

## STATE-WIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP) 2005-2010

This SCORP 2005-2010 summary was created by NCWRPC staff. Parts that relate specifically to Forest County are noted throughout this summary. Generally, this summary was created as if it were written directly for Forest County and the Northwoods Region in reference to the statewide data. See the SCORP Planning Regions Map.

# The 2005–2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Since passage of the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965, preparation of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) has been required for states to be eligible for LWCF acquisition and development assistance. The LWCF is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and provides grants for outdoor recreation projects by both state and local governments.

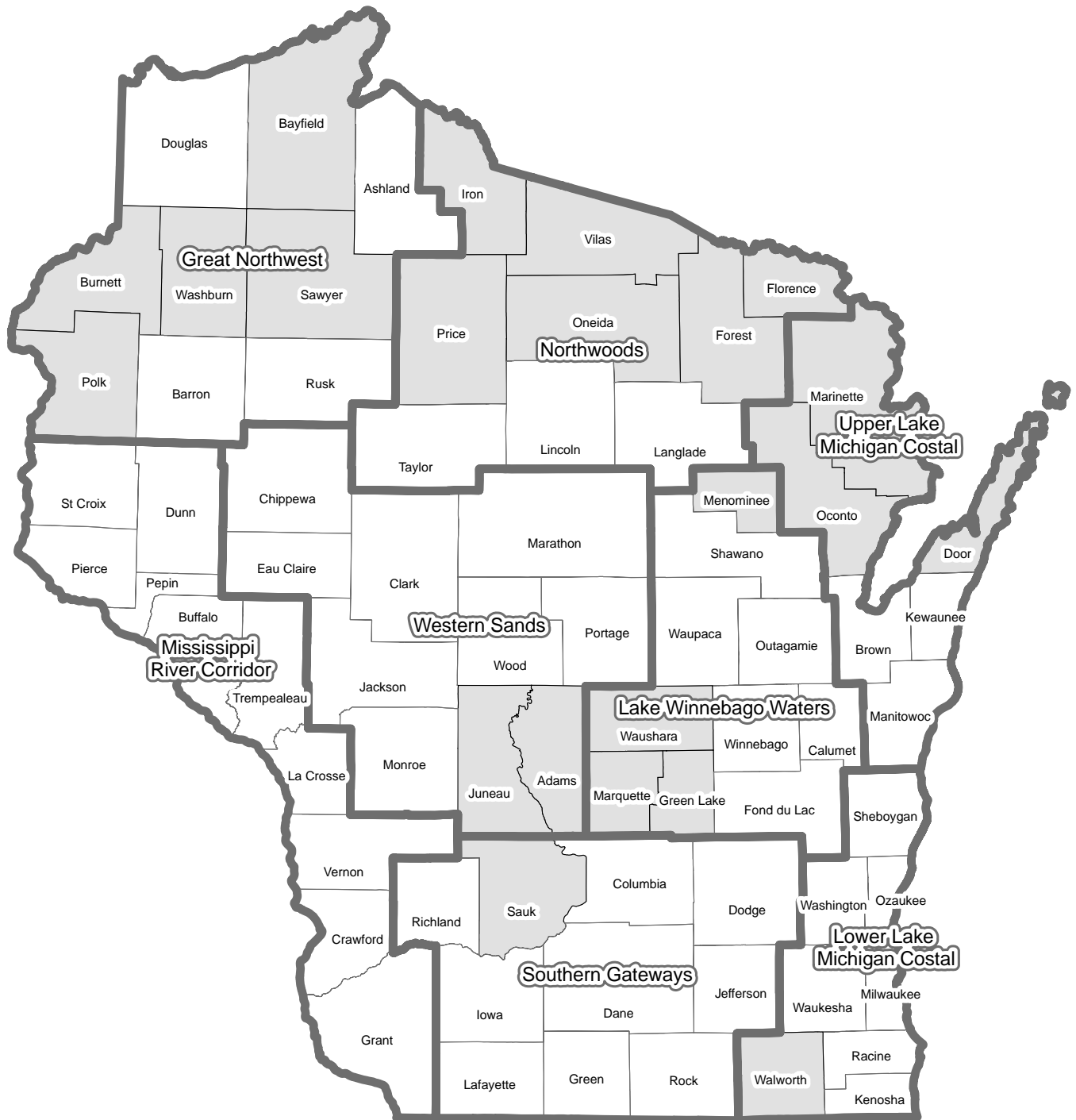
The Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan is required to apply for Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funding and to apply for Wisconsin Stewardship Grant funding.



The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2005-2010 was developed by the WDNR to assist local units of government with recreation planning. This SCORP examines various trends to assess current and future recreational needs within the state. To aid in this process, Wisconsin was divided into a group of eight planning regions each representing a loose collection of natural resource and tourism based assets. With SCORP's comprehensive statewide and regional focus, it will guide the allocation of limited recreation funds to acquire additional recreation and conservation lands and support the continued development of outdoor recreation opportunities.

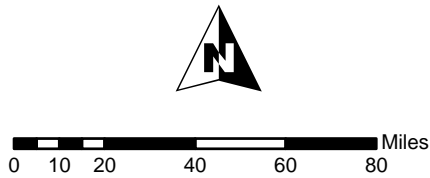
Primary resources in the Northwoods Region are nature, snow, and ice based. The SCORP Planning Regions Map shows that Forest County is in the Northwoods Region.

SCORP consists of 7 chapters and five appendixes that are summarized below.

# SCORP Planning Regions



-  Non-Metro Recreation Counties
-  SCORP Planning Boundaries



This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



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## Chapter 1 – Wisconsin Natural Amenities, Population Changes, and Recreation Destinations.

Chapter 1 explores what natural amenities exist in the Northwoods area, and examines the recreation and population changes that have occurred within Wisconsin over the past 50 years. This chapter investigates the ways in which changing demographic trends have impacted recreation supply and demand in Wisconsin.

Forest County data from SCORP and other sources exists in Chapter 2 – Description of Forest County in the Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2007-2011.

General SCORP conclusions for Chapter 1 include:

- Heavily forested (Forest County) or grassland regions, for example, support activities such as hiking, trail-riding, and cross-country skiing, while regions with many lakes and rivers support speed boating, water skiing, canoeing, swimming, etc.
- Southern Gateways and Lake Winnebago Waters areas are expected to have higher population growth than more rural regions. Larger populations generally support a larger supply of recreational opportunities, more people participating in a more diverse range of activities. For this reason, a larger population will also require a larger pool of potential recreational activities and facilities.
- Age – Older residents (Forest County) generally enjoy quieter, lower impact activities such as viewing birds, driving for pleasure, ice fishing, etc. While younger generations will generally participate in more high impact activities such as running, jogging, inline skating, developed camping, disk golf, downhill skiing, kayaking, paintball, mountain biking, and riding ATVs.
- Income – Middle income Wisconsinites often participate in developed camping, snowmobiling, fishing, picnicking, driving for pleasure, and ATV riding.
- Seasonal housing development in the Northwoods (Forest County) and Great Northwest Regions, was highest during the 1970s and has since leveled off. **(NCWRPC note: Between 1990 and 2000, Forest County in Table 1, page 11, has witnessed an increase in seasonal housing and increased permanent population. Seasonal residents are also becoming permanent residents. Forest County had about 48% seasonal residents in 2000.)**
- The SCORP Planning Regions Map shows that Forest County is considered "Non-Metro Recreation Counties" according to a recent research study (Johnson and Beale, 2002). Non-Metro Recreation Counties are generally considered to be vacation destinations and are therefore important to the overall state economy. Yet these counties have value beyond what they provide in tourist dollars. As natural amenity rich areas they provide large areas of land for outdoor recreating, land that is important to an ever developing statewide landscape. High net migration rates and higher population growth rates occurred in these counties.

## **Chapter 2 – Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Demand and Uses.**

Chapter 2 explores user demand for almost 100 popular Wisconsin outdoor recreational activities, and examines which activities are most popular and which environments are the most desirable for outdoor recreation. This plan is the first SCORP to evaluate recreation demand from outside of the state, an evaluation that will prove useful in balancing the demands of in-state and out-of-state residents. In addition, this chapter explores several barriers that prevent people from participating in recreational activities as often as they would like. Finally, this chapter discusses the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the continuing challenge of addressing outdoor recreation conflicts for individuals with mobility disabilities.

This chapter explores several of the factors that influence a person's recreation preferences – recreation settings, recreation experiences, and geographic location – and classifies recreational activities and users according to these groupings. While important, recreation preferences are only one component of recreation participation. Barriers to recreation are another important consideration in determining how often and to what extent people recreate – personal, environmental, and disabled barriers.

Recreation participation rates within Wisconsin are higher than most other regions of the country. This may be attributed to the combination of Wisconsin's abundant recreation resources and the state's four season climate.

**Wisconsin Demand Use Highlights** describes several activities and projects what their future potential is.

These two following sheets were taken directly from SCORP.

The 2005 – 2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

## Wisconsin Demand Use Highlights

### ATVing

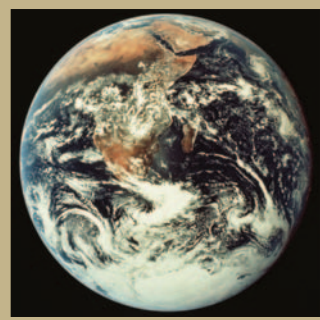
Within Wisconsin, ATVing has been one of the fastest growing recreation activities. What started in the 1970s as a small sport has now grown into a multimillion dollar industry with devoted participants across the country. With its abundance of undeveloped land, Wisconsin has proved an ideal location for ATVing; over 23% of Wisconsinites currently participate in ATV recreation and more are riding every year. For many ATV enthusiasts their sport is a social activity—they ride with their friends and families, stopping to shop and eat at different towns along the way. A number of ATV clubs and their members are active in group outings, performing trail maintenance, and promoting vehicle safety and advocacy. For other riders, ATVing is a nature-based activity. These users value the time they spend outside while on their ATVs, the fresh air and peaceful atmosphere they experience riding on a rural trail.



