

**WISC****NSIN**

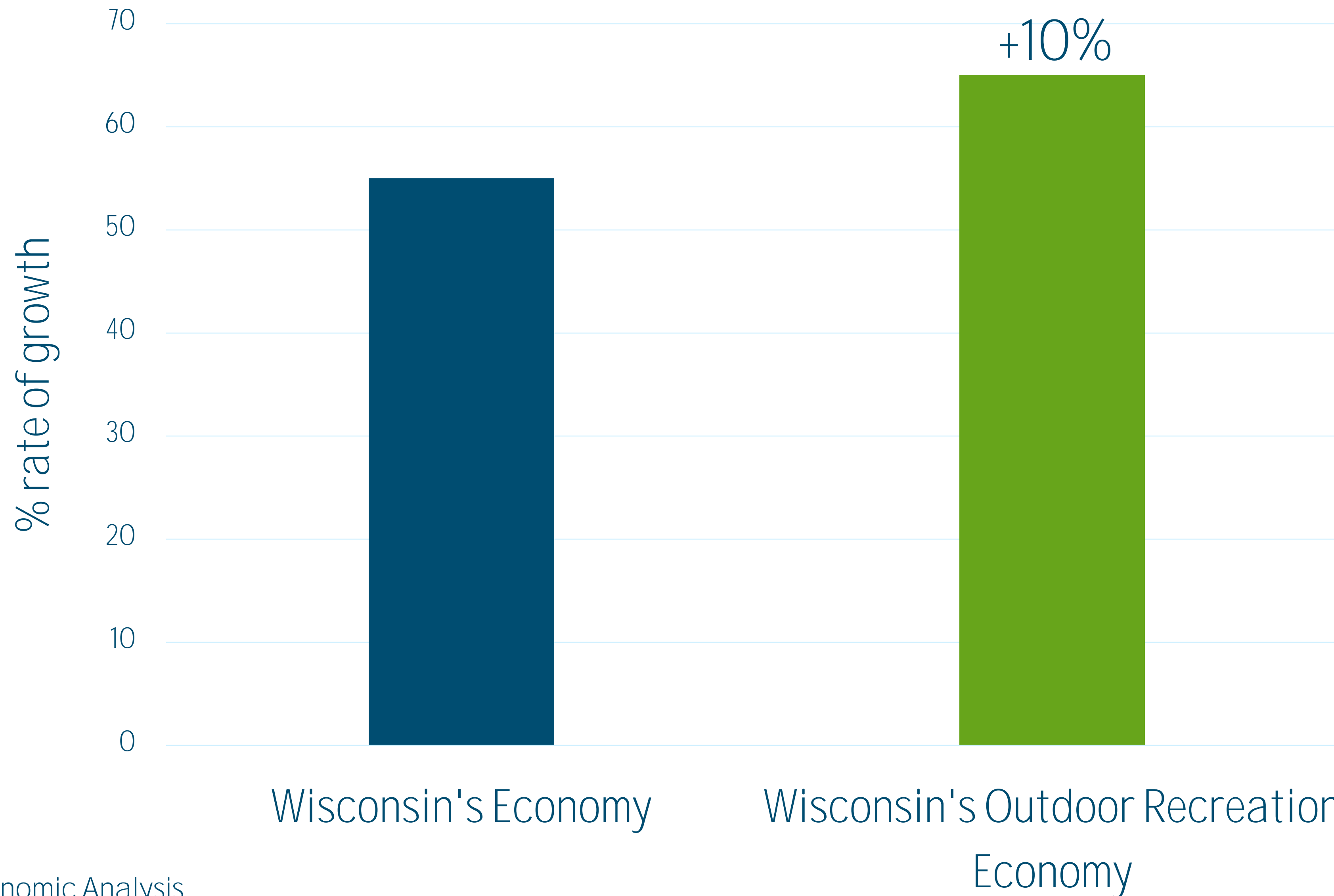
**— OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION —**



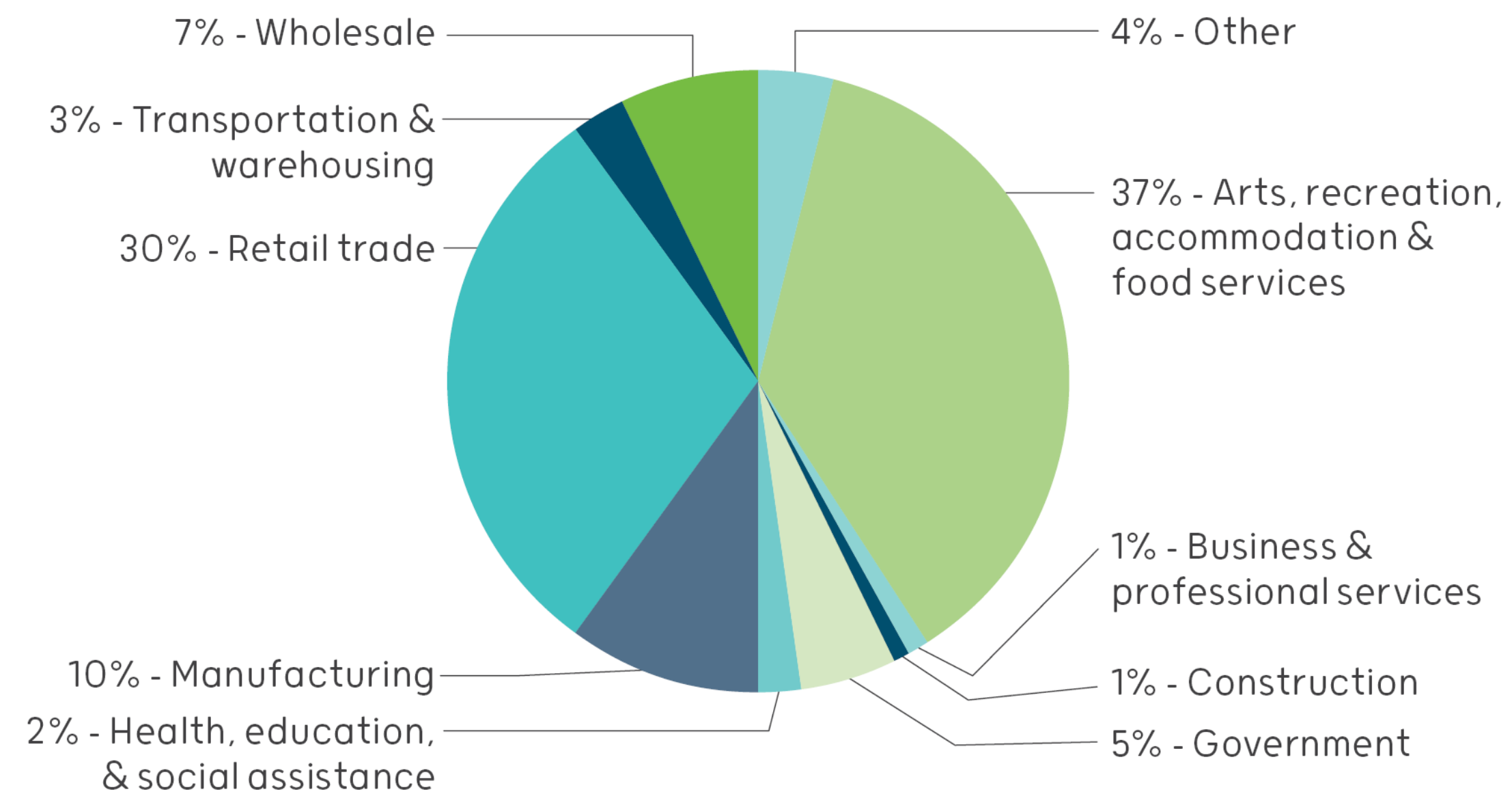
GENERATES  
\$11.2 BILLION FOR  
WISCONSIN

