2014-2019 LOUISIANA STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism
September 26 2014

Gwenevere P. Smith
Chief, Recreation Programs Branch
National Park Service
Southeast Regional Office
100 Alabama Street, SW 1924 Bldg.
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am pleased to endorse the 2014-2019 Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The Louisiana SCORP identifies the important outdoor recreational choices across our state and provides vital information to decision makers as they move forward to develop facilities for our residents and guests.

In updating Louisiana’s SCORP, the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism under the Office of the Lieutenant Governor hosted six statewide public input meetings, a virtual town hall meeting, a statistical phone survey and an online survey. Therefore, in accordance with federal law, I, as Governor of the State of Louisiana, certify that ample opportunity for public participation has taken place in the development of the Louisiana SCORP.

I urge favorable consideration of our SCORP and look forward to our state’s continued partnership with the National Park Service.

Thank you,

Bobby Jindal
Governor

cc: Jay Dardenne, Lieutenant Governor
Stuart Johnson, Ph.D. Assistant Secretary, Office of State Parks
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2014 - 2019 Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) was prepared for the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Office of State Parks, Division of Outdoor Recreation with input from federal, state, and local officials, public opinion leaders, outdoor recreation use organizations, numerous communities and parishes, and the recreating public.

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM (www.crt.state.la.us/lt-governor/)
Jay Dardenne, Lieutenant Governor
Randy Davis, Deputy Secretary

OFFICE OF STATE PARKS
Dr. Stuart Johnson, Assistant Secretary
Dianne Mouton-Allen, Deputy Assistant Secretary

DIVISION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION
Cleve Hardman, Director
Suzette Simms, Recreation Resource Planner

SCORP TASK FORCE COMMITTEE (TFC)
Whitney Cooper, Baton Rouge Downtown Development District
Ric LeGrange, Resouce Development – Louisiana Office of State Parks
Suzette Simms, Committee Chair – Louisiana Office of State Parks

SCORP ADVISORY TEAM (SAT)
Randy Albarez, Louisiana Recreation & Parks Association, Louisiana Municipal Association
Birgitta Baker, PhD, LSU School of Kinesiology
Stephanie T. Broyles, PhD, Pennington Biomedical Research Center
Michael W. Domingue, FWHA Recreational Trails Program for Louisiana
Doug Bourgeois, Scenic Byways Program – Culture, Recreation, and Tourism
Debra Credeur, Atchafalaya National Heritage Area – Culture, Recreation, and Tourism
Steve Windham, Encore Louisiana – Culture, Recreation, and Tourism
Jessica Dixon, Interpretive Section – Office of State Parks
Tommy Tuma, Habitat Stewardship – Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

CONSULTANTS
GreenPlay: Teresa Penbrooke, MAOM, CPRE; Cindy Heath
Atkins: Kristin Caborn, CPRE; Thomas Davidson; Tyler Peterson
RRC Associates: Chris Cares; Michael Simone
NTB Associates, Inc.: Brad Daugherty

# Table of Contents

## Executive Summary
- A. Introduction .................................................. 1
- B. Planning Context ............................................... 2
- C. Planning Process and Timeline .............................. 3
- D. Key Findings ..................................................... 3
- E. Key Strategies .................................................... 4
- F. Louisiana SCORP Chapter Summary ..................... 4

## Chapter 1: Introduction
- A. Vision for Outdoor Recreation in Louisiana ........ 5
- B. Purpose of the Louisiana SCORP ......................... 6
- C. Alignment with National Outdoor Recreation Priorities 7
- D. Value of Outdoor Recreation in Louisiana ............ 8
- E. Demographic Profile and Analysis ..................... 8
- F. Outdoor Recreation Impacts on Health and Livability 17
- G. LWCF Success Stories: Celebrating Outdoor Recreation in Louisiana 21

## Chapter 2: Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Demand
- A. Planning Methodology ....................................... 30
- B. Public Engagement Summary .............................. 31
- C. MindMixer Online Community Engagement Results .... 32
- D. Analysis of Trends Impacting Outdoor Recreation .... 39
- E. Accessibility and Equity .................................... 41

## Chapter 3: Inventory of Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Providers
- A. Recreation Providers Overview .......................... 60
- B. Federal Government .......................................... 61
- C. State Government ............................................. 61
- D. Local Government ............................................ 62
- E. Private Commercial and Non-Profit ..................... 64
- F. Conclusion ...................................................... 64

## Chapter 4: Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Supply
- A. Analysis Methodology ....................................... 66
- B. Inventory of Outdoor Recreation Opportunities .... 67
- C. Inventory of Public Lands .................................. 68
- D. Resource Maps ................................................ 72
- E. Sustaining Louisiana’s Wetland Legacy ................. 73
- F. Wetlands Preservation Emerging Issues ............... 82
- G. Wetlands Preservation ....................................... 84

## Chapter 5: Strategies and Actions
- A. Key Issues Analysis Matrix Introduction ............. 87
- B. Key Issues Analysis Matrix ............................... 88
- C. Strategies, Actions, and Implementation Summary ... 89
- D. Louisiana SCORP Investment Priorities ............... 90
| APPENDIX A: STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS: 2009 - 2013 LOUISIANA SCORP | A.2 |
| APPENDIX B: SCORP TASK FORCE COMMITTEE NOTES | A.7 |
| APPENDIX C: REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER MEETING NOTES | A.10 |
| STATEWIDE RESIDENT SURVEY - FINAL RESULTS | A.39 |
| APPENDIX E: LOUISIANA PUBLIC RECREATION SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY 2014 | A.85 |
| APPENDIX F: ACTIVE LIVING RESOURCES | A.119 |
| APPENDIX G: DOCUMENT LOG | A.121 |
| APPENDIX H: VISIONING WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS | A.124 |
| APPENDIX I: SURVEY RESULT GRAPHS | A.126 |
| APPENDIX J: WATERFOWL HUNTER SURVEY RESPONSES | A.127 |
| APPENDIX K: DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS GRAPHS | A.154 |
| APPENDIX L: MIND MIXER DATA REPORTS | A.157 |
| APPENDIX M: MAP OF ATCHAFALAYA BASIN | A.159 |
| APPENDIX N: OUTDOOR RECREATION GIS DATA REQUEST FORMS | A.160 |
Section III:
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
III
Executive Summary

A. INTRODUCTION
Louisiana’s abundant natural resources and outdoor recreation assets provide unique recreation experiences for residents and visitors to enjoy. From public lands rich with wildlife to some of the largest coastal wetlands in America, Louisiana’s outdoor resources serve as a nature lover’s paradise, a vital contributor to the state and local tourism economy, and a key component in providing opportunities to pursue a healthy, active lifestyle.

To create an implementable plan to sustain and improve outdoor recreation opportunities in Louisiana for the next five years (2014-2019), the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, Office of State Parks, Division of Outdoor Recreation embarked on a year-long process to review and update the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP fulfills the objectives of the National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for federal funding for outdoor recreation facilities and open space land acquisition, and includes a statewide inventory and evaluation of supply and demand for water and land based activities and outdoor recreation facilities in Louisiana.

The overall objectives of the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP are to:

i.  To identify the available outdoor recreation infrastructure statewide

ii. To identify the outdoor recreation priorities and trends for Louisiana residents

iii. To evaluate the unfilled outdoor recreation infrastructure needed for development to meet the priorities and trends

iv. To prioritize plans for future development needed to match infrastructure needs

v. To identify all required actions necessary to provide for outdoor recreation priorities for the state

The 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP has a strong focus on safe access to recreation opportunities, promoting healthy and active lifestyles, and wise stewardship of Louisiana’s natural resources, parks, trails, and cultural sites for future generations. Preserving and enhancing outdoor resources in Louisiana is closely aligned with national efforts to balance outdoor recreation land use with natural and cultural resource protection. America’s Great Outdoors (AGO), a federal initiative created by President Barack Obama, promotes connecting people to the outdoors, conserving natural and cultural resources, and developing partnerships within the following conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives:

• Protection of America’s large, rural landscapes
• Support of outdoor recreation access opportunities
• Restoration of our country’s rich legacy of rivers and waterways
• Connecting city dwelling Americans to urban parks and green spaces
• Developing youth as the next generation of environmental stewards

B. PLANNING CONTEXT

The 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP was developed with a collaborative, open public process. The planning effort was led by the Louisiana State Parks, Division of Outdoor recreation staff, along with the consultant team, the Task Force Committee (TFC) and SCORP Advisory Team (SAT). The plan was informed utilizing various public input methodologies, along with a review of past Louisiana SCORPs, other state SCORPs for relevant trends, census data, and various other relevant documents and studies. Appendix G includes a document log of compiled, reviewed information.

C. PLANNING PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Phase 1: Info Gathering
- Public Input
- Inventory and Analysis

Phase 2: Findings
- Identification of Key Findings and Issues

Phase 3: Plan Development
- Generate Options and Recommendation

D. KEY FINDINGS

- Approximately half of respondents indicated that the availability of parks, trails, and outdoor recreation facilities were extremely important; however, only one-quarter indicated that their needs are being met
  - Trails (paved and unpaved)
  - Water Access
  - Land Acquisition for Preservation/Protection
  - Awareness of Outdoor Recreation Opportunities
  - Camping Areas
- Safety and security was a concern at regional meetings, but wasn’t indicated as a barrier to participation in surveys
- Louisiana’s health ranking is 48th, yet promoting healthy, active lifestyles received the highest average importance rating by survey respondents
- There appears to be support for use of public funds to acquire land for outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation
E. KEY STRATEGIES

Key strategies, actions, and an implementation plan are found in Chapter 5. These are based on a combined analysis of stakeholder meeting highlights, survey results, and the mapping analysis. The strategies focus on findings from visioning sessions held during these meetings, and expand on the five broad headings from the 2009-2013 SCORP: economic tourism, trails, innovation, community outdoor recreation, and cooperation and coordination. Strategies for the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP include:

- GIS
- Communication
- Access
- Sustainability
- Economic Development

F. LOUISIANA SCORP CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the project, providing the reader with all of the purpose and background information necessary to understand the document. It covers the vision for outdoor recreation in Louisiana, highlights of the top ten priorities of the 2009-2013 SCORP, describes how the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP aligns with President Obama’s America’s Great Outdoors Initiative, and illustrates the value of outdoor recreation in Louisiana, Louisiana State Parks visitation history and demographics, and outdoor recreation impacts on health and livability.

Chapter 2 covers Louisiana’s outdoor recreation demand. This chapter describes the planning methodology and results of the public input methods utilized during the planning process. National and local outdoor recreation trends that influence the SCORP planning process are also discussed.

Chapter 3 provides an inventory of Louisiana’s outdoor recreation providers. This chapter summarizes the agencies that promote and provide the outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the state, covering both the public and private sectors.

Chapter 4 covers Louisiana’s outdoor recreation supply. It provides an overview of where the Geographic Information System (GIS) data used to develop the maps was obtained. The maps in this section graphically depict the distribution of all mapped outdoor recreation opportunities in the state, as well as specific depictions of picnicking, playgrounds, walking/hiking, and water access. Data used to create these maps is still missing from large areas of the state. Collection of this missing data is ongoing. Proximity of the population to these opportunities is shown in 5, 10, and 30 mile buffers. A discussion on Louisiana’s wetlands concludes this chapter.

Chapter 5 is the strategies and actions chapter. The Key Issues Analysis Matrix summarizes data collected during the planning process. It provides an overview of the issues identified during the planning process and sets the reader up for the recommendations and an implementation plan that concludes the SCORP.
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION
A. VISION FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION IN LOUISIANA

Through a series of six stakeholders meetings across Louisiana, online and random surveys, coordinated GIS mapping, and working closely with the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP Task Force Committee (TFC), the following vision was developed:

**SCORP VISION**

To provide Louisiana communities with well-maintained, professionally run recreational facilities, natural areas, and trail systems in order to promote healthy, active lifestyle choices.

A Visioning Workshop was conducted with the TFC, and included developing strategies and recommendations based on all input received for the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP. The five areas of focus were:

- Economic Tourism
- Trails
- Innovation
- Community Outdoor Recreation
- Cooperation and Coordination

A summary of these strategies and regional priority recommendations can be found in Appendix H.

This vision builds upon the Top Ten priorities identified for various categories in the 2009-2013 Louisiana SCORP. The categories, which outlined parish specific issues, needs and opportunities as articulated through the public engagement process, included:

- Funding
- Acquisition
- Development
- Promotion and Marketing
- Planning and Implementation
- Program Development
- Greater Access
- Management

Each of the categories had priorities associated with them. These priorities were used to inform the vision for the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP. A full list of these previous planning efforts is included in Appendix A.
B. PURPOSE OF THE LOUISIANA SCORP

The 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP has been prepared to help guide the development of the state's outdoor recreation resources for the next five years. The SCORP’s purpose is to identify diverse community outdoor recreation issues and needs throughout the state, and prioritize outdoor recreation recommendations for improvements. This information is used to guide recreational development of Louisiana as required by the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The purpose of the SCORP document is defined in the LWCF Act of 1965, Public Law 88-578, as amended.

“A comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan shall be required prior to the consideration by the Secretary of financial assistance for acquisition or development properties.”

The goal and objective of the SCORP is defined in the LWCF State Assistance Program Manual Chapter 2-1 as, “Provide each State the maximum opportunity and flexibility to develop and implement its plan.”

To download additional information about the LWCF project selection criteria and its association with the SCORP, refer to LWCF’s website: www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/pub.htm

This is Louisiana’s ninth report since the passage of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. Throughout the planning process, common issues and needs emerged and are outlined in this report.
C. ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL OUTDOOR RECREATION PRIORITIES

The America’s Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative is intended to develop a 21st Century conservation and recreation agenda. AGO takes as its premise that lasting conservation solutions should come from the American people - that the protection of our natural heritage is a non-partisan objective that is shared by all Americans. This initiative turns to communities for local, grass roots conservation initiatives to rework inefficient policies and partner the federal government with states, tribes, and local communities.

A unique opportunity exists for alignment among national, state, parish, and local outdoor, recreation, conservation, and natural resource goals. From a national perspective, President Barack Obama’s 2010 America’s Great Outdoors Initiative has identified the following recommendations relevant to Louisiana:

**Connecting Americans to the Great Outdoors**
- Enhance recreational access and opportunities

**Conserving and Restoring America’s Great Outdoors**
- Establish great urban parks and community green spaces
- Conserve our national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, and other federal lands and waters
- Protect and renew rivers and other waters


D. VALUE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION IN LOUISIANA

The value of outdoor recreation in Louisiana is demonstrated through the three concepts of sustainability: economic, social (health and wellness), and environmental.

**Economic**

Little has been done to prove the economic benefit of Louisiana parks. A study completed for the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism in 2006 by Dr. Harsha Chacko of the University of New Orleans examined the contributions of the Office of State Parks to the economy and quality of life for the year 2004-2005. The study summarized the economics, overnight visitor profile, state park experience, and Hurricane Katrina post-script March 2006 for Louisiana State Parks only. [www.ltgov.la.gov/Assets/documentarchive/impact-report/State%20Parks.pdf](http://www.ltgov.la.gov/Assets/documentarchive/impact-report/State%20Parks.pdf)

In addition, the website [agrilife.org/cromptonrpts/selected-books-articles-and-presentations/selected-articles/](http://agrilife.org/cromptonrpts/selected-books-articles-and-presentations/selected-articles/) offers a quick review of available analysis on multiple studies that could provide justification for conducting an economic impact study.

Public recreation facilities have much to gain from groups of interested citizens. Support groups, friends groups, non-profit organizations and the like have demonstrated various levels of assistance in development, fund raising and operation.

Residents of areas adjacent to Baton Rouge’s Gayosa Park organized in support of redevelopment of that facility. Initially the interested parties identified the improvements they felt were needed at the park in keeping with the qualities of the community. Renovation plans were prepared and community members engaged in fund raising activities accumulating...
monies needed to achieve the development. Through sweat equity, the neighborhood engaged a greater connection with the facility. Now completed, Gayosa Park is attracting increased numbers of users from the immediate area.

Parkway Partners in New Orleans is a non-profit organization that empowers citizens to preserve, maintain and beautify green space in the city. The organization was founded in 1982 in response to massive budget cuts to the New Orleans Department of Parks and Parkways. Today Parkway Partners supports extensive programming throughout Orleans Parish, including community gardens and urban farms, schoolyard gardens, planting of trees, and development and restoration of multiple parks.

The Louisiana Office of State Parks is served by multiple friends groups. Most of these groups identify connections with specific recreation sites or historic sites. For example, the Friends of Palmetto Island State Park provide assistance in delivery of interpretive programs, facilitating concession stand services and development of primitive camping areas. Through fund raising as well as manpower, this friends group helps fill gaps to enhance the visitor experience of park guests.

Many outdoor enthusiasts visit Louisiana as a destination for hunting, fishing, birding and other forms of outdoor recreation, which significantly impacts the state’s economy. The LSU Agriculture Center recently released an article titled “Outdoor Recreation in Today’s Economy” that quantifies these benefits. A full version of this article can be found online at [www.lsuagcenter.com/en/our_offices/parishes/lincoln/news/outdoor-recreation-in-todays-economy.htm](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/our_offices/parishes/lincoln/news/outdoor-recreation-in-todays-economy.htm).