Though increasingly popular, the rise in ATV usage has not been without growing pains. Those objecting to ATVs have continually raised complaints about the noise and displacement of other recreational uses caused by the vehicles. Though the motorsports industry and a number of ATV clubs have addressed these issues with some limited successes in the state, there is still much work to be done to ensure ATVs interact peacefully with other motorized and non-motorized recreational activities.

### Geocaching

Most Wisconsinites have probably never heard of geocaching. For those that participate in the sport, though, it represents a new and exciting form of ultra-modern, technologically advanced recreation. Geocaching may be described as a modern day treasure hunt. The sport relies on Global



Positioning System (GPS) units, small devices that are able to determine, within 6-20 feet, the location of any spot on the planet. With these devices in hand, geocachers set out to find caches—small treasures set up and maintained by a worldwide network of individuals and organizations. The location of a cache is posted on the internet so geocachers need only record the location (in latitude and longitude) of their treasure and set out to find it. Though the sport sounds simple, it often involves a good deal of trekking and searching as geocachers make their way over hills and rocks, forests and streams to find their treasure. The location of a cache is up to the individual who establishes it, thus they are often placed somewhere the hider deems special—a scenic vista, a rocky cliff-face, even the

bottom of a shallow lake. Upon arriving at a cache—generally a small bag containing trinkets and a logbook—the visitor takes a treasure, leaves a treasure, and records his visit in the book. He then replaces the cache and returns home, ready to start his next quest. Geocaching has become popular not only for its sense of adventure, but also its flexibility. Caches can be hidden anywhere—city streets, remote wilderness areas, suburban front yards. The rules, like the treasures in the caches themselves, are loose and adaptable, allowing geocachers to create traveling caches, group treasure hunts, and many other variations. As the sport gains more exposure from associations like the Wisconsin Geocaching Association (<http://www.wi-geocaching.com/>), it is expected to continue to increase in popularity.

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### Walking for Pleasure

Of all recreational activities offered in Wisconsin, walking for pleasure is by far the most popular, with over 85% of state residents (3.5 million people) participating. The reasons are obvious; walking is an easy, accessible activity requiring only your own two feet and a



good pair of shoes (sometimes those are even negotiable!). Walking can be done nearly anywhere, whether in the heart of downtown Milwaukee or in the most remote portion of northern Wisconsin. Walking is also a multitasker's dream, allowing us to sightsee, chat with friends, or simply enjoy the scenery as we stroll. As exercise becomes an increasing concern for the Wisconsin population, walking can provide a good source of activity during a hectic workday just as easily as during a leisurely weekend outing.

### Motorboating

In a state that is nearly surrounded by water—Lake Superior to the north, Lake Michigan to the east, the Mississippi River to the west, and thousands of smaller lakes and rivers in between—it is not surprising that watersports are popular among Wisconsinites. With 1,513,000 people (36% of the population) participating, motorboating is a favorite pastime of many state residents, and with good reason: Every one of our 72 counties has at least 4 lakes with the most—1,327 lakes—occurring in Vilas County. Our boat-to-resident ratio is the second in the nation with one boat for every nine residents (Minnesota is number one, with one boat for every six residents). Our state ranks 6th in the nation for boat registrations and 7th in the nation for money spent on boating. The many varieties of lakes within Wisconsin accommodate nearly every form of motorboat, from small runabouts to large



## Wisconsin Demand Use Highlights

Great Lake vessels. Because of its tremendous popularity, motorboating has sometimes been associated with issues of overcrowding and safety. In reaction to these concerns, certain lakes have placed restrictions on the sport. As the powerboat industry continues to push for more affordable boating, the sport is expected to become increasingly popular, cementing its status as a favorite outdoor pursuit.

### Outdoor Ice Skating

Although cold and sometimes dreary, Wisconsin's winter does provide state residents with a wide variety of winter recreation. With 16.6% of state residents participating, outdoor ice skating is an especially popular winter activity. Skating is available in nearly all parts of



the state, whether in the highly developed outdoor rinks of urban areas or the crystalline surfaces of frozen northern lakes. While ice skating appeals to all ages, the physical demands involved in the sport tend to attract a younger crowd. Among this demographic skating is done recreationally and competitively, ice skating being a popular activity, especially among girls. The cost of participation for ice skating is generally low, a quality that has made the activity popular among families looking for an economical form of recreation. In recent years there has been a push to develop more outdoor ice skating rinks at the local level, a move that would make the activity accessible and popular to an even wider range of state residents.

### Viewing/Photographing Birds

Viewing/photographing birds is an activity popular across all age groups and state regions—over 40% of Wisconsinites (1,700,000 people) participate in the activity. Unlike other forms of more active recreation, birdwatching is a uniquely serene pursuit—quiet, non-destructive, and based in a natural setting. Many birdwatchers value this natural aspect, enjoying the opportunity to be in the fields or woods, away from the noise and sometimes hectic pace of the city. Interestingly, most birdwatchers don't need to go far from home to find this peaceful atmosphere—85% birdwatch within 1 mile of where they live. Other birdwatchers value the educational aspect of the activity, taking the time to search for new species and learn the different behaviors, calls, and appearances of different birds. Birdwatching is often done as a family activity, making the sport a uniquely social way to spend time in nature. As the activity has become more popular, the state has begun to develop birdwatching trails. These trails often feature driving routes with stopping points to observe birds and other wildlife. These new trails are expected to further increase the popularity of birdwatching.



### Disc Golf

Begun as a sport in the 1970s, disc golf has exploded in popularity. What started with a single course in Pasadena, California in 1975 has now expanded to a global phenomenon with courses on all continents but Africa, passionate players across the globe, and a professional sporting association, the Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA). The rules of disk golf are much like traditional golf: get the disc to the target—an above ground, metal, net-like structure—in as few throws



as possible. The course is also very similar, with a fairway, terrain changes, and obstacles (trees, shrubs, water traps) all dotting the landscape of the typically 9 or 18 hole course. 8.8% of Wisconsinites (366,000 people) now participate in disc golf, with more joining these ranks every year. The sport is popular for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the ease in which it is played. A beginner at the sport needs only 3 discs (a driver, a mid-range, and a putter) and access to a course. Courses are found in most cities and entrance fees are generally low-cost or free. The sport itself is very friendly towards beginners as all players move from hole to hole at their own pace. Many participants play in groups and the sport provides a moderate amount of exercise and an opportunity to be outside.

### Attending an Outdoor Sporting Event

You need not look further than your nearest cheesehead-stocked general store to know that sports are big in Wisconsin. Although only 20% of Wisconsinites participate in sports themselves, nearly 57% (2,365,000 people) watch or attend outdoor sporting events. Large events such as University of Wisconsin–Madison football games have ranked among the nation's top 20 in game attendance for each of the team's last nine seasons. Other events—football, soccer, and baseball games—are also popular year-round activities. Because they generally require developed facilities and large crowds, sporting events usually take place in larger cities, making them one of the few forms of recreation best suited for urban environments. While some skeptics may frown at the idea of classifying sporting event attendance as outdoor recreation, there are many side benefits from this activity. Those attending these events walk to the stadium and often tailgate—an outdoor activity and a chance to socialize with family, friends, and neighbors.



## Outdoor Resource Type

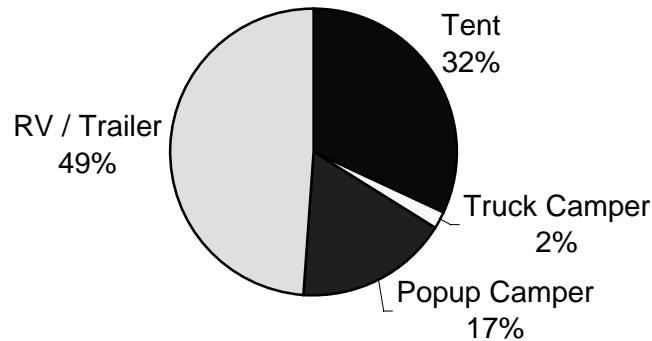
Forest County is part of the Northwoods Region, which supports outdoor recreation uses by the natural resource settings that are: Nature Based, and Snow & Ice Based.

**Nature based** land activities are those outdoor recreation activities that occur in undeveloped settings. While limited developed facilities may be used in conjunction with these activities, the typical nature based land activity participant wants to experience natural surroundings. Visiting wilderness areas is the most popular nature based land activity in Wisconsin with 38.3% of Wisconsinites participating. Hiking and camping are also popular with approximately 1/3 of state residents participating in each. Table B-1 shows the percent of state residents participating in Wisconsin nature based land activities from age 16 on up.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Percent Participating</b>	<b>Number of Participants (1,000s)</b>
Visit a wilderness or primitive area	38.3	1,592
Day hiking	35.0	1,455
Camping – developed	32.3	1,343
Visit a farm or agricultural setting	31.8	1,322
Off-road driving with an ATV	23.4	973
Mountain biking (off-road)	20.4	848
Hunting – big game	19.2	798
Trail running	18.6	773
Mountain biking (single track)	18.0	748
Off-road 4-wheel driving	17.7	736
Camping – primitive	16.0	665
Hunting – small game	14.5	603
Hunting – upland birds	10.5	436
Horseback riding on trails	8.1	337
Backpacking	6.9	287
Rock climbing	5.9	245
Off-road motorcycling	5.9	245
Hunting – migratory bird	5.0	208
Mountain climbing	3.4	141
Orienteering	2.7	112
Geocaching	2.0	83

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

## Wisconsin Camper Type



Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

**Snow and Ice based** activities are those that involve some form of frozen water. These activities are very popular among Wisconsinites with just over 44% of state residents participating. Sledding is the most popular of these activities, with just over a quarter (29.3%) of the state participating. Ice related activities are also very popular in the state, with almost 700,000 Wisconsinites participating in ice skating and nearly 500,000 participating in ice fishing. Table B-2 shows the percent of state residents participating in Wisconsin snow and ice based activities from age 16 on up.