U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

# ECONOMIC GROWTH FROM 2012-2023



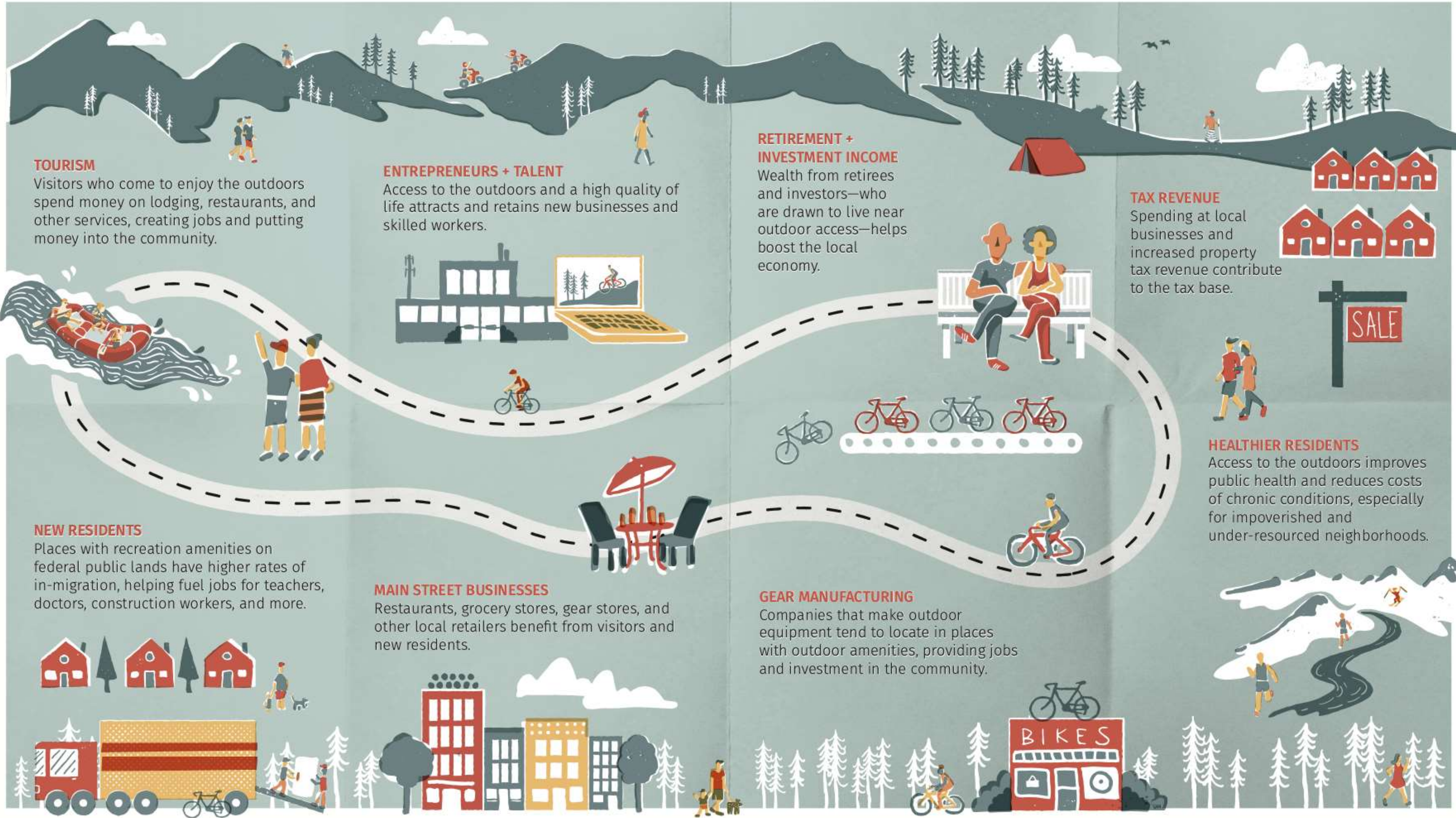
# AND SUPPORTS 97,000 JOBS ANNUALLY



U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis



# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.







# THE OUTDOORS IS ALWAYS A TOP REASON FOR VISITING WISCONSIN.

Longwoods International (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)



# OUTDOOR RECREATION IS ATTRACTION

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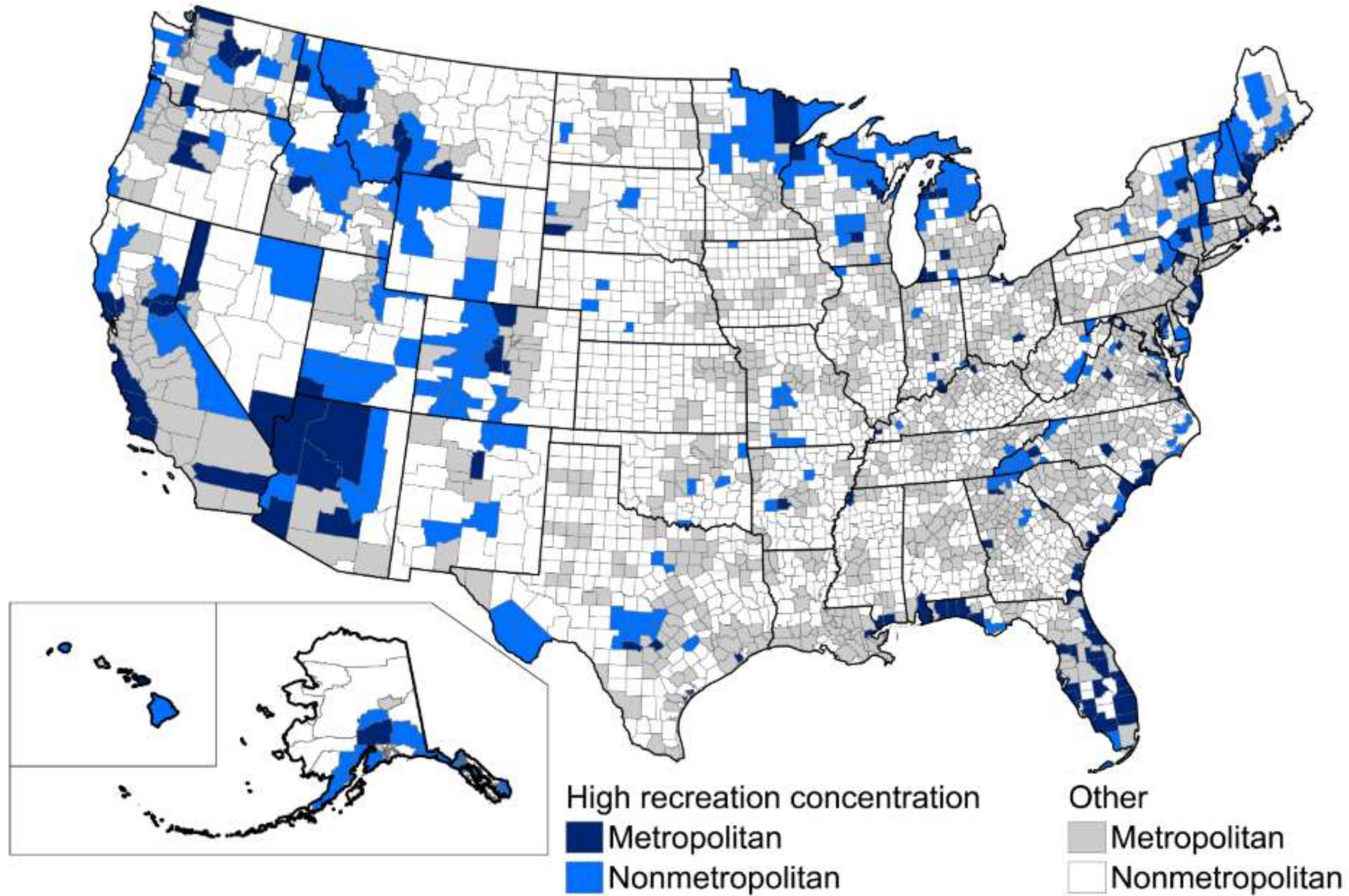
Counties with outdoor recreation amenities, especially rural counties, draw:

