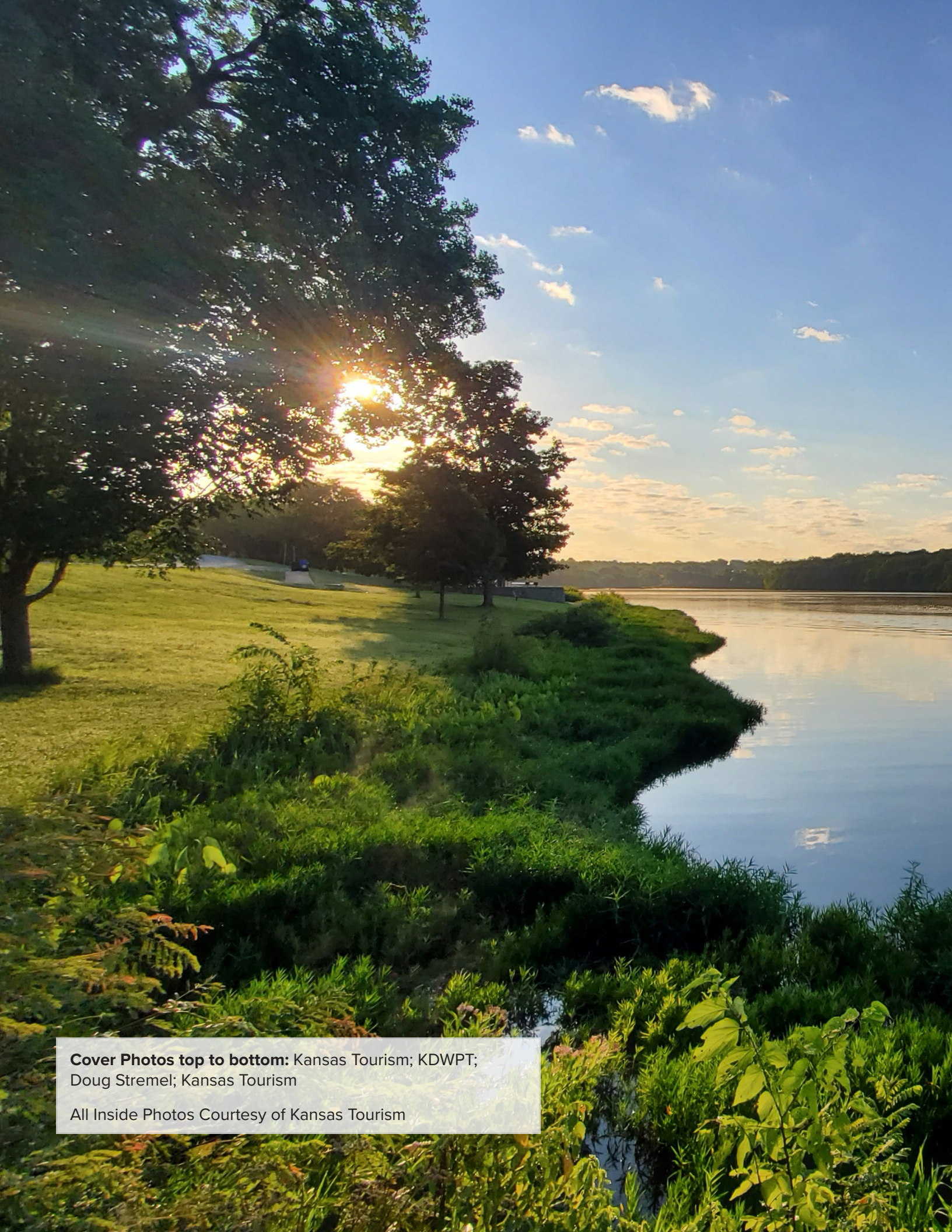


STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE
OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN
2021-2025



**Enhancing
Kansas'
Outdoor Parks
Recreation
Heritage**





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Doug Stremel; Kansas Tourism

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STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

Enhancing Kansas' Outdoor Parks Recreation Heritage

2021-2025



The SCORP process is an important one to ensure that continued enhancement and development of recreational opportunities in Kansas. The research that is a cornerstone of this report was made possible through funding from the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. The analysis and compilation of the report was completed by the Applied Park Science Lab at Kansas State University. This report covers the next five years and will help fund recreation enhancement projects throughout the state of Kansas. Specifically this report was completed through the assistance of the following:

Kansas State University

The Horticulture and Natural Resources Department

The Applied Park Science Lab in the Park Management and Conservation program

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Wolf Tree Design

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Brad Loveless, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

A Message from Secretary Brad Loveless:

If we were ever unsure how much outdoor recreation means to Kansans, we need only look at the recent history of the COVID-19 pandemic, which gripped the nation in early 2020. Facing a frightening and unknown future, Governor Laura Kelly, thinking of the overall health of our residents, allowed outdoor recreation activities under her orders and guidelines. Kansans responded with appreciation and by showing up at state parks and outdoor areas in unprecedented numbers. Families, desperate for something positive, rediscovered the joy and value of spending time together outdoors. They also found perfectly safe venues to practice social distancing and escape the stress and fear surrounding COVID-19.

The increase in visitation is welcome, and it has surely benefitted the businesses and economies of communities around our parks. In an average year, outdoor recreation generates an estimated \$7.1 billion in consumer spending and 85,000 jobs in Kansas. In 2020, the increase in outdoor recreation activity buoyed local economies that might have otherwise suffered dramatic losses.

However, increases in outdoor activity come with a price, requiring increased staffing, maintenance and cleaning efforts. And many outdoor areas were still recovering from the devastating floods of 2019. To ensure our parks are maintained and to stay engaged with those who have recently rediscovered their love of outdoors, we need to continue investing in these resources. While the majority of funding for our state and local parks is derived from user fees and local governments, we also rely on the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which was created by Congress in 1965. LWCF's state grants program for Kansas is administered the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Park and Tourism, and it provides matching funds to plan, acquire and develop land and water areas for state and local parks and recreation facilities. Since 1965, Kansas has received more than \$50 million in 50 percent matching dollars, funding more than 700 state and local park projects.

Amidst the chaos of 2020, a glimmering bright spot was the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, ensuring LWCF will get the full \$900 million in funding each year. To be eligible for LWCF funding, states are required to have an approved outdoor recreation plan on file with the National Park Service and that's where this Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) comes in. SCORP outlines the state's plan to enhance park experiences available to Kansans. It also helps identify areas that have limited access to outdoor recreation. With this plan and the support of Gov. Laura Kelly, we will strive to ensure high-quality outdoor opportunities are available and accessible to all Kansans now and into the future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brad Loveless".

How to Use this SCORP

This SCORP was kept intentionally succinct and serves as a quick reference for suggestions, inspiration, and direction for those developing outdoor recreation opportunities in Kansas. The SCORP's primary goal is to assist outdoor recreation planners and providers in enhancing and promoting local recreation, recognizing opportunities for connectivity, diversifying the recreation portfolio, and promoting health and fitness through connection with outdoor recreation in Kansas. This SCORP should be consulted when planning your next outdoor recreation project to help inform your decision making process. All grants submitted must align with the current SCORP and will be competitively ranked and selected based on what is received for that grant year.

1

Understanding

The introduction and research methods chapters will provide context for better understanding the purpose and intent of this SCORP.

2

Research Synthesis

The results of a statewide user survey provides an overview of how outdoor recreation resources in Kansas are utilized, prioritized and envisioned into the future. The inclusion of an outdoor recreation manager survey and interviews with municipal park managers provides what challenges and barriers may exist in the implementation of outdoor recreation planning projects.

3

Discover Kansas' Outdoor Recreation Priority

SCORP priority themes meant to guide and inspire future outdoor recreation projects. These are outdoor recreation goals and possible outcomes that will positively impact Kansas the most.

4

Plan Your Outdoor Recreation Project

This SCORP provides the information and tools you need to plan an outdoor recreation project that meets the needs of your community, city, region, and the state of Kansas.

SCORP Goals

Several goals were developed in the previous SCORP with the input from various stakeholders, and with minor edits, remain relevant for the next five years of outdoor recreation related planning in the State of Kansas.

Goal A

To measurably enhance outdoor recreation opportunities closer to where people live. Input from the public and professionals in Kansas continue to indicate those experiences more conveniently accessed will more likely be better utilized. State efforts such as boat ramps, water and linked trails to communities, and state parks close to urban areas meet this objective.



Goal B

To more effectively utilize the data available in the state's comprehensive outdoor recreation geo-database, along with population and health statistics; and to gather additional information, if appropriate, to continue to address gaps in access to outdoor recreation experiences. For example, this can be done through the determination of use levels of existing trails, and the review of trail categories, that better define the state's trails and paths.



Goal C

Encourage stakeholder advocacy efforts that regularly address significant outdoor recreation issues facing the state of Kansas. The existence of outdoor recreation advocacy representing the most potent and key stakeholders is particularly relevant given the issues facing outdoor recreation in the state and may be particularly helpful in aiding efforts requiring legislative action. The Kansas Recreation and Park Association plays an important statewide advocacy role on park and recreation issues. It meets regularly, has a statewide presence and represents all levels of public recreation supply. Its advocacy efforts have historically been shown to be both supplier- and user-oriented.



Goal D

To explore and implement a sustainable source of outdoor recreation funding for both operations and capital projects. Across the country, agencies rank the day-to-day challenges of adequate and stable operating funds as a significant challenge to providing quality outdoor recreation experiences. The number of capital projects needed to address gaps in service, as outlined in this document, is also significant. It is important to continue to measure and provide decision makers with accurate, state specific, return on investment data so that the impacts of investments in the supply of outdoor recreation experiences are well known.



Goal E

To continue to protect our state's legacy landscapes (e.g. the Flint Hills) and key biological reserves (e.g. Cheyenne Bottoms the largest wetland in the interior of the United States) while simultaneously working to enhance access for consumptive and non-consumptive outdoor recreation experiences. Access to outdoor recreation experiences needs to continue to be a part of protection scenarios.



Goal F

Continue to measure and promote the health benefits of participating in outdoor recreation experiences. Continuing efforts should be made to catalog and document known best practices within the state that exemplify the purpose of modifying the built environment to achieve collaborative goals of improved health via improved access to recreation and physical activity.



Goal G

Prepare salient justification for the value of water for recreation use to state and local economies, personal enrichment, family cohesion, and mental and physical health. An adequate supply of water-based recreation at the local, regional and statewide level is especially crucial to Kansas because so many experiences are dependent on its availability. While water can serve multiple beneficiaries, reduced availability and/ or changes in policy or allocation potentially could result in troubling impacts on the state's outdoor recreation supply and therefore the state's economy. Outdoor recreation suppliers must anticipate the need to provide evidence of the values and benefits derived from water-based recreation and take steps now to assimilate solid justifications.



Kansas Outdoor Recreation Heritage

The people of Kansas have long been known for their sense of adventure and rugged individualism and share in the knowledge that their state holds a bounty of outdoor recreation opportunities. As early pioneers traveled across the state by such means as the Santa Fe Trail, they provided vivid and detailed accounts of the natural wonders Kansas had to offer. Wildlife abounded, unbroken tall and shortgrass prairies reminded travelers of the ocean and inspired comments about seas of grass. Many traveling through the state decided to put down roots and take advantage of the resources available, and thus started the outdoor heritage of Kansas.

Although the conditions have changed over the past 150 years, there are still areas where you can feel, smell and touch the legacy of being outdoors in Kansas. The state may not be seen as a primary destination for outdoor recreation, in many ways, Kansas is a secret, a place that many would not have at the top of their list to visit. Yes, our state is well known for hunting, fishing, and our position in the flyway for migrating birds, but less known for our tremendous state park system, or five National Park Service Units, our United State Forest Service National Grasslands, our Scenic Byways and our countless community and municipal parks. The state of Kansas also has a wealth of reservoirs, lakes and



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rivers that provide exceptional opportunities for citizens and tourists alike to experience the outdoor recreation heritage of the state.

Kansas provides numerous community, municipal, state, and national parks that invite residents and visitors to explore Kansas outdoors. Additionally there are National Grasslands, Scenic Byways, wildlife management areas and miles of rivers to explore. Whatever your interest — hiking, camping, wildlife watching, fishing, biking, horseback riding, hunting, or just plain relaxing, outdoor recreation in Kansas has what you're looking for. Many outdoor recreation areas provide primitive camping, as well as access to lakes, trails, and wildlife areas. From preserved natural areas that allow for the enjoyment of unspoiled, wild areas, to community and municipal outdoor events such as concerts, festivals, and competitions, being outdoors in Kansas offers something for everyone.

Kansas State Parks

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism manages 28 state parks which includes more than 32,000 acres of land, 500 miles of trails, 10,000 campsites, and access to more than 130,000 surface-acres of water. Many amenities exist such as RV sites with utility hookups, cabins, primitive camping sites, shower houses, playgrounds, trails, beaches, boat ramps, and more. Most parks offer convenient access to reservoirs and wildlife areas. All the state parks highlight beautiful Kansas landscapes, perfect for outdoor exploration. No matter what your nature-loving interest, a Kansas state park has what you're looking for.

32,000
acres of land

500
miles of trails

130,000
surface-acres of water

10,000
campsites





Kansas Natural Wonders

Savor the unspoiled landscapes of Kansas, from the nation's largest remaining stand of tallgrass prairie, to scenic byways, and sparkling lakes and rivers. There's plenty of wildlife to enjoy as well, from the iconic bison that still roam, to exotic species in zoos and wild animal parks. Kansas' natural wonders will amaze you! With 28 state parks, 5 National Park Service units, there is an endless amount of outdoor adventure!

