreation participants and activities.	DCED, DCNR, DMOs (TPAs)
4. Demonstrate the benefits and impacts of nature-based solutions to addressing community needs.	
a. Demonstrate the value of investing in green infrastructure to create more resilient and sustainable recreation facilities that will support multiple community needs.	DCNR, DEP, PDE, PALTA, PEC, TPL, Landforce, APA, county/local municipalities
b. Provide technical assistance to communities on how to retain and attract residents and businesses using outdoor recreation assets.	PEC, DCED, DCNR, heritage areas, conservation landscapes
c. Create a rapid response fund that would facilitate resources and grants for emergency repairs of outdoor recreation amenities due to severe weather events.	PRPS, PALTA, RTC, PEC, DCNR

Create a Pennsylvania Office of Outdoor Recreation supported by a statewide coalition...


- Backbone or coordinating entity
- Aligning strategies, resources, and policies
- Outreach, engagement, coordination



Thank you very much

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APRIL
1978

A photograph of three children walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a lush green forest. The children are holding hands in a line. The child on the left is a girl with long dark hair wearing a red t-shirt and blue jeans. The child in the middle is a smaller child wearing a light blue hoodie and blue jeans. The child on the right is a boy wearing a red hoodie and blue jeans. The path is surrounded by tall grass and dense trees with green foliage.

Thank you very much
I am looking forward to walking this path with you...

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