- Visitors & residents
- Higher incomes
- Faster earnings growth





## High recreation-concentration counties, 2025 edition



Note: High recreation-concentration counties are determined using a weighted index of the share of both earnings and of jobs in arts, entertainment, and recreation; accommodation and food services; real estate and rental and leasing; and the percentage of vacant housing units for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas are based on the U.S. Office of Management and Budget 2023 delineation of core based statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts (3-year average of 2019, 2021, and 2022) and the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2018–22 5-year American Community Survey and 2020 Decennial Census.



“Healthcare professionals have some of the most unpredictable schedules, so having convenient access to the amenities they love is an important consideration when deciding upon a position. Just out the back door, our hospital trails have been critical to our success in attracting excellent clinicians, and, more importantly, helped build an active and healthy lifestyle for the community here ***in Hayward.***”

- Luke Beirl, CEO, Hayward Area Memorial Hospital (Hayward)



# NATIONAL POWERHOUSE IN OUTDOOR REC MANUFACTURING

- Dozens of top outdoor brands have locations in Wisconsin
- Supporting both rural and urban communities





**Gear manufacturer** designed and built the equipment.

**Graphic artists** created tourism ad that inspired the family outing.

**Local restaurant** provided sustenance and an ice cream cone on the way home.

**Main street retailer** fitted and sold the equipment.



**Software engineers** developed a mapping app to guide the family's adventure.

**Trail organization** designed, built, and maintains the recreation area.

**Local farmer and grocery store** supplied snacks to fuel the outing.

The dollar grows when residents and visitors recreate in Wisconsin.



# TIME SPENT OUTSIDE MAKES US HEALTHIER

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- Boosts immune system
- Lowers blood pressure
- Reduces stress & improves mood and sleep quality
- Increases ability to focus
- Accelerates recovery from injury or illness





# MEASURING IMPACTS



# ACTIVITIES BRING IN BILLIONS TO WISCONSIN

- ATV/UTV riders spend \$4.2 billion
- Hunters spend \$2.6 billion
- Anglers and wildlife watchers spend \$1.5 billion each
- Bicyclists spend \$1.4 billion on bicycle expenses

*Lee, D. Economic Impact of ATV/UTV Industry and Riders in Wisconsin, (2024).  
Southwick Associates, Economic Impacts of Hunting and Target Shooting, (2021).  
American Sportfishing Association  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, (2011).  
Davis et al, Economic Impact of Bicycling in Wisconsin, (2019).*





# OUTDOOR EVENTS SPUR ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

- The American Birkebeiner
  - draws 40,000 people
  - \$4 million in economic impact
- **Tour of America's Dairyland**
  - draws nearly 100,000 fans
  - \$2.4 million in economic impact



Photo © Kelly Randolph, American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation.



*Data from American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation.*

*Davis et al, Economic Impact of Bicycling in Wisconsin, (2019).*



# LOCAL IMPACTS



# DIY GUIDE FOR ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Used to help community leaders conduct economic impact analysis on their own
- DIY Economic Impact Program
  - Annual program provides coaching and support

GET THE  
FREE  
GUIDE



**A Do-It-Yourself Guide:  
CONDUCTING VISITOR AND  
RECREATIONAL USER RESEARCH  
TO TELL AN ECONOMIC STORY**



# DODGE COUNTY

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Visitors to Dodge County  
Parks and Horicon Marsh  
Education & Visitor  
Center generate over  
\$8 million in  
economic activity.





# LAFAYETTE COUNTY

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The Cheese Country Trails generate more than \$7.2 million in economic impact for Lafayette County.





# WINMAN TRAILS

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WinMan Trails generates over \$4.3 million in economic impact for **the area's economy.**





# BUILDING OUTDOOR ECONOMIES





G R E A T E R

WAUSAU

P R O S P E R I T Y

P A R T N E R S H I P



# GOALS & INITIATIVES UTILIZE OUTDOOR REC

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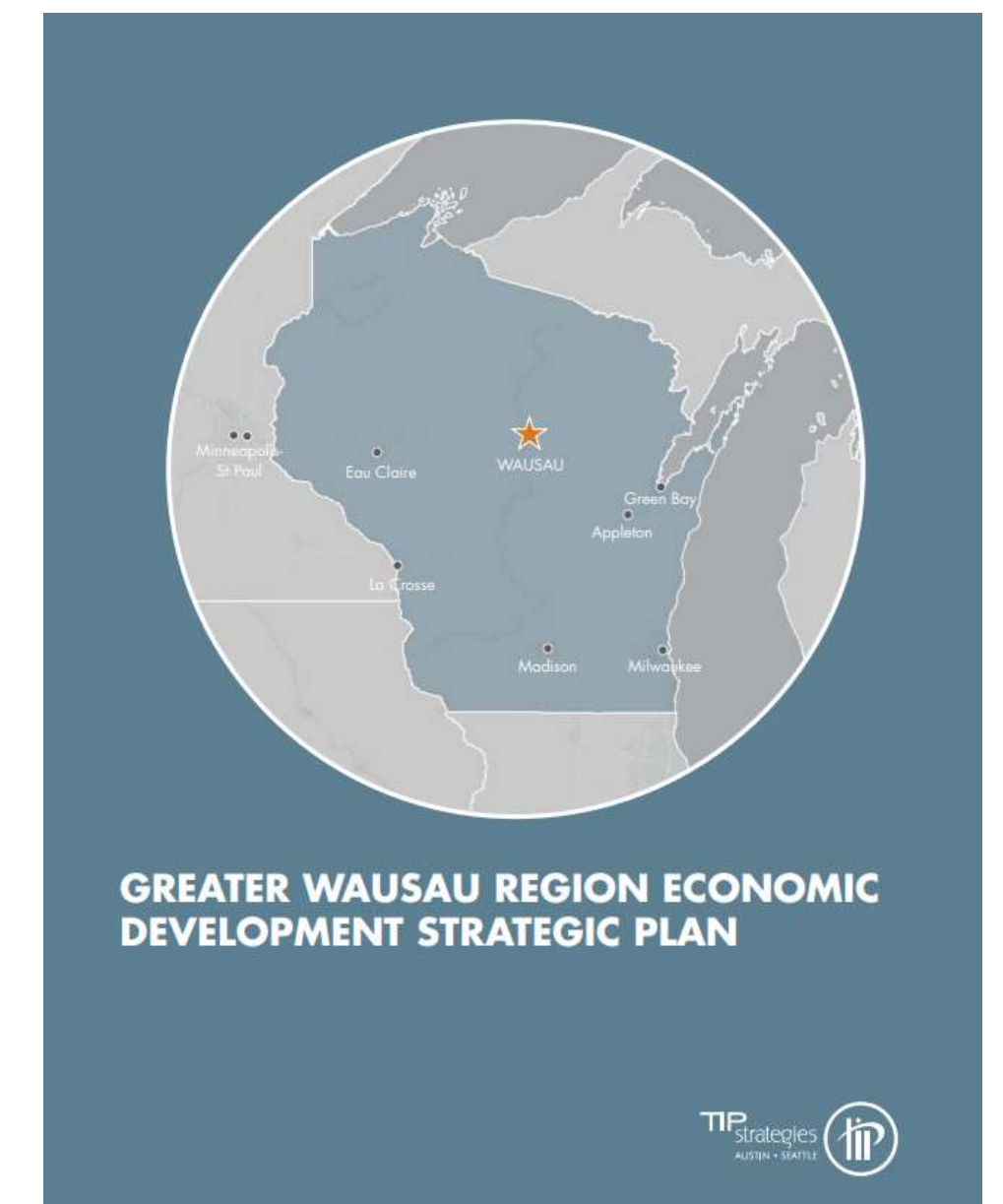
GOAL 1: Attract skilled workers and talented individuals