**Table B-2 State Resident Participation in Snow and Ice Based Activities**

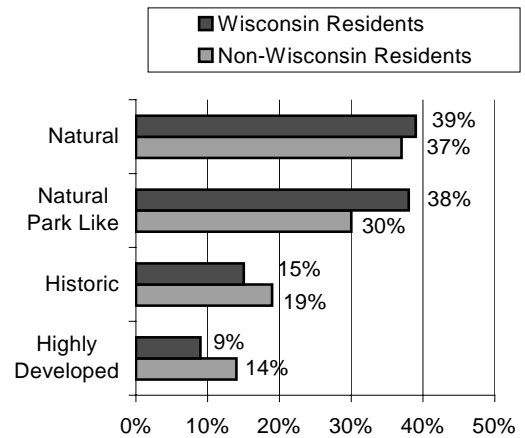
Activity	Percent Participating	Number of Participants (1,000s)
Sledding	29.3	1,218
Snowmobiling	18.3	761
Ice skating outdoors	16.6	690
Skiing – cross-country	11.4	474
Fishing – ice	11.4	474
Skiing – downhill	9.7	403
Snowshoeing	8.0	333
Snowboarding	4.7	195
Ice hockey outdoors	4.0	166
Skiing – telemark	2.4	99
Dog sledding	1.1	46

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

Figure 1: Outdoor Recreation Setting Preferences

### Preferences in Outdoor Recreation Settings

Understanding both setting and activity preferences can help recreation managers and planners provide for a wide range of recreational opportunities within a given setting. Wisconsin and non-Wisconsin residents were asked which of 4 distinct environments they preferred as a recreational setting. Figure 1 shows that natural settings and natural park like settings came out on top.



### Outdoor Recreation Segmentation by Experiences

Another way of understanding recreation activity preferences – the type of experience a person seeks from participating in a given recreational activity. The WDNR and the 1999-2004 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) examined people's preferences and participation in a range of outdoor recreational activities. From this data, several outdoor recreation participation segments were identified:

1. Inactives; 2. Passives; 3. Non-Consumptive Moderate; 4. Nature Lovers; 5. Active Nature Watchers; 6. Water Bugs; 7. Motorized Consumptives (Hunt and Fish); and 8. Enthusiasts.

**Inactives** comprise about 17% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This is the largest and also the most sedentary group of all market segments. Members may participate in some hunting and fishing, but do not participate in any water sports.

*Primary Activities:*

- Walk for pleasure.
- Attend family gathering.

**Passives** comprise about 14.5% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. Unlike most other segments, Passives do not often participate in viewing and photographing activities.

*Primary Activities:*

- Attend family gathering.
- Visit a nature center
- picnicking
- visit a historic center
- visit a beach

**Non Consumptive Moderates** comprise about 14% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group represents the average person that is somewhat more involved in recreation. Some members of this group participate in physically demanding activities such as mountain biking and snorkeling. Activities not favored by this group include hunting, fishing, and off-road driving.

*Primary Activities:*

- Visit a beach
- Swimming
- Downhill skiing
- Visit a nature center
- Mountain biking
- Picnicking
- Day hiking
- Camping

**Nature Lovers** comprise about 16.2% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group enjoys viewing and photographing nature and are almost twice as likely as the average person to participate in these activities. They generally drive for pleasure rather than hike or backpack into a natural setting. Nature Lovers participate in limited amounts of hunting, fishing, active sports, and muscle powered activities, but these activities are not their passion.

*Primary Activities:*

- Viewing/Photographing nature
- Drive for pleasure
- Learning/Viewing a nature center
- Walk for pleasure
- Sightseeing
- Attend a family gathering

**Active Nature Watchers** comprise about 16.5% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group is active when viewing nature as opposed to Nature Lovers. This group hikes or backpacks into natural settings to view wildlife or natural scenery. Members of this group also enjoy water based activities, but prefer to arrive at their viewing destination by human power.

*Primary Activities:*

- Viewing/Photographing nature
- Learning/Viewing a nature center
- Walking
- Day hiking
- Cross-country skiing
- Swimming
- Kayaking
- Visit a historic site

**Water Bug** comprise about 8.2% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group is almost as energetic as the Enthusiasts group. Members of this group participate in water based activities twice as often as the average person.

*Primary Activities:*

- Visit a beach
- Visit a water park
- Swimming
- Boating (all types)
- Drive for pleasure
- Picnicking
- Learning/Visiting a nature center
- Downhill skiing

**Motorized Consumptives (Hunt and Fish)** comprise about 7.8% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group has the highest participation rates for hunting and fishing with members; four times more likely to hunt, and three times more likely to fish than the average person. Rates of physically demanding activities are relatively low among members of this group, with members preferring consumptive activities (hunting and fishing) and motorized activities to human powered activities.

*Primary Activities:*

- Hunting
- Fishing
- Motorboating
- Snowmobiling
- Driving off-road
- Horseback riding
- Camping
- Gathering mushrooms, berries, etc.

**Enthusiasts** comprise about 8.2% of Wisconsinites 16 years and older. This group is the most active of all residents, and they enjoy the broadest array of activities. Members of this group are two to six times more likely to participate in certain activities than most other Americans. Enthusiasts also enjoy activities that are physically challenging and require high levels of skill and endurance.

*Primary Activities:*

- Cross-country skiing
- Kayaking
- Snowboarding
- Mountain biking
- Camping
- Canoeing
- Sailing
- Rowing

### **Recreation Demand from Outside Wisconsin**

Generally, Forest County has visitors who mainly come from the Chicago, Illinois Direct Marketing Area besides residents from other counties in Wisconsin.

### **Status of Health and Barriers to Recreation in Wisconsin**

No matter what recreation experience, setting, or activity people prefer, one thing is clear: physical activity is important to overall health and well-being. Over the course of the past few decades, national overweight and obesity rates have increased dramatically. Today more than 60% of adults over the age of 20 are overweight or at risk of becoming so. In Wisconsin, 61% of adults are overweight or obese, while 24% of Wisconsin high school students are overweight or at risk of becoming so.

In order to encourage increased physical activity among Wisconsinites we must first understand the barriers to becoming active. As part of SCORP 2005-2010 residents were surveyed, and responses were grouped into two categories – personal, and environmental barriers.

Personal barriers to increasing physical activity in order of importance are:

1. Lack of time, 2. Family commitments, 3. Job/work, 4. Crowding, 5. Conflicts with motorized uses, 6. Cost, 7. Age, and 8. Fuel prices.

Environmental barriers to increasing physical activity in order of importance are:

1. Distance/travel time, 2. Lack of access to public lands, 3. Lack of information about where to go, 4. Not enough campsites/electric sites, 5. Noise from ATVs and other motorized uses, 6. Lack of bike trails, 7. Lack of public transportation, and 8. Lack of snow.

### **Accessibility Recreation Considerations**

This SCORP intends to assess and improve recreation for all recreational participants. One often overlooked group in recreational planning has been those with mobility disabilities. Although accessibility to recreational resources has increased for disabled persons there has been little

research exploring the outdoor recreation participation patterns of people with disabilities. To establish a general understanding of the supply and demand of recreation for disabled persons, the WDNR evaluated several studies conducted by the 1999-2004 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE).

In the NRSE data, the characteristics of activities that influenced recreation participation rates of disabled people included: (a) the physical nature of activities, (b) the degree of adaptation needed for participation, (c) the social expectations, self perceptions, and social fears associated with certain activities, (d) the financial costs of activities, and (e) the accessibility of sites where activities took place. From this work, 15 recreation uses listed alphabetically below were determined to have average or above average participation rates among mobility disabled individuals. Most of these activities are nature based requiring a more natural/undeveloped setting. Viewing and learning activities are also popular with this population.

- Attend concerts
- Backpacking
- Birdwatching
- Camping
- Canoeing
- Drive off-road
- Fishing
- Horseback riding
- Nature study
- Sightseeing
- Sledding
- View fish
- Visiting historic/archeology sites
- Visit nature centers
- Wildlife viewing

As reported in the 2000 U.S. Census, Wisconsin has about 791,000 disabled persons, which is about 14% of the state population. Among residents 65 and older, 36.5% are classified as disabled. As Wisconsin's large baby boomer population continues to age, the demand for disabled recreation facilities is also expected to increase.

Generally, this groups barriers to increased participation in outdoor recreation include: 1. No companions, 2. Not enough money, 3. Not enough time, 4. Outdoor pests, and 5. Personal health.



The demand for disabled recreation facilities is expected to increase with Wisconsin's aging population.

### **Chapter 3 – The Supply of Outdoor Recreation in Wisconsin.**

Chapter 3 explores the supply of recreation in Wisconsin, both in terms of built facilities and outdoor recreation environments. Since outdoor supply comes in many forms, this chapter examines both landscape scale needs, and local park and recreation needs.

Data from this part of SCORP was incorporated and expanded upon in Chapter 3 of the Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

#### **Public and Private Recreation Providers**

The major public recreation providers in Forest County is the National Park Service. The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest covers over half of Forest County.

The Wisconsin Managed Forest Law (MFL) provides ideal settings for outdoor recreation uses. The majority of privately held land available for limited public use in Forest County is enrolled in MFL.

Some private recreation providers offer campgrounds or golf courses to the public, and charge a fee for their use. Private recreation lands that charge a fee are not enrolled in MFL.

#### **Elements of Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Supply**

Data from this part of SCORP was incorporated and expanded upon in Chapter 3 – Existing Recreation System.

#### **Recreation Prioritization of Land Legacy Areas**

Wisconsin Land Legacy Areas in Forest County are identified in Chapter 1 of the Forest County Outdoor Recreation Plan under Past Plans, and are also generally shown on Map 1.

As Wisconsin works to develop and expand recreation, it is important that the state develop a system for evaluating potential sites with an eye towards their recreational value. Initial work done by the Wisconsin Land Legacy Plan has identified an inventory of places believed to be critical in meeting Wisconsin's conservation and recreation needs over the next 50 years.

##### *1. Potential Visitors*

Future recreational areas should be easily accessible to a large number of potential visitors. To determine the number of visitors an area may receive, sites were assessed for the number of people living within an hour's drive of their respective boundaries. Road data was used to create buffer areas which were then placed on a map and compared to the buffer areas of surrounding sites. Areas with the highest amounts of potential visitors were assigned a higher score than those with lower amounts. While these areas certainly receive visitors outside of a one-hour drive, additional work evaluating travel patterns will need to be completed before including this data in Land Legacy designations.