28
state parks

5
national
park units

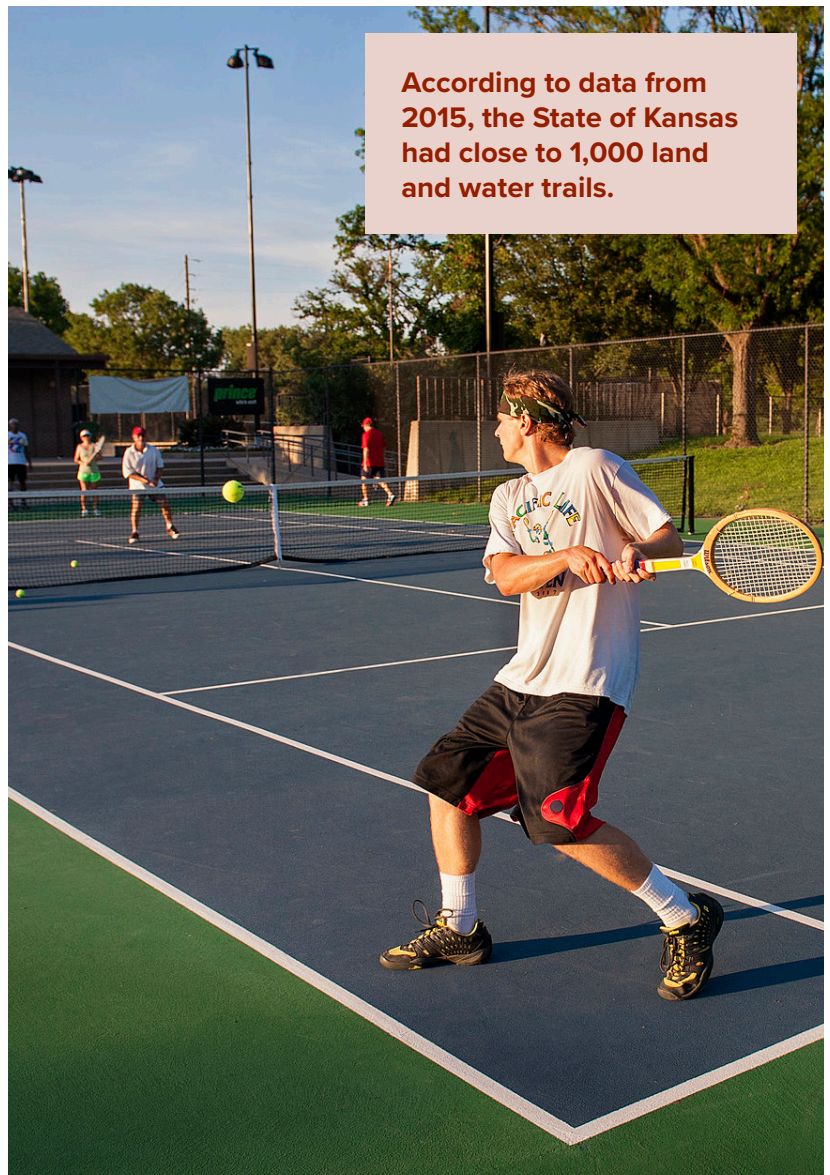
Local and Municipal Parks as Essential Providers of Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Although federal and state agencies are responsible for managing the largest amount of acreage in the state (~850,000 acres), local/municipal agencies are responsible for the largest number of areas available for outdoor recreation (~2,500 or 53%). These areas provide several essential types of opportunities for communities across the state, such as playgrounds, ballcourts, picnic shelters, pools/splash pads, and multi-use trails.

As can be seen by the table below, local/municipal parks and recreation agencies are responsible for the largest number of trails in the state.

TRAILS BY AGENCY TYPE

Agency Type	Number	Miles
College-University	12	7
County	42	113
Federal	74	344
Municipal	539	699
Private	58	306
School	43	20
State	134	1,195



Explore Diverse Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Explore the diverse beauty of the Sunflower State's many hiking, biking and equestrian trails. You don't need to hit the coast for thrilling aquatic adventures - Kansas' lakes, reservoirs and rivers can provide hours of fun. And, for the golf enthusiast, Kansas offers plenty of great golf, including a few courses known around the world. Kansas is also renowned across the country for hunting and angling opportunities.



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SCORP Purpose

Its main purpose is to provide an overview of Kansas' existing public outdoor parks recreation resources, and to provide suggestions, direction, and inspiration to the state's outdoor recreation providers as they seek to conserve, maintain, and expand the wealth

of outdoor recreation opportunities enjoyed by Kansas' citizens and visitors. The Land and Water Conservation Act of 1964, which created the Fund, also contains the mandate for each state to produce, and periodically update, a unique and tailored SCORP.

In order to best compartmentalize the information provided in this SCORP, the surveys and interviews revealed four main themes that will guide outdoor recreation planning in Kansas, and they are:



Connectivity

This includes ways to connect the people of Kansas to outdoor recreation opportunities. Additionally, this theme will address ways to connect different types of opportunities (e.g. park, trails, scenic byway, blueways) with different types of activities (e.g. hiking, biking, water based activities).



Diversifying the Recreation Portfolio of Kansas

The State of Kansas provides world class opportunities for some outdoor recreation opportunities. However, there are many underutilized recreational resources that can help to diversify the recreation portfolio of the state (e.g. long distance hiking, river based activities, road and mountain biking).



Health & Fitness

Intertwined into the previous two themes is the health and fitness benefits of outdoor recreation. Through the connection and diversifying of our outdoor recreation opportunities, we can benefit the long term health for the citizens of Kansas.



Enhance, Connect and Promote Community Recreation

Local and community parks are often the center of outdoor activities and provide spaces for people to exercise and spend time with family. This theme brings all the previous themes together to connect and diversify outdoor recreation opportunities while promoting healthy lifestyles.

What is SCORP?

A Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is required for every state to be eligible for the LWCF Program. Since 1965, the State of Kansas has received over \$50 million and funded approximately 700 LWCF projects related to outdoor recreation in nearly every county. The LWCF program provides 50 percent reimbursement to selected outdoor recreation projects that are sponsored by political subdivisions and other appropriate public agencies. The LWCF is funded by the extraction of oil and gas from America's Outer Continental Shelf. This helps to offset the environmental harm of fuel extraction by assisting local and state governments in the purchase of land to be put perpetually in the public trust, and the development of those lands into viable public outdoor recreation areas. In 2020 the Great American Outdoors Act was passed which, in part, fully funds the LWCF (\$900 Million) for the first time since the Fund was created. This will provide exceptional opportunities to increase the opportunities for all of Kansas' citizens to enjoy the incredible beauty of their state's natural environment, regardless of social status, economic privilege, or physical ability.

The goals for the LWCF State Assistance Program are:

- a. Meet state and locally identified public outdoor recreation resource needs to strengthen the health and vitality of the American people.**
- b. Increase the number of protected state and local outdoor recreation resources and to ensure their availability for public use in perpetuity.**
- c. Encourage sound planning and long-term partnerships to expand the quantity, and to ensure the quality of needed state and local outdoor recreation resources.**

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) administers only the state and local portion of LWCF (for more information about the specifics of SCORP and LWCF please visit <https://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/manual/lwcf.pdf>). KDWPT holds the authority to represent and act for the state to work with the Department of Interior for the LWCF Act.

This newest version of SCORP "Enhancing Kansas' Outdoor Parks Recreation Heritage" has been a collaboration between KDWPT, local parks, and Kansas State University, in an effort to develop a concise and easily decipherable plan. As such, this plan builds on the existing resources in the state, including Kansas's previous SCORP efforts. The goal of this plan is to not overwhelm readers with all the data and findings procured through the user and management surveys, but to provide highlights of this information to help inform goals and recommendations for Kansas's outdoor recreation opportunities.

Who is Eligible for State-side LWCF funds?

There are several state entities that are eligible for LWCF state-side funds, they include incorporated cities, towns, counties, school districts, state agencies, and tribal governments. It is important to note that all tribal entities in Kansas are eligible to apply for these funds as well. If you have questions about eligibility please reach out to KDWPT: <https://ksoutdoors.com/KDWPT-Info/Grants>.

Utility of SCORP

This plan acts as a resource for outdoor recreation planners, providers and organizations. This document should guide future planning efforts, assist with grant applications, and be a vision of outdoor recreation for the state. When applying for LWCF, language from this document should be incorporated into funding requests. It is recommended emphasizing how individual projects align with the SCORP themes outlined in this document. These plans are produced by all 50 states and are recognized by local, state, and federal agencies as being the primary guiding documents for outdoor recreation. This SCORP document should be used as justification in grant applications, future planning efforts, in the justification of allocating resources. The Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals (SORP) (<https://www.recpro.org/>) is a resource for organizations who want to know how to utilize SCORP for planning, management, and research. Additionally, SORP has an electronic database of all 50 states' SCORP reports (<https://www.recpro.org/scorp-library>).

This newest version of the Kansas SCORP recognizes the heritage of being outdoors and the importance of our local and state parks to provide spaces for outdoor recreation. It intends to build on existing strengths, while acknowledging the potential to connect and diversify outdoor recreation opportunities for the health and benefit of the people of Kansas.

Research Methodology

The Recreation User Survey

This survey was constructed using best practices, such as those set forth by Vaske (2008) and Dillman (2011). The survey instrument was developed with input from the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. The questions were designed to understand what outdoor recreation activities people currently participate in (and how often), what they would like to see more of, at what types of places do they recreate and what barriers there may be to their participation.

The primary data collection effort took place via online survey (i.e. Qualtrics) during the summer months of 2020.

A database of email addresses from 224,859 Kansas outdoor recreation users was acquired from KDWPT. In all cases, the potential survey participant was 18 years of age or older. A total 13,426 emails were not current or valid, thus making the starting sample size 211,433. An overall response rate of 17.7% (37,538 surveys) was obtained, which for a sample of this nature is well within accepted standards (Vaske, 2008). An initial email was sent to all valid participants, and then two successive reminders (one week apart for both) were sent to those who had not already completed the survey.

The Recreation Manager Survey

This survey was constructed using best practices, such as those set forth by Vaske (2008) and Dillman (2011). The survey instrument was developed with input from the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. Iterative discussions with KDWPT leadership were integrated throughout the survey-writing process. The questions were designed to understand what challenges managers have in maintaining and expanding outdoor recreation opportunities in Kansas. The survey also aimed to understand what types of opportunities different agencies currently provide and what they would like

to see more of in the future.

The primary data collection effort took place via online survey (i.e. Qualtrics) during the summer months of 2020.

An anonymous link to an online survey was sent to outdoor recreation managers in the state of Kansas. The total number of possible respondents is not known as the link was sent through several organizations' distribution lists (e.g. KDWPT, The Nature Conservancy, The National Park Service, and Kansas Recreation and Park Association). A total of 46 managers from around the state completed the survey. Although the true distribution of the survey is unknown, the responses represent municipal, state, national, and non-profit organizations. Additionally, 11 managers from large to small municipal park and recreation agencies/organizations from around the state were contacted via phone. These interviews were conducted to understand the most pressing and relevant issues to these important stakeholders. The results of user and manager surveys were used to develop themes and guide outdoor recreation managers' planning efforts for the next five years.

Covid Limitation

Respondents were asked to answer questions based on their outdoor recreation usage in 2019, rather than 2020, when normal habits and routines were most likely disrupted by the Covid-19 global pandemic. Even with this prompt, survey respondents may have been using conditions at the time of response (e.g. local parks and pools being closed) to inform their answers. Additionally, a database provided by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism was utilized for the user survey, which may have limited the input from local park and recreation users.

Recreation User Survey Limitations

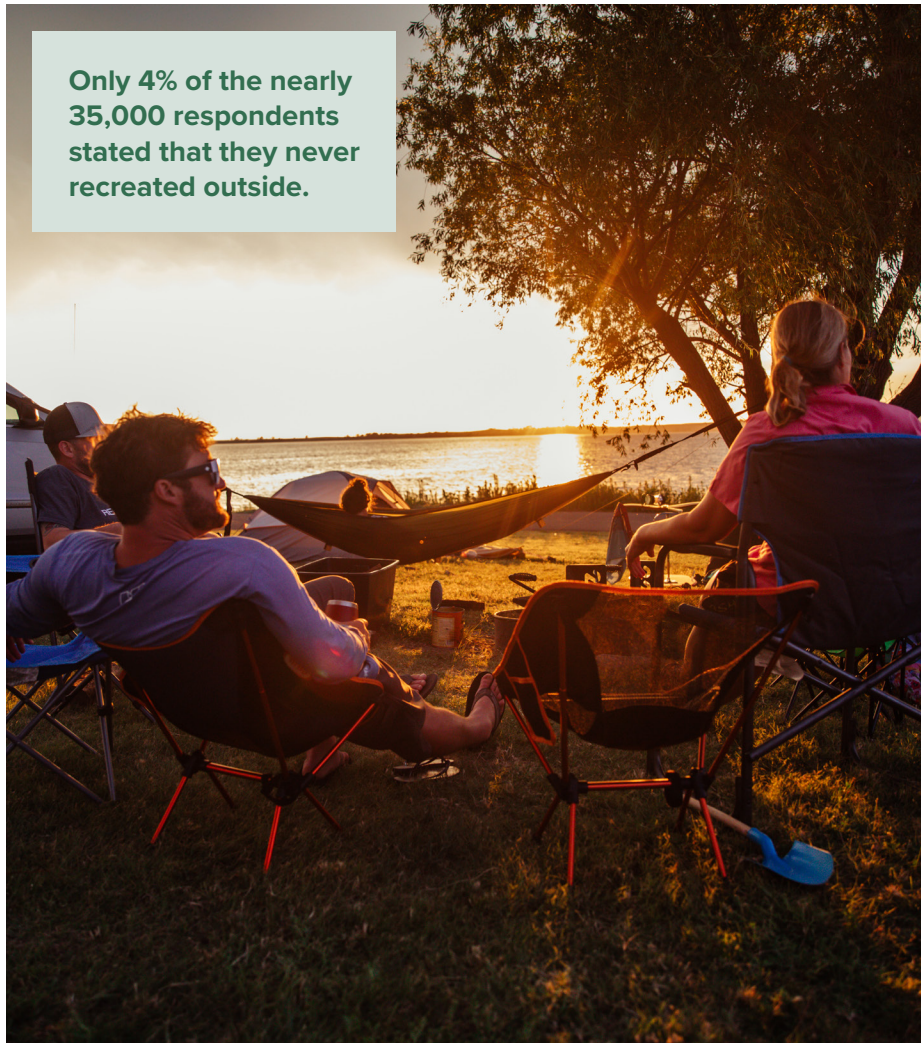
The database used for this data collection effort was those who sought a hunting or fishing license in Kansas and may not be wholly representative of all outdoor recreation users in the state.