- Initiative: Rebrand the Wausau region as an **outdoor recreation mecca**

GOAL 2: Nurture, Grow, and Attract Technology-Enabled Companies

- Initiative: Invest in marketing efforts focused on five target industries including **tourism & outdoor recreation**.

GOAL 3: Develop Quality Places and Amenities to Attract the Best and Brightest





# NINE MILE COUNTY FOREST & REC AREA

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Out-of-town visitors to  
Nine Mile Forest generate  
\$3.25 million in  
economic activity for  
Marathon County.

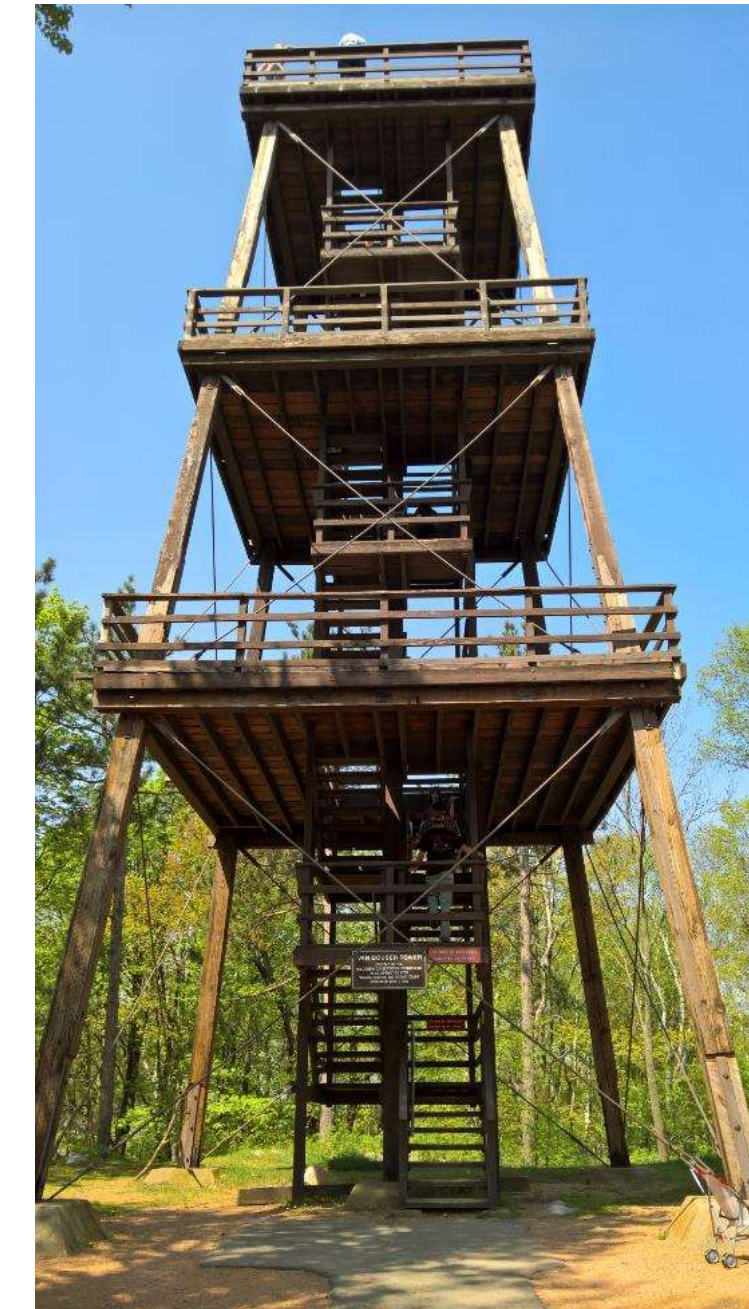
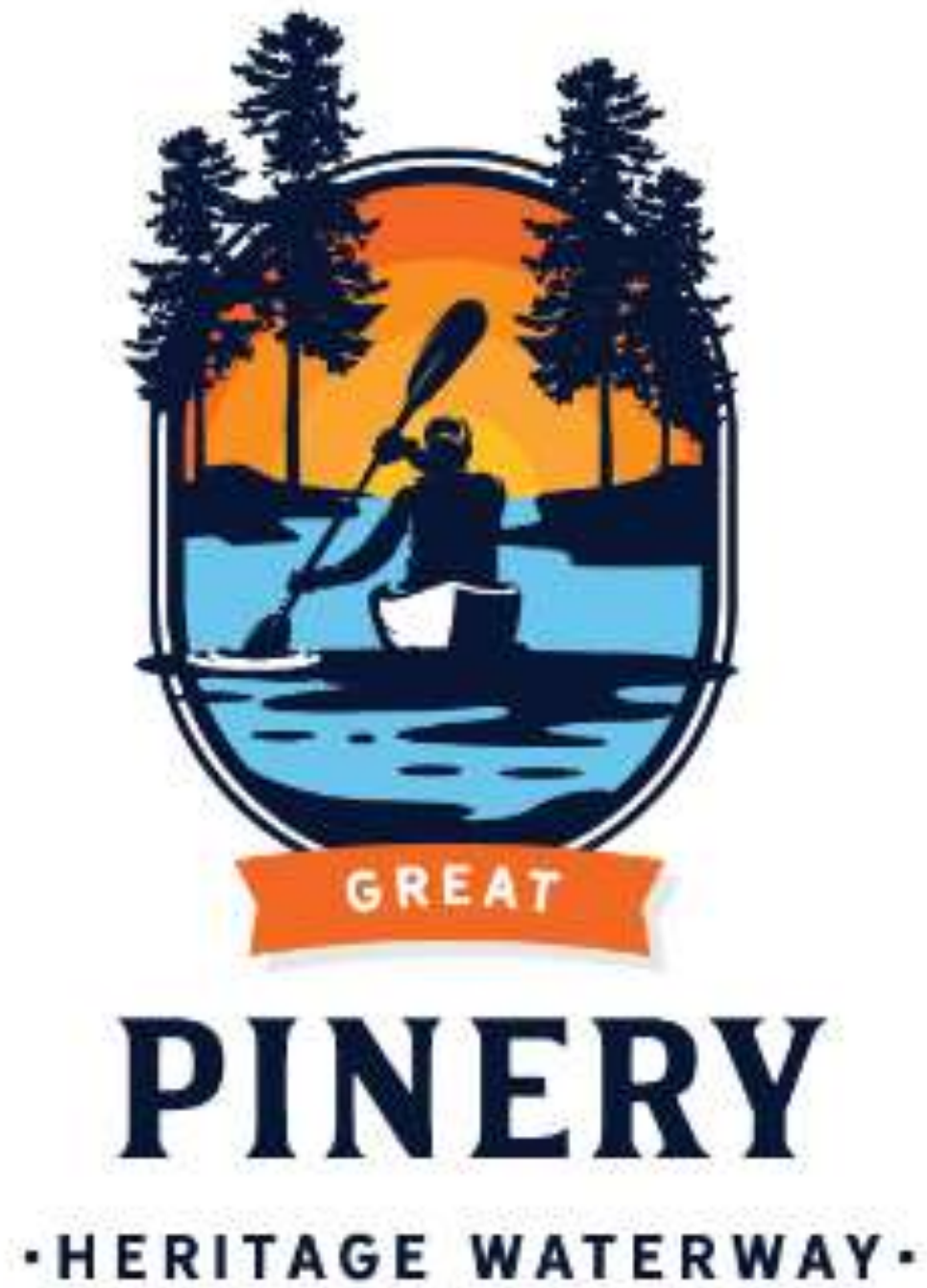