## *2. Population/Development Pressure*

In addition to providing sites that are easily and widely accessible, the WDNR also hopes to preserve Wisconsin's unique and special environments. Sites with especially high development pressures may, therefore, deserve priority in the designation of future protected areas. To determine population and development pressure, projected population growth estimates were assessed for each site. Areas expected to undergo the highest population growth were assigned higher scores than those in which population growth was expected to be minimal.

## *3. Cost of Land Acquisition*

Cost of land acquisition is also an important consideration when evaluating potential Land Legacy sites. Areas in which undeveloped land (land which has not been developed for either urban or agricultural use) is relatively inexpensive were assigned a higher score than those in which land was relatively more expensive.

## *4. Conservation Significance Value*

Though the primary goal of the SCORP is improving and expanding recreation within state-owned lands, the WDNR also hopes to preserve places of special ecological importance. For this reason, sites with significant ecological conservation value were assigned higher scores than those with a lower conservation value.

## *5. Recreational Potential*

Finally, any future site must also facilitate participation in its region's top recreational activities. The top 15 recreational uses in each SCORP region were used as a template against which potential sites were evaluated. Sites that offered the most opportunities for popular recreational opportunities received a higher score than those areas that provided fewer opportunities for these activities.

Data from all five components was then compiled on a site-by-site basis. Sites receiving the highest scores within each region were designated as high recreational potential Land Legacy sites.

Look in the SCORP Chapter 5 summary under **Regional Land Legacy Areas for High Recreation Demand** to view the highest priority Legacy Areas in the Northwoods SCORP Region.

## **Local Park and Recreation Needs**

As another aspect of this planning process, local recreational needs (county, city, village, and town) were also assessed. This process involved a review of 373 local park and recreation plans on file as part of the WDNR recreational grants program.

The top five planning recommendations of each municipality were summarized. These recommendations were then compiled into a larger list, and categorized into three areas – 1. Park and Open Space Acquisition Needs, 2. General Recreation Improvements, 3. New Recreation Developments – and are listed in Table B-3

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**Table B-3 Summary of Local Outdoor Recreation Plan Recommendations**

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**Park and Open Space Acquisition Needs:**

- Community parks
- Dog parks
- Ice Age Trail
- Mini parks
- Neighborhood parks

**General Recreation Improvements:**

- ADA accessible facilities
- Athletic field upgrades and improvements
- Better signage
- Playground equipment upgrades
- Restroom upgrades

**New Recreation Developments:**

- Bike trails
  - Boat launches
  - Camping
  - Disc golf courses
  - Ice skating rinks
  - Indoor recreation complexes
  - Nature trails
  - Park shelters
  - Picnic areas
  - Scenic drives
  - Skateboard parks
  - Sledding hills
  - Soccer fields
  - Swimming pools
  - Tennis court development
  - Trail connections
  - Volleyball courts
  - Water access
  - Water trails
  - Water spray parks
- 

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

**Warren Knowles – Gaylord Nelson Stewardship 2000 Fund**

The Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Program (Stewardship 2000) is the state's primary funding source for the state, local governments (including tribes), and non-profit conservation organizations (NCOs) to acquire land and easements for conservation and outdoor recreation purposes. This program is funded by general obligation bonds.

Stewardship 2000 is administered by the WDNR and provides \$60 million annually through FY 2010. As shown in Table B-4, the program acts as an umbrella organization for several subprograms, each with its own goals and priorities. These subprograms provide funds to improve visitor amenities at state and local parks; restore wetlands and prairies; and acquire land for trails, natural areas, state and county forests, wildlife habitat, urban green space, state and local parks, river and stream corridors, and flowages and wild lakes.

Stewardship 2000 has four major components:

*1. Land Acquisition by WDNR and NCOs:* Acquisition of land and easements for a wide range of conservation and outdoor recreation purposes.

Qualified NCOs are also eligible to acquire lands and conservation easements with Land Acquisition funds for such purposes as the protection of natural areas, habitat areas, streambank protection, and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

2. *Local Assistance:* Grants to local governments and NCOs for acquisition of land, conservation easements, and development projects that support nature-based outdoor recreation.

3. *Baraboo Hills:* Land and easement acquisition for the conservation of the hardwood forests of the Baraboo area by the WDNR, local governments and NCOs.

4. *Property Development on State Lands by WDNR, Friends groups, and NCOs:* Development of recreational facilities on state properties includes such projects as campground renovations, construction of park support and interpretive facilities, and improved accessibility to recreation areas.

As the state budget fluctuates and funding for programs statewide becomes increasingly scarce, proposals have been made to severely cut or reduce the scope of Stewardship 2000 funding. Public response to these proposals has been overwhelmingly supportive of the existing Stewardship Program. Editorials in support of the program appeared in more than 25 newspapers statewide, indicating that Wisconsinites recognize and support the key role this program has played and will continue to play in the long-term protection of Wisconsin's special places.

Program Category	Subprogram	Annual Funds (\$)	% of Fund
Land Acquisition	WDNR Conservation and Recreation Land and Trails	\$37,000,000	62%
	Nonprofit Conservation Organization (NCO) Conservation and Recreation Land and Trails	\$8,000,000	13%
Bluff Protection	WDNR and NCO land acquisition in the Great Lakes; \$1 million earmarked through FY 2004		
Baraboo Hills	WDNR, NCOs, local governments; \$5 million		
Property Development and Local Assistance	Earmarked over previous years	\$6,750,000	12%
	NCO State Property Development Grants (e.g. Friends of Wisconsin State Parks)	\$250,000	<1%
	Local Assistance Grants: for acquisition and development; local governments and NCOs	\$8,000,000	13%
Total		\$60,000,000	

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

## Summary

The need for an increased supply of recreation land and facilities is evident on a variety of levels. On a landscape scale, there are a number of important areas within the state that deserve increased attention for environmental protection and preservation. At the local level, municipal and county parks are in need of facility upgrades and continued management.

## **Chapter 4 – The Supply of Outdoor Recreation in Wisconsin.**

Chapter 4 investigates the current status of Wisconsin's outdoor recreation conflicts, and states the difficulties in developing permanent solutions to these issues. This chapter also explores several of the current innovative solutions for resolving recreation conflicts.

### **Outdoor Recreation Conflict Reporting in Wisconsin and Surrounding States**

In order to establish a general understanding of which Wisconsin recreational activities experience conflict, researchers performed a LexisNexis search for Wisconsin popular press articles from the past two years (December 2003 – December 2005) that discussed issues of recreation conflict. A total of 75 different news stories were found. The most frequently cited conflicts included concerns over environmental damage (19 citations), trails (18 citations), conflict with landowners (15 citations), the implementation of activity bans (14 citations), management actions by state or local agencies (12 citations) and disputes over the use of local parks (11 citations). Other issues included, in order of frequency: safety, conflict with wildlife, noise, budget allocation or fee disputes, local ordinances, access to recreational lands and facilities, loss of viewscapes, park creation, water levels, and passage of state bills.

LexisNexis is a database of The Associated Press State & Local Wire, The Capitol Times, The Daily Reporter, The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, The Wisconsin Law Journal, and The Wisconsin State Journal. Sources from surrounding states are also included.

The activities most frequently cited as involved in some form of conflict were hunting (31 citations), ATVs (14 citations) and recreational fishing (8 citations). Other activities found to be associated with some form of conflict included, in order of frequency: bicycling, snowmobiling, hiking, boating, cross-country skiing, camping, swimming, boating, kayaking, swimming, wildlife watching, water skiing and horseback riding.

Articles gathered through this search revealed that conflict associated with non-motorized activities is generally associated with trail use. Articles also indicated that conflicts involving hunting are unique in that they rarely involve conflicts with other outdoor recreation activities. Rather, conflicts related to hunting are most often due to conflicts with private landowners over issues of access or trespassing, or conflicts with the state or recreation area over state management actions or use of parks by hunters.

An additional LexisNexis search was completed for articles from the surrounding states of Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota. Results of this search revealed far fewer articles relating to recreation conflict than the search performed in Wisconsin. For the activities of ATV riding, hunting, and fishing, there were 50 articles found in Wisconsin alone and only 38 articles in all other three states combined. These findings beg the question: What causal effects are contributing to more recreation conflicts in Wisconsin than elsewhere in the upper Midwest?

Past research in the field of recreational compatibility has focused on two principle explanations for why recreation conflict occurs. The first of these explanations suggests that conflict occurs when the goals of one recreation participant interfere with the goals of another recreation participant in the same location. For example, the goal of a mountain biker to ride fast through a forest may

conflict with a horseback rider’s goal of a tranquil ride through the same forest. The actual amount of conflict that occurs when the horseback rider and mountain biker actually encounter one another is dependent on a host of factors including each user’s experience level, previous experience with similar situations, feeling of attachment to the trail they are riding, design of the trail, proximity to one another, duration of their meeting, and tolerance of the other person’s behavior. The second explanation for recreation conflict suggests that conflict may occur simply because of differences in social values. A classic example of this type of clash is the conflict that may occur between hunters and other recreation participants when there are differences in opinion about when and where hunting should occur, or differences in the values held towards live animals. This type of value based conflict is more likely to be an issue during planning processes and public meetings than in recreation settings themselves.

Previous research has also documented a number of important generalizations about recreation conflict. First, recreation conflict is often asymmetrical, meaning that one user group is generally more impacted by the conflict than another. For example, cross-country skiers may be very bothered by snowmobile users, but snowmobile users are not generally bothered by the presence of cross-country skiers. Second, asymmetrical conflict is most likely to occur between motorized and non-motorized recreation activities than between either two motorized or two non-motorized activities. Third, because recreation users employ a variety of coping methods when encountering recreation conflict, increased levels of conflict may not necessarily reduce a person’s satisfaction with their experience. An angler encountering more boaters on a lake than he had expected may, for example, move to another lake or revise his expectations for the trip. In this way, the angler still enjoys his fishing expedition regardless of the fact that it did not meet his initial expectations.