In 2012 and 2013, Louisiana surveyed waterfowl hunters to gather their opinions on topics related to this form of recreation. The 2012 survey primarily focused on hunting zones, while the 2013 survey focused on hunting season dates. Both surveys revealed that the majority of waterfowl hunters are men, with an average age of 44 years old. A complete summary of those survey results is included in Appendix J.

Information and statistics for hunting, fishing, and boating license revenue in Louisiana over the past 5 years can be found here: [www.wlf.la.gov/licenses/statistics](http://www.wlf.la.gov/licenses/statistics)
State Park and Historic Site Visitation
Visitation trends at Louisiana State Park and State Historic Site facilities have trended down over the last four years, but only slightly. The primary decline has been recorded in overnight visitation. In Fiscal Year 2010 the Louisiana Office of State Parks had 924,209 overnight visitors, including 622,003 using campers and an additional 210,157 in cabins and lodges. By the end of Fiscal Year 2009, overnight visitation was reported as 827,813 with 552,510 using campers and an additional 186,019 in cabins and lodges.

During the same period, day use visitation remained almost constant, ranging from a high of 1,327,968 visitors in Fiscal Year 2011 to a low of 1,139,191 in Fiscal Year 2013.

Visitation of State Historic Sites across Louisiana has also remained almost constant, with a high of 148,915 in Fiscal Year 2011 to a low of 125,109 in Fiscal Year 2012.

Table 1.1: FY 09-10 Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2009-2010 Visits</th>
<th>Day Use</th>
<th>Campers</th>
<th>Overnight</th>
<th>Lodges</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cabins</th>
<th>State Historic Site Visitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day Use</td>
<td>1,144,585</td>
<td>622,003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overnight</td>
<td>924,209</td>
<td>18,964</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,068,794</td>
<td>191,193</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>148,915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2: FY 10-11 Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2010-2011 Visits</th>
<th>Day Use</th>
<th>Campers</th>
<th>Overnight</th>
<th>Lodges</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cabins</th>
<th>State Historic Site Visitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day Use</td>
<td>1,327,968</td>
<td>620,691</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overnight</td>
<td>914,015</td>
<td>21,670</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,241,983</td>
<td>188,322</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>142,861</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.3: FY 11-12 Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2011-2012 Visits</th>
<th>Day Use</th>
<th>Campers</th>
<th>Overnight</th>
<th>Lodges</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cabins</th>
<th>State Historic Site Visitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day Use</td>
<td>1,277,249</td>
<td>579,954</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overnight</td>
<td>873,403</td>
<td>22,278</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,150,652</td>
<td>182,465</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>125,109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.4: FY 12-13 Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2012-2013 Visits</th>
<th>Day Use</th>
<th>Campers</th>
<th>Overnight</th>
<th>Lodges</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cabins</th>
<th>State Historic Site Visitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day Use</td>
<td>1,139,191</td>
<td>552,510</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overnight</td>
<td>827,813</td>
<td>21,773</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,967,004</td>
<td>164,246</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>142,279</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While it is important to consider park and historic site visitation trends, there are factors weighing on these results. These include closures of cabins for an extended period at Fontainebleau State Park due to damage from Hurricane Isaac, closures of cabins at Chicot State Park for renovations, drawdowns of lakes and reservoirs which limit access for boating and fishing, weather incidents causing closures due to damage, and budget actions curtailing operating hours of State Historic Sites from seven days-a-week to just five days-a-week.

An analysis of overnight guests at Fontainebleau State Park before and after Hurricane Isaac identified the impact of natural disasters on visitation trends. Hurricane Isaac reached the Louisiana coast on August 28, 2012 pushing a storm surge onto the north shore of Lake Ponchatrain and seriously damaging cabins at Fontainebleau State Park. The 20 cabins at Fontainebleau have yet to be reopened while repairs are being completed. In Fiscal Year 2012 Fontainebleau State Park welcomed 108,567 overnight guests. With cabins closed due to storm damage, overnight visitation for Fiscal Year 2013 at Fontainebleau State Park was 68,347. This decline of 40,220 for just the last 10 months of the fiscal year is attributed to this cabin closure.

Social Land and Water Conservation Fund

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) assistance has supported hundreds of model projects since the first grant was approved for Port Hudson State Historic Site on December 22, 1965. Louisiana has received more than $73.2 million in matching fund assistance through the LWCF for 722 projects in 62 of the state’s 64 parishes. These projects have included ball fields and boat ramps, tennis courts and hiking trails, swimming pools and splash pads, picnic areas and playgrounds.

St. Tammany Parish’s Pelican Park is an example of how a small initial investment of LWCF assistance inspired continued growth into a major facility with significant impact for the local community. An LWCF investment of $49,663.82 in a project sponsored by St. Tammany Parish Recreation District #1 has grown into a vital part of the community. The park consists of 32 athletic fields, a three-court gym, a two-court gym, the 46,000 square foot multi-purpose Castine Center, paved roads, walking trails, dog park, batting cages, sand volleyball courts, an 18-hole disc golf course and parking for more than 1,700 vehicles. On a typical Saturday, the park hosts more than 12,000 visitors with more than one million visitors each year.

Pelican Park also serves as a major economic generator for the community through shows and tournaments for a variety of sports. In 2011 the park hosted 11 major sport tournaments with 50-200 participating teams that brought thousands of visitors to the area for the weekend. The park also employs 35 full-time employees supported by an army of volunteers.

Nearby Pelican Park is Tammany Trace (www.tammanytrace.org/), the first Rails-to-Trails project in Louisiana. Although this facility has not received LWCF assistance, the project transformed an unwanted rail line that cut across the southern portion of St. Tammany Parish into a 31-mile corridor for hiking, biking, and equestrian use. The “Trace” offers wildlife sightings of turtles, snakes, rabbits, birds, deer, and even an occasional bald eagle.

Development of the facility has not been cheap. Millions of dollars have been poured into Tammany Trace during more than two decades of development. Annual spending by the Parish on the Trace is more than $1.25 million with funding from numerous sources including grants, donations, parish government general funds, and cell phone tower revenues.

Supporters say that the money has been well spent. Nearly 230,000 people use the Trace in a given year. The Trace does not fit the traditional Louisiana economic development model, but supporters credit the facility’s importance in the area’s economy. While no formal economic development study has been conducted, local shops do cater to runners and cyclists. Restaurants and cafes near the Trace attribute boosts in business on nice weekends to the trail. Perhaps more importantly, St. Tammany Parish economic development leaders credit the Trace as being a key component in attracting new businesses to the community.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Model recreational developments are not limited to the southern part of the state. Kiroti Park, an LWCF-assisted facility in West Monroe, offers 150 acres of natural beauty. The park features playgrounds, a unique conservatory, a dog park, tennis courts, numerous gardens, picnic areas, fishing ponds and hiking trails. Most of the park is wooded and accessible through paved streets and trails that hold surprises like a suspension bridge, covered bridge, observation tower, and elevated walkways.

A short drive west is Lincoln Parish Park north of Ruston. This LWCF-assisted facility became fully operational in 1995 and hosts more than 100,000 guests annually. Facilities are developed around a 30-acre lake and include nationally recognized biking trails, 90 RV campsites, boating, fishing, swimming, and picnic areas.

LWCF assistance also has been instrumental in assisting local government agencies to rebuild recreation areas in the aftermath of natural disasters. Olla Sports Park in LaSalle Parish was developed in the aftermath of tornados, and Tuten Park in Lake Charles is a natural area in the middle of residential and commercial development that was redeveloped after Hurricane Rita.

The 1965 Land and Water Conservation Fund Act is set to expire in 2015. In order to meet the outdoor recreation needs of all Americans for the next 50 years, the Society of Outdoor Recreation Professional (SORP) created The 2015 Land and Water Conservation Fund Act - Adapting the Landmark 1965 LWCF to Meet the Outdoor Recreation Needs of Americans for the Next 50 Years. This paper presents SORP’s core values to strengthening the LWCF, and provides a proposed 2015 edition of the document. An online version of this report is located here: www.recro.org/assets/SORP_Reports/2013_adapting_lwcf_2015_final_compressed.pdf.

Rails-with-Trails

According to the National Trails Training Partnership, a trail’s success depends on good design. “Design of a whole trail system as well as its component parts must meet the needs of the anticipated users, which include people of all ages, socioeconomic status, abilities, and activities (bicycling, walking, running, wheelchair, equestrian, inline skating). Design elements such as making trails aesthetically pleasing and easily accessible, with multiple points of entry, will also encourage use of the trail.”

The main finding in a recent study from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy on the development of multi-use trails along active rail lines is that “rails-with-trails are safe, common, and growing.” Entitled America’s Rails-with-Trails: A Resource for Planners, Agencies and Advocates on Trails Along Active Railroad Corridors, this report studies the characteristics of 88 projects in 33 states. Key findings include:

- A 260% increase in rails-with-trails since 2000
- A growing trend for rails-with-trails alongside local and regional transit corridors
- Evidence that rails-with-trails provide a safe travel alternative

Visit the following link to download a current copy of this study: www.railstotrails.org/ourWork/reports/railwithtrail/report.html.

Currently, there is not a “one-stop shop” source for trail maps and information in the state. Nonetheless, the following online resources may be helpful:

- www.bikelouisiana.com/  
- www.cajuncyclists.org/  
- crescentcitycyclists.org/chain-links/  
- N.O. Bike Map – bikeeasy.org/
Bayou Teche Paddle Trail (130 miles)
The Center for Cultural and Eco-Tourism (CCET) partnered with the TECHE Project and the National Parks Service to plan and implement this 130-mile long paddle trail. After two years of planning, the Bayou Teche Paddle Trail is moving to the implementation phase.

- [techeproject.org/bayou-teche-paddle-trail/](http://techeproject.org/bayou-teche-paddle-trail/)
- [ccet.louisiana.edu/Conference/bayou-teche-paddle-trail.html](http://ccet.louisiana.edu/Conference/bayou-teche-paddle-trail.html)

The Tour du Teche is an annual race for canoes and kayaks along the entire 130-mile length of Bayou Teche that attracts both competitive and recreational paddlers alike. The event began in 2010 to introduce the area to paddlers and other eco-tourists, as well as show off the recreational, aesthetic, cultural, and economic value of the Bayou to local residents. Since then, the event has become known not only as a tough challenge, but also a fun party for participants of all ages. To find out more, visit [www.tourduteche.com](http://www.tourduteche.com).

*Paddlers take part in Tour du Teche, a nationally-known annual race on Bayou Teche (Images courtesy of Ron J. Berard/Tour de Teche)*
Chapter 1: Introduction

Figure 1.1: Bayou Teche Paddle Trail Launch and Support Facilities Map

Map courtesy of the Bayou Teche Paddle Trail report (cct.louisiana.edu/Conference/BTPT-plan-final.pdf)
Recreation Groups, Providers, and On-line Resources

- Cajun Coast Visitors Convention and Bureau - www.cajuncoast.com
- Louisiana North - www.explorelouisiananorth.org
- Baton Rouge Bike Club (BRBC) - www.batroungebikeclub.com
- Baton Rouge Area Mountain Bike Association (BRAMBA) - www.bramba.org
- Audubon Golf Trail - audubongolf.com
- Louisiana Outdoors Outreach Program (LOOP) – www.crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-parks/louisiana-outdoors-outreach-program/loop-new-orleans/index
- BREC Outdoor Adventure – www.facebook.com/brecadventure
- www.bikelouisiana.com/bike-trails-search
- www.mapmyride.com/us/baton-rouge-la/
- www.mapmyride.com/us/houma-la/
- www.bramba.org/trails.php
- www.brec.org/index.cfm/page/350
- www.downtownbatonrouge.org/aroundbike.asp
- alltrails.com/us/louisiana/baton-rouge
- www.batroungebikeclub.com/
- www.scout.me/bike-paths-and-trails--near--louisiana
- bccbike.org/
- Wanna Go Paddle Facebook page - www.facebook.com/groups/104713559643727/
- www.explorelouisiananorth.org/itinerarycategories.aspx
- kayaklouisiana.org/
- www.atchafalaya.org/page.php?name=Paddling
- canoeandtrail.com/
- bccbike.org/
- Bikes Belong Coalition - bikesbelong.org
Environmental
The LSU AgCenter recently received a grant from the Walton Family Foundation to develop three paddling trails, such as the Bayou Bartholomew paddling trail, that will draw outdoor enthusiasts to the northeast part of the state. Additional grants will continue to support other ecotourism initiatives. An online article detailing this project can be found here: www.lsuagcenter.com/en/our_offices/parishes/Franklin/News/Ecotourism-project-leads-to-3-canoeing-trails.htm.

The Memphis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, released the Assessment of River Related Recreation and Access, the second report authorized by the Lower Mississippi River Resource Assessment. This report will address recreation on the Lower Mississippi River and the need for facilities and access. The report is available at: www.mvm.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects/LMMRA.aspx.
E. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND ANALYSIS

Overview
The population data used in this demographic profile of the State of Louisiana comes from ESRI Business Information Solutions, based on the U.S. Census. A summary of demographic highlights is followed by more detailed demographic analysis. This plan includes a demographic analysis in eight planning regions as identified by the Louisiana Office of State Parks. The map in Figure 1.2 identifies each of the eight regions.

Figure 1.2: Louisiana Planning Regions

Map courtesy of NTB Associates, Inc.
Demographic Analysis

Population Projections

Table 1.5 illustrates the population forecast for the State of Louisiana, which is predicted to grow by about 10 percent from 2010 to 2023, reaching 5,002,273. The biggest growth areas are predicted to be Region 2 (7 percent growth from 2010 – 2018) and Region 1 (12 percent growth from 2010 – 2018). Region 1 is predicted to come close to recovering its 2000 (pre-Katrina) population (1,224,058) level by 2018 (predicted at 1,195,698).

Table 1.5: Population projections for Louisiana*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>US Census (2000 and 2010) and ESRI Projections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000 Population</td>
<td>4,468,976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Population</td>
<td>4,533,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Estimated</td>
<td>4,643,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018 Projected</td>
<td>4,823,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023 Projected</td>
<td>5,002,273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census and ESRI Business Information Solutions.
*GreenPlay, LLC, calculated projected population for 2023 based on ESRI growth multiplier of .76 % for the State of Louisiana.

Louisiana Subregions

The population distribution represented in Figure 1.3 shows that in 2013:

- Region 1, including New Orleans, has the largest population (1,112,929), followed closely by Region 2, which includes Baton Rouge (998,028).
- Region 4 with Lafayette (652,285) and Region 7 with Shreveport (599,167) have mid-range population levels.
- Region 5 in southwest Louisiana has the lowest population (297,294).

Figure 1.3: 2013 Louisiana Population by Planning Region*

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions 2013 estimate based on U.S. 2010 Census data
*Refer to Page 17, Figure 1.2 for the Louisiana Planning Regions Map
Figure 1.4 illustrates the population growth trends for the eight regions over the 2000 – 2018 period. The New Orleans area (Region 1) has not yet recovered the population loss due to Hurricane Katrina.

**Figure 1.4: 2013 Louisiana Planning Region* Population Trends, 2000 - 2018**

Source: U.S. Census and ESRI Business Information Solutions 2013
(2013 populations are ESRI estimates and 2018 populations are ESRI projections)
*Refer to Page 17, Figure 1.2 for the Louisiana Planning Regions Map

Population Distribution, Median Age, and Median Income were collected for each planning region. Refer to Table K.1 in Appendix K for more information.

- The median age in the 8 planning regions ranges from 34.4 in Region 2 (holding 21% of the State’s population) to 37.6 in adjacent Region 1 (holding 24% of the population).
- The median income in the planning regions spans a $15,000 range from a low of $35,902 in Region 8 to a high of $50,854 in Region 3.

Population: Age Ranges, Ethnicity Distribution, and Income Distribution Information

**Age Distribution**

As part of the population trend analysis, it is useful to understand age distribution in Louisiana as a whole as well as in each of the planning regions. According to ESRI Business Information Solutions estimates based on the 2010 U.S. Census, the 2013 median age for the State of Louisiana is 35.8. Comparisons of age distributions in the state are illustrated in Appendix K. Figure K.1 compares the age distribution in the United States with that of Louisiana. Figure K.2 illustrates the full age distribution for each planning region, as estimated by Esri for 2013, based on 2010 U.S. Census data.
Figure K.1 illustrates that the age distribution for the State of Louisiana (median age 35.8) and the United States (median age 37.6) compare favorably with the United States as a whole trending slightly older. Figure K.2 illustrates the age distribution among the eight Louisiana planning regions.

- Some outliers to note:
  - Regions 2 and 7 have significantly higher population in the 20-24 age range than in the other regions
  - Regions 1 and 2 have noticeably higher populations in the 25-34 age range
  - Region 3 has a higher population in the 45-54 age range
  - Region 1 has a higher population in the 55-64 age range

- In general, Regions 2, 3, and 4 have lower populations in the 65-85+ age range than in other regions
- Regions 1, 6, and 7 have the greatest senior populations (65-85+), and Region 1 trends older than any of the other regions, in general

Ethnic Distribution
The current ethnic breakdown for the State of Louisiana shows that a significant percentage (61.8%) of Louisiana residents are Caucasian, but that African Americans also have a significant presence in the state (32.3%). Statewide, the next highest ethnic cohort is Hispanic Origin (of any race) at 4.9 percent. In Appendix K, Figure K.3 illustrates the racial/ethnic distribution statewide and among Louisiana’s eight regions. Figure K.4 illustrates the distribution of Hispanics (of any race) in the eight regions of Louisiana.