User Research Findings

Summary of Respondents' Profile

Demographics - The average age of survey respondents was 54 years, ranging from 18 to 105. The vast majority of respondents were male (83%), from the state of Kansas (70%), white (93%) with an average residency in the state of 39 years (range from 1-86 years). The sample included a wide range of socio-economic and educational backgrounds (Figure 1 and Figure 2)

The majority of respondents stated that they recreated 2-4 times per week (30%), with an additional 22% reporting that they recreated outdoors at least once per week. It is important to note that only 4% of the nearly 35,000 respondents stated that they never recreated outside.



Only 4% of the nearly 35,000 respondents stated that they never recreated outside.

ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME

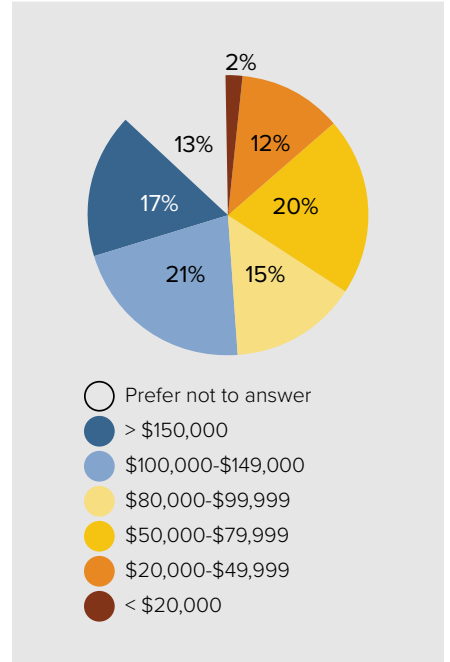


Figure 1

HIGHEST EDUCATION COMPLETED

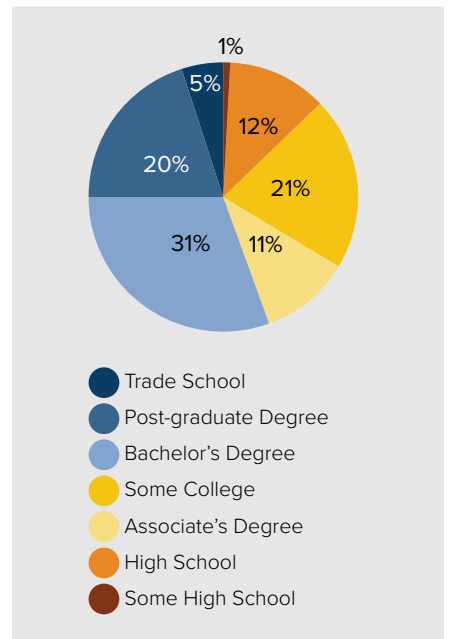


Figure 2

Figure 3 represents the distribution, by zip code, of the survey respondents within the state of KS. Additionally, several people come to recreate in Kansas from out of state, and we surveyed ~20% of these people to get their views on outdoor recreation. This sample provides a wide distribution of possible perspectives about outdoor recreation in the state.

ZIP CODE FREQUENCY WITHIN KANSAS

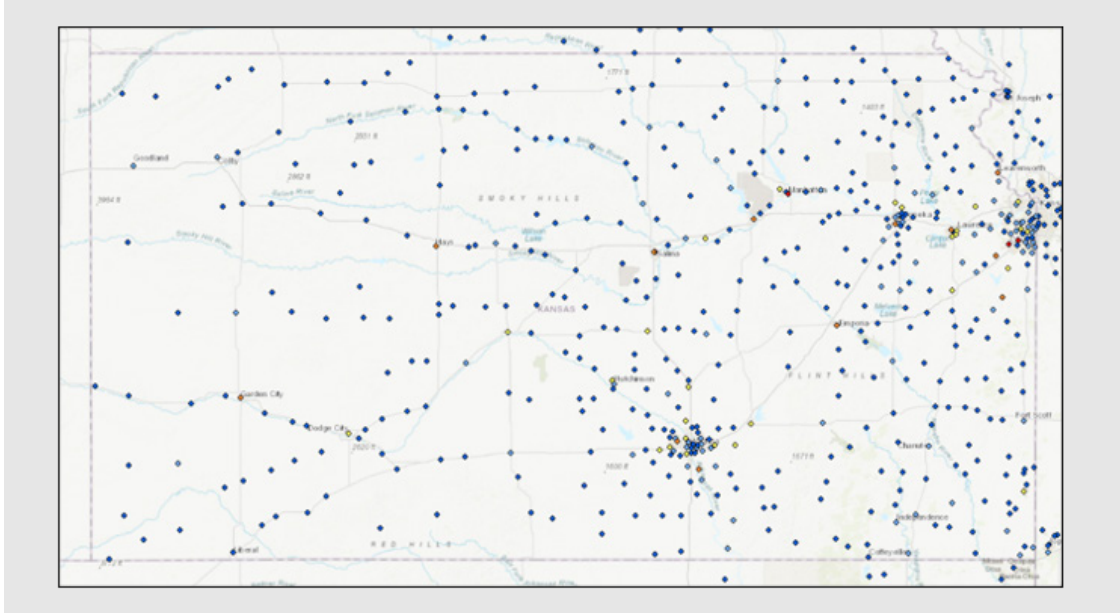


Figure 3

Respondents

- 1 - 7
- 8 - 17
- 18 - 31
- 32 - 49
- 50 - 67



How often did you use the following outdoor recreation areas in your local community in 2019?

Figure 4 displays how often respondents utilize outdoor recreation opportunities in and around their communities. The results revealed that many people throughout the state utilized state parks, city parks and county parks on a regular basis. In fact, close to 40% stated that they utilized a local or county park at least once a week. This shows the importance of all parks, but especially local, municipal resources.



Approximately 40% of people stated that they utilized city/county parks at least once a week.

FREQUENCY OF USE WITHIN COMMUNITY

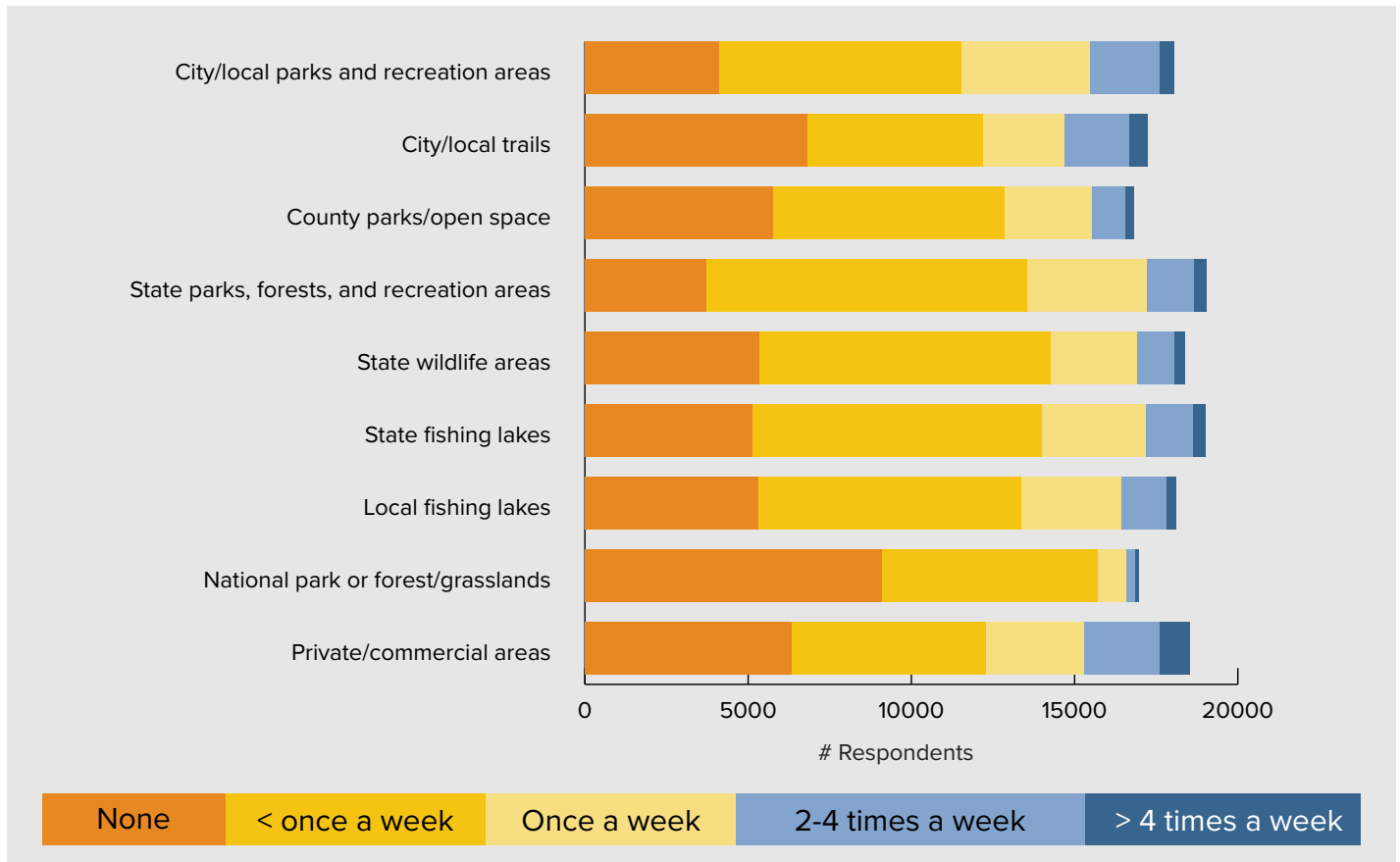


Figure 4

How often did you use the following outdoor recreation areas outside of your local community in 2019?

Figure 5 clearly displays that the majority of respondents do not utilize outdoor recreation resources outside of their community on a regular basis. In fact, only visiting state fishing lakes and state parks registered use at least once week, with most others stating that they never use, or use less than once a week.

Visitors reported that approximately 29% of their outdoor recreation trips in the state of Kansas were overnight with hotels/motels (21%), friends/relatives home (14%), RV camping (22%), and primitive/tent camping (14%) being the most popular options. Only 2% stated that they used a bed & breakfast during their overnight stays in Kansas.



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FREQUENCY OF USE OUTSIDE COMMUNITY

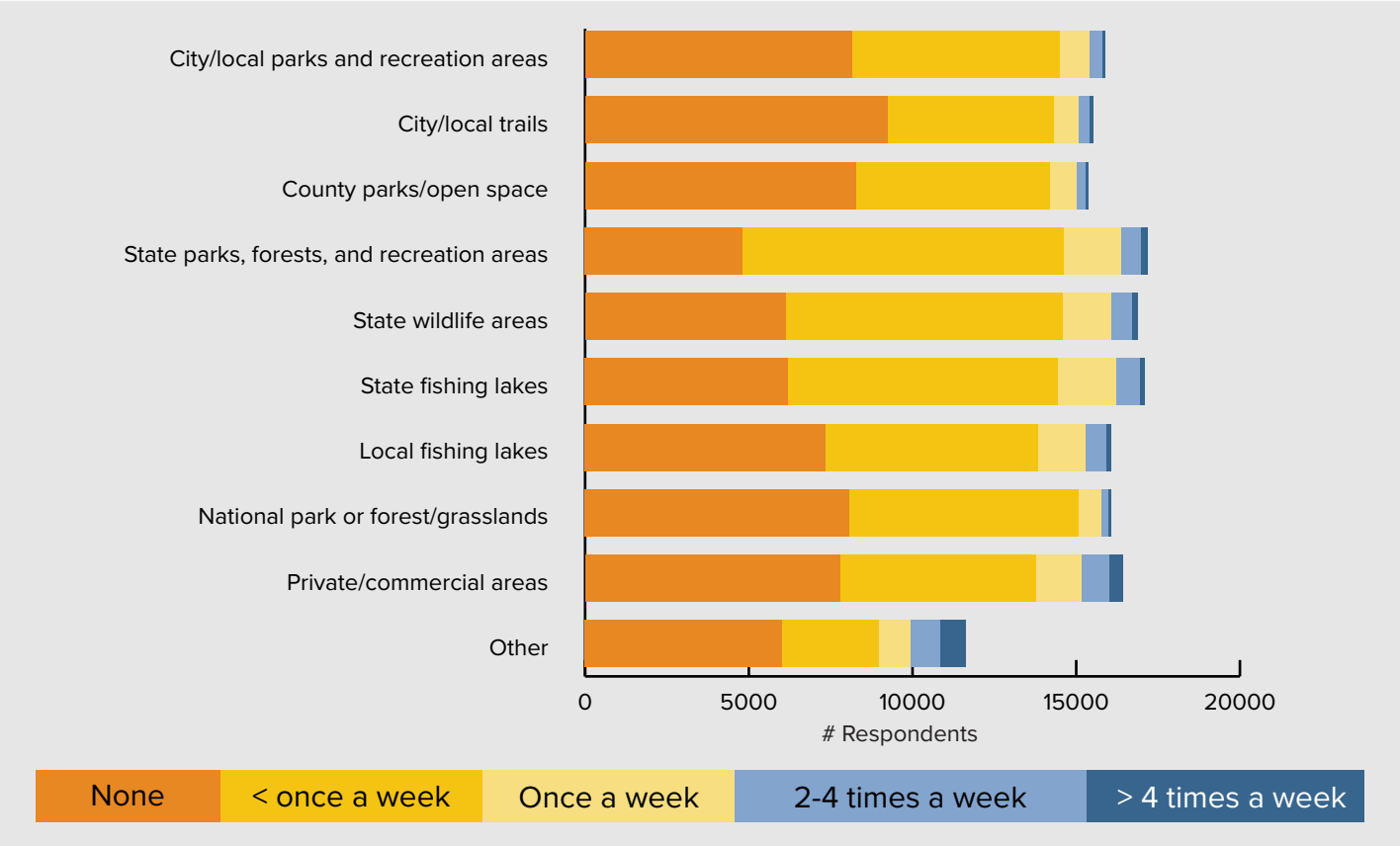


Figure 5

Outdoor Recreation Participation by Activity

The most common activities participated in during 2019 were hunting, fishing, walking, RV camping, and swimming. However, several other activities were listed in the rankings, just not to the extent of the top 5 listed earlier, they are: **wildlife viewing, kayaking, swimming, OHV use, road biking, mountain biking, tent camping, birdwatching.** Figure 6 provides a breakdown of the activities that respondents stated they participated in at least once in 2019. Figure 6 displays that although some activities may have been listed more often, the average number of days participated in certain activities exceed their popularity. For example, the importance of walking, jogging, birdwatching, road biking and the involvement in team sports are revealed as important activities to citizens of Kansas.

OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION BY ACTIVITY

Rank	Activity	# Days
1	Walking	69
2	Jogging/running (outdoors)	60
3	Bird watching	60
4	Wildlife viewing (excluding bird watching)	45
5	Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) or 4-wheeling/ motorcycling	39
6	Road biking	36
7	Team or individual sports (outdoors) (e.g., basketball, golf, tennis, etc.)	33
8	Playground activities	30
9	Mountain biking	27
10	Ball fields	25
11	Fishing	23
12	Archery	23
13	Horseback riding	22
14	Swimming pools	21
15	Swimming (outdoors)	20
16	Power boating/jet skiing	18
17	Snowmobiling	17
18	Hunting	16
19	Water skiing	15
20	RV camping/cabins	15
21	Kayaking	14
22	Target or skeet shooting	14
23	Picnicking	12
24	Sailing	11
25	Canoeing	11
26	Stand up paddleboarding	10
27	Splash pads	10
28	Snowshoeing/cross country skiing	9
29	Ice fishing	9
30	Rafting	8
31	Sledding/tubing	7
32	Tent camping	7

Figure 6

Would you be willing to pay increased fees for more and/or improved facilities for any of the following?

The majority of people are willing to pay an increased fee for any services. For those who were willing to pay a fee, the average amount they would be willing to pay was approximately 16% increase in current rates. This finding represents a general acceptance of fee increases for services related to outdoor recreation, and not necessarily for one type of fee increase.

32% of users would not be willing to pay an increased fee. 46% stated that high cost associated with entrance, parking, or other user fees would be a slight to major barrier.



How important to you is each of the following reasons to recreate outdoors in Kansas?

Figure 7 outlines several reasons why people in Kansas choose to recreate in the outdoors. The highest averages for the responses (with 5.0 = very important) were “to spend time in nature” (4.34), “to spend time with friends and family” (4.31), and “to relax” (4.27). The option “to exercise/improve physical health” (3.56) registered a relatively neutral response, respondents felt it was slightly important to go outdoors for “spiritual/cultural purposes” (2.51).



Approximately 70% of respondents stated that they participated in outdoor recreation activities outside of the state, with the primary destinations being Missouri (22%), Colorado (19%), and then a precipitous drop off for the third most popular, Oklahoma at 9%.

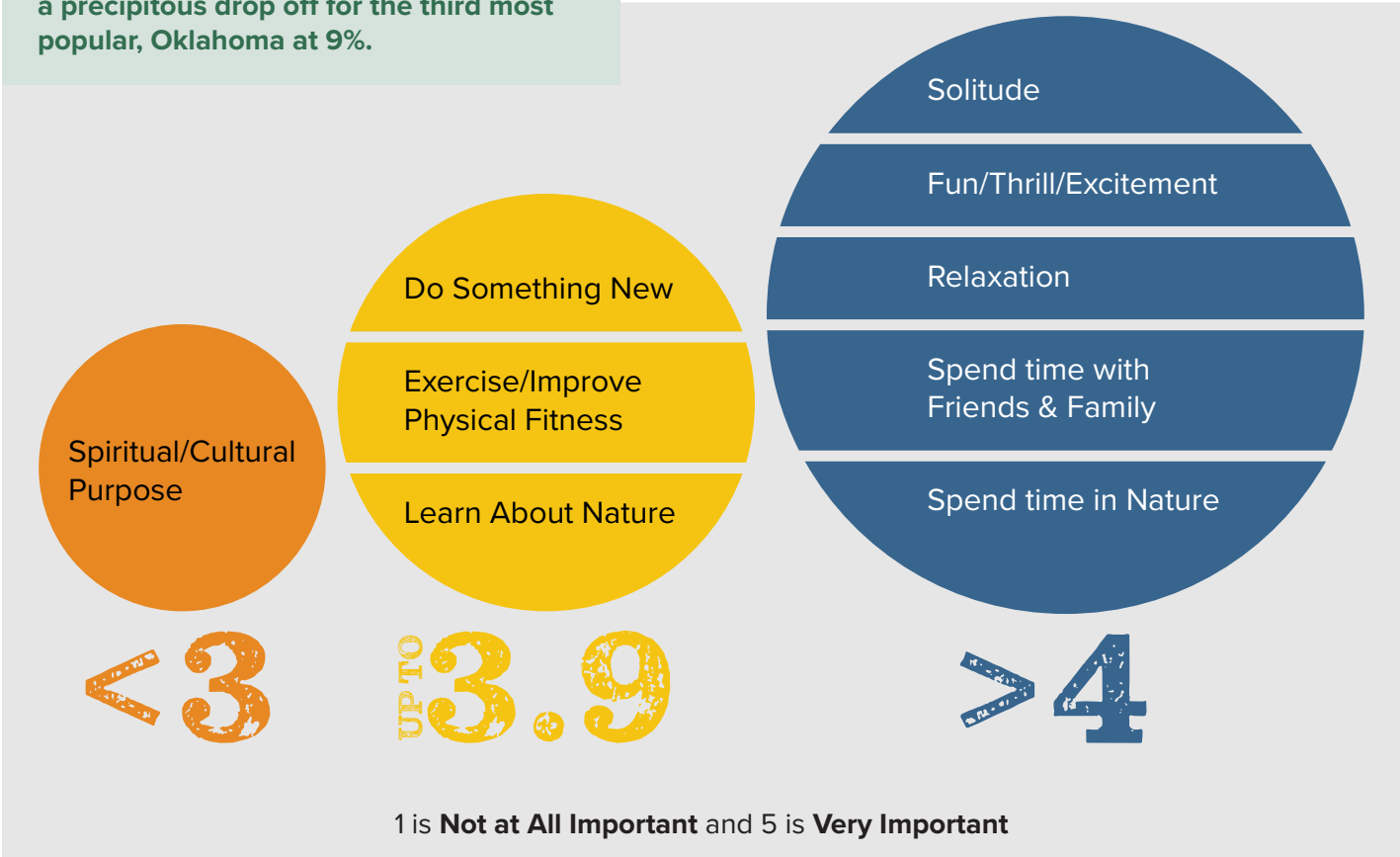


Figure 7

Indicate how much of a barrier the following is in preventing you from participating in outdoor recreation in Kansas:

Figure 8 provides a snapshot of what possible barriers to outdoor recreation in Kansas may be. Although there appear to be no major barriers for those recreating in Kansas, there were a few responses of note. There were two responses bordering on a “moderate barrier,” those were “outdoor recreation areas are too crowded” (2.5) and “limited access to outdoor recreation” (2.3). For these two barriers 20% and 17% respectively, survey participants claimed these were “major barriers,” which was more than two times as much as any other item on the list. Items that were listed as minimal barriers were “limited access for those with disabilities” (1.4) and “concerns about safety/crime in outdoor recreation areas” (1.5).

1 is **Not a Barrier** and 5 is **Major Barrier**

Barrier	Mean
Outdoor recreation areas are too crowded	2.5
Limited access to outdoor recreation	2.29
Nearby outdoor recreation areas are dirty or poorly maintained	1.85
Cost of equipment/gear needed to participate	1.84
High costs associated with entrance, parking, or other user fees	1.81
Outdoor recreation areas are not developed enough (e.g., limited picnic tables, restrooms, etc.)	1.76
Lack of or high costs associated with transportation	1.75
Not enough information about outdoor recreation	1.66
No one to go with	1.62
Concern about safety/crime in outdoor recreation areas	1.52
Health concerns	1.51
Limited access for those with physical disabilities	1.41
Traffic congestion (e.g., I-70; I-35)	1.41



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Figure 8

How could outdoor recreation areas/facilities assist you in achieving your health and fitness goals or priorities?

Figure 9 clearly displays that survey participants feel that more long distance trails and/or pathways, and the protection of more natural settings for outdoor recreation, would help them better achieve their outdoor and fitness goals. It is worth pointing out that a significant number of people stated that they did not have any health or fitness goals.

We asked survey participants if they know of any employer-provided programs and/or incentives for participating in outdoor recreation. Most (74%) stated that their employer did not provide anything with an additional 5% stating they did not know if anything was available. For those who responded that they were aware of employer provided programs, 71% stated that they participated in these programs, incentives or opportunities.

A vast majority of survey respondents (82%) claimed that they participated in activities or exercise in the outdoors with the average amount spent outdoors equaling approximately 4.5 hours per week (median was the same), with the most common answer being 2 hours per week.

HOW TO ASSIST IN ACHIEVING HEALTH/FITNESS GOALS

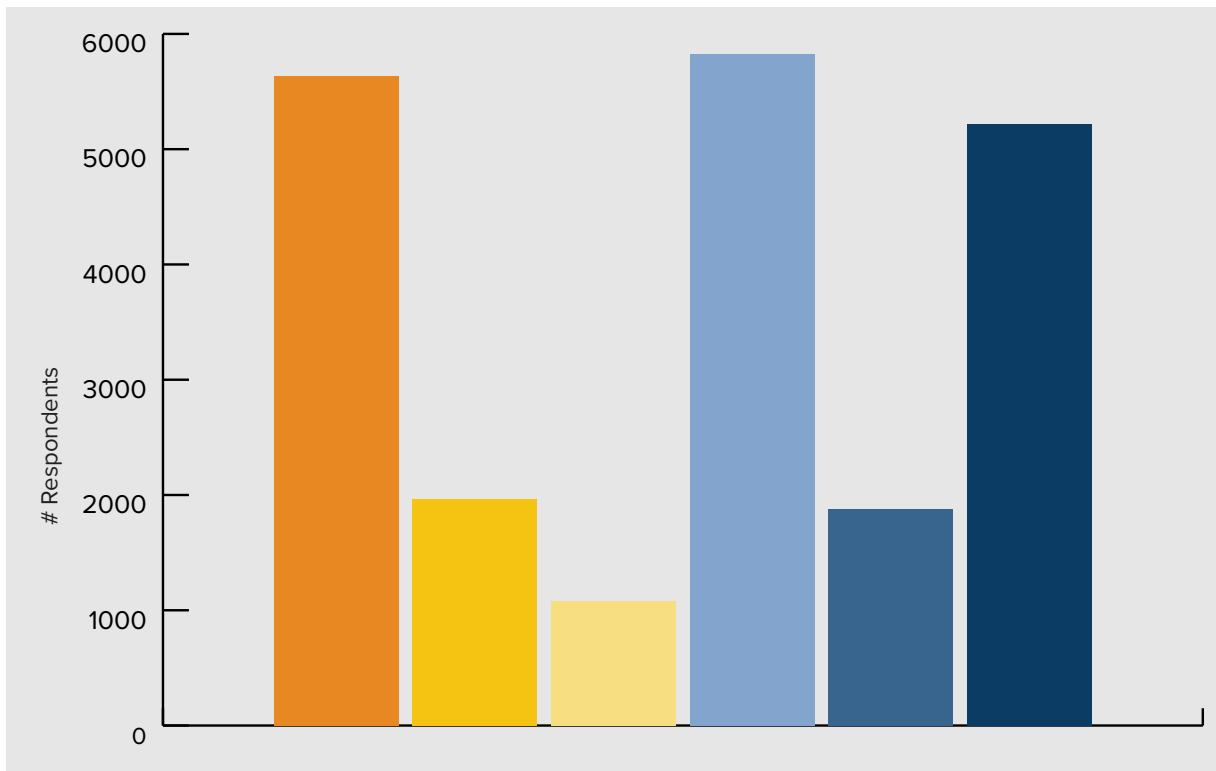


Figure 9

- I don't have fitness goals or priorities
- Support health and fitness community events (e.g. 5k races, adventure races, etc.)
- Protect and encourage more natural settings at outdoor recreation areas/facilities
- Provide information and educational health-related signage
- Provide more fitness/exercise stations at outdoor areas/facilities
- Provide more long distance trails/pathways

How much of a priority do you feel each of the following types of recreation areas should be for future investment where you live?

Figure 10 displays that all of the items on the list were at least a moderate priority for the survey respondents. The items of highest priority were “Nature and wildlife viewing areas” (2.97), “Dirt/soft surface walking trails and paths” (3.12), and “Picnic areas and shelters for small groups” (3.17). It is worthy to note that the “Nature/wildlife viewing and trails” had the highest percentage of responses in the “essential priority” category. Although all items on this list were not rated as “high priority,” this does not diminish the roles of resources such as playgrounds, and ballfields to communities across the state. Additionally, the user survey was conducted during the COVID pandemic when there was an emphasis on social distancing, thus the responses may reflect that reality (e.g. emphasis on natural areas, walking paths and picnic shelters).

1 is **High Priority** and 4 is **Not a Priority**

Field	Mean
Nature and wildlife viewing areas	2.97
Dirt/soft surface walking trails and paths	3.12
Picnic areas and shelters for small groups	3.17
Playgrounds and play areas built with natural materials (e.g., logs, water, sand, trees)	3.29
Paved/hard surface walking trails and paths	3.42
Picnic areas and shelters for large groups	3.49
Playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured materials (e.g., swing sets, slides)	3.54
Off-leash dog areas	3.67
Off-highway vehicle trails/ areas	3.72
Multi-use fields for soccer, football, baseball, etc.	3.78

Figure 10



Outdoor recreation providers often need to prioritize their efforts. How do you think that recreation providers should prioritize the following activities on recreation areas in Kansas?