### Spectrum of Interaction Types

Recreation activities interact in a variety of ways. Some activities positively impact one another and are called complementary. Camping facilities, for example, often attract many visitors, thereby increasing the number of people who hike on an adjacent trail network. Other recreation activities are merely compatible, having a neutral impact on the pursuit of another recreation activity. These activities are called supplementary. Most activities, however, experience some form of conflict when encountering other activities. Users from these different groups may experience conflicts over competition for space, trail infrastructure, viewscapes, and soundscapes. In extreme cases, two activities may be completely incompatible and interactions between them are described as antagonistic. Table B-5 outlines the spectrum of recreation interactions.

<b>Interaction Type</b>	<b>Key Characteristic</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Example</b>
Complementary	Increasing compatibility with increased use	No conflict	Canoeing and fishing
Supplementary	Neutral interaction – no impact on compatibility	Minor conflict	Snowmobiling and ATV use
Competitive	Decreasing compatibility with increased use	Conflict	Fishing and personal water craft
Antagonistic	Activities completely incompatible	Strong conflict	Wilderness camping and ATV use

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

## Expert Based Focus Groups

To investigate the compatibility of recreation activities in Wisconsin, a series of expert-based focus groups were held with recreation managers, members of the Wisconsin SCORP External Review Panel, and the leadership team from the “Minimizing Recreational Use Conflicts in Wisconsin’s Forests” session of the Governor’s Conference on Forestry.

Using a ten-point scale developed specifically for this study participants were asked to complete a matrix comparing recreation activities to other recreation activities. Given an interaction between two activities, participants were asked to assess their relative level of compatibility. Ten different land-based activities were included for consideration in this matrix, these activities representing the primary recreation groupings relevant to outdoor recreation in Wisconsin. Table B-6 activities included were ATV riding, camping, cross-country skiing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, linear trail biking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, and wildlife watching. A separate matrix compared six water-based activities, as shown in Table B-7. These activities included canoeing/kayaking, fishing, personal watercraft, motorboating/water skiing, sailing, and swimming. Recognizing the asymmetrical nature of outdoor recreation conflict, respondents were asked to rate the degree of compatibility in both directions of recreational interactions. In this way, conflict was rated for users of the first activity interacting with users of the second activity, and users of the second activity interacting with users of the first activity.

PRIMARY USE:	INTERACTS:										
	ATV Riding	Hunting	Snowmobiling	Horseback Riding	Mountain Biking	Cross-Country Skiing	Linear Trail Biking	Hiking	Wildlife Watching	Camping	Average Compatibility
ATV Riding	X	5.3	6.5	5.1	5.5	4.9	5.5	6.1	6.9	7.5	6.0
Hunting	3.3	X	3.7	4.7	4.3	5.3	5.7	5.4	6.0	6.3	5.0
Snowmobiling	4.3	4.0	X	4.0	4.8	4.3	5.8	5.3	6.3	7.2	5.1
Horseback Riding	2.2	3.5	3.0	X	3.8	4.9	4.5	6.3	7.3	7.7	4.8
Mountain Biking	3.1	3.6	4.7	4.8	X	5.7	8.1	6.1	7.4	8.0	5.7
Cross-Country Skiing	1.8	3.6	2.6	3.3	4.2	X	5.6	4.9	8.1	8.5	4.7
Linear Trail Biking	2.6	3.9	5.5	5.3	8.2	7.1	X	7.4	8.0	8.7	6.3
Hiking	2.4	3.5	3.5	5.7	4.7	6.1	6.5	X	8.9	9.2	5.6
Wildlife Watching	2.2	3.2	2.9	6.4	5.2	7.6	6.8	8.6	X	8.3	5.7
Camping	3.9	4.1	5.0	7.5	7.8	8.2	8.2	8.9	8.5	X	6.9
Average Compatibility	2.9	3.9	4.2	5.2	5.4	6	6.3	6.6	7.5	7.9	

Ratings below 4.0 are highly competitive or antagonistic.	Ratings between 4.0 and below 7.0 are moderately to mildly competitive.	Ratings 7.0 and above are supplementary or complementary
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Source: WI SCORP 2005

<b>Table B-7</b>		<b>Average Water Based Recreation Activity Compatibility Ratings</b>					
<b>PRIMARY USE</b>	<b>INTERACTS</b>						
	Personal Water Craft	Motorboating/ Water Skiing	Swimming	Fishing	Sailing	Canoeing/ Kayaking	Average Compatibility
Personal Water Craft	X	7.1	5.4	5.9	6.5	6.2	6.2
Motorboating/Water Skiing	6.5	X	4.9	5.6	5.8	5.9	5.7
Swimming	2.9	3.5	X	6.1	6.2	7.4	5.2
Fishing	2.5	3.0	5.4	X	6.5	7.7	5.0
Sailing	3.4	4.3	6.4	7.0	X	7.6	5.7
Canoeing/Kayaking	2.6	3.2	7.6	7.9	7.4	X	5.7
Average Compatibility	3.6	4.2	5.9	6.5	6.5	7.0	

Ratings below 4.0 are highly competitive or antagonistic.	Ratings between 4.0 and below 7.0 are moderately to mildly competitive.	Ratings 7.0 and above are supplementary or complementary
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Source: WI SCORP 2005

How to read Tables B-6 and B-7 – Ratings reflect the perceived level of conflict from the perspective of users listed in the vertical Y axis (labeled as Primary Use). Ratings indicating a user’s level of perceived recreation conflict should therefore be read horizontally across rows. For example, hunting interaction ratings range from a low of 3.33 for interactions with ATV riding to a high of 6.30 for interactions with camping. Light gray shading represents generally complementary recreation interactions, no shading represents generally compatible interactions, and dark gray shading represents generally antagonistic interactions.

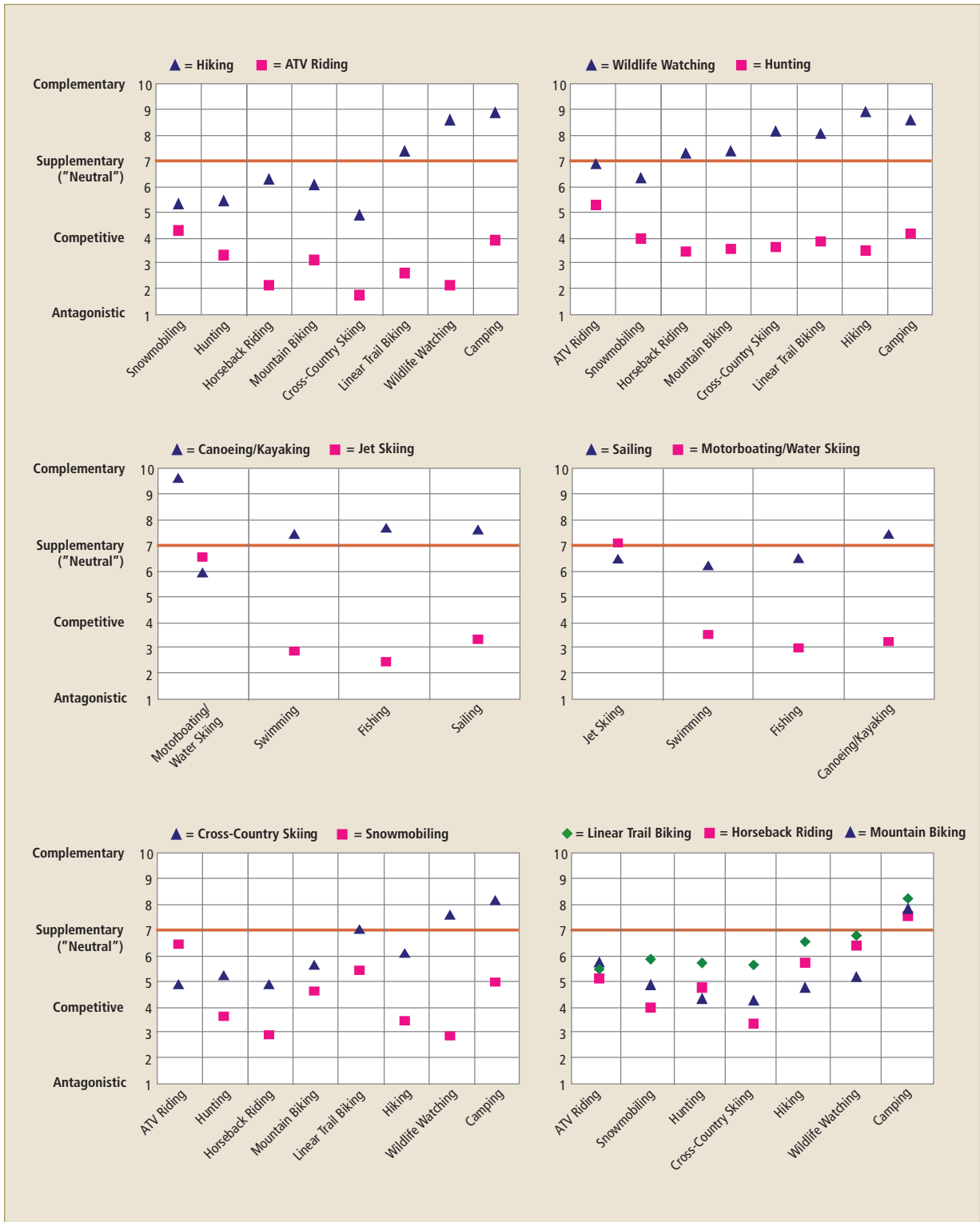
Results of survey of recreation professionals suggest some interesting patterns in recreation compatibility. While there was some variability in responses gathered, there are clearly some activities that recreation managers feel are complementary or supplementary and others that appear to be much more competitive or antagonistic. The average ratings reported for land-based recreation activity interaction ranged from 9.2, a number representing complementary interactions (recorded for hiking with camping), to 1.8, a number representing antagonistic interactions (recorded for cross-country skiing with ATV riding). For water-based activities, average ratings ranged from 7.9 for canoeing/kayaking with fishing to 2.5 for fishing with personal water craft. The average compatibility rating for land- and water-based outdoor recreational activities are summarized in Tables B-6 and B-7.