Population Demographics Summary by Planning Region
- Distribution of the Caucasian population in Louisiana ranges from a high of 73.1% in Region 5 to a low of 56.7% in Region 7.
- The African American population is moderately well distributed among the regions, with the highest population (38.2%) in Region 7 and the lowest population (22.3%) in Region 5.
- Regions 5, 6, and 7 hold the largest American Indian populations at .7%, .9%, and .8%, respectively.
- Region 1 is the most diverse with the highest percentage of Asian people (2.9%), along with those of two or more races (2.2%), “some other race” alone (3.1%), a significant percentage of African Americans (34.6%), and an American Indian presence (5%).
- The Hispanic population is notable as well in Louisiana (4.9% statewide), with the highest Hispanic percentage found in Region 1 (9.1%).

Household Income
According to ESRI Business Information Solutions (based on 2010 U.S. Census data), the estimated median household income for Louisiana residents was $43,437 in 2013. In Appendix K, Figure K.5 demonstrates the full income distribution for the State of Louisiana. Figure K.6 reflects the median income for each planning region and for the state as a whole in 2013.

- Region 3 has the highest median household income in the state in 2013, estimated at $50,854.
- Sixteen-to-nineteen percent (16-19%) of household income levels in all of the regions were in the $50,000 – 75,999 range.
- Region 8 has the most households with income levels of under $15,000 (22.6%) while Region 1 has the most households with income levels of $200,000+ (3.9%).
- Data for Region 8 reflected the lowest median income at $35,902, with 63% earning under $50,000.
F. OUTDOOR RECREATION IMPACTS ON HEALTH AND LIVABILITY

Extensive research has been conducted on the positive impacts of outdoor recreation participation on health and livability. In a 2013 report, the United Health Foundation identified Louisiana as the state with the third highest obesity rate in the nation, with 66 percent of the population recognized as overweight. To positively address this issue, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BC/BS) of Louisiana Foundation, in collaboration with Pennington Biomedical Research Center, funded a total of $10.6 million to 12 projects around the state in its 2012 Challenge Grant program, leveraging an additional $16.9 million in matching funds.²

Many of the Challenge Grant projects are designed to involve youth in outdoor adventure recreation, encourage community gardening, improve play areas, and construct trails and pathways in both rural and urban communities in Louisiana. Outcomes will be measured over the course of the three year grant period, using metrics such as measuring usage of new trails, parks, sports facilities, and playgrounds through user surveys and interviews. Nationally, studies have shown that a connected system of trails increases the level of physical activity in a community.

This fact has been scientifically demonstrated through the Trails for Health initiative of the CDC.³ Trails can provide a wide variety of opportunities for being physically active, such as walking/running/hiking, rollerblading, wheelchair recreation, bicycling, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. Communities are recognizing that active use of trails for positive health outcomes is an excellent way to encourage people to adopt healthy lifestyle changes.


The health benefits for trails in urban neighborhoods are similar to trails in state or national parks. A trail in a neighborhood, also known as a “linear park,” makes it easier for people to incorporate exercise into their daily routines, whether for recreation, fitness, or non-motorized transportation. Urban trails need to connect people to places they want to go, such as schools, transit centers, businesses, and neighborhoods.4

Louisiana ranks 29th among states as a “bikeable” state, according to the League of American Bicyclists’ 2013 Bike Friendly State Ranking.5 The league’s ratings are based on the following scoring criteria:

- Legislation and Enforcement — (Louisiana received 40-60% of points available)
- Policies and Programs — (Louisiana received 40-60% of points available)
- Infrastructure and Funding — (Louisiana received 0-20% of points available)
- Education and Encouragement — (Louisiana received 20-40% of points available)
- Evaluation and Planning — (Louisiana received 0-20% of points available)

---


G. LWCF SUCCESS STORIES: CELEBRATING OUTDOOR RECREATION IN LOUISIANA

Historically, the value of Land and Water Conservation Fund applications in Louisiana have generally far exceeded available funding. This clearly demonstrates rising demand for outdoor recreation resources in the state.

**Figure 1.5: LWCF Funding and Application History**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># LWCF Applications</th>
<th>$ Value</th>
<th># Projects Awarded</th>
<th>$ Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$701,247</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$454,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$682,634</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$639,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>$1,984,633</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$614,847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$2,068,823</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$694,679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>$1,749,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$658,310</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project highlights that received funding and accomplished one or more of the 2009-2013 statewide priorities include:

**Riverside Park**

Riverside Park received assistance in the development of a waterfront walking trail providing scenic views along this professionally designed linear park. The trail leads to multiple recreation facilities, natural areas, and parking (Sponsor: City of Lake Charles). [www.cppj.net/index.aspx?page=853](http://www.cppj.net/index.aspx?page=853)
Chapter 1: Introduction

Gum Swamp Boardwalk
Camp Salmen Nature Park’s Interpretive Journeys trail system meets the region’s recreational vision identified in The Comprehensive Plan for St. Tammany Parish – New Directions 2025. This professionally designed park is being developed with LWCF assistance as an active and passive public recreational facility located close to a residential population along the Tammany Trace. The interpretive trails and boardwalks provide public access to one of St. Tammany’s most attractive streams (Bayou Liberty) and publicly owned natural resources. The park’s trail system offers a connection to the 28 mile Tammany Trace Trail (www.tammanytrace.org), part of the National Rail to Trail Network – a safe route through five historic communities with vistas of rivers and streams from atop 31 bridges (Sponsor: St. Tammany Parish Police Jury). www.campsalmennaturepark.org/

Rathborne Park Improvements
Multiple grants provided assistance in the restoration and development of this 12.6 acre active and passive recreational park in easy walking distance of the Luling area and adjacent to rapidly developing residential areas. Improvements include trails with fitness stations, ballfield lighting, a new restroom, concessions building, fencing, dugouts, basketball court, pavilion, picnic tables, water fountains, bike racks, and parking (Sponsor: St. Charles Parish). www.facebook.com/stcharlesgov

Ruins at the Order of the Arrow Gardens (Image courtesy of the Camp Salmen Nature Park website)

Blackeyed Susans (Image courtesy of the Camp Salmen Nature Park website)
The Tammany Trace trail is enjoyed by 290,000 users every year (Image courtesy of the St. Tammany Parish Government website)

An equestrian trail runs parallel to the main paved trail (Image courtesy of the St. Tammany Parish Government website)

Rathborne Park is a popular place for families (Image courtesy of the St. Charles Parish Rathbone Park and Walking Trail Group website)
Kenner City Park Playground
Kenner City Park designed a playground specifically for children with disabilities. The park was acquired in part through LWCF support. Over the years, additional phases included pavilions, a lakeside walking trail, and additional parking (Sponsor: City of Kenner). www.kenner.la.us/pages/section_2_16.asp

![An accessible playground provides fun for all (Image courtesy of the Louisiana Office of State Parks)](image1)

Cassidy Park Improvements
LWCF assistance provided development of a new interactive spray ground, concrete walkways, and a restroom facility at this existing park along the bank of Bogue Lusa Creek. The master plan also includes swimming beach improvements, a canoe launch, a raised deck, and a fishing pier with parking (Sponsor: City of Bogalusa).

www.bogalusa.org/department/index.php?structureid=12

![The walking trail is half a mile long (Image courtesy of the Louisiana Office of State Parks)](image2)

Cassidy Park Master Plan [Plan courtesy of Joseph Furr Design Studio]
Chapter 1: Introduction

Polk City Park Improvements
Vidalia received LWCF assistance for multiple phases of development for Doctor William T. Polk City Park. Amenities include basketball and volleyball courts, a fishing pond, a boardwalk and pier, restrooms with showers, and a concession building. The master plan also includes a skate park, amphitheater, spray park, bocce ball, playground equipment, a community garden and farmer’s market pavilion, and a sculpture garden. The park’s trail was funded by the Recreational Trails Program (Sponsor: City of Vidalia). [www.cityofvidalia.com/index.php/concordia-recreation-district-3/](http://www.cityofvidalia.com/index.php/concordia-recreation-district-3/)

Lighting will be added to the tennis courts (Image courtesy of the City of Vidalia)

The park will be developed in four phases (Plan courtesy of the City of Vidalia)

Washington Parish Recreation Complex
LWCF assisted in the acquisition of 115 acres and development of a recreation facility to provide physical fitness activity and recreational opportunities. This facility will provide walking and bike trails, baseball and soccer fields, basketball courts, restrooms, concession stands, as well as picnic pavilions. This facility will be lighted (Sponsor: Washington Parish Recreation District #1). [wprd1.com/](http://wprd1.com/)

The park program focuses on active recreation (Plan courtesy of Washington Parish Recreation District 1)

View of the undeveloped site from the proposed entrance (Image courtesy of Washington Parish Recreation District 1)
The Great Park at Coquille

The Great Park at Coquille, being developed on a 130-acre parcel of land with LWCF assistance, is a regional park with an innovative children’s play area. Included in this project area are several of the top 10 important outdoor recreational activities listed in the 2009 – 2013 SCORP including water based recreation, walking trails, sports fields, swimming and tennis facilities, playgrounds, picnic and day use facilities, dog park, nature and event center and an outdoor amphitheater, splash pad, pavilion, fishing pier, parking, walkways, and a public restroom (Sponsor: St. Tammany Parish Rec. Dist. 14). www.coquillemasterplan.org/
Zemurray Park Pond Restoration
The master plan of this historic LWCF-assisted park included multiple phases of development and renovation to existing recreational assets. The improvements include restoration of the three acre Zemurray pond to provide for fishing, kayaking and canoeing, new playground equipment, and picnic facilities with site improvements. Additional park amenities include a skatepark, tennis courts, baseball fields, a swimming pool, and walking trails (Sponsor: City of Hammond). [www.recreationparks.net/LA/tangipahoa/zemurray-park-hammond;](http://www.recreationparks.net/LA/tangipahoa/zemurray-park-hammond) [www.facebook.com/hammondrec](http://www.facebook.com/hammondrec)

Zemurray Park Development Plan (Plan and inset image courtesy of the City of Hammond)
Terrebonne Parish Community Park
LWCF assisted in acquiring 39.9 acres of undeveloped land adjacent to an existing 144 acre community park. The master plan details development of a second entrance; a paddling lake and water based activity center; green trails; a disc golf course; baseball, softball, soccer, and sports fields; a tennis facility; a dog park; a skate park; splash pads and play equipment; additional lake development for paddling and fishing; walking, jogging, and bicycle trails; a great lawn with a performance venue; natural areas; green cross-country trails; and ancillary facilities to support outdoor recreation (Sponsor: Terrebonne Parish and Recreation District 2.3). [www.tpcg.org/?f=planning&p=community_park](http://www.tpcg.org/?f=planning&p=community_park)
Chapter 2: LOUISIANA’S OUTDOOR RECREATION DEMAND
Chapter 2: Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Demand

To establish priorities for land conservation, outdoor recreation, and natural resource protection for the next five years, Louisiana’s Office of State Parks, along with outdoor recreation providers nationwide, face the challenge of balancing the demand for active and passive outdoor recreation use of public lands with protection and stewardship of water and land based natural resources.

This chapter highlights relevant recreation trends in Louisiana. Trends have been identified through multiple sources to demonstrate the demand for outdoor recreation facilities and natural resource protection. This data has influenced the focus and recommendations of the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP.

A. PLANNING METHODOLOGY

Innovative and traditional planning and analysis tools were used in developing the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP, with input and guidance from our Task Force Committee (TFC) and SCORP Advisory Team (SAT). These groups are comprised of staff from the Division of Outdoor Recreation, Office of State Parks and representatives from academic, business and economics, health, and outdoor recreation provider sectors. A collaborative planning approach created a five-year plan with implementable recommendations that incorporates statewide comment and institutional history. The following methodologies were used.

Public Engagement and Surveys

Citizen stakeholder meetings were held in six regions throughout Louisiana. The meetings were hosted by local agencies in the following communities:

- Jennings - Jefferson Davis Parish, Regions 4 and 5
- Baton Rouge - East Baton Rouge Parish, Region 2
- Harahan - Orleans and Jefferson Parish, Regions 1 and 3
- Shreveport - Caddo Parish, Region 7
- Swartz - Ouachita Parish, Region 8
- Pineville - Rapides Parish, Region 6

In addition to public meetings, three meetings were conducted with the Task Force Committee throughout the planning process, as well as Office of State Parks staff project team meetings and interviews with key stakeholders as needed. Surveys were conducted in several different formats:

- Random Telephone Survey (700)
- Online Open Link Survey (568)
- Provider Survey (106 received, target 100)
- MindMixer Online Community Engagement (564)
Chapter 2: Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Demand

Demographics, Trends, and Previous Planning Efforts
A demographics analysis and trends summary was prepared using data from ESRI Business Solutions and relevant outdoor recreation industry research. The trends analysis explored state and national trends in outdoor recreation participation, water recreation, active transportation, and healthy lifestyles. The previous SCORP was reviewed to determine commonalities and provide guidance.

Outdoor Recreation Resource Inventory and Proximity Level of Service Analysis
Using GIS data collected from state agencies and local parishes, an outdoor recreation resource inventory and proximity level of service analysis of Louisiana’s outdoor recreation assets was developed. Resource maps depicting LWCF funding history, planning regions, population density, and Proximity Analysis maps showing levels of service for picnicking, playgrounds, walking trails, and water recreation at various distances traveled were produced. Analyses focused on proximity to known/mapped outdoor recreation assets across the state.

Findings and Visioning Workshops
Members of the Task Force Committee reviewed the findings and participated in a Visioning Workshop to evaluate recommendations based on five key areas: Economic Tourism, Trails, Innovation, Community Outdoor Recreation, and Cooperation and Coordination.

Key Issues Analysis, Strategies, and Recommendations
A Key Issues Analysis exercise was conducted using the highlights from the community engagement process, surveys, and GIS mapping process, which contributed to the development of strategies and recommendations.

B. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY
The goals of the public engagement process for the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP were to:

- Gather quantitative, relevant, and meaningful information to inform strategies and recommendations for the next five years
- Provide Louisiana residents and stakeholders the opportunity to be involved in the planning process
- Inform and encourage stakeholders to create a recreation vision for their communities and use sound planning principles to make their dreams a reality

Highlights of the public engagement activities are outlined below.

Regional Public Meetings
Citizen stakeholder meetings were held in six regions throughout the state. All meetings began with a presentation by the planning team to introduce stakeholders to the purpose of the plan, the planning process, and goals for outdoor recreation, natural resources, and open space in Louisiana. An interactive discussion was held to receive input on broad questions relating to outdoor recreation.

Detailed summaries of each regional meeting are provided in Appendix C. The regional meetings were hosted by local agencies, and yielded the following key findings.
1.) Jennings
   • Corridor management plan in progress (bicycling, off road, water, hiking) with a connectivity focus
   • Natural resource protection is a priority
   • Public beach access is desired
   • Opportunities exist for agri-tourism, youth access, promotion of local assets

2.) Baton Rouge
   • Partnerships, promotion, trends are a priority – target youth
   • Expanded promotion of outdoor activities desired – highlight uniqueness
   • Larger parks with staff presence/maintenance promote a feeling of safety
   • Variety of activities available – bicycling, hiking, walking, water-based recreation
   • Designing natural surface trails for seniors a desire
   • Separate and distance ATV use from “quiet recreation”

3.) Orleans and Jefferson Parish
   • Wetlands and family cabins are an asset
   • Bicycling/walking trails are desired (with lighting for nighttime use)
   • Floating cabins suggested to expand water access

4.) Shreveport
   • Bicycle trails connecting adjacent parks desired
   • Beautify and modernize parks to make them more attractive
   • Perception of safety a concern
   • Better access to bank fishing, ponds, lakes, rivers
   • ATV groups underrepresented, but incompatible with “quiet recreation”

5.) Ouachita Parish
   • Build awareness of geocaching community in Louisiana (70,000 users reported)
   • Perception of safety for walking, running, recreation is a concern
   • Multi-use facility desired for soccer/baseball/softball to enhance local economy
   • Capacity of wildlife areas compromised (hunting overuse concerns)
   • Tennis court upgrades desired
   • Promote gateway activities to attract new users (ex: developed camping)

6.) Rapides Parish
   • Red River an asset for water-based recreation
   • Accessible dock on Pineville side of Red River desired – liability and safety issues
   • Natural resource protection a priority
   • Improve senior citizen accessibility/safety
   • Rapides Foundation – funding sources
Consistent themes emerged among the regions to suggest that the perception of safety is a factor in participation in outdoor recreation activities. This includes running and walking on trails, as well as a desire to make facilities more accessible to youth, senior citizens, and people with disabilities. Attendees across the regions recognize Louisiana’s world class outdoor recreation opportunities and their potential to positively impact the local and state economy. Expanded access to water recreation (i.e. bank fishing) also emerged as a theme.