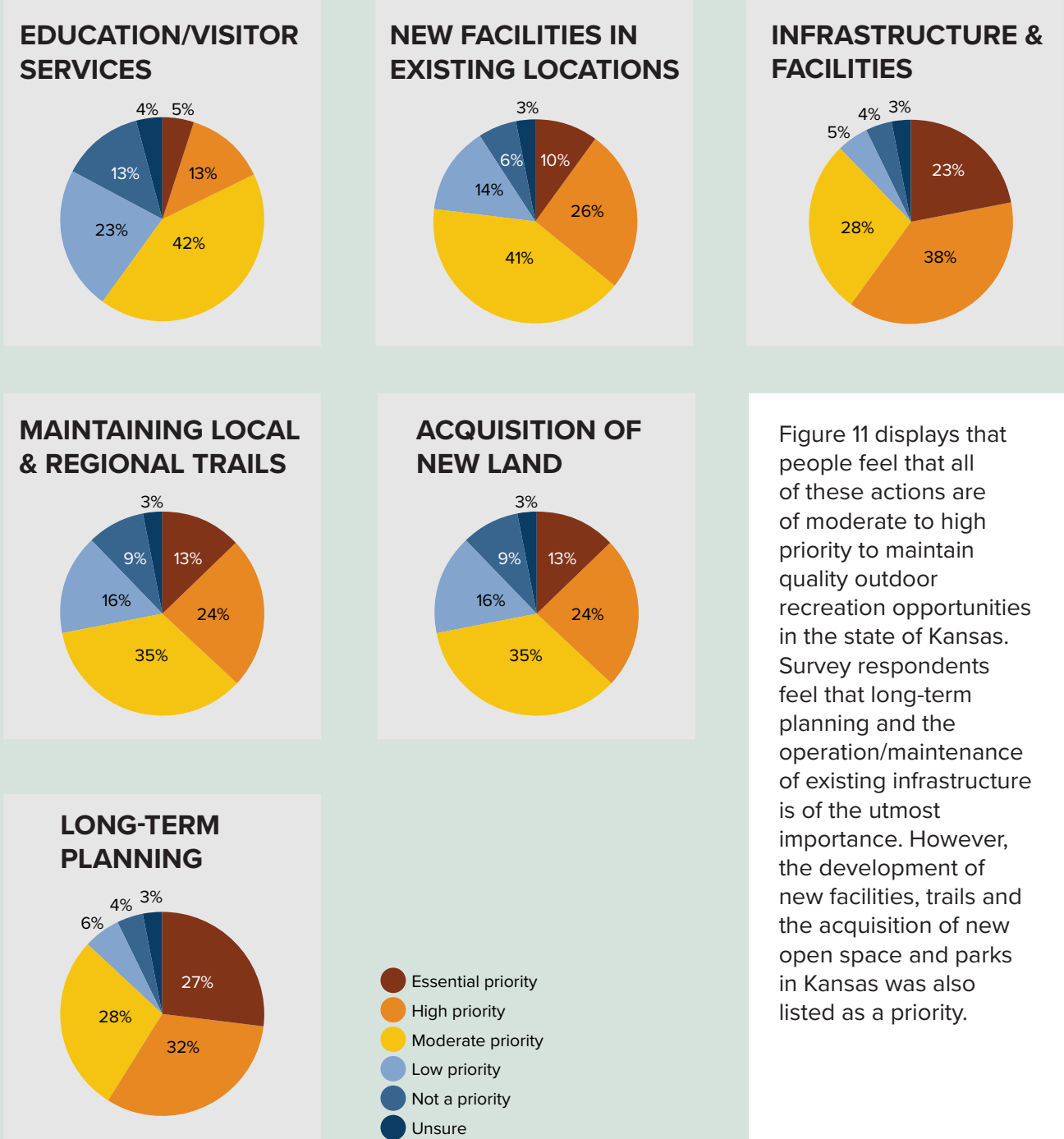


Figure 11 displays that people feel that all of these actions are of moderate to high priority to maintain quality outdoor recreation opportunities in the state of Kansas. Survey respondents feel that long-term planning and the operation/maintenance of existing infrastructure is of the utmost importance. However, the development of new facilities, trails and the acquisition of new open space and parks in Kansas was also listed as a priority.

Figure 11

Manager Research Findings

General Sample Characteristics

Several different organizations were represented in the sample such as federal and state agencies, municipalities, county based organizations, land trusts, and NGOs. These organizations were then represented by district rangers, park directors, program directors, and park superintendents. The average tenure at the respondents' respective organization was approximately 15-20 years, and they were responsible for managing a wide range of resources. For example, the managers who responded to the survey stated that they managed, on average, 72 miles (median 71 miles) of trails/greenways with a minimum of 1.7 miles to a maximum of 170 miles. Most respondents stated they received funding through Fee-in-Lieu, use or property taxes, and they do not have dedicated funding for parks, open space, or trail investments. The manager interviews reflected much of the same information as the statewide survey.



Programming

Figure 12 displays that most of the respondents stated they have education programs, and near equal (~35% each) availability of recreation (e.g. sports, fitness), and health and wellness programs. Additionally, the managers reported a dependence on volunteers to complete their programming, with 61% saying they used volunteers for educational programs. Those who reported tracking their volunteer hours had a median number of hours per year of 1,172, thus demonstrating the dependence on volunteers. The reliance on volunteers was echoed in the manager interviews as well, as getting funding for adequate staffing (and qualified staff) was cited as a major challenge in the next 5 years, which in some instances has decreased the amount and quality of programming.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS

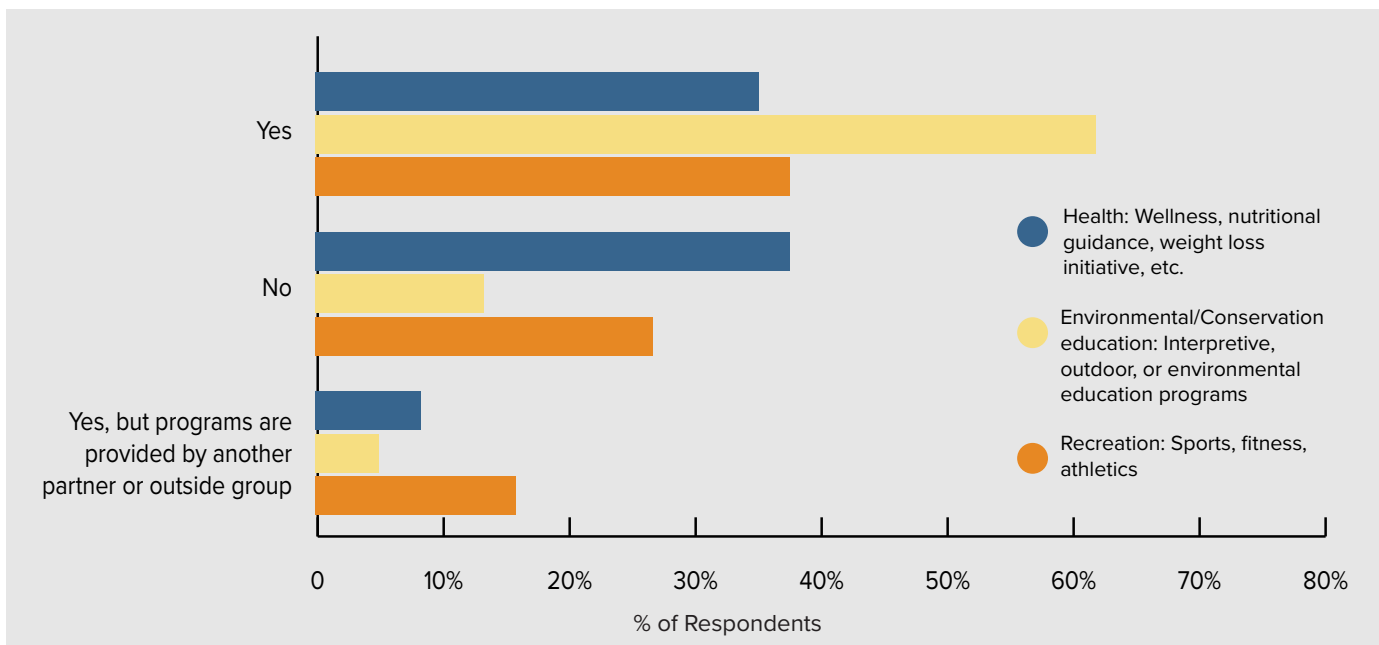


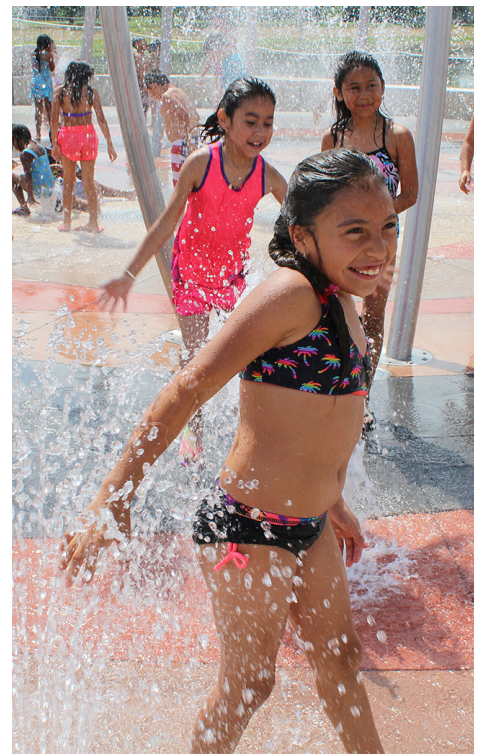
Figure 12

Funding

Most respondents stated they received funding through Fee-in-Lieu, use or property taxes, and they do not have dedicated funding for parks, open space, or trail investments. The manager interviews revealed that there is a need to display to city and town councils the importance of outdoor recreation to the quality of life, which may in turn help with justification for increased funding for outdoor recreation services and facilities.

Figure 13 highlights how significant the respondents feel these funding issues are, and the struggles that may be associated with this topic. Further highlighting this issue is the fact that all but one survey respondent stated that they have a significant unmet financial need related to outdoor recreation, parks, and open space. To help deal with these shortfalls, most replied that they did one or more of the following:

- Applied for grants
- Increased user fees
- Sought sponsorships
- Reduced Staff or services
- Relied on additional volunteer services



SIGNIFICANCE OF FUNDING ISSUES

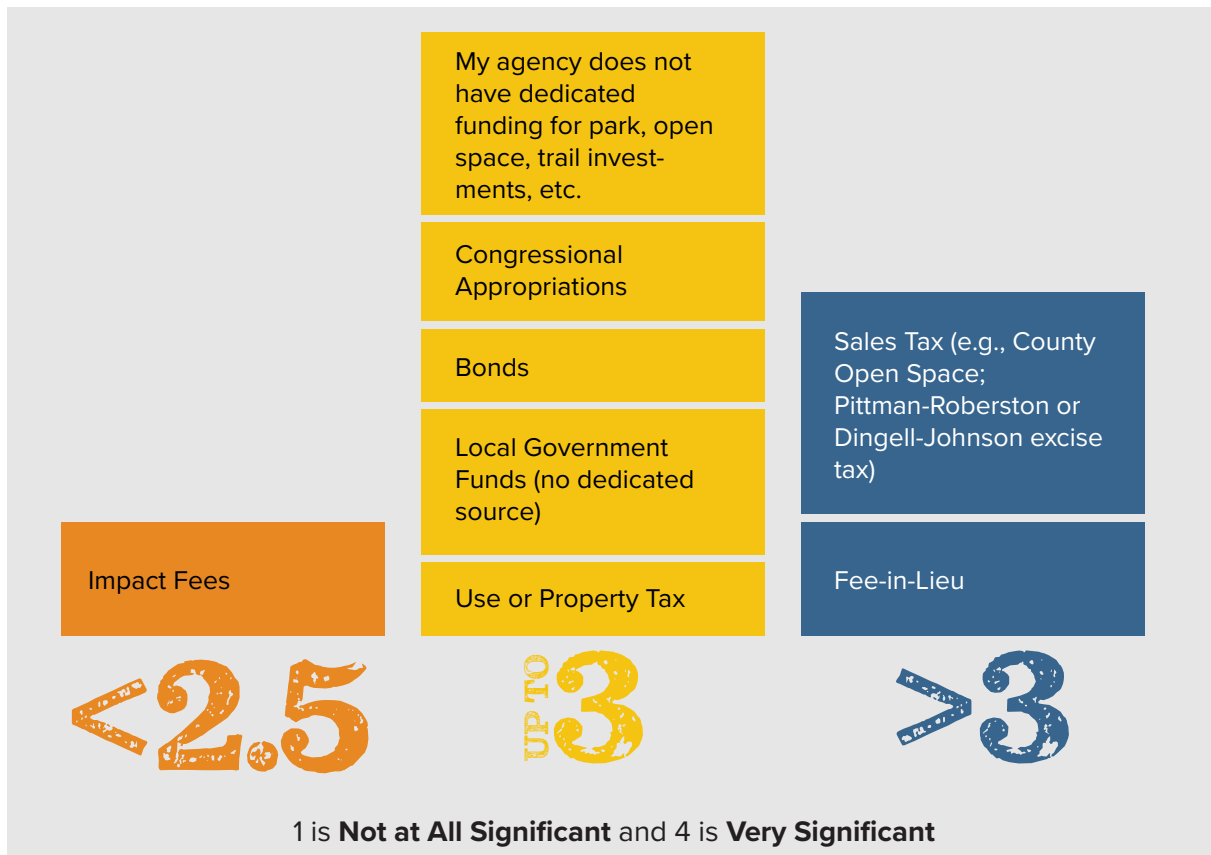


Figure 13



Extent to which your efforts were successful at meeting your agency's/ organization's unmet financial need

1 is **Not at All Successful** and 4 is **Very Successful**

Field	Mean
Applied for grants	2.72
Increased user fees	2.72
Sought sponsorship or donations	2.29
Relied on additional volunteer services	2.25
Reduced services or staff	2.17

Figure 14

Figure 14 displays the somewhat moderate success that survey respondents have had in procuring the pursued funding and staffing mechanisms.

How significant are the following management issues for your agency/ organization?

Figure 15 provides an overview of the issues most important to the managers surveyed. The most important issues reported were the maintenance of existing recreation infrastructure and resources (3.96), adapting to changing user needs/preferences (3.44), and capacity to serve a growing population (3.41). Management issues of less concern are human-wildlife interactions (1.96), and conflicts among recreationists (2.36). The manager interviews largely confirm the information in the statewide manager survey, with a few notable additions. The interviews revealed that managers are also dealing with issues related to deferred maintenance, if the recent increase in local park usage during COVID will continue, and keeping up with ever changing trends (e.g. technology).