A second observation from Tables B-6 and B-7 indicates that differences in compatibility between motorized and non-motorized activities becomes less pronounced when more specialized trail based activities such as cross-country skiing, horseback riding, mountain biking and linear trail biking are compared to motorized activities. Because these types of specialized activities need particular kinds of trail infrastructure and have activity styles that are not as compatible with other recreation activities, they are often partially separated from other recreation activities. This may explain the higher levels of compatibility recorded between these activities and motorized uses.

# 4

## Chapter 4: Compatibility and Conflict in Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation

Figure 4-3: Average Outdoor Recreation Compatibility Ratings for Interaction with Highlighted Activities



## **Recreation User Perceptions**

One research study focused on forest-based recreation in Wisconsin and rated the compatibility of different recreation activities by surveying a large sample of outdoor recreation participants. Respondents in this study were asked whether they agreed with the statement that other recreational users were not bothersome. Results are displayed on the next page in SCORP Figure 4-3 taken directly from SCORP. Most respondents had some level of agreement with this statement.

In general, compatibility ratings in SCORP Figure 4-3 were lowest with motorized vehicle use or hunting and highest with primitive camping or hiking/skiing. These results suggest that recreation participants may hold a more positive view of outdoor recreation compatibility than recreation managers. In order to develop comprehensive management techniques, future research in the field of recreation conflict will need to elicit input from all groups involved in outdoor recreation – managers and participants alike.

## **Summary**

Both antagonistic and non-antagonistic recreation interactions will best be addressed through proper recreation planning and management, and activities that will maximize positive interactions between non-antagonistic activities and mitigate antagonistic uses.

## **Chapter 5 – Wisconsin SCORP Regional Profiles.**

Chapter 5 divides Wisconsin into eight SCORP planning regions and summarizes the unique characteristics that define each of them. Chapter 5 offers insights into what makes each individual region unique and valuable to statewide recreation, and also summarizes regional recreation needs.

Forest County is part of the Northwoods Region shown on the SCORP Planning Regions Map.

The Northwoods Region counties have abundant natural and recreational resources. In the Northwoods Region these resources include the Northern Highland/American Legion State Forest, the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, and the Peshtigo River. With its numerous high quality lakes and rivers, the region supports a large number of water-based recreation opportunities. Tourism is an important and growing business in the region as increasing numbers of visitors from Milwaukee, Madison, and Chicago make use of the Northwoods environment. With this influx of visitors and an ever-growing population of baby boomers retiring to the region, the Northwoods has experienced a surge in its seasonal housing and recreational property market. These properties and the populations they attract are expected to be an important influence on future recreation uses within the region.

In an attempt to quantify out-of-state recreation demand, this SCORP also examined the recreation demands of tourists visiting Wisconsin. In 2004, the Wisconsin Department of Tourism conducted a survey of both the Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul Designated Market Areas (DMAs). This survey gauged reaction demand by asking residents of each DMA what types of Wisconsin recreation they participated in. Data was separated according to SCORP Region and is listed in Table B-8

**Table B-8 Out-of-State Recreation Demand  
In Northwoods SCORP Region**

<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Chicago DMA</b>	<b>Minneapolis/St. Paul DMA</b>
1	Canoeing	Fishing
2	Hiking	Sightseeing
3	Fishing	Boating
4	Downhill Skiing	Camping
5	Camping	Hiking

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

### **Regional Public Perspectives on Top Recreation Issues and Needs**

Certain issues are causing impediments to outdoor recreation opportunities within Wisconsin. In order to better understand these issues, the WDNR conducted a series of town meetings across the state. These meetings, conducted in 2005, collected 125 written comments and an additional 1,300 online comments. All survey participants were asked 2 questions:

- “What recreation issues will be growing in significance in the next 5 years?”
- “What barriers are keeping you from recreating outdoors as often as you would like?”

#### Northwoods Region summary of most common responses

The notes in brackets "(note)" after each point state how common the issue or need is throughout the state, by describing if it is unique to the Northwoods Region or not.

#### **Issues**

- Increasing ATV usage and associated impacts (an issue in most regions)
- Loss of public access to lands and waters (an issue in half the regions)
- Noise pollution from motorized activities (only in this region and Lower Lake Michigan)
- The possible loss of silent sport facilities (only in this region)

#### **Needs**

- More biking trails (a need in most regions)
- More hiking trails (a need in every region)

### **Relative Supply of Recreation by Type Based on Population**

Recreation demand and recreation supply are fundamentally unique elements built on different units of measurement. Recreation supply represents the extent of physical resources present in a given region and gives some indication of user capacity. Various approaches for standardizing supply components have been developed. These approaches can be generalized into two groups; those that focus on relevant market size (population based) and those that focus on aggregate geographic extent (area based).

For the 2005-2010 SCORP process, a metric was developed to present the relative nature of recreation supply in Wisconsin. The recreation location quotient (RLQ) is the metric that provides comparable measures of a region's recreational resources. An RLQ is a measure of the difference in regional recreational characteristics as compared to a given reference region (the whole state).

Results suggest that regions with high demand for outdoor recreation do not provide opportunities for this recreation in proportion to their physical size. For instance, the Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Region (including Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, and the northern Chicagoland suburbs) and Southern Gateways Region (including Madison) have overall population based RLQs of less than one (0.52 and 0.92, respectively), which indicate a relative lack of recreation supply within these regions. When comparing these results to those of the less populous northern regions (the Great Northwest and the Northwoods), it is clear that northern regions have comparatively abundant opportunities relative to their low population (population based RLQs of 2.52 and 3.22 respectively).

### **Regional Land Legacy Areas for High Recreation Demand**

Another important consideration for future recreational needs is the preservation and protection of the larger areas that provide space for popular regional activities. As part of the recreational Land Legacy process described in Chapter 3, Land Legacy sites were also identified within each region. These sites were chosen to provide recreational opportunities that could serve the recreational needs of an entire region. These sites should be considered the highest priority recreation areas to preserve and protect within the Northwoods Region.

The top five Land Legacy sites in the Northwoods Region are:

1. Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
2. Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest
3. Upper Wolf River
4. Upper Forks of the Flambeau River
5. Black River

### **Summary**

One of the primary purposes of the SCORP is to identify shortfalls in recreation facilities (supplies) across the state. This identification process relies on both primary data gathering techniques such as surveys, as well as anecdotal comments on recreation user perceptions. By making use of both of these techniques, this SCORP has developed a comprehensive summary of recreation needs across the State of Wisconsin.

For this SCORP, targeting was done at the regional level, using regional demand, regional supply, local park and recreation plans, and public comment data to determine which recreation supplies are relatively in short supply. In addition, future trends were also considered through a process discussed in Chapter 3. The combining of these methods and techniques has resulted in a summary presented in Table B-9. To simplify the targeting technique, recreation needs were divided into nature-based and developed setting categories. This division allows for a clear distinction between recreation niches such as state parks and urban trails.

**Table B-9 Northwoods Recreation Supply Shortages**  
**Nature Based**

Campsites – electrical	Parks
<b>Developed Setting</b>	
Basketball Courts	Marinas
Bicycling clubs	Outdoor swimming pools
Boats/sailboat rental	Soccer fields
Dog parks (urban areas)	Softball diamonds
Playground facilities	Tennis courts
Horseback riding clubs	Trails – inline skating
Ice skating rings	Volleyball courts

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

**Chapter 6 – Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Participation Trends and Observations.**

Chapter 6 describes several key indicators for outdoor recreation trends and offers insights for future recreation participation and demand.

**Key Indicators and General Trends**

**Demographics** are some of the most important indicators of future recreational demand. The aging of the baby boom generation (born between 1946 – 1964) is a significant trend. Improved health, fitness, and lifestyle changes have assisted many baby boomers with continued participation in outdoor recreation well past previous generations. This group also has relatively high disposable incomes, allowing them to travel and participate in a diverse range of recreational activities. As this group continues to age, the demand for less active outdoor recreational pursuits and facilities – walking, gardening, and birding, for example – has become an increasingly important factor in state recreation demand. As more members of this demographic retire, one would expect a higher level of marginally fit recreation users, and more demand for mid-week recreation programs.

While the baby boom generation is important in predicting future recreation demand, Generation Y is also becoming an important group to watch. Members of this generation, born between 1981 and 1995, make up the largest consumer and recreation group in the nation. As Generation Y begins to enter the workforce and have families of their own, their specific demands will increasingly shape recreation supply and demand. Early indicators suggest that this group demands instant information access, has a high level of multi-tasking, and has low rates of physical activity.

More adults now remain single until their 30s and 40s, with many of those that do marry either postponing having children until later in their lives, or choosing to not have children at all. At the same time, single-parent families have also increased. For all of these groups, free time is perceived as an opportunity to spend time with family and friends and as such, they often seek out recreation activities that allow group participation.

While group activities are popular among single parent and no-children families, members of these demographics are often also interested in the more active and unusual recreation available in experiential trips and other non-traditional recreation activities. Traditional team sports such as football have reached a plateau in their growth, while more modern activities such as geocaching and disc golf continue to rise in popularity.

Recreation demand has also been affected by changes in work and leisure trends. Data from this SCORP indicates that Wisconsinites consider time to be their scarcest resource. While dual-income households and flexible work schedules create more flexible recreation and travel patterns, the increasing demands of work often prevent people from participating in recreation as often as they would like. Work hours are longer, leisure hours less. Dual-income households in particular have felt the pinch of increased work hours as many American women (over 50%) now work outside the home. With all adults in a household working, free time available for recreating diminishes significantly. Because of these increased demands on limited spare time and the fact that households are generally busier with work and home life responsibilities, discretionary activities (activities that do not require scheduling) are expected to become increasingly popular in the coming years.

Population has a limited impact on recreation demand because recreational activities and interests vary significantly over a person's lifetime. Rather than examine total populations, it is more useful to examine the profile, size and participation rates within actual user groups to determine future recreation needs. Certain population groups representing potential service needs or demands may be divided into specific user categories called market groups. Once these market groups are defined, additional research can reveal the specific needs and demands of each group.