**Statistically Valid and Open Link Surveys**

A statistically valid, random telephone survey of 700 Louisiana residents was conducted during the planning process, with the results providing key insight into participation levels, preferred outdoor recreation activities, barriers to participation, and priorities for future investment. Concurrently, an open link web based survey was conducted with 568 respondents. It is useful to compare the results of the two surveys to determine where responses were aligned, which informs strategies and recommendations.

A significant number of respondents to both surveys prefer that outdoor recreation providers pursue an equal balance between preservation and protection of natural resources and developing outdoor recreation facilities, as noted in Appendix I.

Respondents’ participation in outdoor recreation activities shows a preference for low cost natural resource based recreation preferences as well as visiting playgrounds. This finding helps to guide priorities for LWCF projects related to fishing and general water recreation access, trails, and community playground development. In addition to the priorities below, 70 percent of Open Link web survey respondents participate in outdoor recreation by visiting natural areas.

The Top Ten most popular outdoor recreation activities reported are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP TEN ACTIVITIES: RANDOM SURVEY</th>
<th>TOP TEN ACTIVITIES: OPEN LINK SURVEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Fishing* (62%)</td>
<td>1. Walking (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Walking (61%)</td>
<td>2. Visiting natural areas (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Picnicking (55%)</td>
<td>3. Fishing (61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Swimming outdoors (52%)</td>
<td>4. Picnicking (61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Visiting playgrounds (51%)</td>
<td>5. Hiking/backpacking (53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Spectator activities (44%)</td>
<td>6. Nature programs/self-guided tours (52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Visiting natural areas (44%)</td>
<td>7. Swimming outdoors (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Hunting (42%)</td>
<td>8. Paddling (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Playing outdoor athletic team sports (40%)</td>
<td>9. Primitive tent camping (47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Non-team outdoor sports (37%)</td>
<td>10. Botanical gardens (47%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ranked as the most popular outdoor activity in the previous SCORP survey*
Kidz Korner Playland Project is a collaborative endeavor between the Pilot Club of Denham Springs Foundation and the City of Denham Springs. The goal of the project is to build an ADA approved playground for the children of Livingston Parish and surrounding areas to play without limitations set on their physical, mental or developmental abilities.

In a related question, survey participants were asked to identify facilities to be added or expanded. Paved and unpaved trails were by far the top priority as shown in Figure 2.1 below:

![Figure 2.1: Outdoor Rec. Facilities to be Added, Expanded, or Improved](image)

Adding sports lighting is one type of improvement to outdoor recreation facilities (Image courtesy of Atkins/Tommy Davidson)

A connected network of paved trails will improve access to recreation facilities (Image courtesy of the St. Tammany Parish Government website)
Priorities for future investment in outdoor recreation aligned with respondents’ preferences for more trails, camping areas, and access to water recreation, as shown in Figure 2.2 below:

**Figure 2.2: Priorities For Future Investment**

Regionally, respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the amount of public access to natural bodies of water near their home, indicating that more promotion of water recreation assets is needed to inform users of the opportunities for water recreation.

**Figure 2.3: Satisfaction with the Amount of Public Access to Natural Bodies of Water Near your Home - By Region**
Importance of Outdoor Recreation to Louisianans

Random and open link surveys conducted for the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP revealed that 48 percent and 69 percent (respectively) feel that the availability of parks, trails, and outdoor recreation facilities are “extremely important” to their households. Responses to the random survey indicated that 48 percent shared this view, while the open link survey had a 69 percent response. When asked whether their needs were being met by outdoor recreation facilities, respondents were generally satisfied, but there is room for improvement, as shown in Figure 2.4 below:

Figure 2.4: Importance of Outdoor Recreation and Needs Being Met

When asked, “How important is it to you that the State of Louisiana spend public funds to acquire land to prevent the loss of exceptional natural areas to development?” a majority of respondents to both surveys indicated that it was “extremely important,” as noted in Appendix I.
Provider Survey
A significant finding in the results of the Provider Survey, sent to members of the Louisiana Recreation and Park Association, was the response to the following question, “What facilities or natural resources would you consider the most ‘in demand’ in your area?” As noted in Figure 2.5 below, the results aligned with the citizen responses in the online and random surveys – picnic areas, walking and bicycling trails, and playgrounds – but access to water recreation does not appear to be an issue according to providers’ responses.

![Figure 2.5: Facilities or Natural Resources Most In Demand](image)

Interestingly, outdoor recreation providers identified walking and jogging trails and bicycling paths as facilities in demand, yet they do not provide bicycling facilities, as noted in Figure 2.6 below:

![Figure 2.6: Bicycling Amenities Provided](image)
C. MINDMIXER ONLINE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

For this project, MindMixer Community Engagement tools were used to garner broad public input online at playoutdoorsla.mindmixer.com. Similar to the other community engagement tools, the MindMixer online engagement polls revealed a number of themes and ideas which contributed to the overall strategies and recommendations for the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP. The MindMixer tool allows contributors to suggest ideas for improvement, and allows other visitors to provide comments and indicate support for the specific idea. Ideas that generated the most support were as follows:

- Demand for bicycling and walking facilities
- Safer and more connected bicycling and walking routes to recreation and community destinations
- Maintaining water quality for fishing and boating access
- Adding accessible launch facilities for car-top boats to water access facilities
- Preserving natural resources and land acquisition for future generations
- Provide better maintenance for existing parks/facilities to encourage new visitors
- Benches, observation decks, and boardwalks/walkways/bridges around natural features on the trails located in the Louisiana State Park system
- Promote awareness of local outdoor recreation opportunities

MindMixer contributors also provided comments to expand on the ideas that were generated. Relevant comments are outlined below:

“The active transportation movement is pushing all progressive communities and cities towards connecting trails.”

“I would love to see greenways which not only connect large community parks within parishes, but also city parks to state parks and refuges. For example, a hiking and biking trail that connects BREC’s Frenchtown Road Conservation Area to Tickfaw State Park would be an end goal to the project. It would provide a recreational outlet common in many other parts of the country that Louisiana has never experienced before!”

“Don’t need a commuter network, but would like to see trails that connect neighborhoods to schools, shopping, grocery, and restaurants, not just to or from parks.”

“First impressions are everything. If a park is clean and well-kept, users tend to respect that. We must educate by example and, in turn, they will help out with the process. We need local communities where a park is located to buy into the pride of having that asset close to them.”

“There are many watersport-loving residents of EBR Parish and surrounding communities without any river access. I suggest launches be built at intervals along the Comite and Amite Rivers to provide residents a much-needed outlet to these water sources and allow boaters to put in and take out at measured intervals along these rivers. Suggested locations include the Comite/Amite Confluence, Waddill Wildlife Refuge, Bayou Manchac Confluence, etc.”

“Every community along the Mississippi River has a levee just waiting to be turned into a walking, running, and biking trail.”
Task Force Committee (TFC)
Three meetings were conducted with the project’s Task Force Committee, providing valuable multi-sector feedback on the community engagement findings and development of the project’s vision for the next five years. The following highlights emerged:

- **Improve Trails and Connectivity:** For senior citizen access and perception of safety, consider both paved and natural surface trail improvements.
- **Build Awareness of Water Recreation Opportunities:** Consider all types of water recreation including fishing, swimming, and boating; encourage future information gathering on types of water access and water recreation activities.
- **Water Quality Concerns:** Relevant coastal studies cite water quality as an issue.
- **Multi-Sport/Regional Complexes and Youth Sports Participation:** Local recreation providers are lacking funds for maintenance and upgrades, many local ball park facilities are in disrepair, some are abandoned. Multi-sport regional facilities are an economic draw.
- **Youth Swimming Lessons:** Decline in lesson opportunities due to pool closings, local surveys indicate a demand and need for water safety training.
- **Playgrounds:** Quality improving in urban areas, but need exists to educate communities on maintenance and safety standards for playgrounds. A copy of the Public Playground Safety Handbook, published by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is available here: [www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/122149/325.pdf](http://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/122149/325.pdf).
- **Open Space and Forest Lands:** Undeveloped forests are being clear cut and developed; survey respondents identified natural resource preservation/protection as a priority.
D. ANALYSIS OF TRENDS IMPACTING OUTDOOR RECREATION

The following information highlights relevant state and national outdoor recreation trends from various sources that may influence Louisiana outdoor recreation planning for the next several years.

Parks and Recreation Industry Trends

Overarching trends impacting parks and recreation were identified in 2013 by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in collaboration with a national group of industry leaders. These trends are summarized below:

- **Human Capital**: Parks and recreation professionals of the future must be equipped to contribute to creating and sustaining livable, healthy, and environmentally resilient communities. Human-capital development will focus on young professionals and succession-planning needs.

- **Green Infrastructure**: Parks and conservation lands will increasingly be tapped for their potential to contribute to stormwater management and improving air quality.

- **The Societal Piece**: It is vital that parks and recreation professionals understand the concept of social equity in the context of social innovations such as technology, placemaking, and repositioning agencies as contributors to public health.

- **Reframing Our Proposition**: Parks and recreation must be contributors to the social innovation strategies such as healthy eating and active living strategies that help communities become vibrant places that people value.

- **Economic Forecast**: New trends, such as the infusion of private capital into public parks, innovative public-private partnerships, and privately funded and managed parks have caused a re-evaluation of traditional methods of funding parks and recreation through tax supported general funds.

Demographic Trends in Recreation

**Adults – The Baby Boomers - Planning for the Demographic Shift**

Baby Boomers are defined as individuals born between 1946 and 1964, as stated in Leisure Programming for Baby Boomers. They are a generation consisting of nearly 76 million Americans. In 2011, this influential population began its transition out of the workforce. As Baby Boomers enter retirement, they will be looking for opportunities in fitness, sports, outdoors, arts and cultural events, and other activities to suit their lifestyles. With their varied life experiences, values, and expectations, Baby Boomers are predicted to redefine the meaning of recreation and leisure programming for mature adults.

In the leisure profession, this generation’s devotion to exercise and fitness is an example of its influence on society. When Boomers entered elementary school, President John F. Kennedy initiated the President’s Council on Physical Fitness; physical education and recreation became a key component of public education. As Boomers matured and moved into the workplace, they took their desire for exercise and fitness with them. Now as the oldest Boomers are nearing 65, park and recreation professionals are faced with new approaches to provide both passive and active programming for older adults. Boomers are second only to Gen Y/Millennials (born between 1980 and 1999) in participation in fitness and outdoor sports.

In an article titled, “Recreating retirement: how will Baby Boomers reshape leisure in their 60s?” Jeffrey Ziegler, a past president of the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association, identified “Boomer Basics.” Highlights are summarized below.

---

Chapter 2: Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Demand

Boomer Basics
Boomers are known to work hard, play hard, and spend hard. They have always been fixated with all things youthful. Boomers typically respond that they feel 10 years younger than their chronological age. Their nostalgic mindset keeps them returning to the sights and sounds of their 1960s youth culture. Swimming pools have become less of a social setting and more of an extension of Boomers’ health and wellness program. Because Boomers in general have a high education level, they will likely continue to pursue education as adults and into retirement.

Boomers will look to park and recreation professionals to give them opportunities to enjoy many life-long hobbies and sports. When programming for this age group, a customized experience to cater to the need for self-fulfillment, healthy pleasure, nostalgic youthfulness, and individual escapes will be important. Recreation trends will shift away from games and activities, such as bingo, bridge, and shuffleboard, that Boomers associate with senior citizens, because they relate these activities to being old and inactive.

BABY BOOMERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION IN LOUISIANA

Louisiana’s demographic profile indicates that 26.2% of the current population falls within the Baby Boomer age range (approximately 45 - 64 years of age). As a result, local parishes should begin to evaluate programs and services, conduct outreach to determine the needs and interests of this cohort, and recognize the need to support this group’s health and physical activity needs.

Boomers have reinvented what being retired and 65 years old means. Parks and recreation agencies should plan for Boomers carrying on in retirement at the same hectic pace in which they have lived during their years in employment.

Things to consider when planning for the demographic shift:

- Boomer characteristics
- Passive and active fitness trends
- What drives Boomers?
- Outdoor recreation/adventure programs
- Marketing to Boomers
- Travel programs
- Arts and entertainment

MULTI-GENERATIONAL PROGRAMMING: IMPLICATIONS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION IN LOUISIANA

In Louisiana, the highest ranking age cohort is 25 - 34 (14.3% of the population), followed closely by the 45 - 54 (13.6%), 55 - 64 (12.9%), and 35 - 44 (12.2%) age groups. The 64 - 75 cohort is expected to grow from 6.9% in 2010 to 9.2% in 2018.

Planning for the next ten years suggests a growing demand for programs and services for young adults, Baby Boomers, and seniors.
Cultural Diversity Trends
The 2010 U.S. Census indicates that, while the overall Louisiana population increased by only one percent, there was a 79 percent increase in Hispanic population between 2000 and 2010. The age group of those under age 18 forms about a quarter of the U.S. population, and this percentage is at an all-time low. Nearly half of this population group is ethnically diverse, and 25 percent is Hispanic.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY: IMPLICATIONS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION IN LOUISIANA
Regarding cultural diversity, implications for Louisiana outdoor recreation and leisure service providers include a greater awareness of the Hispanic community’s priority on multi-generational family activities, and considering the potential for language barriers to impact participation.

Youth - Planning for the Demographic Shift
As one of the five trends shaping tomorrow today, Emilyn Sheffield identified that the proportion of youth is smaller than in the past, but still essential to our future. As of the 2010 Census, the age group under age 18 forms about a quarter of the U.S. population, and this percentage is at an all-time low. Nearly half of this population group is ethnically diverse and 25 percent is Hispanic.⁹

Facilities Development Trends
According to Recreation Management magazine’s “2013 State of the Industry Report,”¹⁰ national trends continue to show an increased user-base of recreation facilities (private and public). To meet that growing need, a majority of the survey respondents (62.7%) reported that they have plans to build new facilities or make additions or renovations to their existing facilities over the next three years. The average age of respondents’ main facilities is 27.7 years. Public parks and recreation respondents planning construction were the most likely to be planning renovations (50.5%), building new facilities (28.3%), and making additions to current facilities (27.9%).

The average amount planned by public parks and recreation respondents for construction for parks in 2013 budgets saw an increase of 15.5 percent from an average of $3,440,000 in last year’s survey to an average of $3,973,000 for 2013. The five most commonly planned facility additions include: dog parks, splash play areas, trails, park structures (shelters/restrooms), and playgrounds.

This national trend in facility planning generally aligns with the random telephone survey results for outdoor recreation participation in Louisiana, in which respondents identified trails and greenways (74%), public access to water (80%), and large multi-use parks (77%) as desired future improvements.

The current national trend is toward “one-stop” indoor recreation facilities to serve all ages. Larger, multi-purpose recreation centers that serve large portions of the community help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use. Agencies across the U.S. are increasing revenue production and cost recovery. Multi-use facilities versus specialized space is a trend, offering programming opportunities as well as free-play opportunities. “One stop” facilities attract young families, teens, and adults of all ages.

Aquatics
According to the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA), swimming ranked third nation-wide in terms of participation in 2012.\textsuperscript{11} Outdoor swimming pools are not typically heated and open year round. Swimming for fitness is the top aspirational activity for “inactives” in 6 of 8 age categories in the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) “2013 Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report,” representing a significant opportunity to engage inactive populations. Nationally, there is an increasing trend towards indoor leisure and therapeutic pools. Additional indoor and outdoor amenities like “spray pads” are becoming increasingly popular as well.

\textbf{AQUATIC TRENDS: IMPLICATIONS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION IN LOUISIANA}

In a random telephone survey of Louisiana residents, swimming outdoors ranked among the top five outdoor recreation activities, along with fishing, walking, picnicking, and visiting playgrounds. This result suggests that local parishes and other outdoor recreation providers consider strategies such as outdoor “spraygrounds,” leisure pools, and enhanced promotion of water recreation opportunities in capital planning and marketing plans.

Healthy Lifestyles
In October, 2010 the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Vulnerable Populations Portfolio\textsuperscript{12} shared thoughts on how health is impacted by where and how we live, learn, work, and play. Below demonstrates the connection that nonmedical factors play in where health starts before illness sets in.

Where We Live
Residential instability has adverse health impacts. Examples include:

- Homeless children are more vulnerable to mental health problems, developmental delays, and depression than children who are stably housed.
- Difficulty keeping up with mortgage payments may be linked to lower levels of psychological well-being and a greater likelihood of seeing a doctor.
- The connection between access to public transportation and health studies found that people who live in counties with high “sprawl indexes” were likely to have a higher body mass index than people living in more compact counties.
- Convenient, affordable, and available eating habits result from inability to move from place to place within the community. PolicyLink and the Food Trust, two nonprofits focused on expanding access to fresh foods where low-income people live, have found that “decreased access to healthy food means people in low-income communities suffer more from diet-related diseases like obesity and diabetes than those in higher-income neighborhoods with easy access to healthy food, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables.”
- Communities without crime are healthier. Researchers from the Baltimore Memory Study found that residents living in the most dangerous neighborhoods were nearly twice as likely to be obese as those living in the least dangerous neighborhoods.

Where We Work
The relationship between work and health is critical to creating productive environments.