**WISCONSIN'S  
BASECAMP**

**IRONBULL™**





# 8-COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

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- Regional effort to build an inclusive outdoor recreation destination.
  - Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, Pepin, Tremplealeau counties
  - Urban and rural stakeholders
  - Economic development strategies





# EAU CLAIRE

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Eau Claire trails generate over **\$4.12 million** for the **area's economy.**

- Over half of trail users visit restaurants and coffee shops







“We see customers stopping into our retail store every day from the nearby trail. The trails are a vital part of the culture of our downtown. ***They’re not only great for the people using them, but even just seeing trail users- it all has a recreational ‘relaxation’ effect on our shoppers that helps create economic impact in a way many don’t often consider.***”

- Nick Meyer, Owner, Volume One, The Local Store, Eau Claire E-Bike and E-Scooter Rental, and co-owner of The Oxbow Hotel (Eau Claire)



# EAU CLAIRE OUTDOORS

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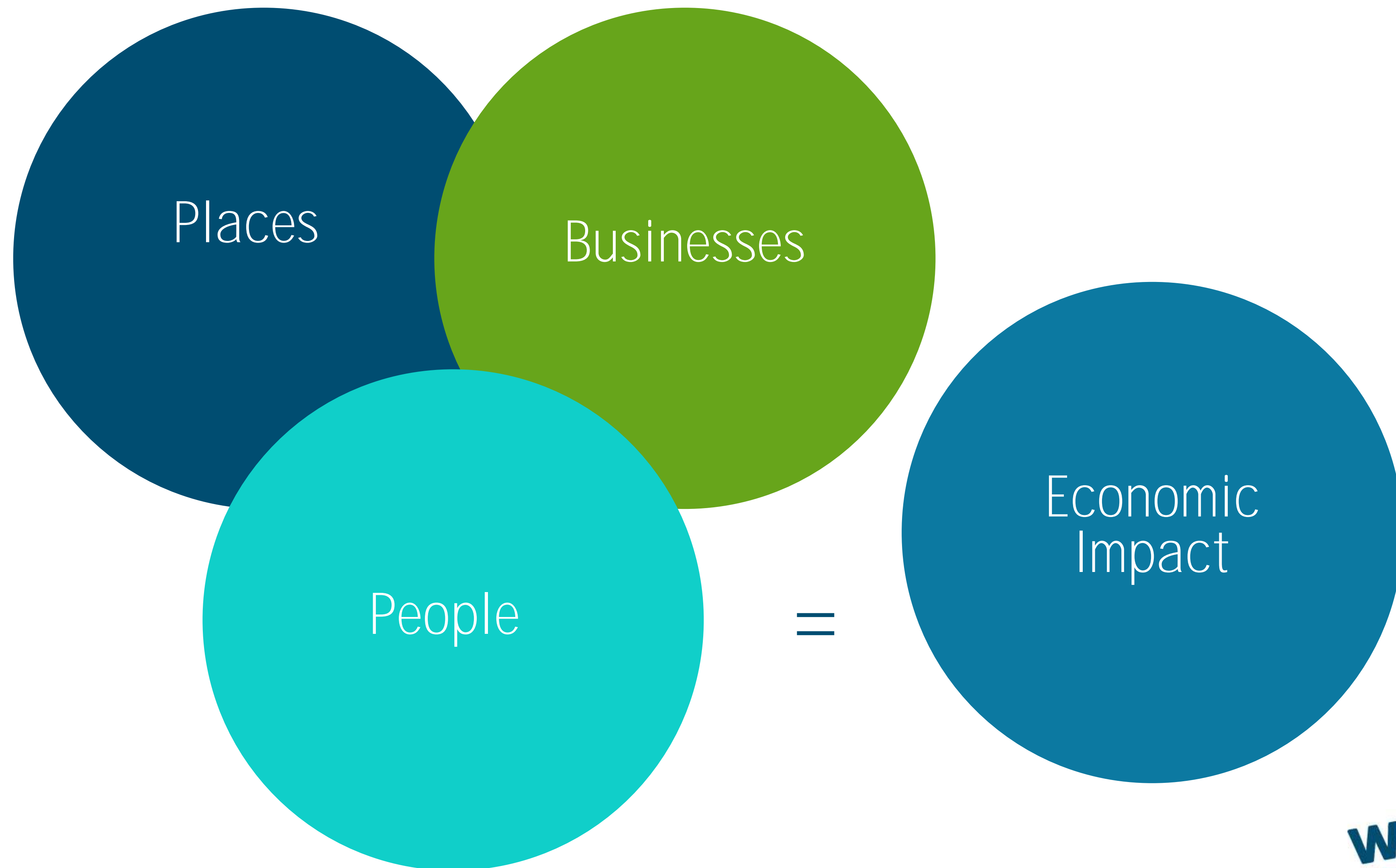
- Recent downtown business addition
- Local independent outdoor retailer
  - Equipment rental
  - Guided experiences
  - Events