### **Health and wellness**

Outdoor recreation is a component of physical fitness and a major focus of preventative care. Activity done as a part of outdoor recreational activities leads to a better quality of life physically, mentally, and socially. An examination of the current outdoor recreation industry reveals several trends: increased equipment sales, development of new activities, and growth in activities at both ends of the recreation spectrum. These activities include both those that are close to home and require little gear, such as walking, and those that require a large time commitment, a more adventurous attitude, and more technical gear, such as climbing, kayaking, and backpacking. The exact role public lands, recreational facilities, and outdoor activities will have in the future of health and wellness care is uncertain. It is undeniable that recreation can help maintain wellness. Over time, it is expected that the health benefits of recreation will become a constant feature of programming and investment in park facilities.

### **Environment**

As the general public becomes more aware of environmental issues, concern over environmental quality is growing. Citizen expectations are also evolving with regards to the role regional and national environmental agencies play in local recreation and planning. More citizens are seeking an active role for themselves in environmental protection and conservation, a role that is creating a community-wide revitalization in environmental preservation and the provision of open space. This increased interest in the environment has also affected recreation participation rates as more people visit areas of minimally altered environments and trails. Although environmental awareness is growing, environmental degradation continues. Global warming has begun to impact outdoor recreation, creating longer warm seasons, shorter cold seasons, and unpredictable climatic conditions. In the future, these changes will create an extended season for warm weather activities

and a shortened season for cold weather activities. Changes to the landscape resulting from less dependable weather patterns will make seasonal recreation less reliable and planning for this type of recreation more difficult. **(NCWRPC Note: Global warming has one trend in Wisconsin that affects recreation professionals. The amount of precipitation falling in each season is now falling during extreme events, some of which are called 100-year floods. This is the norm now, and recreation managers may need to consider how erosion and floodwater flow will affect outdoor recreation resources.)**

### **Technology**

Electronic communication innovations have created interactive opportunities for recreation through the Internet, computer simulated games and sports, and other electronic sources. Although this new technology has increased and diversified the overall pool of recreational opportunities for users to choose from, it has also detracted from participation in more traditional recreation activities. In order to compete with non-traditional activities, providers of outdoor recreation must continue to provide and maintain high quality service in all their recreational programming and facilities.

### **Economics**

Increasingly, there is a rift between those that have access to recreation and those that do not. While household income is increasing, individual income in real growth terms is expected to decline. The fact that most homes are now two-income households results in two primary challenges. For affluent households with more discretionary income, additional resources from dual incomes are often used for leisure activities including travel and entertainment. This affluent population has a greater ability to participate in a broader spectrum of recreation. At the same time, however, there has been an increase in the percentage of the population that falls within poverty guidelines. This growing gap between the rich and the poor has prompted an interest in developing separate strategies for the provision of leisure services for these two populations.

This disparity in income levels has created new demands for outdoor recreation as affluent families seek out new and exciting forms of recreation and less affluent families seek out high-quality, low-cost forms of recreation. As recreation activities compete for household recreation dollars and available time, there has been an increased emphasis on value and diversity of choices in recreational activities. To remain competitive with other facilities and to appeal to family households, facilities such as swimming pools must now have the most modern equipment and technologies such as water slides and interactive play areas.

### **Government**

Whether state or locally owned, a large percentage of recreation lands are government owned and managed. Pressures on government lands— greater scarcity and high cost of land, rising operating costs and revenue limits, and increasing anti-taxation sentiment—will all affect the operation and development of recreational facilities and programs on these lands. Recreation is also becoming more market driven, meaning that activities are increasingly subject to competition between private, public, and non-profit recreation providers. A broad issue of what constitutes public access to public sponsored facilities and programs may challenge the financial feasibility of building new facilities and maintaining existing ones. Subsidized programs and minimal use fees could be difficult to maintain in light of these conditions.

## Changing Land Use

Over time, Wisconsin's population has shifted from a predominantly rural population to a predominantly urban population. Today, roughly two-thirds of the state's population lives in urban areas, with more people migrating to these areas every year. Because of this shift, urban fringe areas are becoming an increasing hotbed for recreation activities. Facilities and spaces such as local dog parks, urban trails, and green space allocations, are all reflections of this increasing urban/suburban demand. Residential development in rural areas has continued as better highway networks provide for easy access to urban services and workplaces. Regional land use planning will continue to be a primary component in the provision of recreational activities within an ever-changing suburban environment.

## Wisconsin Trends

Wisconsin's population grew 7.3% between 1994 and 2004 and is expected to grow another 3.3% by 2010. This growth, along with the state's sizeable population of baby boomers now reaching retirement age, will create a larger demand for passive recreational activities. Land resource-based activities have increased just over 27% in a ten year period. Much of this increase has occurred in the areas of wildlife viewing and off-road driving, both relatively inactive activities. While not generally popular among older participants, the biggest change in recreation participation has been in the area of snow- and ice-based activities. Much of this change may be attributed to recent advancements in equipment technology and an increased interest in snowboarding and ice skating.

In Chapter 2 of SCORP, Forest County is listed as part of the Northwoods Region, which supports outdoor recreation uses by the natural resource settings that are: Nature Based, and Snow & Ice Based. Table B-10 supports a growth scenario for snow and ice based, and nature based activities.

Resource Type	# of Participants in Millions		Percent Change
	1994*	2004**	1994-2004***
Snow and ice based activities	1.29	1.84	43.1
Land resource based activities	3.15	4.02	27.3
Water resource based activities	2.77	2.98	7.8

\*1994 population = 5,133,678; \*\*2004 population = 5,509,026; \*\*\*% growth = 7.3%  
Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Participants in Millions*</b>		<b>Percent Change 1994-2004</b>
	<b>1994</b>	<b>2004</b>	
Kayaking	0.051	0.262	413.7
Horseback riding	0.136	0.407	199.3
Personal water craft	0.136	0.403	196.3
Snowboarding	0.074	0.195	163.5
Rock climbing	0.097	0.245	152.6
Soccer outdoors	0.175	0.407	132.6
Drive off-road	0.513	1.073	109.2
Orienteering	0.054	0.112	107.4

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

Recreation projections can be examined in two ways. The first is simply participation as a numerical total. For the vast majority of recreation activities, this number will increase as the state's population does. To gauge a more accurate view of future participation, it is far more useful to examine a given activity's participation rate as a percentage of the total population. This number gives a better understanding of population growth vs. participation change in an activity. Table B-11 considers the percentage changes in recreation participation rates, as well as industry forecasts and opinions from recreation professionals, to suggest which activities will be popular in the future. These observations are made for a five year period, and therefore reflect the most pressing demands on recreation in the immediate future. Some of these activities such as ATVing, RV camping, and geocaching are expected to grow in popularity. Other activities such as swimming, day hiking, and fishing, are expected to remain stable in their popularity. Still others such as personal watercraft, skiing, and mountain biking are expected to decrease in popularity.



Kayaking experienced the highest percentage change in participation from 1994 to 2004, growing 413.7%. But 262,000 people participating are only about 4% of the Wisconsin population.

The next three tables – increasing demand (Table B-12), stable demand (Table B-13), and decreasing demand (Table B-14) – show projected trends in Wisconsin outdoor recreation activities from 2005 to 2010. Each table lists an activity and has a comment to assist with projecting the need for a particular activity.

**Table B-12**                      **Projected Trends in Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Activities  
Increased Demand 2005-2010**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Comment</b>
ATV	Market saturation may occur by 2010 causing this use to level off.
Bird watching	A popular activity for an aging baby boom population.
Canoeing	Cheap, easy water access for all generations.
Driving for Pleasure	An easy activity for all generations.
Gardening	On the rise with the baby boom population.
Geocaching	Popular both with families and members of the Y Generation.
Kayaking	Better technology has made this an affordable sport for the general public.
Motorboating	Costs have decreased enough to continue to make this a popular activity.
Off-road Motorcycling	Record sales of off-road vehicles continues to fuel this demand.
Paintball Games	Better and cheaper technology attracts the Y Generation.
Picnic	A family activity crossing generation gaps.
Road Biking	Increases will slow do to the retirement of Lance Armstrong and the effect that was felt from his Tour de France wins.
RV Camping	The baby boom population continues to change from tent to RVs, but increasing fuel prices may slow this.
Skateboarding	Popular with urban youth and the Y Generation.
Snowboarding	This may start to level off by 2010 as the next generation looks towards newer technology.
Snowshoeing	Not growing as fast since 2002.
Visit a Dog Park	Urban residents continue to demand more of these areas.
Walking	Popular among all ages, though especially aging baby boomers.
Water Parks	Construction of new water parks continues to fuel the increasing demand for this activity.
Wildlife Viewing/Photography	Often done in conjunction with driving for pleasure, making this activity very popular.

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

<b>Table B-13</b>		<b>Projected Trends in Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Activities Stable Demand 2005-2010</b>
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Comment</b>	
Cross-Country Skiing	Stable at this time but mainly driven by the baby boom. Declines may start by 2010.	
Day Hiking	An easy, popular activity for all generations.	
Disc Golf	Popular with younger urban generations.	
Fishing	Very popular with all generations.	
Horseback Riding	Continues to be popular with the boomers, but may not be popular with the Y Generation.	
Ice Skating	An easy, cheap activity for the mass public.	
Inline Skating	After a quick rise in the 1990s this activity has leveled.	
Rock Climbing	A small but stable Y Generation niche.	
Rowing	A small niche activity with simple equipment.	
Run/Jog	The baby boomer generation continues to do this, but Y Generation may not.	
Sailing	Equipment demands and skill requirements prevent this from growing.	
Scuba/Snorkel	A niche sport that attracts a younger generation.	
Swimming	Always popular – water quality issues have caused growth in this activity to stagnate.	
Tennis	A recent resurgence has stabilized this activity.	
Tent Camping	Still popular but may start to lose ground to the RV trend.	