- Investing in the right ways to support employees, businesses can help create a workforce that is less stressed and more content. The net result: a happier, healthier workforce which is more productive and yields better results.
- An approach such as “lifestyle leave” to take care of the inevitable personal and family needs that arise is a valuable asset for many working parents. Programs which help provide employees with peace of mind also help them to breathe and work more easily.
- Business leaders and employees alike should view work as a place of opportunity — a source of support, satisfaction, and motivation, which can offer mutual benefits when done right.

Where We Learn
Eight times more lives can be saved with education than with medical advances.

- Without graduating from high school, one is likely to earn less money and struggle to make ends meet, work longer hours and maybe even need two jobs just to feed family, and live in a compromised neighborhood without access to healthy food.
- Better educated people have more opportunities to make healthier decisions. They have the money and access necessary to buy and eat healthier foods.
- Data from the National Longitudinal Mortality Study indicates that people with higher education live five to seven years longer than those who do not finish high school.
- Schools are not just centers of teaching and learning, they are places that provide the opportunity to improve the health of all Americans.

Where We Play
Play is a profound biological process that shapes brain function.

• Play prompts us to be continually, joyously, physically active, combating obesity and enhancing overall health and well-being.
• Play can interrupt damage done by chronic stress and give the immune system relief.
• Play is a basic need; a biological requirement for normal growth and development. Scientists with the National Institute for Play are united in their concern about “play under-nutrition,” noting that the corrosive effects of this form of starvation gradually erode emotional, cognitive and physiologic well-being – a major aspect of sedentary, obesity, and poor stress management can be readily linked to play starvation.
• Places to spend leisure time and recreate are critical to creating healthy communities.

For more active living resources, see Appendix F.

America’s Health Rankings®
In an effort to educate Americans and encourage them to take steps toward a healthier future, the United Health Foundation (UHF) annually presents America’s Health Rankings®: A Call to Action for Individuals and Their Communities. The rankings are derived from a composite index of over 20 different metrics that give a snapshot of health of a population in each state relative to the other states, such as obesity, smoking, cancer, diabetes, and physical inactivity.

The UHF has tracked the health of the nation for the past 22 years, providing a unique, comprehensive perspective on how the nation (and each state) measures up. Recent editions of the Rankings suggest that our nation is extremely adept at treating illness and disease. However, Americans are struggling to change unhealthy behaviors such as smoking and obesity, which cause many of these diseases. Obesity continues to be one of the fastest growing health issues in our nation, and America is spending billions in direct health care costs associated with poor diet and physical inactivity.

The UHF has ranked Louisiana 48th in its 2013 State Health Rankings, up from its ranking of 49th in 2012. Louisiana’s biggest strengths and challenges include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
<th>WEAKNESSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small disparity in health status by educational attainment</td>
<td>High prevalence of physical inactivity, obesity, and diabetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High immunization coverage among adolescents</td>
<td>High infant mortality and high prevalence of low birth weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low incidence of pertussis infections</td>
<td>High percentage of children in poverty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 2014 Pennington Biomedical Research Center Childhood Obesity and Public Health Conference focused on creating healthier communities for Louisiana’s youth. Reports from that conference can be found at www.pbrc.edu/childhood_obesity_conference/links_and_resources.htm.
Chapter 2: Louisiana's Outdoor Recreation Demand

Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan • 2014 - 2019

AMERICA’S HEALTH RANKINGS®:
IMPLICATIONS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION IN LOUISIANA

Research on the positive health impacts of the built environment is growing. It is vital that state, regional, and local agencies involved in health promotion in Louisiana take the lead to address the health issues facing Louisiana citizens of all ages. Health, planning, transportation, and parks and recreation professionals have the capacity and skills to collaborate to create healthier communities through infrastructure changes (trails, greenways, bike/walk friendly initiatives), policy changes (Safe Routes to School, Complete Streets, Safe Routes to Play), and community engagement efforts (events, campaigns, health/wellness programs).

Shade Structures
Communities around the country are considering adding shade structures as well as shade trees to their parks, playgrounds, and pools as, “a weapon against cancer and against childhood obesity”\textsuperscript{13} – both to reduce future cancer risk and promote exercise among children. A 2005 study found that melanoma rates in people under 20 rose three percent a year between 1973 and 2001, possibly due to a thinning of the ozone layer in the atmosphere. It is recommended that children seek shade between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., but with so little shade available, kids have nowhere to go. Additionally, without adequate shade, many play areas are simply too hot to be inviting to children. On sunny days, the playground equipment is hot enough to scald the hands of would-be users.

Trees would help, as tree leaves absorb about 95 percent of ultraviolet radiation. However, most trees take a decade or more to grow large enough to make a difference. So, many communities are building shade structures instead. The non-profit Shade Foundation of American is a good resource for information about shade and shade structures, www.shadefoundation.org.

Trails and Health
Physical activity of a community can be increased through development of a connected system of trails. The “Trails for Health” initiative of the CDC has scientifically demonstrated the value of this approach.\textsuperscript{14} Trails provide a wide variety of opportunities for being physically active, such as walking, running, hiking, rollerblading, wheelchair recreation, bicycling, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. Recognizing active use of trails for positive health outcomes is an excellent way to encourage people to adopt healthy lifestyle changes. The “Benefits of Trails and Greenways” section of the American Trails website is an excellent resource. www.americantrails.org/resources/benefits

The health benefits are equally as high for trails in urban neighborhoods as for those in state or national parks. A neighborhood trail, creating a “linear park,” makes it easier for people to incorporate exercise into their daily routines, whether for recreation or non-motorized transportation. Trails can connect people to places they want to go, such as schools, transit centers, businesses, and neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{15}


\textsuperscript{14} “The Guide to Community Preventive Services” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), \url{http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.htm}

Chapter 2: Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Demand

Economics of Bicycling and Walking
The Alliance for Biking and Walking’s Bicycling and Walking in the United States 2014 Benchmark Report (www.bikewalkalliance.org/download-the-2014-benchmarking-report)\(^\text{16}\) contains hundreds of references to the following:

- Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects create 8 to 12 jobs per $1 million of spending. Road infrastructure projects create seven jobs per $1 million of expenditures (Garrett-Peltier, 2011).
- The total economic cost of overweight and obese citizens in the United States and Canada was roughly $300 billion in 2009. This estimate includes medical costs, disability, and excess mortality (Behan et al., 2010).
- A modest increase in bicycling and walking could save three billion gallons of gasoline and prevent the release of 28 million tons of CO\(^2\) (Rails to Trails Conservancy, 2008).

The report identifies the following Louisiana initiatives related to bicycling and walking:

- A combined bicycle and pedestrian master plan
- A Complete Streets policy
- Bicycles on roadways are considered vehicles
- Helmets are required for youth
- Three feet required for safe passing of bicyclists by cars

Louisiana ranks below the national average (2.1%) in federal transportation dollars dedicated to bicycling and walking (1.5%). Louisiana also has among the lowest percentage of schools (2.4%) participating in the Safe Routes to School program. The highest school participation rate is 60 percent (Maine).

Inactivity and obesity in the United States cost the country hundreds of billions of dollars annually. Recent studies\(^\text{17}\) have identified at least four major categories of economic impact linked with the meteoric rise of obesity in this country, likely leading to over $215 billion in economic costs associated with obesity, annually:

- Direct medical costs (as much as 100% higher than for healthy weight adults)
- Productivity costs (absenteeism, presenteeism [working while sick], disability, and premature mortality – total productivity costs as high as $66 billion annually)
- Transportation costs and human capital costs (studies indicate that these are significant, but further work is needed to quantify)

The economic benefits of bicycling and walking:

- Bicycling and walking projects create 8 to 12 jobs per $1 million spent, compared to just seven jobs created per $1 million spent on highway projects.
- Cost-benefit analyses show that up to $11.80 in benefits can be gained for every $1 invested in bicycling and walking.

At the 2013 Walking Summit in Washington, D.C.\(^\text{18}\), presenters called walking a wonder drug with the generic name “physical activity.” While other forms of physical activity work equally well, three factors were cited as making walking the most effective treatment:

1. Low or no cost
2. Simple to do for people of all ages, incomes, and fitness levels
3. Because walking is America’s favorite physical activity, we are more likely to stick with a walking program than other fitness or pharmaceutical regimens

\(^{16}\) The Alliance for Biking and Walking published Bicycling and Walking in the United States 2012 Benchmark Report.


Active Transportation

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has studied the health implications of the current U.S. transportation infrastructure, which “focuses on motor vehicle travel and provides limited support for other transportation options for most Americans.” Several quality of life and health concerns emerge from the CDC’s study.

- Physical activity and active transportation have declined compared to previous generations.
- The lack of physical activity is a major contributor to the steady rise in rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke and other chronic health conditions in the United States.
- Motor vehicle crashes continue to be the leading cause of injury-related death for many age groups.
- Pedestrians and bicyclists are at an even greater risk of death from crashes than those who travel by motor vehicles.
- Many Americans view walking and bicycling within their communities as unsafe because of traffic and the lack of sidewalks or multi-modal paths, crosswalks, and bicycle dedicated lanes.
- Although using public transportation has historically been safer than highway travel in light duty vehicles, highway travel has grown more quickly than other modes of transportation.
- A lack of efficient alternatives to automobile travel disproportionately affects vulnerable populations such as the poor, the elderly, people who have disabilities and children by limiting access to jobs, health care, social interaction, and healthy food choices.
- Although motor vehicle emissions have decreased significantly over the past three decades, air pollution from motor vehicles continues to contribute to the degradation of our environment and adversely affects respiratory and cardiovascular health.
- Transportation accounts for approximately one-third of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

As a result of these implications, communities around the country are creating programs to address and support alternative methods of transportation. Policy is being created, funding options are available, and partnerships are emerging. Initiatives like Safe Routes to Schools, Safe Routes to Play, and designing for “Complete Streets” are emerging to create safe, walkable communities. A copy of the transportation part of a plan that has been created for Baton Rouge to implement such initiatives can be found here: brgov.com/dept/planning/pdf/FBRTransportationE.pdf.

In November 2013, the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy published a *Standard for Transportation Oriented Design (TOD)*, with accessible performance objectives and metrics, to help municipalities, developers, and local residents design land use and built environment “to support, facilitate, and prioritize not only the use of public transport, but the most basic modes of transport, walking, and cycling.” The TOD Standard, along with its performance objectives and scoring metrics, can be found at [go.itdp.org/display/live/TOD+Standard](http://go.itdp.org/display/live/TOD+Standard).20

### National Bicycle Trends

- Bike sharing and bike libraries allow people to rent bikes and tour communities using multiple pick up and drop off locations.
- Infrastructure to support biking communities is becoming more commonly funded in communities.
- Cycling participation by those ages 25-64 almost doubled, from 23 percent in 1995 to 42 percent in 2009.
- Cycling participation by ethnicity shows that non-Hispanic whites have the highest bike mode sharing among ethnic groups, but cycling rates are rising faster among African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans.

### Louisiana “Bikeability” Trends

Louisiana ranks 29th among states as a “bikeable” state, according to the League of American Bicyclists’ 2013 Bike Friendly State Ranking.21 The league’s ratings are based on the following scoring criteria:

- Legislation and Enforcement – Louisiana received 40-60% of points available
- Policies and Programs — Louisiana received 40-60% of points available
- Infrastructure and Funding — Louisiana received 0-20% of points available
- Education and Encouragement — Louisiana received 20-40% of points available
- Evaluation and Planning — Louisiana received 0-20% of points available

The League of American Bicyclists’ Bicycle Friendly Community Programs has awarded bronze level designations to Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

### Natural Environments and Open Space

#### Conservation

The top ten recommendations of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Conservation Task Force were published in the November 2011 issue of *Parks and Recreation* magazine.22 These recommendations are a compilation of best practices used by trend-setting agencies.

1) Take a leadership role in the community to promote conservation. Park and recreation agencies have a unique opportunity to bring governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, community leaders, and the public together for the cause of working together on community wide conservation objectives – clean water, wildlife habitat preservation, reducing energy use, and improving environmental quality. Park and recreation agencies must lead the way in promoting conservation to diverse and underserved audiences.

2) Lead by example in employing best management conservation practices in parks. Park and recreation agencies should become the catalyst in the community for conservation by showing how best practices can be adopted, i.e. not mowing what you do not need to mow, stopping wasteful energy consumption, and reducing pesticide use for example. Show the public how conservation practices can benefit everyone.

---


21 The League of American Bicyclists, [http://www.bikeleague.org/content/ranking](http://www.bikeleague.org/content/ranking), accessed on March 27, 2014.

3) Engage volunteers in conservation and stewardship. Create a sense of belonging and stewardship for parks by creating a personal sense of ownership and value. Enable people to identify with their parks and natural resources, and to care about their future. Sustain stewardship by creating meaningful public participation in implementation of conservation principles and practices.

4) Establish a strategic land acquisition strategy based on knowledge and awareness of significant natural and cultural resources (watershed protection, unique ecological characteristics, and sensitive natural areas deserving protection). As the largest owners of public land within most communities, park and recreation agencies should lead the way in developing a strategic vision for preserving open space and conserving important landscapes and natural features.

5) Engage youth in conservation. Get kids and teens outdoors and enjoying their parks. The experience of nature is inherently rewarding for youth. Set as a goal to connect kids in the community to nature and the outdoors. Children and youth will be fascinated by nature and may develop a lifelong affinity as well as a conservation ethic if they have early opportunities to enjoy nature and recreate outdoors in a safe, rewarding way.

6) Conserve energy in all ways. Park and recreation agencies must lead by example, showing the public how and why they should adopt practices they can see demonstrated in parks and recreation facilities. Park and recreation agencies should adopt energy conservation measures that make sense and save public taxpayer funds.

7) Protect natural resources in parks and in the community. A core mission of public parks is to protect land and water resources and to be stewards of natural resources. This means committing personnel and resources to protect natural and cultural resources and creating sustainable, long-term methods of funding this conservation mission. Parks and recreation agencies are entrusted with some of the most important public assets of a community and the conservation and long-term protection of this public trust is and should be a core component of every parks and recreation agency’s mission.

8) Create sustainable landscapes that demonstrate principles of conservation. Utilize sustainable landscape practices to save taxpayer funds, to measurably improve conservation benefits, and to educate the public about conservation. For example, agencies can reduce turf grass and mowing frequency; replace turf with native plants; manage floodplains for multiple uses including conservation and public recreation; enhance wetlands for water filtration and groundwater recharge; plant model landscapes of drought tolerant native plants adapted to climate and culture; and promote parks as food sources through edible landscapes and community gardens.

9) Forge partnerships that foster the mission of conservation. The greatest and most beneficial conservation successes most often occur as a result of collaboration. Park and recreation agencies should partner with non-profit and community service organizations, universities and colleges, school systems, other governmental agencies, and non-traditional partners for conservation outcomes. Promote health, education, and other goals while working toward a common mission of conservation.

10) Utilize technology to promote conservation. Park and recreation agencies should embrace technology to promote conservation. This is not only in applications such as GIS, but in utilizing social media to engage the public, especially youth. Technology offers the opportunity of a means of sharing knowledge and connecting people to conservation and stewardship.
Chapter 2: Louisiana's Outdoor Recreation Demand

Economic and Health Benefits of Parks

There are numerous economic and health benefits of parks, including the following:

• Trails, parks, and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home.
• Research from the University of Illinois shows trees, parks, and green spaces have a profound impact on people’s health and mental outlook.23
• U.S. Forest Service research indicates when the economic benefits produced by trees are assessed, the total value can be two-to-six-times the cost for tree planting and care.24
• Fifty percent (50%) of Americans regard outdoor activities as their main source of exercise.25

The Trust for Public Land has published a report titled: “The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space.” The report makes the following observations about the health, economic, environmental, and social benefits of parks and open space26:

• Physical activity makes people healthier.
• Physical activity increases with access to parks.
• Contact with the natural world improves physical and physiological health.
• Residential and commercial property values increase.
• Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
• Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
• Trees are effective in improving air quality and act as natural air conditioners.
• Trees assist with storm water control and erosion.
• Crime and juvenile delinquency are reduced.
• Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.
• Stable neighborhoods and strong communities are created.

For many years, researchers have publicized the benefits of outdoor exercise. According to a study published in the Environmental Science and Technology Journal by the University of Essex in the United Kingdom, “as little as five minutes of green exercise improves both mood and self-esteem.”27 In China, a new trend emerged as they prepared to host the 2008 Summer Olympics. Their aim was to showcase a society that promotes physical fitness, and reaps the benefits of outdoor exercise, by working out on outdoor fitness equipment.

The United States is now catching up on this trend, as park and recreation departments have begun installing “outdoor gyms.” Equipment that can be found in these outdoor gyms is comparable to what would be found in an indoor workout facility, such as leg and chest presses, elliptical trainers, pull down trainers, etc. With no additional equipment such as weights and resistance bands, the equipment is fairly easy to install. Outdoor fitness equipment provides a new opportunity for parks and recreation departments to increase the health of their communities, while offering them the means to exercise outdoors. Such equipment can increase the usage of parks, trails, and other outdoor amenities while helping to fight the obesity epidemic and increase the community’s interaction with nature.