# CONNECTING THE DOTS

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# THE OUTDOOR ECONOMY

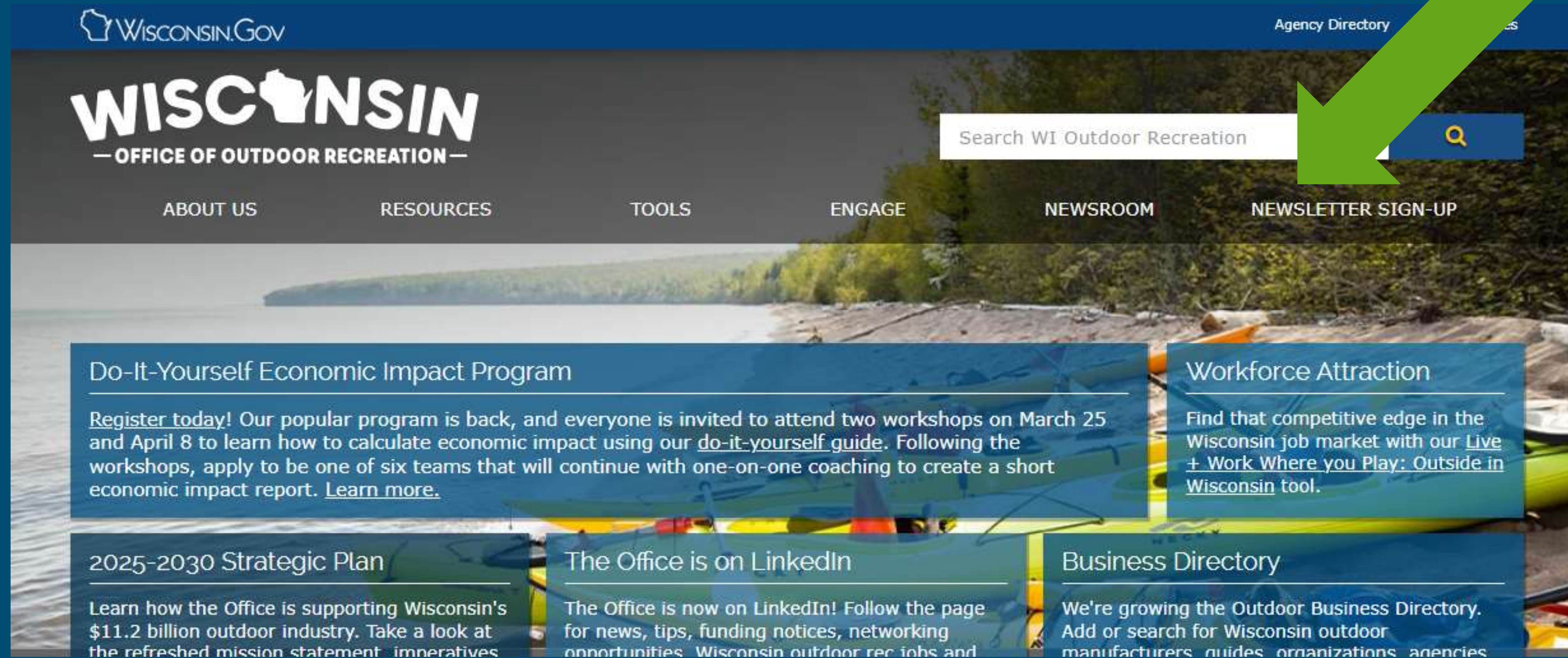
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# TOOLS & RESOURCES FOR YOU

Sign up for the Wisconsin Outside newsletter:  
[outdoorrecreation.wi.gov](http://outdoorrecreation.wi.gov)



The screenshot shows the Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: Agency Directory, ABOUT US, RESOURCES, TOOLS, ENGAGE, NEWSROOM, and NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP. A large green arrow points to the 'NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP' link. Below the navigation bar is a search bar labeled 'Search WI Outdoor Recreation'. The main content area features several promotional tiles: 'Do-It-Yourself Economic Impact Program', 'Workforce Attraction', '2025-2030 Strategic Plan', 'The Office is on LinkedIn', and 'Business Directory'. Each tile contains a brief description and a link to learn more.

WISCONSIN.GOV

Agency Directory

**WISCONSIN**  
— OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION —

Search WI Outdoor Recreation

ABOUT US RESOURCES TOOLS ENGAGE NEWSROOM NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP

**Do-It-Yourself Economic Impact Program**  
Register today! Our popular program is back, and everyone is invited to attend two workshops on March 25 and April 8 to learn how to calculate economic impact using our [do-it-yourself guide](#). Following the workshops, apply to be one of six teams that will continue with one-on-one coaching to create a short economic impact report. [Learn more.](#)

**Workforce Attraction**  
Find that competitive edge in the Wisconsin job market with our [Live + Work Where you Play: Outside in Wisconsin](#) tool.

**2025-2030 Strategic Plan**  
Learn how the Office is supporting Wisconsin's \$11.2 billion outdoor industry. Take a look at the refreshed mission statement, imperatives


**The Office is on LinkedIn**  
The Office is now on LinkedIn! Follow the page for news, tips, funding notices, networking opportunities, Wisconsin outdoor recreation jobs and

**Business Directory**  
We're growing the Outdoor Business Directory. Add or search for Wisconsin outdoor manufacturers, guides, organizations, agencies




# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

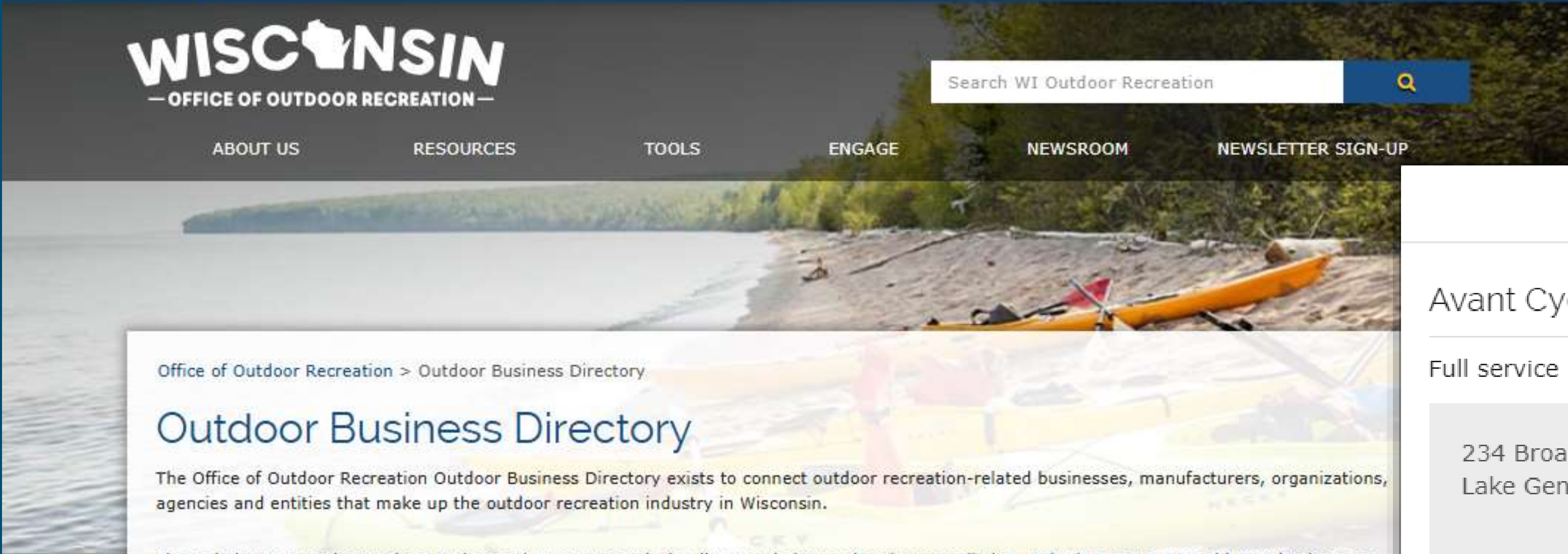
Business  
detail:

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[Agency Directory](#) [Online Services](#)

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[ABOUT US](#) [RESOURCES](#) [TOOLS](#) [ENGAGE](#) [NEWSROOM](#) [NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP](#)



[Office of Outdoor Recreation > Outdoor Business Directory](#)

## Outdoor Business Directory

The Office of Outdoor Recreation Outdoor Business Directory exists to connect outdoor recreation-related businesses, manufacturers, organizations, agencies and entities that make up the outdoor recreation industry in Wisconsin.