1 is **Not at All Significant** and 4 is **Very Significant**

Field	Mean
Maintaining existing recreation infrastructure or resources	3.96
Adapting to changing user needs/preferences	3.44
Capacity to serve a growing population (e.g., crowding/ overuse of parks, trails, etc.)	3.41
Creating or updating your agency/organization's parks, trails, and/or open space plan	3.16
Promoting tourism and economic development	3.13
Coordination/cooperation with other outdoor recreation	3.04
Educating public on user ethics	2.96
Engaging partner organizations for programs or agency/ organization needs	2.88
Capacity to manage volunteers	2.85
Engaging volunteer or youth corps assistance for programs/agency needs	2.84
Off-leash dogs	2.81
Vandalism	2.65
Recreational access to rivers	2.52
Conflicts among recreationists	2.28
Adapting to climate change	2.21
Human-wildlife interactions	1.96
Displaced or homeless community members	1.88

Figure 15



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How significant are the following visitor service issues for your agency/ organization?

Figure 16 displays that all of these visitor services were moderately to very significant to park and protected area managers. This shows the importance for managers to provide high quality experiences for visitors. Additionally, survey participants were asked what is the biggest threat their agency is facing, with inadequate funding, not enough staff, and aging infrastructure being the most common responses.



SIGNIFICANCE OF VISITOR SERVICE ISSUES

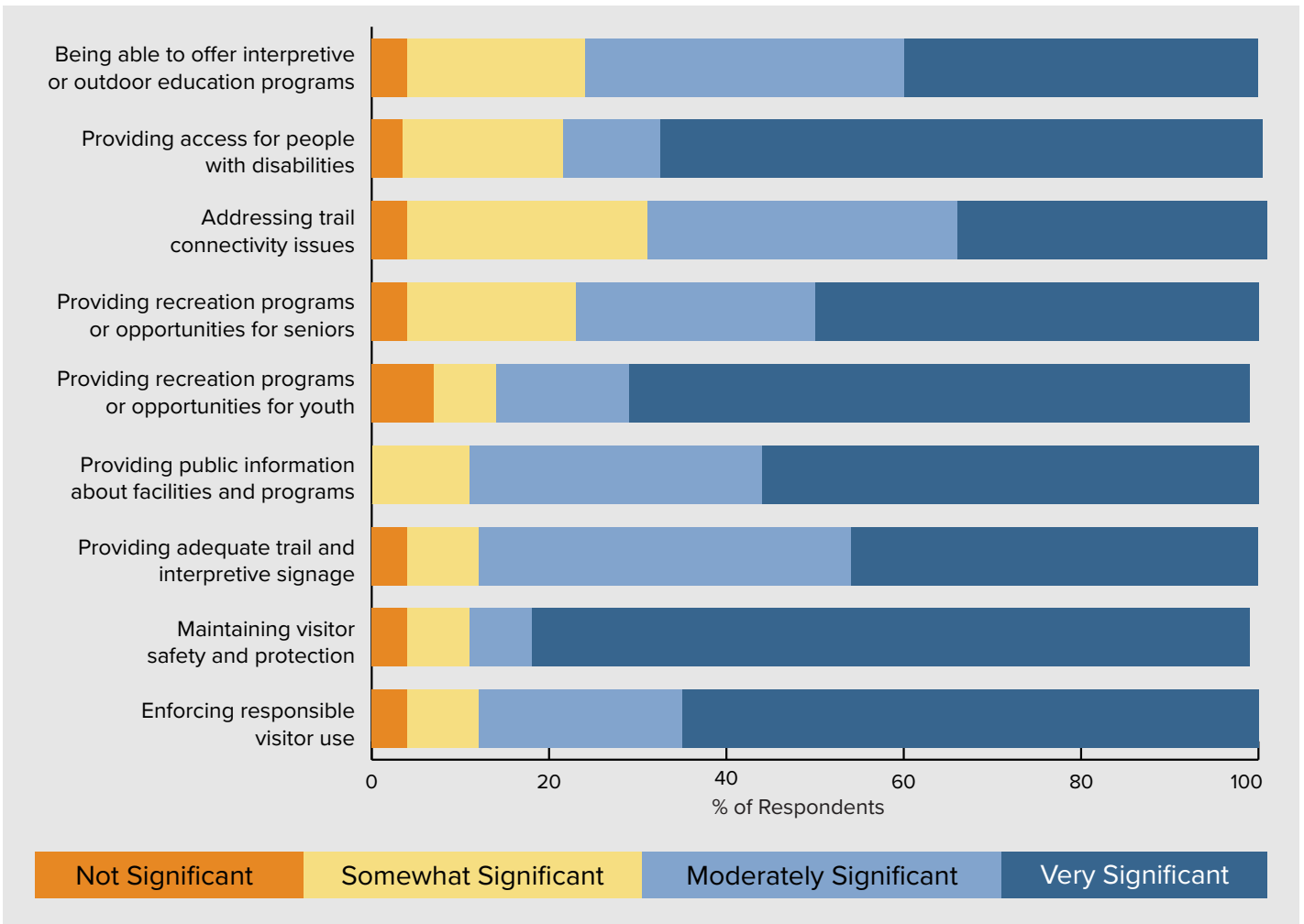


Figure 16

Looking ahead at the next five years, how much of a priority do you think the following types of new outdoor recreation sites or activities will be for your agency/organization?

Figure 17 reveals three main priorities for outdoor recreation for the managers surveyed. They are, in order of reported priority: 1) expanding community trail systems, 2) connecting regional trail systems, and 3) improving outdoor interpretive/educational facilities or programs. It is important to note that although developing neighborhood community or special use parks and facilities did not rank as high, only 2 managers stated this was not at all a priority, thus showing the importance of these resources. *Additionally, although the manager interviews revealed that trails are indeed a priority for the state and local communities, they also highlighted the need for more/updated sport fields (e.g. pickleball is becoming more popular), updating and expanding playgrounds, and providing more/better access to water based activities.*



PRIORITIES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

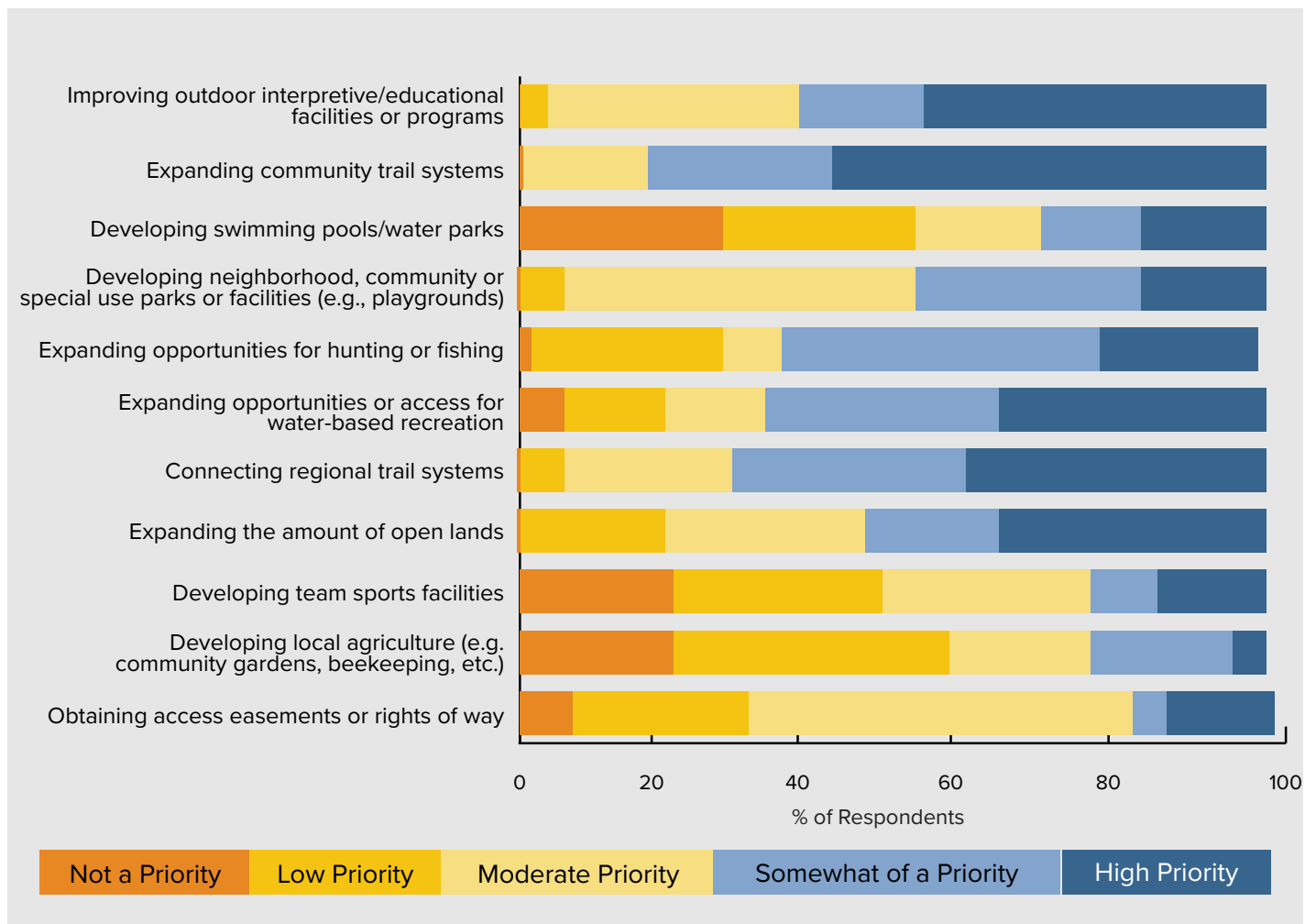


Figure 17

Please indicate the extent to which any of the following represent current trail-related priorities of your agency/organization

The results in Figure 18 reflect the following trail related priorities for the managers who completed the survey: 1) maintaining existing trails, 2) providing connections between existing trails, 3) creating opportunities for non-motorized trail users, and 4) providing interpretive and education opportunities. Managers rated reducing user conflict, and creating opportunities for motorized use as less of a priority for their parks, agencies, or organizations.



PRIORITIES FOR TRAILS

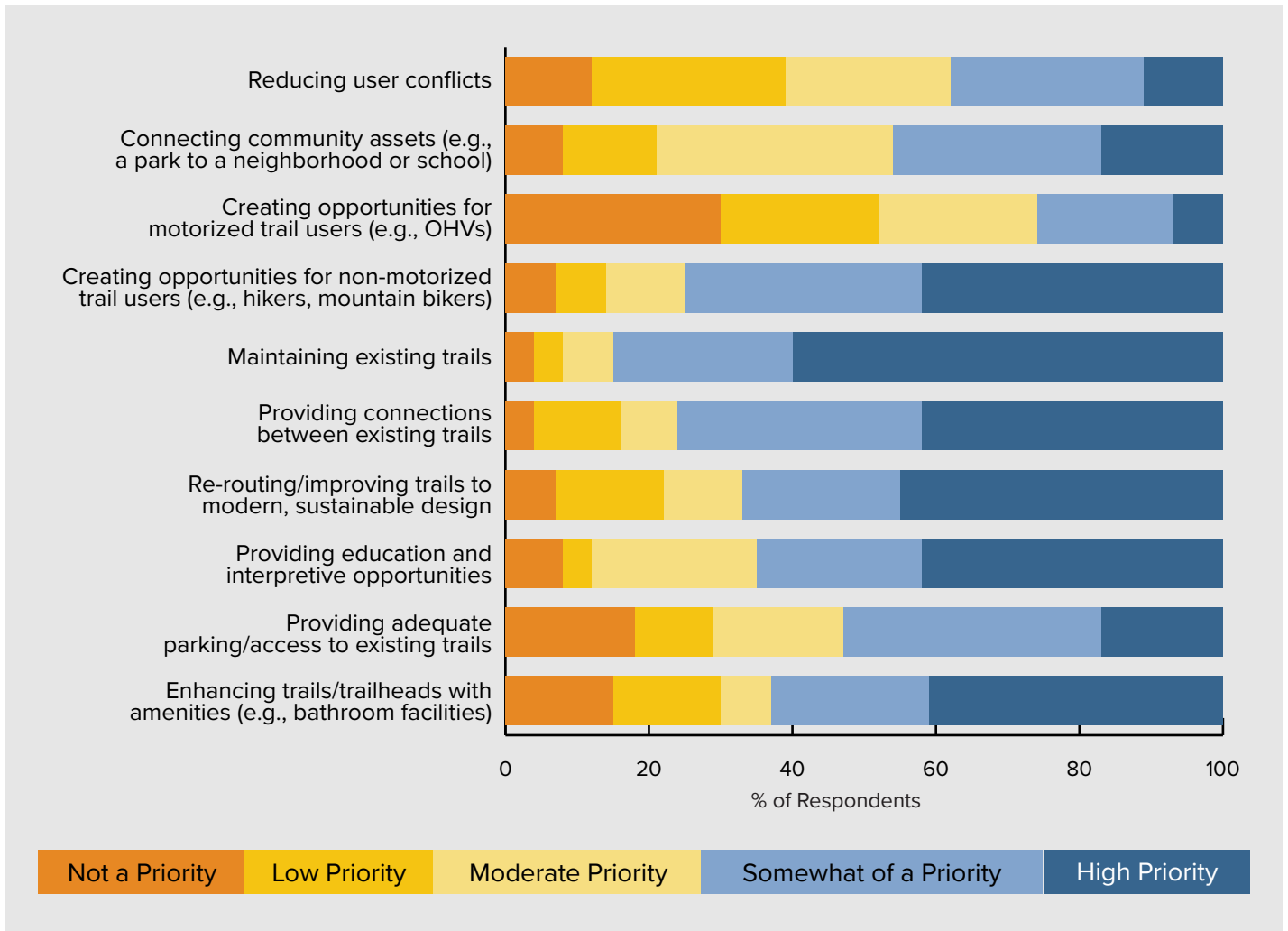
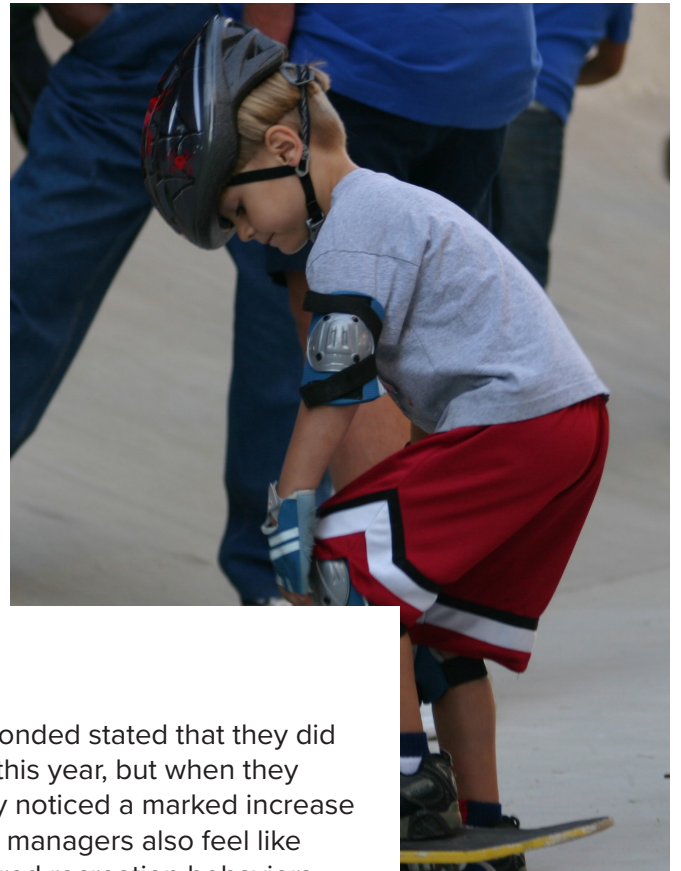
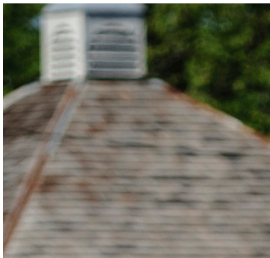


Figure 18



COVID Notes

Most of the managers who responded stated that they did not close their area at any time this year, but when they were open, 89% stated that they noticed a marked increase in the amount of visitation. Most managers also feel like visitors will return to their preferred recreation behaviors and patterns after the pandemic, but over half felt that outdoor recreation behavior in the future may be changed. We did not ask a direction for this change, but we can speculate that more people have been exposed to what outdoor recreation has to offer during the pandemic, as they were seeking a socially responsible outlet for exercise and recreation.