Nature Programming

Noted as early as 2003 in Recreation Management magazine, park agencies have been seeing an increase in interest in environmental-oriented “back to nature” programs. In 2007, the NRPA sent out a survey to member agencies in order to learn more about the programs and facilities that public park and recreation agencies provide to connect children and their families with nature. A summary of the results follow:

- Sixty-eight percent (68%) percent of public parks and recreation agencies offer nature-based programming, and 61% have nature-based facilities.
- The most common programs include nature hikes, nature-oriented arts and crafts, fishing related events, and nature-based education in cooperation with local schools.
- When asked to describe the elements that directly contribute to their most successful programs, agencies listed staff training as most important followed by program content and number of staff training.
- When asked what resources would be needed most to expand programming, additional staff was most important followed by funding.

“There’s a direct link between a lack of exposure to nature and higher rates of attention-deficit disorder, obesity, and depression. In essence, parks and recreation agencies can and are becoming the ‘preferred provider’ for offering this preventative healthcare.”

– Fran P. Mainella, former director of the National Park Service and Instructor at Clemson University.

Chapter 2: Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Demand

- Of the agencies that do not currently offer nature-based programming, 90% indicated that they want to in the future. Additional staff and funding were again the most important resources these agencies would need going forward.
- The most common facilities include: nature parks/preserves, self-guided nature trails, outdoor classrooms, and nature centers.
- When asked to describe the elements that directly contribute to their most successful facilities, agencies listed funding as most important followed by presence of wildlife and community support.

Figures from the Association for Interpretative Naturalists, a national group of nature professionals, demonstrate that nature-based programs are on the rise. According to Tim Merriman, the association’s Executive Director, the group was founded in 1954 with 40 members. It now boasts 4,800 members, with research indicating that about 20,000 paid interpreters are working nationally, along with an army of more than 500,000 unpaid volunteers staffing nature programs at parks, zoos and museums. The growth of these programs is thought to come from replacing grandparents as the teacher about the “great outdoors.” It is also speculated that a return to natural roots and renewed interest in life’s basic elements was spurred as a response to September 11, 2001.

In his book Last Child in the Woods: Saving Children from Nature Deficit Disorder, Richard Louv introduced the concept of the restorative qualities of being out in nature, for both children and adults. This concept, and research in support of it, has led to a growing movement promoting connections with nature in daily life. One manifestation of this is the development of Nature Explore Classrooms in parks. Nature Explore is a collaborative program of the Arbor Day Foundation and the non-profit organization, Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, with a mission of helping children and families develop a profound engagement with the natural world, where nature is an integral, joyful part of children’s daily learning. Nature Explore works to support efforts to connect children with nature.

Coastal Management
The Louisiana Coastal Management Program Assessment and Strategy (2011-2015) establishes six strategies to guide the implementation of priority coastal management enhancement projects:

1. Implement an updated inland boundary for Louisiana’s coastal zone
2. Implement Federal consistency procedures to improve beneficial use of dredged material
3. Establish mitigation regulations for unavoidable impacts due to permitted activities in coastal Louisiana
4. Address risk and hazards through the Local Coastal Program of the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program
5. Establish new permit procedures for avoiding and mitigating oil and gas facility siting conflicts
6. Improve decision-making regarding water management

Pursuant to the assessment, coastal hazards and wetlands remain a high priority as in prior assessments. Public access decreased from medium to low priority. Marine debris is increased from low to high priority. Ocean resources and special area management increased from low to medium priority, as did energy and government facility siting. Cumulative and secondary impacts and aquaculture remain low priorities.

---

Riparian and Watershed Best Practices
The ability to detect trends and monitor attributes in watershed and/or riparian areas allows planners opportunities to evaluate the effectiveness of their management plan. By monitoring their own trends, planners can also identify changes in resource conditions that are the result of pressures beyond their control. Trend detection requires a commitment to long-term monitoring of riparian areas and vegetation attributes.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) suggests the following steps to building an effective watershed management plan. See water.epa.gov for more information from the EPA.

- Build partnerships
- Characterize the watershed
- Set goals and identify solutions
- Design a watershed management plan
- Implement the watershed management plan
- Measure progress and make adjustments

National Outdoor Recreation Trends
The Outdoor Foundation releases a “Participation in Outdoor Recreation” report, annually. According to the 2013 report, while there continues to be fallout from the recent economic downturn, the number of outdoor recreation outings reached an all-time high in 2012. The foundation reports that the top outdoor activities in 2012 in the nation were running, fishing, bicycling, camping, and hiking. Bird watching is also among the favorite outdoor activities by frequency of participation.

The Outdoor Foundation’s research brought the following key findings:

- Nearly 50% of Americans ages six and older participated in outdoor recreation in 2012. That equates to a total of 141.9 million Americans and a net gain of one million outdoor participants.
- Top Five Biggest Participation Percentage Increase in Outdoor Activities in the Past three years:
  1. Triathlon (Off Road)
  2. Adventure Racing
  3. Telemarking
  4. Freestyle Skiing
  5. Triathlon (Traditional/Road)

Outdoor recreation trends are also a recurring topic of study by the United States Forest Service through the Internet Research Information Series (IRIS). An IRIS report dated January 2012\endnote{Hope Nardini, “Bike Tourism a Rising Trend”, Ethic Traveler, http://www.ethicaltraveler.org/2012/08/bike-tourism-a-rising-trend/, Accessed on Marcy 24, 2014.} provides the following recent nature-based outdoor recreation trends: Participation in walking for pleasure and family gatherings outdoors were the two most popular activities for the U.S. population as a whole. These outdoor activities were followed closely in popularity by viewing/photographing wildlife, boating, fishing, snow/ice activities, and swimming. There has been a growing momentum in participation in sightseeing, birding and wildlife watching in recent years.

### National Recreation and Cycling Trends

For trail-related recreation activities such as hiking, bicycling, and running, the 2013 Outdoor Recreation Topline Report indicates a positive three-year trend for trail running, running/jogging, hiking, and mountain biking, but a slightly negative trend for road/surface bicycling. Participation in BMX bicycling is up significantly over the past three years (12.2%).
Chapter 2: Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Demand

The Outdoor Recreation Participation Report for 2013 reports a downward trend nation-wide for equestrian participation from 2007 – 2012 (from a high of 4.4 percent in 2007 to a low of 2.8 percent participation in 2012).

Other Cycling Trends

- Bicycle touring is becoming a fast-growing trend around the world, including the U.S. and Canada. “Travelers are seeking out bike tours to stay active, minimize environmental impact, and experience diverse landscapes and cityscapes at a closer level.”

- Urban bike tours, popular in cycle-friendly cities in Europe, are taking hold in the United States as well. Bikes and Hikes LA, an eco-friendly bike and hike sightseeing company founded in West Hollywood, California last September, offers visitors the opportunity to “see the city’s great outdoors while getting a good workout.” In New York, a hotel and a bike store are partnering to offer guests cruisers to explore the city during the summer of 2014. A similar opportunity is also available in New Orleans.

- One of the newest trends in adventure cycling is “fat bike,” multiple speed bikes that are made to ride where other bikes cannot be ridden, with tires that are up to five inches wide run at low pressure for extra traction. Most fat bikes are used to ride on snow but they are also very effective for riding on any loose surface like sand or mud. They also work well on most rough terrain or just riding through the woods. This bike offers unique opportunities to experience nature in ways that wouldn’t be possible otherwise.

Water Recreation Trends

The Outdoor Recreation Topline Report 2013 includes nationwide trends for various outdoor activities, including the following water recreation activities: boardsailing, canoeing, fishing, kayaking, sailing and stand-up paddling. Among water recreation activities, stand-up paddling had the highest number of new participants in 2012. Fishing is the second most popular outdoor activity nationwide (with 16 percent participation) after running/jogging (19 percent participation).

Table 2.1: National Recreation Participation by Activity (in thousands) (6 years of age or older)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>3 Yr. Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMX Bicycling</td>
<td>1,887</td>
<td>1,904</td>
<td>1,811</td>
<td>2,369</td>
<td>1,547</td>
<td>2,175</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling (Mountain/Non-Paved)</td>
<td>6,892</td>
<td>7,592</td>
<td>7,142</td>
<td>7,161</td>
<td>6,816</td>
<td>7,714</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling (Road/Paved)</td>
<td>38,940</td>
<td>38,114</td>
<td>40,140</td>
<td>39,320</td>
<td>40,349</td>
<td>39,232</td>
<td>-0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking (Day)</td>
<td>29,965</td>
<td>32,511</td>
<td>32,572</td>
<td>32,496</td>
<td>34,491</td>
<td>34,545</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running/Jogging</td>
<td>41,064</td>
<td>41,130</td>
<td>43,892</td>
<td>49,408</td>
<td>50,713</td>
<td>52,187</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail Running</td>
<td>4,216</td>
<td>4,857</td>
<td>4,833</td>
<td>5,136</td>
<td>5,610</td>
<td>6,003</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Outdoor Foundation 2013.

Table 2.2: National Water Recreation Participation by Activity (in thousands) (6 years of age or older)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boardsailing/Windsurfing</td>
<td>1,118</td>
<td>1,307</td>
<td>1,128</td>
<td>1,617</td>
<td>1,151</td>
<td>1,593</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing</td>
<td>9,797</td>
<td>9,935</td>
<td>10,058</td>
<td>10,553</td>
<td>9,787</td>
<td>9,839</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing (Fly)</td>
<td>5,756</td>
<td>5,941</td>
<td>5,568</td>
<td>5,478</td>
<td>5,360</td>
<td>6,012</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing (Freshwater/Other)</td>
<td>43,859</td>
<td>40,331</td>
<td>40,961</td>
<td>38,860</td>
<td>38,868</td>
<td>39,135</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing (Saltwater)</td>
<td>14,437</td>
<td>13,804</td>
<td>12,303</td>
<td>11,809</td>
<td>11,983</td>
<td>12,017</td>
<td>-.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayaking (Recreational)</td>
<td>5,070</td>
<td>6,240</td>
<td>6,212</td>
<td>6,465</td>
<td>8,229</td>
<td>8,144</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayaking (Sea Touring)</td>
<td>1,485</td>
<td>1,780</td>
<td>1,771</td>
<td>2,144</td>
<td>2,029</td>
<td>2,446</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayaking (White Water)</td>
<td>1,207</td>
<td>1,242</td>
<td>1,369</td>
<td>1,842</td>
<td>1,546</td>
<td>1,878</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailing</td>
<td>4,056</td>
<td>4,226</td>
<td>4,342</td>
<td>3,869</td>
<td>3,725</td>
<td>3,958</td>
<td>-2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-Up Paddling</td>
<td>NO DATA</td>
<td>NO DATA</td>
<td>NO DATA</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>1,242</td>
<td>1,541</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Outdoor Foundation 2013.

**WATER RECREATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION IN LOUISIANA**

The random telephone and open link surveys revealed high participation rates in fishing (62 percent random, 61 percent open link) and varying participation rates for paddling (18 percent random, 48 percent open link). In addition, respondents placed a high priority for future investment on boating and fishing opportunities and public access to natural bodies of water. A coordinated effort to conduct an inventory and promotional campaign for state and local parish water recreation opportunities could increase participation rates.
E. ACCESSIBILITY AND EQUITY

Park Equity

Equitable access to parks, trails, natural areas, and outdoor recreation facilities is a trending issue in the parks and recreation industry. Conducting a GIS based Park Equity Analysis provides a quantitative statewide analysis to evaluate the access of public lands for children of unserved communities (communities that have little to no access to nature and open space). The online Park Analysis Tool (www.dnr.state.md.us/) was developed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and is built using U.S. Census Data combined with statewide layers identifying public parks. The model prioritizes unserved areas of in need of park space by identifying areas with:

- High concentration of children under the age of 16
- High concentration of populations below the poverty line
- High population density
- Low access to public park space

Accessible facilities create lasting memories for families (Image courtesy of Brandy Roberts/Pilot Club of Denham Springs)

Boardwalks facilitate access to ecologically sensitive environments while minimizing impacts from construction (Image courtesy of the Louisiana Office of Tourism)

Waterparks and splash pads are becoming a popular amenity in parks and recreation facilities (Image courtesy of MW Domingue/FWHA Recreational Trails for Louisiana)
Chapter 3:

INVENTORY OF LOUISIANA’S OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDERS
A. RECREATION PROVIDERS OVERVIEW

The State of Louisiana’s residents and visitors have numerous recreational opportunities to choose from, provided by the local, state, and federal governments, as well as the private sector. This chapter focuses on each of the agencies that supply and promote recreational opportunities, providing brief descriptions of each service.

B. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The majority of land reserved for recreation within the state is owned and controlled by the federal government. These lands are comprised of Military Installations, National Wildlife Refuges, and National Parks and Forests. The federal lands serve many recreational purposes, including conservation, hunting, and camping. Although the federal entities hold the majority of recreation areas, actual recreational opportunities are limited when compared to local and private recreation providers. As of August 2014, the federal government offers 159 recreational areas within the state, according to www.recreation.gov.

Agencies that have jurisdiction over the federally controlled recreational land within the state include the Military Installation Commands, the National Park Service, the United States Forest Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Military Installations

Recreational opportunities provided by the Department of Defense (DoD) can be found on three military installations within the state – the Naval Air Station-Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, Barksdale Air Force Base, and Fort Polk. Together, these three installations support approximately 37,000 enlisted and civilian personnel, including countless additional military retirees and DoD family members. Typically, these installations provide fitness centers, trails, social hubs, bowling alleys, sport fields and courts, and outdoor recreational equipment rental through their internal department of Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR). Additionally, there are six off base recreational areas that offer camping, outdoor recreational equipment rental and water related recreation (www.militarycampgrounds.us/louisiana).

Although these facilities are reserved for DoD use, there are limited instances in which these facilities have been opened for use through memorandums of understanding and other joint use arrangements.

National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS) is an agency within the Department of the Interior whose prime responsibilities include the care and management of the national parks, national monuments, and other nationally historic properties. Its mission is to preserve, unimpaired, the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this, and future, generations. Within Louisiana, the NPS manages five national parks, over 1,300 National Register of Historic Places listings, two National Heritage Areas, and over 50 National Historic Landmarks. The agency is also responsible for coordinating and distributing community grants for the establishment and preservation of historic places, parks and recreation facilities, conservation areas, and trails and greenways. For additional information about the NPS within the State of Louisiana, please visit: www.nps.gov/state/la.

United States Forest Service

National resource management in the country is lead by the United States Forest Service (USFS), an agency within the United States Department of Agriculture. The Kisatchie National Forest is the second largest recreational area by acreage within the state, containing approximately 604,000 acres. The forest consists of five ranger districts across seven parishes. The majority of the forest is open for public recreational use, including hunting, camping, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, all-terrain vehicle riding, bicycling, and canoeing/kayaking. The forest has more than 100 miles of trails and over 40 developed recreation sites. Additional information related to the USFS and Kisatchie National Forest can be found at: www.fs.usda.gov/kisatchie.
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Like the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is an agency within the Department of the Interior dedicated to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats. In the state, there are 23 national wildlife refuges totaling over 567,000 acres as of July 2014. Several of the wildlife refuges are in a land acquisition phase as a result of previous congressional authorizations. The USFWS also administers the National Fish Hatchery in Natchitoches. Federal law restricts recreational uses to those that are compatible with the refuge – mostly wildlife and wild land-oriented activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, observation, paddling, education, and photography. Additional information on the USFWS and National Wildlife Refuges can be found at www.fws.gov.

United States Army Corps of Engineers
Much of the State of Louisiana’s waterways and coastlines are managed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), an agency within the Department of Defense. Its primary responsibilities include the planning, designing, building, and operating of locks and dams, flood control and protection, beach nourishment projects and dredging of waterways for commerce navigation. The agency is also responsible for military facility construction and ecosystem restoration projects. The majority of the state falls within two ACOE districts: the New Orleans District and the Vicksburg District. A very small portion of the state falls within the Galveston District in Texas.

Although older ACOE projects authorized by congress were limited to flood damage reduction purposes only, newer projects include natural resource management, environmental stewardship, and recreation. In many cases, the public is allowed in these areas for recreational purposes, provided that their activities do not interfere with the operation and maintenance of the ACOE facilities.

The New Orleans District has jurisdiction over coastal Louisiana and manages three recreational areas: the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway, Bonnet Carre’ Spillway, and the Louisiana Old River Control Area. The Atchafalaya Basin is the largest wetland and swamp in the U.S., spanning 140 miles through 14 parishes. A full map of the area can be found in Appendix L. The Vicksburg District manages several recreational sites in northern Louisiana, including Bayou Bodcau, Caddo Lake, Wallace Lake, J Bennet Johnston Waterway, and the Ouachita-Black River. Caddo Lake is the largest natural freshwater lake in the south and the largest cypress forest in the world.

These lands and waters provide opportunities for fishing, paddling, crawfishing, hunting, horseback riding, picnicking, dog training, hiking, ATV and motorcycle riding, camping, wildlife watching, and model airplane flying competitions. For more information, visit www.mvn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation.aspx.

C. STATE GOVERNMENT
Similar to the federal government, the state has several agencies that provide recreational facilities and opportunities, including state parks and an arboretum totaling over 30,200 acres, state historic sites, Wildlife Management Areas, Wildlife Refuges, and Conservation Areas totaling over 1.5 million acres (source: www.crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-parks).