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

<b>Table B-14</b>		<b>Projected Trends in Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Activities Decreasing Demand 2005-2010</b>
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Comment</b>	
Backpacking	A popular baby boomer activity not as popular with the Y Generation.	
Downhill Skiing	Continues to struggle with attracting the Y Generation.	
Golf	Time and expense continue to push players to other recreation.	
Hunting	Continues to struggle with generational loss and access issues.	
Personal Watercraft	Market saturation occurred in the 1990s with the baby boomers who are now replacing their personal watercraft with motorboats.	
Mountain Biking	Baby boomers that made the sport popular in the 1990s have switched to road bikes.	
Snowmobile	The industry struggles with how to attract more people with less snow.	
Team Sports	Except for soccer, all other sports have declined.	

Source: WI SCORP 2005-2010

## **Chapter 7 – Wisconsin SCORP Outdoor Recreation Goals and actions.**

Chapter 7 describes eight goals and actions intended to improve the supply of outdoor recreation within Wisconsin, and encourage state residents to participate in more outdoor recreational activities.

### **Goal 1: Protect, Restore, and Enhance Wisconsin’s Natural Resources for Outdoor Recreation**

Wisconsin’s lands and waters are a natural draw for outdoor recreation. Those who use the state’s environments expect clean waters to paddle on and healthy forests to hike in. Increasingly, however, these natural resources are being menaced by threats such as invasive species, environmental degradation, and the continued fragmentation of forest and other natural areas. Left unmanaged, these threats will contribute to a diminished quality of outdoor recreation within the state. Wisconsinites are aware of the danger in these threats and have identified two issues—control of invasive species and poor water quality—as matters of high importance for state management.

#### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Continue to provide protection to lakes, rivers and streams to improve aquatic habitat, water quality, and fisheries.
2. Continue to provide programs and funding for access to industrial forestry lands for outdoor recreation activities.
3. Continue to implement an invasive species control program on Wisconsin lands and waters.
4. Increase protection to wetlands, thereby benefiting the ecological and recreational resources of the state.
5. Continue to provide funding and assistance for the restoration of native prairies and grassland ecosystems.
6. Continue to support and fund the Smart Growth Planning process to help stop the fragmentation of open spaces while also allowing for development.

### **Goal 2: Continue to Improve and Develop Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Facilities**

Upkeep and development of outdoor recreation facilities continues to be a central component of providing a quality outdoor recreation experience. Without proper facilities—an ice rink to skate on or an outdoor pool to swim in, for example—recreating outdoors becomes a challenge. A variety of publicly funded programs such as the Stewardship 2000 Program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund are important partners in the funding and support of these developments. While development helps expand the recreational resources and facilities of an area, maintenance sustains the resources already developed within a region. This efficient use of existing resources allows more money and time to be directed towards development of new facilities. Upkeep can be as simple as painting a building or as complicated as upgrading a water and sewage system within a state park. Because of its important role within any park system, it is important that providers allocate enough resources to support facility maintenance. The State Park system alone has a \$90 million backlog of maintenance projects, all of which are important to the continued health of the system. As this backlog continues to grow, more recreationalists are noticing the effects of limited upkeep: less signage, less restroom monitoring, un-maintained grounds, and earlier seasonal closings.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Continue to maintain and renovate outdoor recreation facilities for future generations.
2. Provide for continued development and enhancements of urban outdoor recreation facilities such as soccer fields and playground equipment.
3. Provide for expansion of the following trail systems: hiking, biking, horse, and water.
4. Enhance and upgrade signage and maps for all outdoor recreational lands and waters.
5. Continue to acquire lands for outdoor recreation at all levels of government.
6. Support publicly funded programs that provide financial assistance for the actions listed above.

### **Goal 3: Understand and Manage the Growing Issue of Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Conflicts**

As demand for different outdoor recreation activities grows, managing the conflict that develops between these uses will become an increasingly important issue of public policy. Two conflict arenas merit continued creative management from those charged with prioritizing public resources. The most obvious conflict arena is that which develops between different users of Wisconsin's finite land and water base. This conflict has developed as a result of both an increased demand for outdoor recreation activities and the development of new recreation technologies that have facilitated activities such as geocaching and ATVing. The second conflict arena is that which develops between outdoor recreation and other forms of land use. This conflict has impacted the development and maintenance of open space, creating struggles in the development of residential, agricultural, and managed forest areas. These conflicts have not gone unnoticed by state residents who have witnessed a rise in noise pollution, an overcrowding of public lands and waters, and increased development pressures on parks and open spaces.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Proactively plan for increased user conflicts and provide for increased recreation uses consistent with the state's growth in population.
2. Develop public and private management tools for addressing user conflicts.
3. Increase funding for outdoor recreation law enforcement authorities so that they may better enforce outdoor rules and regulations.
4. Examine and understand Wisconsin's capacity for local and state recreation growth according to the state's natural resource base.
5. Designate more public land for recreational use to better meet the increasing demand for outdoor recreation.
6. Examine options such as private landowner incentive programs, which would allow public access to private lands.

### **Goal 4: Continue to Provide Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Education and Programming**

Outdoor education and programming continue to be in high demand among Wisconsin citizens. These programs are particularly important for urban populations who have lost opportunities to practice outdoor skills on a regular basis. By providing for structured recreational opportunities such as kayaking and outdoor sports, recreation providers will establish a base user population that will

carry the activity into the next generation. Equally important to this programming is the teaching of environmental ethics. As our society continues to use land in ever more intrusive and environmentally degrading ways, there is a real need to instill the “land ethic” philosophy in all outdoor users.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Provide funding and support for joint outdoor recreation programs between schools, government, and communities.
2. Provide funding and support for more outdoor recreation skills courses.
3. Develop programs that begin to address the state’s diversifying urban populations.
4. Develop and support programs that bring nature based experiences close to home for urban, low income youth.
5. Provide more courses in environmental education and ethics.

### **Goal 5: Continue to Provide and Enhance Public Access to Wisconsin Recreational Lands and Waters**

As recreation continues to place demands on public lands and waters, the lack of public access to these areas has become an increasing concern among many state citizens. In some cases this perception is true; more water/boating access is needed in certain areas of the state. In many cases, however, public access to recreational resources does exist, the public is simply not aware of it. Improved and easily accessible maps and signage would aid the public in locating access points.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Develop a statewide interactive mapping system showing all public lands and water access points across the state.
2. Continue to acquire and develop boating access sites to meet public boating needs.
3. Promote awareness of the location of existing recreation lands, facilities, and opportunities available within a given region.
4. Continue to increase public access to Wisconsin waterways.
5. Continue to improve disabled accessibility for outdoor recreation facilities, and promote the development of facilities using universal design standards.

### **Goal 6: Understand the Threats and Opportunities of Wisconsin’s Developing Urban Areas and Areas of Rapid Population Growth**

While most of Wisconsin’s landscape is rural, most people in Wisconsin (68%) live in a relatively small urbanized area of the state. This population is concentrated in the southern and eastern portions of the state, especially in the Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Region (home to Milwaukee and expanding Chicago suburbs). Urbanization has proved to be a double-edged sword for recreation; it provides many opportunities for diverse recreational opportunities, but it also poses a threat to the environmental and recreational resources of the state. Threats from urbanization include the continued loss of agricultural/ outdoor recreation lands, the increasing tension of urban populations recreating in urban/rural fringe areas, and decreasing water quality and habitat availability.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Continue to protect prime recreation lands through the use of publicly funded programs such as the Stewardship 2000 Program.
2. Develop trail networks that offer easy access from urban/suburban areas to rural areas.
3. Encourage communities to develop park and open space plans that allow for balanced growth while also providing land and facilities for outdoor recreation.
4. Continue to develop and provide active outdoor sports facilities such as soccer fields and tennis courts.
5. Continue to provide and expand community and neighborhood parks for multiple forms of outdoor recreation.

### **Goal 7: Maintain and Enhance Funding Opportunities for Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation**

From its early years establishing the original state parks, Wisconsin has had an active program of state land acquisition. The latest iteration of these programs is the Stewardship 2000 Program. Under this program the state may issue bonds in a total not to exceed \$572 million spread over a ten year period. The Stewardship Program is biased towards land acquisition, with lesser amounts provided for property development and local assistance. As Wisconsin receives an increasingly smaller portion of state resources—Wisconsin State Parks rank 49th in the nation for total percentage of state budget—funding programs have provided vital support to outdoor park and recreation lands and facilities.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Renew the State Stewardship 2000 Program.
2. Encourage all local governments to develop park and recreation plans for participation in state and federal cost share programs.
3. Provide more cost share opportunities for local governments to acquire, develop, and maintain recreational lands and facilities.
4. Increase Wisconsin State Parks funding to the nationwide average of 0.2% of state budget, or \$53 million a year.
5. Explore new and innovative funding methods for outdoor park and recreation facilities. These methods may include public/private partnerships or cost sharing among multiple government agencies.
6. Increase revenue generating capabilities for outdoor recreation by continuing to update and improve technologies such as automated fee collection systems.
7. Explore the option of an exercise tax on outdoor recreational equipment to help fund park and recreation developments.

### **Goal 8: Promote Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation as a Means to Better Health and Wellness for State Citizens**

The United States as a whole is in the midst of an overweight and obesity epidemic brought on by increasingly sedate and inactive lifestyles and higher caloric intakes. This epidemic has profound consequences in terms of increased health care costs and shortened life expectancies. Outdoor park and recreation areas can be key partners in reversing this trend as they provide the type of active recreational opportunities that promote physical fitness. Encouraging Wisconsinites to use

recreation lands and facilities will benefit not only park and recreation areas, but also the state citizens themselves who receive the health benefits of increased activity—a true win-win proposal.

### **Actions and Recommendations**

1. Encourage individuals, workplaces, community groups, and schools to become physically active by promoting programs such as the Governor’s Wisconsin Challenge program.
2. Develop a “Get Fit with Wisconsin” campaign for public lands and waters that touts the health benefits of recreation and reaches a wide audience of potential users.
3. Educate the public about the health benefits of moderate and enjoyable physical activities such as walking, biking, nature study, etc.
4. Integrate opportunities and incentives for exercise during the workday—giving employees 30 minutes a day for exercise, providing exercise equipment and changing rooms, etc.
5. Start a dialogue between public outdoor recreation providers and health agencies to identify other (non-traditional) funding sources for recreational facilities and development.



## The 2005–2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

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