Priorities & Recommendations

Outdoor recreation in Kansas is clearly an important part of many people's daily lives. As the results of the surveys for this SCORP found that almost a third of the people recreate outdoors at least 2-4 times a week for an average of 4.5 hours a week. Perhaps more importantly, only 4% stated that they never participated in outdoor recreation, again showing the importance of our outdoor recreation providers across the state.

The manager survey and community outdoor recreation provider interviews revealed that our outdoor recreation providers are often struggling to meet the needs of outdoor recreation users and adapting to ever changing needs and preferences. The recreation survey revealed a wide variety of activities that people participate in on a regular basis, thus displaying the opportunity to diversify what Kansas has to offer in the way of outdoor recreation. This information can be used to enhance the current outdoor recreation portfolio in Kansas. A concern for achieving this goal was mentioned by managers several times, that of adequate funding and staffing. Although this SCORP may not be able to directly address those issues, this consideration should be taken into account when planning future outdoor recreation projects.

From a user perspective, there appeared to be few barriers to participating in outdoor recreation, which bodes well for providing this opportunity to all who choose to pursue it. However, the only

barrier of moderate importance to those who participated in the user survey was “limited access to outdoor recreation.” This is an important finding. Although many are able to find opportunities in the outdoors to recreate, we still have work to do to provide reasonable access to as many people as possible. Additionally, 89% of the respondents to the manager survey stated that they have seen a significant increase in use of outdoor recreation areas during the COVID-19 pandemic. This observed increase in use may lead to more people (and new users) utilizing parks and natural spaces in the long term, pursuing a wide variety of activities. This increase in demand has created a tremendous opportunity to expand or create places for people to engage in outdoor recreation (e.g. land acquisition). The increased demand also provides an opportunity to expand facilities and/or trails throughout the state. This SCORP can help to achieve these goals with the following priority areas that outdoor recreation planners can focus their efforts on when applying for funding from the LWCF. They are as follows:

Priority 1 - Connectivity

Priority 2 - Diversifying the Recreation Portfolio of Kansas

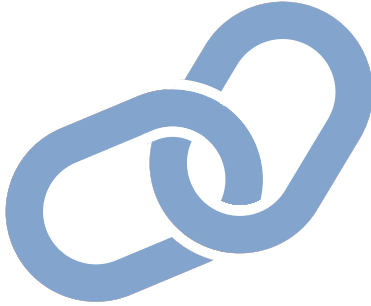
Priority 3 - Health & Fitness

**Priority 4 - Enhance, Connect, and Promote
Community Recreation**

All four of these priority areas are intertwined in several ways. For example, if we aim to improve connectivity for outdoor recreation, we may wish to find ways to bring trails and paths together, or connect natural areas with more populated areas. This in turn may provide more opportunities for people to engage in a variety of activities, thus diversifying the recreation portfolio of the state. The additional connectivity and opportunities for a large variety of outdoor recreation activities can help to enhance users health and fitness. Finally, the previous themes can be included to enhance, connect and promote community recreation. Thus, these priority areas are being presented separately, it will be easy to marry them all together to enhance the outdoor recreation opportunities for the residents of Kansas.



Priority 1: Connectivity



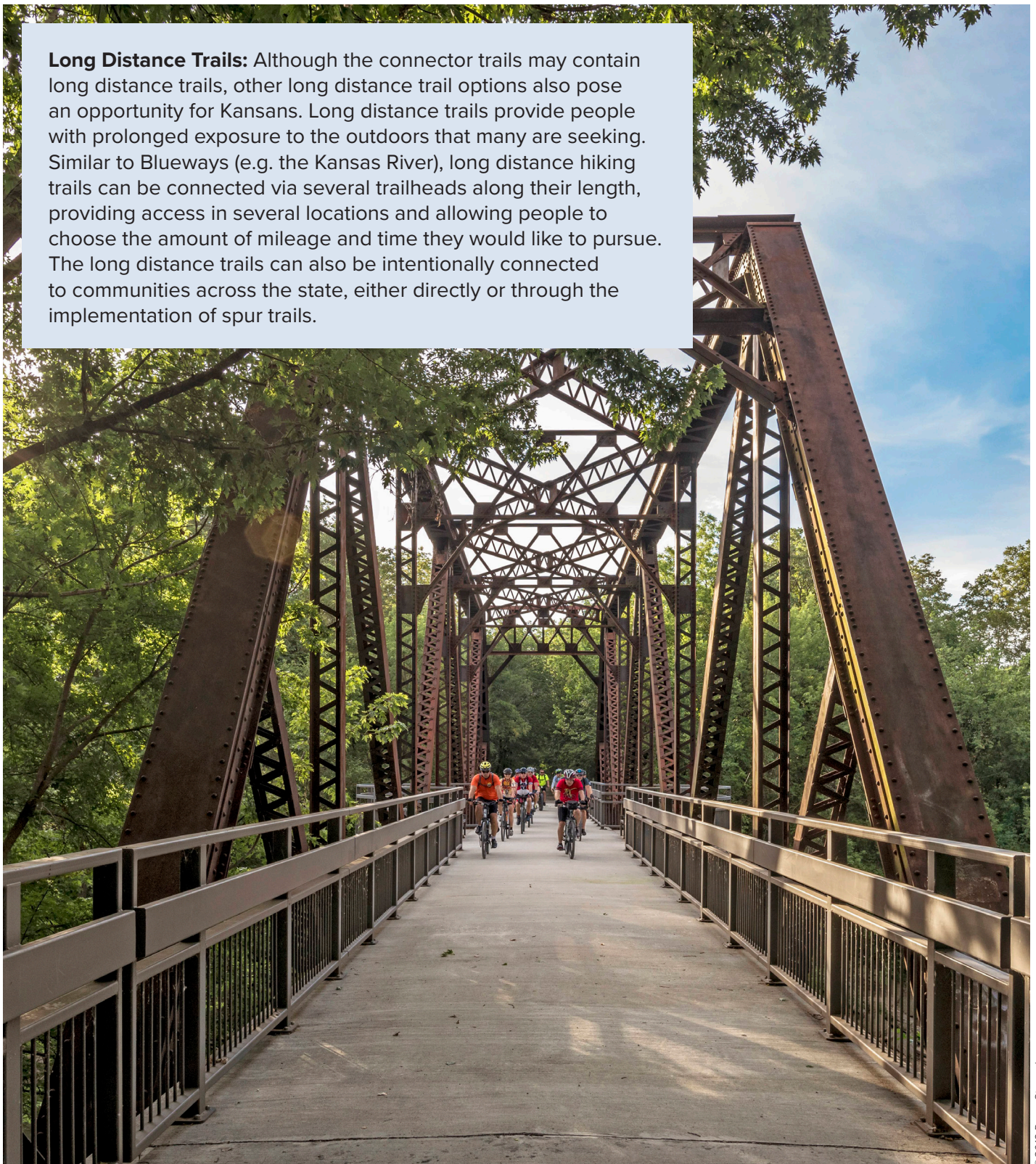
The user survey and the manager survey clearly revealed connectivity to outdoor recreation opportunities is of the utmost importance. Although many users said that they recreated outdoors frequently, there was a significant number of people who stated that they did not use parks, lakes or trails on a regular basis. According to survey results most people claimed that they participated in outdoor recreation in and around their local communities and that they desired more walking trails/paths and more long distance trails and pathways. Taking all of this into consideration, an opportunity arises for connecting more people to the outdoors in the following recommended ways:

Community/Nature Connector Trails:

Knowing that people do most of their outdoor recreation near and around their communities, there lies an opportunity to build connectors from park to park, from natural area to natural area and from areas of dense populations to less densely populated and more natural areas. These connector trails can provide several options for people that will not require driving to them. Additionally these connector trails can be multi use allowing for mechanized (e.g. bicycles, e-bikes) and non-mechanized use (e.g. walking, hiking, running). The trails could be of various substrates depending on available resources and location of the trail. More durable surfaces (e.g. concrete) may be more appropriate for more urban areas, but can transition to more gravel or dirt surfaces at the city/town/nature interface. These community trails can also connect ballfields, swimming pools and playgrounds.



Long Distance Trails: Although the connector trails may contain long distance trails, other long distance trail options also pose an opportunity for Kansans. Long distance trails provide people with prolonged exposure to the outdoors that many are seeking. Similar to Blueways (e.g. the Kansas River), long distance hiking trails can be connected via several trailheads along their length, providing access in several locations and allowing people to choose the amount of mileage and time they would like to pursue. The long distance trails can also be intentionally connected to communities across the state, either directly or through the implementation of spur trails.



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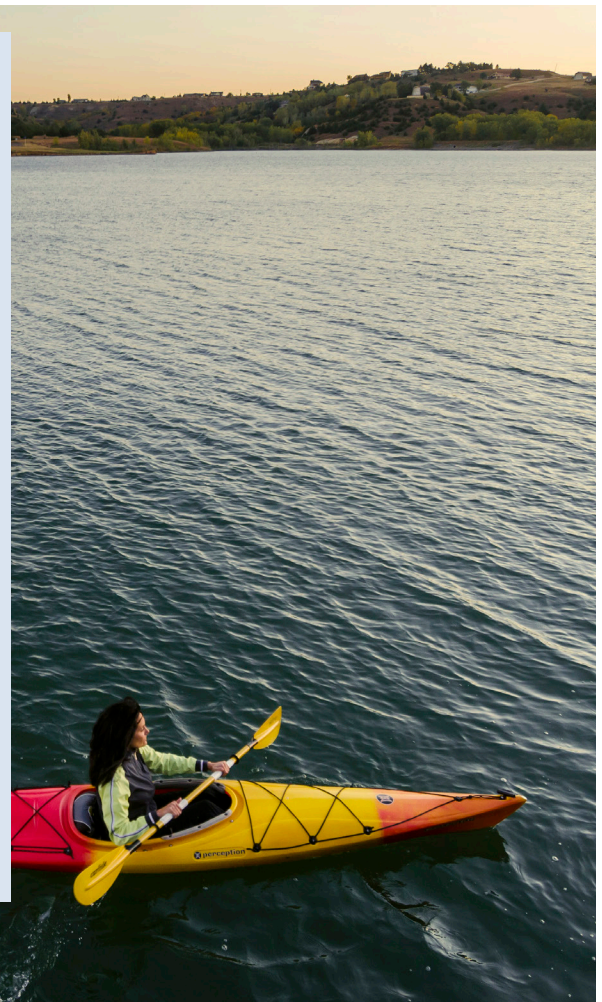
Survey results revealed that the primary reasons that people recreate in the outdoors is to connect with nature and spend time with family. Both of these connectivity options can provide these types of opportunities. Managers and users both agreed that a priority area in the future was the expansion of trails (especially within communities) and the connecting of existing trail networks. This finding fits nicely within the connectivity theme, but also all four of the priority areas for the state.

Priority 2: Diversifying the Recreation Portfolio of Kansas

From Kansas City to Goodland, from Norton to Elkhart and everywhere in between, there are a wealth of outdoor recreation opportunities. This report is littered with photos of all the possible activities that someone could pursue in the state. Many different types of activities (32) were reported by those who took the survey. This provides evidence that there is tremendous opportunity to expand and diversify the outdoor recreation opportunities in the state. The diversification of outdoor recreation opportunities can also encourage people to seek these opportunities in the state, as 70% of the survey respondents stated that they have recreated in other states in the past year. Although other areas or states in the country may provide enhanced opportunities for certain types of outdoor recreation, Kansas, at the very least, can be an introduction to many of these activities. Thus opportunities for diversifying the recreation portfolio for Kansas can occur in the following ways:



Expand Water Based Opportunities: A large percentage of people reported that they participated in water-based outdoor recreation activities. The most popular were swimming and power boating, which can continue to be promoted on the states waterways and lakes. Kayaking, canoeing and non-motorized water based activities present an opportunity for growth. Recent trends (e.g. lower cost of boats, COVID-19) have led to a huge increase in the sales of canoes, kayaks and stand-up paddle boards. This surge suggests that more people will be seeking out these types of opportunities, and thus more facilities and opportunities can be provided to accommodate this increase. Building non-motorized specific boat ramps on lakes, more developed put-ins on rivers and developing campsites specifically for these users could enhance their experience. Additionally, managers have recognized the importance of providing water based activities, as the manager interviews revealed that promoting water based opportunities is a priority to many communities. Opportunities in municipal parks can also be expanded (e.g. pools, splashpads) to get people comfortable with water based outdoor recreation that may lead to other activities listed above.