State agencies with jurisdiction over the state controlled recreational land include the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the Louisiana Office of State Parks, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Sabine River Authority and Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

Louisiana Office of State Parks
The Louisiana Office of State Parks manages one golf course, 22 unique parks with varying amenities and recreational activities, as well as the State Arboretum, all open for public use. Its mission is to “serve the citizens of Louisiana and visitors by preserving and interpreting natural areas of unique or exceptional scenic value, planning, developing and
operating sites that provide outdoor recreation opportunities in natural surroundings, preserving and interpreting historical and scientific sites of statewide importance and administering intergovernmental programs related to outdoor recreation and trails.”

The parks offer overnight facilities including cabins, lodges, group camps and large dormitories, and primitive, improved and premium camping. Recreation facilities include: boat/canoe launches and rentals, concessions/gift shops, pavilions, laundry and meeting facilities, outdoor classrooms, picnic areas, visitor/nature centers, fishing piers, playgrounds, sport areas, swimming, and trails for hiking, biking, off-highway vehicles and horseback riding. The State Arboretum, established in 1961, is the oldest state-supported arboretum in the country. It is approximately 600 acres in size with miles of hiking trails through dramatic topography, and is home to over 150 species of plants that are native to Louisiana. The J.D. “Prof” LaFleur Nature Center opened in 2009 features exhibits of woodlands and plant and animal habitats of Louisiana. The state park system includes the following parks: Bayou Segnette, Bogue Chitto, Chemin-A-Haut, Chicot, the Arboretum, Cypremort Point, Fairview-Riverside, Fontainebleau, Grand Isle, Hodges Gardens, Jimmie Davis, Lake Bistineau, Lake Bruin, Lake Claiborne, Lake D’Arbonne, Lake Fausse Pointe, North Toledo Bend, Palmetto Island, Poverty Point Reservoir, St. Bernard, Sam Houston Jones, South Toledo Bend, and Tickfaw.

The Office of State Parks also manages 19 State Historic Sites accessible to the public with a variety of amenities such as walking trails and picnic areas. State Historic Sites include the Audubon, Centenary, Fort Jesup, Fort Pike, Fort Saint Jean Baptiste, Forts Randolph and Buhlow, Kent Plantation House, Locust Grove, Longfellow-Evangeline, Los Adaes, Mansfield, Marksville, Plaquemine Lock, Port Hudson, Poverty Point, Rebel, Rosedown Plantation, and Winter Quarters.

Black Bear Golf Course, launched in 2006 as The Office of State Park’s only golf course, is a part of Louisiana’s Audubon Golf Trail. This championship course, clubhouse and 17-room lodge offers public golf opportunities adjacent to Poverty Point State Park’s 3,000 acre man-made lake.

A listing of the amenities and activities offered at each state park and historic site can be found in the appendix. Additional information on the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism can be found at [www.crt.state.la.us](http://www.crt.state.la.us).

**Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry**

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) operate several recreation areas found in the state, but primarily for hunting and fishing. Its mission is to promote, protect, and advance agriculture, forestry, soil and water resources within the state.

The department manages the 8,000 acre Alexander State Forest, which is home to the Indian Creek Recreation Area. Seventy-five percent of the forest is managed for hunting and other recreational activities, such as camping, swimming, boating, picnicking, hiking and fishing. Additional information about the LDAF can be found at [www.ldaf.state.la.us](http://www.ldaf.state.la.us).

**Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries**

All of the state Wildlife Management Areas and Wildlife Refuge Areas are managed by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). The LDWF protects, conserves, and replenishes the natural resources, wildlife and aquatic life of the state. In 1970, the Louisiana Legislature created the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers System. The System was developed for the purpose of preserving, protecting, developing, reclaiming, and enhancing the wilderness qualities, scenic beauties, and ecological regimes of certain free-flowing Louisiana streams. LDWF manages approximately 3,000 miles of Louisiana designated Natural and Scenic Rivers. Recreational opportunities within Wildlife Management Areas include hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, camping, wildlife observation and nature photography.”

The Office of Wildlife is split into two divisions: the Wildlife Division and the Coastal and Non-game Resources Division. The Wildlife Division of the LDWF is responsible for the conservation program and biological data gathering for the
Chapter 3: Inventory of Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Providers

state, managing approximately 1.1 million acres as part of the West Gulf Coast Plain WMAs, East Gulf Coast Plain WMAs, Mississippi Alluvial Valley North WMAs, and Mississippi Alluvial Valley South WMAs.

The Coastal and Non-game Resources Division’s responsibilities include the conservation of coastal wildlife species and their marsh habitats through management of the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge, the White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area, Atchafalaya Delta WMA, Biloxi WMA, Isle Dernieres Refuge, Lake Boeuf WMA, Marsh Island Refuge, Pass-a-Loutre WMA, Pointe-aux-Chenes WMA, Salvador WMA, State Wildlife Refuge, Saint Tammany Refuge, and the Timken WMA.

Additional information regarding the LDWF can be found in the appendix, or by visiting www.wlf.louisiana.gov.

Sabine River Authority
The 510 mile-long Sabine River forms the boundary between the states of Louisiana and Texas in its lower course. To facilitate the management of the river and its basin, the Sabine River Authority (SRA) was formed. The SRA’s mission is to “provide for economic utilization and preservation of the waters of the Sabine River and its tributaries by promoting economic development, irrigation, navigation, improved water supply, drainage, public recreation, and hydroelectric power for the citizens of Louisiana.” (srала-toledo.com).

Recreation facilities that the Authority manage include San Patricio and Clyde's Crossing roadside recreational areas, Oak Ridge Park, San Miguel Park, Cypress Bend Park, and Pleasure Point Park, and the Cow Bayou Wilderness Park, Converse Bay, Blue Lake, and Pendleton Bride Park day-use areas.

D. LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Municipalities and Parish Governments
Because of the quantity of municipal governments throughout the state, the greatest number of recreational facilities is provided to the public at this level. Although local governments provide the greatest number of recreational facilities, they do so using the least amount of land. Local government park and recreational offices primarily account for the majority of active recreation such as baseball, football, and soccer fields, running tracks, basketball and tennis courts, swimming pools, fitness facilities, and playgrounds.

Although school facilities are not included in the SCORP inventory, they are an important resource for recreational activity at the local level, and are distributed throughout the state, reaching the greatest number of citizens. A positive trend over the past several decades are public school boards forming partnerships with other local agencies for the shared use of recreational facilities. These cooperative agreements benefit both groups, allowing for school facilities to be used by the community, and community facilities to be used by the school system. The community benefits by having after school programs and activities made available to residents and the school systems benefit by reduced maintenance responsibilities and availability of public parks and other public facilities for the students to use. In February 2014, the State of Louisiana listed over 715,000 students enrolled in 1,300+ public and charter schools. As recommended in the previous 2009-2013 SCORP, a detailed evaluation and inventory should be completed to record locations and conditions of all existing public school recreational facilities in order to identify recreation opportunity gaps within the system.

E. PRIVATE COMMERCIAL AND NON-PROFIT

The private sector provides a substantial amount of the total number of recreational facilities available for public use through semi-public open spaces, commercial fitness centers, private golf courses, tennis and hunting clubs, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Club, and church/youth camps, to name a few. Because these recreational opportunities are privately owned, it would be difficult to get a complete picture of the types and locations of the facilities, as well as the sizes and quantities of the facilities. Another large source of private recreation is hunting on commercial forest lands. Millions
of acres of land in Louisiana are classified as commercial forests, and a large portion of these commercial forests have, historically, been leased for hunting sports.

F. CONCLUSION

There are numerous providers of a multitude of recreational amenities and activities throughout the State of Louisiana. The five federal agencies listed in this chapter offer the most recreational areas by acre, but the least amount of recreational activities when compared to other levels of providers. This includes national forests and parks, facilities associated on military installations, wildlife refuges, and Corps of Engineering projects. These areas are typically associated with isolated, non-group recreation such as hunting and fishing. The second largest supplier of recreational amenities by size is the State of Louisiana agencies, such as the Office of State Parks within the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Sabine River Authority. Like the federal recreation providers, the number of recreational activities provided by the state is small in comparison to the local and private providers, and generally include activities such as hiking and camping.

Local governments and private groups provide the majority of recreation activities in the state. The facilities provided tend to also be more evenly distributed, by population densities, when compared to federal and state provided amenities. Local level recreational opportunities are usually more organized than state or federal levels, and typically include group activities such as team field sports, sport courts, swimming, and fitness centers.

The trend for all levels of government is that levels of funding are decreasing while use of the recreational facilities is increasing, leading to deteriorated and overcrowded amenities and placing further strain on already thin government budgets. Citizens young and old value their recreational opportunities, often time citing these amenities when it comes to selecting where to live, work, and play. It will be critical to sustain, enhance, and increase recreational opportunities at all levels of government, as well as the private sector, to keep up with this growing demand for quality recreation opportunities.
Chapter 4: LOUISIANA’S OUTDOOR RECREATION SUPPLY
A. ANÁLISIS METODOLOGÍA

Introducción
GIS data was mined from multiple resources throughout the state in order to analyze the proximity of outdoor recreation opportunities to the state’s population. In particular, analysis was performed on access to five specific outdoor recreation opportunities, selected based upon public input: all outdoor recreation opportunities, locations where picnicking opportunities exist, playgrounds, walking/hiking trails, and access to water for fishing and/or boating activities. The GIS data sets that were used to perform the analysis are listed below. The number of “features” (points, lines, or polygons that appear on a map) within each dataset are shown in parentheses. For example, the City of Alexandria provided data on the location of 28 of its facilities.

Acquired GIS Data
- City of Alexandria Parks (28), Rapides Parish, Region 6
- Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC) (187), East Baton Rouge Parish, Region 2
- Louisiana State Parks (42 - includes 22 parks, 19 historic sites, and 1 arboretum), All Regions
- Louisiana Wildlife Management Areas (139)
- Public Marinas/Boat Launches (254)
- City of Monroe Parks (120), Ochita Parish, Region 8
- Kisatchie National Forest (1), Multiple Parishes, Region 6
- National Parks (2)
  - Cane River Creole, Natchitoches Parish, Region 7
  - Jean Lafitte, Jefferson Parish, Region 1
- City of New Orleans Parks (179), Orleans Parish, Region 1
- City of Shreveport Parks (62), Caddo Parish, Region 7
- St. Charles Parish Parks (53), Region 1
- USFW Wildlife Refuges (23), All Regions

Created GIS Data
- Access Points for Paddle Routes (26)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Projects (851)
- Paddle Routes (29)
- SCORP Regions (8)
- Tammany Trace Trail (1)
- Various Park Locations from Local Entities (288) (See map in Figure 3.3)
- Various Trailheads (13)

An effort was made to acquire data from as many outdoor recreation providers as possible throughout the state. All recreation providers were asked to share their outdoor recreation GIS data for inclusion in the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP. A similar request was made regarding outdoor recreation facilities at public schools. Templates of the inventory forms for both requests are included in Appendix N.

Although this effort received a large response, adequate data is still missing from large areas of the state, as can be seen in the following figures. Louisiana State Parks hopes to maintain this data and continually add new resource and facility information as it is provided by recreation providers.
B. INVENTORY OF OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

The locations of the outdoor recreation opportunities were buffered by set distances to determine proximity to the state’s population. A “buffer” is a ring drawn around a location (ex. park boundary, trailhead location, paddle route, etc.) at a set distance. The distance of the buffers varied from 5, 10, or 30 miles depending on the type of location being analyzed. The buffers did not take into account road distance or any travel barriers (ex. water bodies) but were strictly equidistant buffers around the set location. The distance was chosen to take travel time into account, with 5 miles assuming a travel time of less than 10 minutes for more local-type amenities (example: playgrounds) and up to 30 miles and a travel time of up to 60 minutes for more regional-type amenities (example: water access).

The parameters used for each analysis are summarized below:

All Outdoor Recreation Opportunities
- Buffer distance of 10 miles
- Includes all of the datasets collected and associated features listed above
**Picnicking**
- Separate buffer distances of 5, 10 and 30 miles
- Includes all parks from Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Monroe, and New Orleans except for ball fields, civic centers, golf courses, museums, sports complexes, stadiums, and recreation centers
- Includes parks from all other local entities, State Parks, and Kisatchie National Forest ([www.fs.usda.gov/main/kisatchie/home](http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/kisatchie/home)) that had picnicking listed as an available activity at the location
- All LWCF projects associated with a park
- All USFW wildlife refuges and all Louisiana State Wildlife Management Areas

**Playgrounds**
- Separate buffer distances of 5 and 10 miles
- Includes parks from all local entities, State Parks, and Kisatchie National Forest that had a playground listed as an available activity at the location (Cypremort Point, Grand Isle, and Hodges do not have playgrounds)
- All LWCF projects associated with a playground
- No other national or state lands were included

**Walking/Jogging/Hiking**
- Separate buffer distances of 5 and 10 miles
- Includes all parks from Alexandria, Monroe, and New Orleans except for ball fields, civic centers, golf courses, museums, sports complexes, stadiums, and recreation centers
- Includes parks from all other local entities and Kisatchie National Forest that had hiking or walking path listed as an available activity at the location
- All trails and trail heads
- All State Parks (Cypremort Point and Lake Bruin do not currently have trails)
- All LWCF projects associated with a park
- All USFW wildlife refuges and all Louisiana State Wildlife Management Areas

**Water Access**
- Buffer distance of 30 miles
- Includes parks from all local entities, State Parks, and Kisatchie National Forest that had water related activities (ex. fishing, boat launch, fishing pier, canoe, etc.) listed as an available activity at the location
- All mapped paddle routes
- All mapped marinas and boat launches
- All LWCF projects associated with boat launches
- All USFW wildlife refuges and all Louisiana State Wildlife Management Areas

The buffers that were generated for each of the categories above were then compared to the population data associated with the 2010 Census. **Figure 3.2** is a map showing the 2010 population density of Louisiana. The concentration of the state’s population resides in the following seven areas: Shreveport, Monroe, Alexandria, Lake Charles, Lafayette, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans.
Kisatchie National Forest is the only National Forest in Louisiana [Map courtesy of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)]

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or family status. (Not all basis apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA Office of Communications at 202-720-5881 (voice) or 202-720-7808 (TDD).

To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or call 202-720-7327 (voice) or 202-720-1127 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity employer.
Figure 3.2: 2010 Louisiana Population Density

Map courtesy of NTB Associates, Inc.

Number of People per Square Mile

- Less than 500
- 500 to 1000
- 1000 to 1500
- 1500 to 2000
- 2000 to 2500
- 2500 to 3000
- 3000 to 3500
- 3500 to 4000
- 4000 to 4500
- Greater than 4500

---

Map courtesy of NTB Associates, Inc.
C. INVENTORY OF PUBLIC LANDS

Figure 3.3: Past Land and Water Conservation Funded Projects

Map courtesy of NTB Associates, Inc.
D. RESOURCE MAPS

Figure 3.4: Outdoor Recreation Opportunities Within 10 Miles

Ninety-four percent (94%) of the State’s population is within 10 miles of some type of outdoor recreation opportunity, and all seven of the most populated areas have access to over 40 amenities within 10 miles.
Eighty percent (80%) of the State's population is within five miles of a location with an opportunity to picnic.
Ninety-five percent (95%) of the State’s population is within 10 miles of a location with an opportunity to picnic.
One hundred percent (100%) of the State’s population is within 30 miles of a location with an opportunity to picnic.
Only 46 percent of the State’s population is within five miles of a playground based on the available data for this analysis.
62% of the State’s population is within 10 miles of a playground based on the available data for this analysis.
Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the State's population is within five miles of a location where they can participate in walking or hiking activities.
Ninety-five percent (95%) of the State’s population is within 10 miles of a location where they can participate in walking or hiking activities.
Based on this analysis, the state’s population has ample access for water related activities within an hour drive. This is a discrepancy from the survey results, which indicate developing water access as a high priority. Therefore, a conclusion can be drawn that there is not adequate advertising of water access points in state, and the public cannot use access points if they do not know about them. The data for public marinas and boat launches is heavily concentrated in the southern portion of the state with very little data in the northern portion, although there are likely multiple access points throughout the state. Also, the analysis did not account for any private access points which are heavily used throughout the state, as well.
**Picnicking summary:** Louisiana appears to provide adequate coverage for formalized picnicking opportunities throughout the state, as the areas without coverage within five miles are more rural in nature and have the opportunity for informal picnicking.

**Playground summary:** Based on the available information, access to playgrounds within a 10 mile radius from each playground appears under-represented across the state. Additional information that would be beneficial in analyzing playground access across Louisiana includes public and private schools that allow the public to utilize playgrounds during off hours.

**Walking/Hiking opportunity summary:** Walking/hiking opportunities were listed as very important activities on the survey. Based on the available information, access to walking/hiking areas within a five-mile radius from each opportunity appears under-represented across the state. Additional information that would be beneficial in analyzing walking/hiking access across Louisiana includes the locations of trails, sidewalks, athletic tracks, and other transportation-related paths.

### E. SUSTAINING LOUISIANA’S WETLAND LEGACY

Section 303 of the Federal Emergency Wetland Act requires that the SCORP address wetlands as an important outdoor recreation resource. Figure 3.13 depicts Louisiana’s wetlands, based on information from the National Land Cover Dataset.

In further support of Section 301 of the Federal Emergency Wetland Act, The National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan is a framework document of the U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service which provides guidance to federal and state agencies acquiring wetlands through Land and Water Conservation (LWCF) appropriations. The plan provides a process for identifying priority wetlands for preservation and protection under the provisions of the LWCF.