Please help us grow the Outdoor Business Directory! Search the directory below and review your listing. [Submit a request](#) to add your business or organization or to update information in the listing. Your business must be based in Wisconsin and be directly related to the outdoor industry or have programs/initiatives in the outdoor field. Please allow one week for review and approval of requests.

### Search

Search Businesses:

Business Category: 

Select All

Recreation: 

Select All

Name	City	County	Business/Organization Category	Recreation Category	More Information
1000 Islands Environmental Center	Kaukauna	Outagamie	Conservation, Other	Fishing, Hiking and Backpacking, Other	<a href="#">More Info</a>

## Avant Cycle Cafe

[avantcyclecafe.com](http://avantcyclecafe.com)

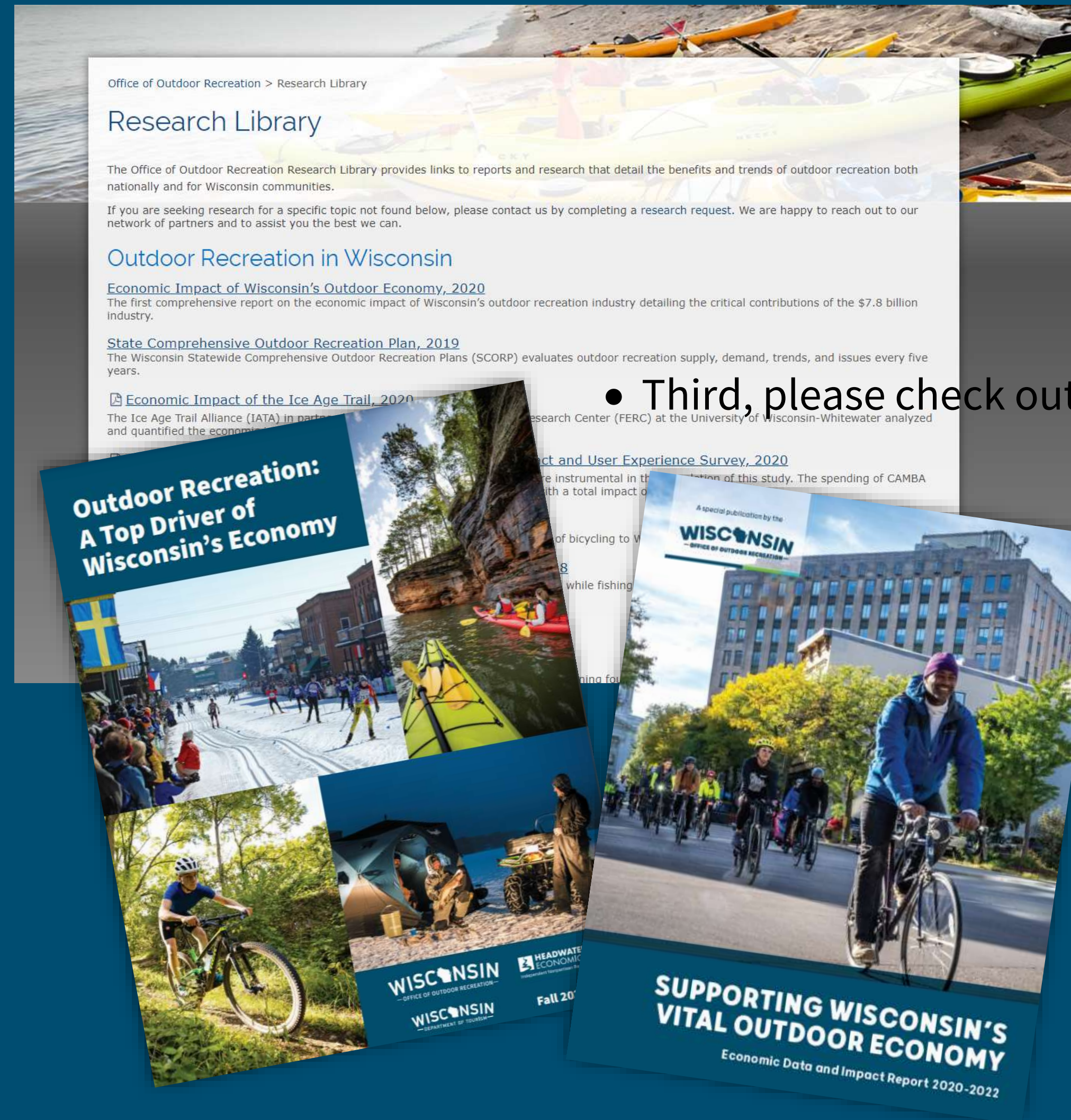
Full service bicycle retail and repair shop and coffee shop.

234 Broad Street  
Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147

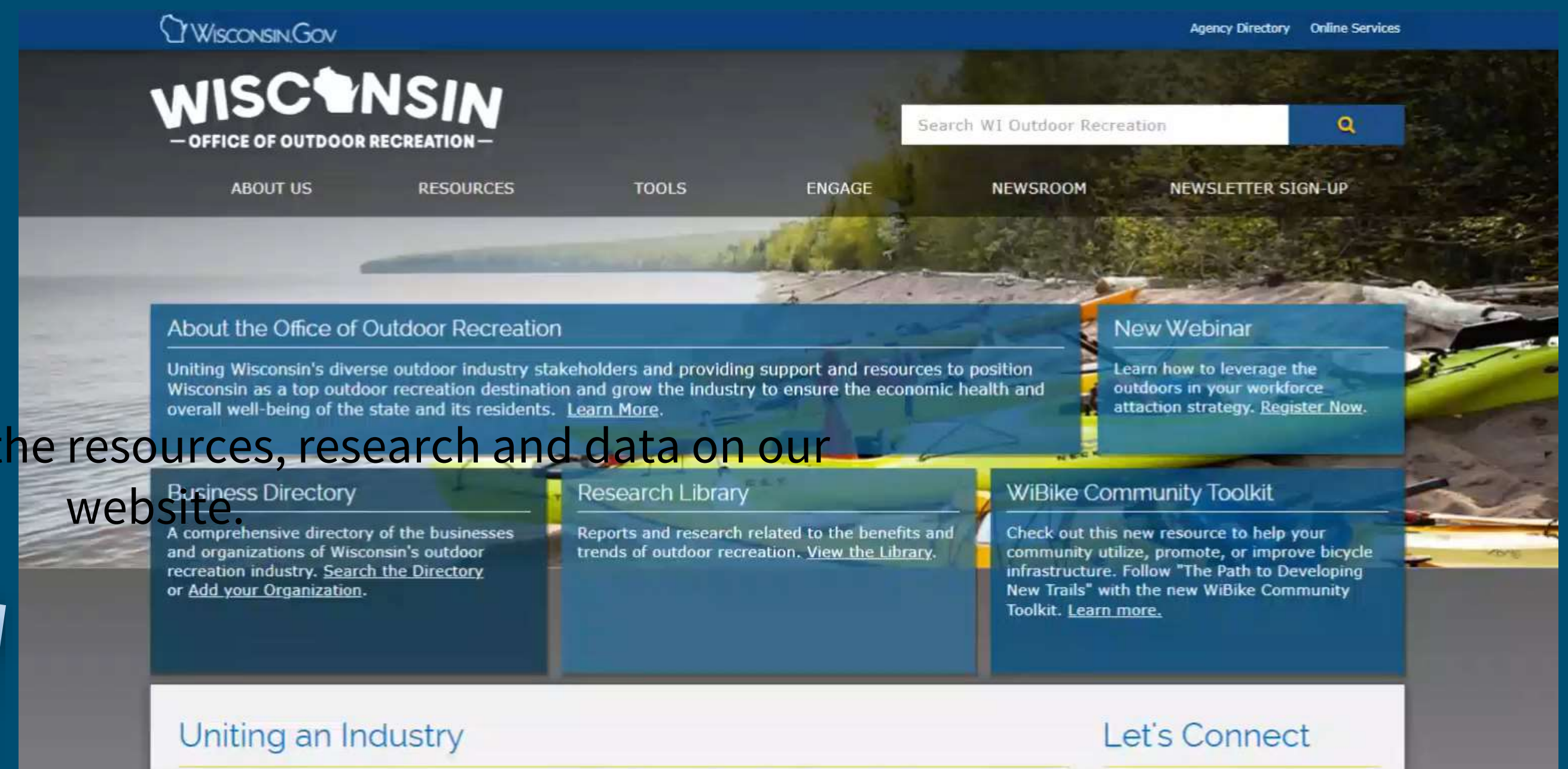
Email:  
[ridebikes@avantcyclecafe.com](mailto:ridebikes@avantcyclecafe.com)  
Phone: 262-203-5141