Overall, Louisiana contains approximately 25 percent of the United States’ coastal wetlands, and 40 percent of its salt marshes (www.seagrantfish.lsu.edu/pdfs/WetlandFunctions.pdf). The estimated acreage of wetlands in Louisiana is 3,300,000 acres, while 5,760,000 acres are classified as open water, based on the information from the National Land Cover Dataset. Accordingly, wetlands occupy approximately 10 percent, and open water 17 percent, of Louisiana’s area. The majority of the wetlands are in the eastern and southern portion of the state, along the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico, and consists of woody wetlands, bayous, and surface water.

Louisiana is fortunate to have ample water access across the state with numerous lakes, bayous, rivers, and the Gulf of Mexico. The Mississippi River and its delta form the eastern boundary of the state, and the southern portion of the state is adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico. Some of the benefits of wetlands include: aiding in stoppage of flood waters, filtering drinking water, providing habitat for animals, preventing erosion, providing aesthetic beauty, and protecting water quality. In addition, wetlands can provide recreation opportunities and economic benefits. In 2002, Louisiana commercial fish landings exceeded one billion pounds with a dockside value of $343 million – approximately 30 percent of the total catch weight in the lower 49 states (water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/outreach/upload/EconomicBenefits.pdf).
Figure 3.13: Louisiana Wetlands - National Land Cover Database

Map courtesy of NTB Associates, Inc.
Access to water has been proven in this SCORP to be a priority for residents of Louisiana. The state’s wetlands contribute to recreational water access; however, once a site is available for recreation use, it must have long-term maintenance to ensure that there is a balance between the health of the eco-system and the enjoyment of the users.

**F. WETLANDS PRESERVATION EMERGING ISSUES**

In 2012, America’s WETLAND Foundation released a report titled “Beyond Unintended Consequences: Adaptation for Gulf Coast Resiliency and Sustainability” that made recommendations focused on Gulf Coast sustainability based on research and input from several leadership forums held in different communities from Florida to Texas. To view a copy of this report, visit [www.futureofthegulfcoast.org](http://www.futureofthegulfcoast.org).

Additional resources on the value of Louisiana’s wetlands, as well as approved methods for addressing negative impacts to wetlands as required by section 404 of the Clean Water Act are outlined in a series of white papers ([www.greenfieldadvisors.com/blog/186-the-history-of-louisiana-coastal-wetlands](http://www.greenfieldadvisors.com/blog/186-the-history-of-louisiana-coastal-wetlands)) produced by Greenfield Advisors, a global real estate analysis firm.

Advocacy efforts to protect Louisiana’s Gulf Coast are ongoing. For example, the Gulf Restoration Network (GRN), a multi-state coalition working to improve the health of the entire Gulf of Mexico, conducts research, education, and advocacy campaigns to raise awareness of gulf protection and restoration. The GRN’s vision is that “…the Gulf of Mexico will continue to be a natural, economic, and recreational resource that is central to the culture and heritage of five states and three nations. The people of the region will be stewards of this vital but imperiled treasure, and they will assume the responsibility of returning the Gulf to its previous splendor.”

According to the Gulf Restoration website, in April 2010, the BP oil disaster spilled more than 200 million barrels of oil and two million gallons of toxic chemical dispersants into the Gulf of Mexico. The federal government, along with local, state, and national advocacy and conservation groups, are leading efforts to improve public health and recreation, the commercial fisheries industry, and coastal restoration. These efforts remain ongoing. Partnerships and coalitions are working to rebuild barrier islands, restore wetlands, and improving natural storm protections in the Gulf Coast region.

**Wetlands Loss**

The following data regarding the current conditions and loss of wetlands in Louisiana has been compiled by the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana. ([www.americaswetland.com/photos/article/Coastal_facts_sheet_03_27_2012.pdf](http://www.americaswetland.com/photos/article/Coastal_facts_sheet_03_27_2012.pdf)):

- Length of Coastline: 397 miles
- Tidal Shoreline: 7,721 miles
- Coastal Zone Population: 2,000,000 (47% of the state’s population)
- Coastal Area: 14,587 square miles
- Coastal Louisiana has experienced a net decrease of 1,883 square miles of land between 1932 and 2010 due to natural and man-made causes.
- Currently, Louisiana has 37 percent of the estuarine herbaceous marshes in the continental United States and accounts for 90 percent of coastal wetland loss in the lower 48 states.
Barrier island and wetland studies conducted by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) have explored strategies for mitigating future wetland losses from natural causes such as hurricanes, saltwater intrusion, natural shifts in the course of the Mississippi River, tidal currents, and sediment transport as well as man-made causes such as canal dredging and wetland draining, levees, and commercial and recreational boat traffic. Current scientific studies suggest restoration approaches that mimic natural processes for future diversions of the Mississippi River, including sea-level rise, subsidence of coastal areas, and beach nourishment.

G. WETLANDS PRESERVATION

In 2012, Louisiana published the Coastal Master Plan. This document provides information to assist citizens of the coast with caring for their families, managing their businesses, and planning for the future. The projects highlighted in the plan seek a balance between providing immediate relief to impacted areas and providing a foundation for larger efforts essential to protecting coastal communities from future impacts for the next 50 years.

A full version of this master plan is available online here: [www.coastalmasterplan.louisiana.gov/2012-master-plan/final-master-plan/](http://www.coastalmasterplan.louisiana.gov/2012-master-plan/final-master-plan/)

One of our nation’s most ecologically rich examples of river swamp stretches across 14 parishes in south-central Louisiana. The Atchafalaya National Heritage Area ([www.atchafalaya.org](http://www.atchafalaya.org)) is home to more than 24 species of threatened or endangered birds and wildlife, as well as a culturally diverse population of Cajun, European, African, Caribbean and Native-American people. Significant concentrations of natural, scenic, cultural, historic, and recreational resources, provide Louisiana residents with myriad opportunities for education and outdoor recreation. A map of this area can be found in Appendix M.

In addition to the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area, other organizations provide wetlands education resources:

LaBranche Wetland Watchers ([www.wetlandwatchers.org](http://www.wetlandwatchers.org)) is a wetlands education, awareness, and service learning organization serving over 1,100 fifth through seventh grade students annually at Hurst Middle School in Destrehan Parish. The organization primarily uses the Bonnet Carre Spillway as its outdoor classroom, and partners with the University of New Orleans Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Science Water Testing Project ([www.pies.uno.edu](http://www.pies.uno.edu)) and Louisiana State University Coast Roots Project ([coastalroots.lsu.edu](http://coastalroots.lsu.edu)) to achieve its educational mission.

![Education and service projects help increase awareness about wetlands (Image courtesy of the LaBranche Wetland Watchers website)](image1)

![Replanting costal vegetation (Image courtesy of Atkins/Tommy Davidson)](image2)
Chapter 4: Louisiana’s Outdoor Recreation Supply

The group is also developing a Wetlands Watchers Park (www.wetlandwatchers.org) and trail system in St. Charles Parish. Students conduct water quality monitoring, tree planting, clean ups, and species identification, and provide educational outreach to area residents.

People aren’t the only species watching the wetlands [image courtesy of Lenny Wells Photography (www.naturallylouisiana.com)]

Louisiana’s coast and deltas are a major part of the state’s unique character (Images courtesy of the Louisiana Office of Tourism)
Chapter 5: Strategies and Actions

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Image courtesy of the Louisiana Office of Tourism
A. KEY ISSUES ANALYSIS MATRIX INTRODUCTION

The planning process for the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP incorporated an innovative planning tool that helps to develop credibility and justification for the recommended Strategies and Action Steps. Compiling both qualitative and quantitative results from the community engagement process and mapping analysis, patterns and trends emerged. The Key Issues Analysis presented in the following section highlights consistent feedback through the various tools used to assess supply and demand for outdoor recreation resources.

Active recreation is serious fun for all ages
(Top image courtesy of LensArt Photography/Tobi Gomez; Left image courtesy of Retire Louisiana Style/Louisiana Office of Tourism)
### B. KEY ISSUES ANALYSIS MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Issue Legend</th>
<th>Regional Meetings</th>
<th>Qualitative Data</th>
<th>Quantitative Data</th>
<th>Consultant's Analysis and Professional Expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jersey</td>
<td>Baton Rouge</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>Shreveport</td>
<td>Monroe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pineville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Staff Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TPC / SAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MindMinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2009-2013 SOOP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inventory / LOS Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Analysis / Inventory Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Best Practice or Possible Solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Land Use Planning</td>
<td>Coordinate with Parishes for regional approach to development</td>
<td>Develop community generated GIS data collection system</td>
<td>Develop user-generated data collection - ESRI, Storyboard, Google Maps</td>
<td>Study other state land acquisition models (TX, MO, CO, IL, NY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for large multi-use parks</td>
<td>Connect people safely to trails within walking distance of home</td>
<td>Expand quality and quantity of water access opportunities</td>
<td>Explore partnerships with health, academic, non-profit org</td>
<td>Coordinate funding opportunities between RTP and health industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinated data for state wide outdoor recreation gap analysis</td>
<td>Coordinate LOS analysis and connectivity opportunities for RTP funding</td>
<td>Coordinate with Parishes for regional approach to development</td>
<td>Coordinate promotion of specific water recreation opportunities</td>
<td>Pilot ‘Trail Town’ concept in urban communities with existing trail systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect people safely to trails within walking distance of home</td>
<td>Protect natural resources</td>
<td>Coordinate with Parishes for regional approach to development</td>
<td>Pilot ‘Trail Town’ concept in urban communities with existing trail systems</td>
<td>Coordinate funding opportunities between RTP and health industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand quality and quantity of water access opportunities</td>
<td>Explore partnerships with health, academic, non-profit org</td>
<td>Coordinate LOS analysis and connectivity opportunities for RTP funding</td>
<td>Pilot ‘Trail Town’ concept in urban communities with existing trail systems</td>
<td>Study other state land acquisition models (TX, MO, CO, IL, NY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Facilities</td>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Activities</td>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Activities</td>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Activities</td>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity to safety access trails</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>User conflicts between ORV use and ‘quiet recreation’</td>
<td>Focus on trail development &amp; statewide connectivity as first priority</td>
<td>Expand LOOP program beyond Baton Rouge &amp; New Orleans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of natural resources</td>
<td>Pinball</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of multi-use athletic facilities</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to water recreation (boating, fishing, beaches)</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe access to natural surface trails (for seniors, and all users)</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible facilities (fishing docks, trails)</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Activities</td>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Activities</td>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Activities</td>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Activities</td>
<td>Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiting and resting natural areas</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting/Shooting</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor team sports</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Classrooms/Children in Nature/Gardens</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water based recreation</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending playgrounds, spectator activities</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User conflicts between ORV use and ‘quiet recreation’</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mowing/Backpacking/Camping</td>
<td>Picnicking</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
<td>Develop online resource by activity in coordination with CRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaware of Louisiana’s unique outdoor recreation assets</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote trails and connection to health/livability</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote trails and connection to health/livability</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritize partnerships targeting youth access to the outdoors</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritize partnerships targeting youth access to the outdoors</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of facilities for participating in outdoor activities</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of gateway activities to outdoor recreation participation</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education of community leaders on playground standards</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for directional signage &amp; wayfinding to parks, trails</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
<td>Public Involvement / Communications / Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting on bicycling/walking trails</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote feeling of safety in parks</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of safety for walking, running</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
<td>Safety and Vandalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for modernization of parks to make them more attractive</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of capacity to upgrade existing facilities</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of paved trails and greenways</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote green building principles and management practices</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
<td>Park and Facility Updates and Maintenance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan • 2014 - 2019
### C. STRATEGIES, ACTIONS, AND IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION</th>
<th>MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Identify steps for developing a GIS database.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Hiring a GIS professional and purchasing GIS program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Ongoing GIS data collection from communities and schools</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Building of the data base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Build trail GIS data including trails of all types, loops within a park, loop systems, connecting trail, fitness, nature, transportation systems, etc.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Building of the data base; Development of data format/outreach process (priority for LWCF-funded projects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Assess connectivity gap utilizing level of service analysis</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Writing a report that researches this across Louisiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Develop recreation provider and user generated data collection system using ESRI, Google Maps, Story Board, etc., and partner with other state agencies</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Establishment, and use of, a system for data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Publish an annual SCORP update on the website detailing actions taken toward addressing priorities, implementation progress and remaining urgencies</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>To publish the updates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Promote the existing recreational facilities and bike/pedestrian trails through publicly accessible websites, publications and media</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Conducting a random, scientific survey of residents statewide to determine their awareness of available recreation facilities; Building and promoting survey using Department of Recreation web page; Utilizing SurveyMonkey or similar free service and Facebook page to promote and for updates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Collect email addresses on surveys to support promotional efforts and build the database of advocates</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Collecting this data from Facebook and on future surveys, and including them in master e-mail data base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRATEGY</td>
<td>ACTION</td>
<td>IMPLEMENTATION</td>
<td>MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SHORT</td>
<td>MID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Utilize CPTED to address safety concerns, including the lighting of trails</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide surveys with trail type details to gather more details (surface, activity, etc.) from users</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form a statewide trails committee and conduct a trails/connectivity master plan/workshop</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions for bike/ped facility development</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinate with parishes for regional approach to development</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage volunteerism to support outdoor recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Address an aging infrastructure of outdoor recreation facilities statewide through provision of monies specifically targeting updating and upgrading parks and playgrounds. Safety of recreation enthusiasts is paramount and a large percentage of facilities have been found to be out of date and unsafe for public use.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximize recreation as a tool to address healthy lifestyles</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRATEGY</td>
<td>ACTION</td>
<td>IMPLEMENTATION</td>
<td>MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic/Funding Development</td>
<td>Research the development of a state or non-profit funding assistance program to assist project sponsors in acquiring monies necessary to meet matching fund components of grants or to facilitate recreation development beyond the limits of Federal recreation grant programs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Conducting the research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify non-profit organizations and foundations to financially support parks, historic sites and other public outdoor recreation facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Developing a list of possible partner organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study best practices nationwide in identification and collection of funds for land acquisition for recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conducting the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage private enterprise investment in outdoor recreation/trail-based tourism</td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing a means for private investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to prioritize funding assistance for the acquisition and development of property dedicated to outdoor recreation. The total recreation infrastructure of outdoor recreation across Louisiana is inadequate to address the recreational needs of citizens and their guests and to promote a healthy lifestyle</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>The percentage of new acreage dedicated to public outdoor recreation in a five-year period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Target grant assistance to projects that increase public access and use of water-based recreation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Conducting surveys of recreation providers and recreation users to determine if a greater percentage of the population is more engaged in water-based recreation after a five-year period (on the next SCORP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. LOUISIANA SCORP INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

The 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP identifies investment priorities for outdoor recreation in Louisiana. These priorities were established after analysis of input from the following public engagement methodologies:

- Random Telephone Survey (700 participants)
- Online Open Link Survey (568 participants)
- Outdoor Recreation Provider Survey (106 participants)
- MindMixer Online Community Engagement (564 participants)
- Multi-Sector SCORP Task Force Committee (11 participants)

A component of the public engagement process evaluated user preferences in outdoor recreation participation, which supports the identified future investment priorities based on the demand for outdoor recreation activities in Louisiana. In addition, the Outdoor Foundation 2013 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report identifies cycling, trail running, hiking, kayaking, board sailing/windsurfing, and fly fishing as outdoor recreation activities on the rise nationwide. Interestingly, outdoor recreation providers identified walking and jogging trails and bicycling paths as facilities in demand, yet they do not generally provide bicycling and walking facilities in their communities.

A table that lists the Top Ten most popular outdoor recreation activities for Louisiana residents as identified in the statistically random and online open link surveys can be found in Chapter 2.

A level of service mapping analysis was conducted using various proximity buffers, identifying the percentage of the state’s population within 5, 10, and 30 mile distances to various amenity components. While this analysis showed adequate coverage for picnicking, playgrounds, walking/jogging/running facilities, and water access throughout the state, a desire for a connected system of trails, greenways, and natural areas was indicated through the community engagement process. Further GIS analysis using community level buffers (2 miles for bicycling access, ½ mile for walking access) is recommended.
As a result of the analysis conducted for the 2014-2019 Louisiana SCORP, combining public engagement feedback, GIS mapping gap analysis, and survey results, the following future investment priorities have been identified in order of priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIORITY</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Trails</strong></td>
<td>Paved &amp; unpaved multi-use trails with an emphasis on connecting residential areas with outdoor recreation facilities and natural resources to facilitate non-motorized, accessible travel to destinations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Public Access to Water</strong></td>
<td>Public facilities for bank fishing, kayak/canoe trails, beach swimming facilities, boat launches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Camping Areas</strong></td>
<td>Established camping areas and rental cabins with access to trails, boating, fishing, and swimming opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Land Acquisition for Preservation/Protection</strong></td>
<td>Wilderness or conservation areas and open space with little or no development and opportunity for solitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Playgrounds and Picnic Areas</strong></td>
<td>Upgrades and new development of community playgrounds meeting national standards, and multi-purpose picnic areas, “spraygrounds,” splash pads, and pavilions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>