# RESEARCH LIBRARY & RESOURCE BY TOPIC



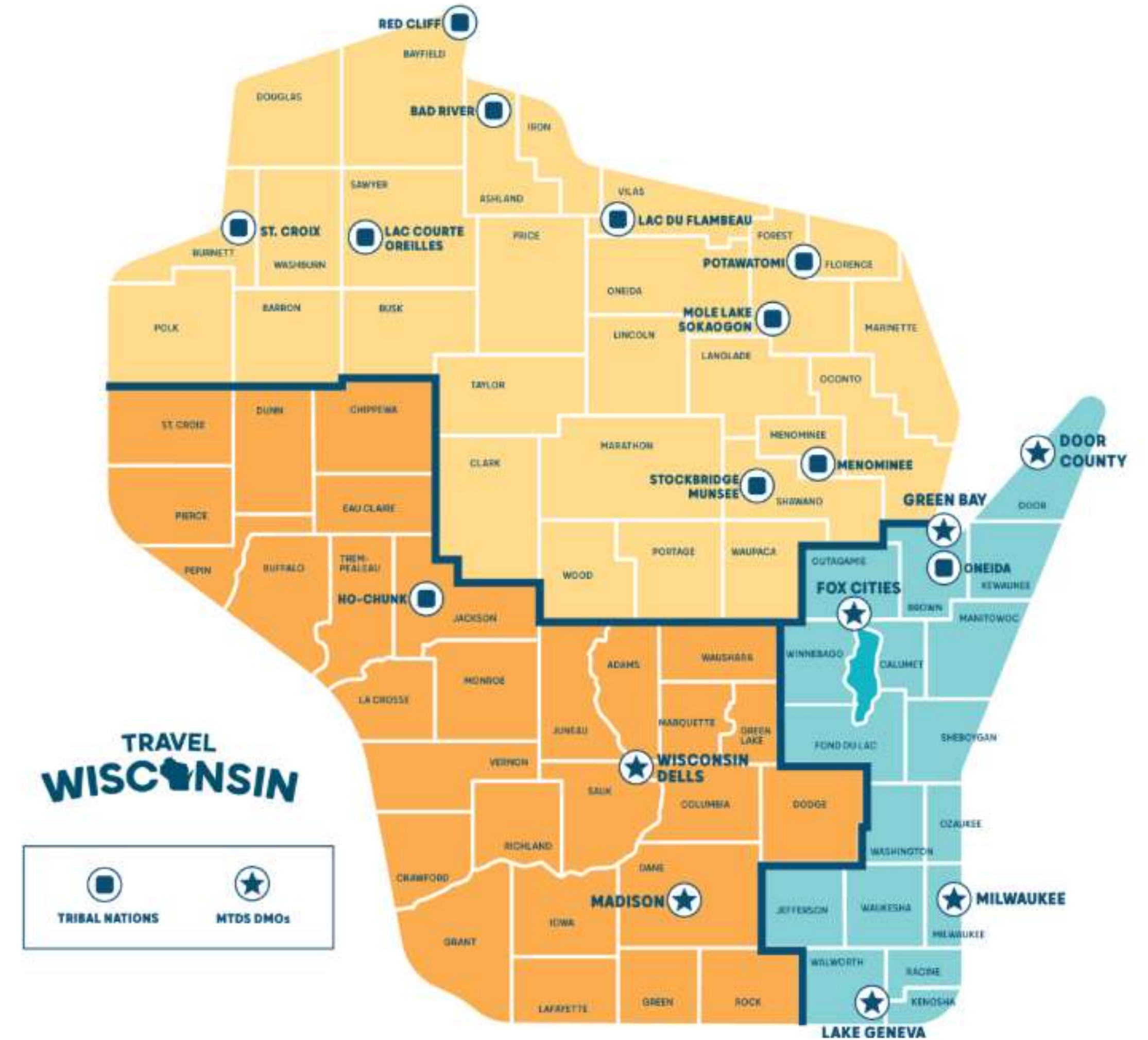
- Third, please check out the resources, research and data on our website.





# TRAVEL WISCONSIN RESOURCES

- Tourism Development Specialists
- Grant programs
  - Joint Effort Marketing
  - Ready, Set, Go!
- TravelWisconsin.com listings
- Marketing and PR Co-op Program



**Andrew Nussbaum**



**Christopher  
Jennings**



**David Spiegelberg**



**Melissa Sabel**





[OutdoorRecreation.WI.gov](http://OutdoorRecreation.WI.gov)



# Outdoor Recreation and Economic Development

Nicki Anderson: Marshfield Parks and Recreation

▶ Marshfield and North Wood County



## Topics to Tackle

- ❖ Overcoming geographical obstacles
- ❖ Recognizing a market demand
- ❖ Thinking outside the box



Find the “gems” of your area and maximize its potential!



## Questions to ponder

- ❖ Can your vision become reality?
- ❖ Is there a community/tourism need?
- ❖ Can the impossible actually be possible?





## Continued

- ❖ What are the recreational needs of your area?
- ❖ What is being underutilized?
- ❖ How can we help the community be outdoor in all seasons?
- ❖ Does it benefit tourism, economic development and quality of life?





## Steps to Success

- ❖ Utilize “out of city limits” outdoor recreation
- ❖ Collaboration is your best strategy
- ❖ Be market focused—stay up on trends!
- ❖ Mix outdoor recreation with entertainment “draws”
- ❖ Organized events and activities





## Final Thoughts

If you build it, they will come (plus stay and play!)