Expand Opportunities for Walking, Hiking, Biking and Horseback Riding: A large percentage of people stated that walking/running was a primary outdoor recreation opportunity for them. Thousands of people stated that they enjoyed road biking and/or mountain biking in Kansas. Although we did not specifically ask people about hiking, many provided comments that this is an important activity for them. Additionally, many people stated that they rode horses. Horseback riding may present the largest opportunity for growth in this category. The development of more trails (community and long distance) in the connectivity theme will certainly help to facilitate the enhancement of these activities. Connecting trails and scenic by-ways could be a way to enhance the experience for road bikers and mountain bikers. The development of multi-use trails could help to accommodate these diverse activities, and the survey did not point to many existing conflicts amongst recreation users, which provides a good place to begin these types of conversations. As mentioned above, developing facilities specifically for horseback riders (e.g. trails, horse camps, hitching posts) could be an opportunity for the state of Kansas. Horseback riding generates revenue in areas where it is popular and where facilities exist to accommodate them (see Eminence Missouri as an example).





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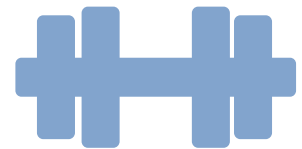
Continue and Expand Opportunities for Camping: Kansans spend a good deal of time camping (tent, cabin and RV) in the outdoors according to survey results. In fact, people reported RV camping for an average of 14 days in the last year and according to a recent RV Industry Association report, RV camping was up in the past year and will continue to grow in the near future (2021 is projected to be the biggest year ever for RV camping). This increase in interest for RV camping provides an opportunity to cater to these users across the state by offering such things as WI-FI in campgrounds, online registration processes and upgraded water, electric and sewer related accommodations. Motorized means of camping are not the only segment of this market increasing in popularity. Cabin, primitive tent camping and glamping have increased in recent years. The North American Camping report published by KOA stated that more people than in recent memory are now interested in camping (mostly due to canceled international and domestic travel plans). Almost 3 million new households have started camping in the past 3 years, and the KOA report also states that spending time in the outdoors with family (i.e. camping) is a priority when travel is again safe in the near future. Another possible outcome of these increases provides an opportunity to directly reach people for interpretive and educational opportunities through the construction of visitor centers (which the construction can be funded through the LWCF). All of these trends point to a tremendous opportunity for Kansas outdoor recreation providers to continue and enhance these types of opportunities.



All of the above recommendations are based on the findings of the user survey (and to a lesser extent the manager survey) and that present the best opportunities for diversifying the outdoor recreation portfolio for the state of Kansas. However, activities that fall under the category of municipal recreation (playgrounds, ball fields, pools, etc.) are still important and should not be removed from consideration in this discussion (this is discussed in further detail in the Priority 4 section of the report). There may be opportunities to offer some of the listed opportunities and recommendations within the context of more municipal offerings. Creativity in the diversification of outdoor recreation opportunities may be one of the more important considerations in future planning efforts.

Priority 3: Health & Fitness

When asked why people choose to recreate in the outdoors, most said to relax, spend time with family or connect with nature. The category “exercise and health” was rated as neutral for a reason to recreate in the outdoors, which may seem like a less than ideal outcome. However, the middle of the road attitude for people related to health and fitness provides a chance to promote and incentivize this aspect of outdoor recreation in the state of Kansas. Manager surveys and interviews revealed that providing outdoor recreation opportunities for mental and physical health was indeed a priority, which could in turn lead to an overall better quality of life for Kansans. Even though most did not rate this category as high as others, we do know that people reported that they spend, on average, up to 4.5 hours a week outdoors. This amount of time is plenty to achieve a wide variety of health outcomes (many doctors state that 150 minutes of moderate exercise is recommended a week). Of course this reported time outdoors, may not always equate to moderate exercise, but it presents the opportunity to direct some of that time towards health and fitness goals. This can be achieved as follows:



Enhanced Opportunities for Walking, Jogging and/or Biking:

Alluding to the interconnectedness of the presented themes, providing more trails and connecting more trails (especially between towns and outlying areas) can provide the opportunity for more walking, jogging and/or biking. As more people are engaging in outdoor recreation the development of trails and pathways can help to meet individual and community health goals. These trails and pathways can also use mile markers, benches and water access to entice people to use the trails/pathways on a more regular basis. Manager surveys and interviews revealed that providing outdoor recreation opportunities for mental and physical health was indeed a priority, which could in turn lead to an overall better quality of life for Kansans. Connecting people within a community to promote these activities is also recommended. If people have safe and accessible trails and pathways to access areas in the community (parks, stores, restaurants, etc.), they may be more likely to walk or bike and leave the car in the garage. Safety is a big concern for many, as people often do not feel safe riding or walking without the benefit of a trail or pathway. Local organizations and businesses could also incentivize recreating in the outdoors to achieve health goals. For example, if you walked or rode your bike (on a new, enhanced or existing trail or path) to work, this could provide incentives for lower health insurance premiums, or financial bonuses. Some doctors may even begin prescribing outdoor recreation as a means of reducing physical and mental stress.

Connect Nature and the Outdoors to Physical and Mental Health: Outdoor recreation is often associated with an action, such as hiking, biking, swimming or boating. Kinetic activities are certainly important for physical and mental health and should continue to be promoted as such. However, just being in nature has mental and physical restorative effects such as lowering stress, lowering heart rate and blood pressure and increased positive emotions (e.g. happiness). Tens of thousands of survey respondents stated that they participate in outdoor recreation to relax, to spend time in nature, to spend time with family and to a lesser extent find opportunities for solitude. It was not always about learning about nature, or for excitement or to do something new, but rather finding ways to “take a breath” and bask in the restorative properties of nature. The acquisition of land and the enhancement of existing property for these restorative properties can be achieved through the LWCF. The opportunities to pursue or enhance public greenspace in Kansas should be considered so that citizens of the state can find time to slow down and enjoy the sound of the wind rushing through the trees, or the birds singing, or the gurgle of a stream either on their own or in the company of their family and friends.

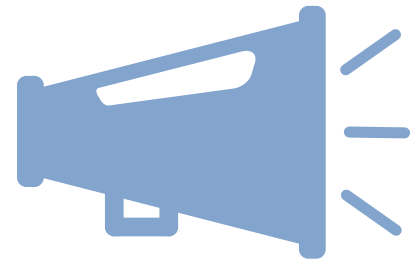


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These themes and subsequent recommendations are meant to provide guidance for explicitly linking health/fitness outcomes with outdoor recreation and ultimately Kansans mental and physical wellbeing.

Priority 4: Enhance, Connect and Promote Community Based Recreation

As seen throughout this SCORP, the state of Kansas offers a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. Although National and State parks are a tremendous resource to the citizens of the state, the community and municipal parks throughout Kansas truly are the lifeblood for getting people engaged in outdoor recreation. Most of the popular activities reported by the public can be pursued in community parks, but especially those related to fitness (walking/jogging/biking), family related outdoor recreation (playground use, swimming pools, splash pads) and sports related outdoor recreation (use of ballfields and ball courts). The importance of these activities was also prominently mentioned by managers. The manager survey and interviews clearly showed that enhancing and promoting multi use trails (for walking, jogging, biking, etc.), sports fields/courts and water-based activities for community based outdoor recreation is of the utmost importance for their constituent's quality of life. For these reasons it is crucial that community and municipal outdoor recreation providers continue to enhance, connect and promote opportunities for getting outdoors, and can occur in the following ways:



Maintain and Update Existing Community Outdoor Recreation Facilities: Nearly every community in Kansas provides their citizens with some form of outdoor recreation. From outdoor picnic shelters, to walking paths, to ball fields/court to water-based opportunities (e.g. pools), they all have something in common; they require maintenance, upkeep, and often updating to remain safe while meeting the needs of the users. The means of accomplishing this task is different from community to community, but one constant through the manager interviews was the challenge of procuring funding to maintain and update existing outdoor recreation facilities. Popular activities such as swimming in outdoor pools, and utilizing splash pads require constant upkeep to ensure the quality (and safety) of the experience. The same is true for sport facilities that see a tremendous amount of use over the course of an entire year. Managers and outdoor recreation providers can utilize LWCF funds to help with this herculean effort of updating and expanding existing facilities in community outdoor recreation areas. Possible appropriate projects to be funded for this priority area (and that have been funded in the past) are the construction of restrooms, updating walking trails, new construction or replacing outdoor picnic shelters, updating playground equipment, and installation of pools and/or splash pads. This is not a complete or exhaustive list of possible projects, but it is clear that this SCORP can provide justification for the pursuit of funds to update outdoor recreation facilities, statewide, but especially in local communities and municipalities.



Identify and Prioritize New and Emerging Community Outdoor Recreation Opportunities: The previous sections clearly highlighted the importance of upgrading existing facilities that are the cornerstone of most community outdoor recreation offerings. However, it is also important to maintain an ongoing awareness of the new and emerging outdoor recreation activities that people are interested in. The manager survey and interviews identified this as a challenge, the ability to “keep up” with changing public demands, and the difficulty in identifying real trends and not just passing fads. Although not a necessarily new or emerging activity for many communities, skate parks are a valuable outdoor recreation opportunity for young people (and identified by several managers through the interview process). Skate parks are also a good example of what was once a new activity, becoming more of a commonplace one. Updating, and in some cases, restructuring existing facilities to meet new needs is also important to consider. For example, during the outdoor recreation manager interviews, courts for pickleball were mentioned several times as a need and demand for community parks. Pickleball is not a new activity, but a (re)emerging one that may need funds for development. Water based activities, such as canoeing and kayaking and the infrastructure that accompanies it (e.g. launches), have certainly been popular for many years, but are emerging as a priority for many communities as the price of the equipment continues to fall. Similar to these activities, paddle boarding is becoming an increasingly popular way to engage in outdoor recreation. It will always be a challenging to keep track of trends in outdoor recreation, but hopefully through conferences, professional development, speaking with constituents and hiring recent graduates of parks and recreation programs can help understand this always changing sector.



All forms of outdoor recreation are important to consider to ensure that opportunities are provided to engage in whatever activity someone may be interested in pursuing (within reason). Considering that most people recreate in or around the home communities, community and municipal outdoor recreation opportunities are essential for connecting people with nature, for providing opportunities for health and fitness through their chosen activity, and for providing opportunities for spending time with family and friends. In these ways this priority area ties all the others together to promote the outdoor recreation heritage of Kansas.

Into the Future...

The data, ideas and recommendations provided in this SCORP should assist in guiding outdoor recreation planning for the state of Kansas for the next 5 years. These ideas are not all encompassing, and outdoor recreation planners and managers will add their knowledge and experience to what is included here. Across all the information and recommendation in the SCORP, the following should also be considerations for outdoor recreation planning.



Evaluate Success and Identify Challenges:

Every five years a SCORP is completed to guide and direct outdoor recreation planning for the following five years. However, the success of these efforts is often unknown, other than the number of LWCF projects funded. Although the number of funded projects is certainly a viable metric of success, we encourage outdoor recreation managers, planners and practitioners to consider how to best evaluate success in other ways. Challenges that may arise during the process and how they may be overcome is also a metric worth evaluating. By doing so we may be able to better position the state of Kansas to procure as much funding that is needed from the LWCF to provide the highest quality outdoor recreation experiences as possible.



ADA Considerations: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates that when possible, reasonable accommodations should be made to provide access to those with disabilities. There are many accessible trails and paths in the state, but there could be more. Also, certain types of activities may not be accessible for all citizens. When planning for outdoor recreation, and taking into account the content of this SCORP, it is expected that improved accessibility to resources and facilities will be included.

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:

Outdoor recreation opportunities should be available for all to pursue and the concepts of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion should be a part of all planning efforts. Outdoor recreation professionals should always be working towards reducing barriers to participation, ensuring equal access to opportunities and facilities, engaging with a wide array of perspectives, and encouraging all to have a voice in what outdoor recreation can and should be.



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Appendix A



User Survey & Results Summary

For purposes of this survey, please consider **OUTDOOR RECREATION** to mean **any form of outdoor activity pursued during your leisure time that provides personal enjoyment and satisfaction**, including activities like camping, hunting, jogging, fishing, hiking, picnicking, playing outdoor sports (e.g., golf, soccer), etc.

For purposes of this survey, please consider “2019” to mean the 2019 calendar year from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019. Due to the recent changes related to COVID-19, please do not consider your experiences from January 2020 to now.

Your Outdoor Recreation Participation

1. On average, how often did you **recreate outdoors** during 2019? *(Please check one)*

- Never → → *(If “Never” please **SKIP** to question 9)*
- Less than once per week – 22.2%
- Once per week – 23.0%
- 2-4 times per week – 30.6%
- More than 4 times per week – 15.0%
- I am not sure – 4.9%

2. How often did you use the following outdoor recreation areas in your local community in 2019? (if unsure, choose your best estimate) – *See report*

- City/local parks and recreation areas
- City/local trails
- County parks/open space
- State parks, forests, and recreation areas
- State wildlife areas
- State fishing lakes
- Local fishing lakes
- National park or forest/grasslands
- Private/commercial areas
- Other (please specific

3. How often did you use the following outdoor recreation areas outside of your local community in 2019? (if unsure, choose your best estimate) – *See report*

- City/local parks and recreation areas
- City/local trails
- County parks/open space
- State parks, forests, and recreation areas
- State wildlife areas
- State fishing lakes
- Local fishing lakes
- National park or forest/grasslands
- Private/commercial areas
- Other (please specific

4. Approximately what percentage of your outdoor recreation trips were overnight during 2019? *(Please write-in the percentage of overnight trips here)*

- Average = 29.1%

5. When spending the night away from home to participate in outdoor recreation, what accommodations did you use during 2019? *(Please check all that apply)*

- Friend or relative's home – 17.1%
- RV camping – 16.6%
- Hotel/motel – 23.1%
- Cabin/yurt- 10.1%
- Bed and breakfast 2.2%
- Vacation rental home (e.g., AirBnB, VRBO, etc.) – 9.9%
- Luxury accommodations (e.g., high-end hotel or resort) – 2.2%
- Primitive/tent camping – 14.7%

6. When spending the night away from home to participate in outdoor recreation, which accommodation did you use most frequently during 2019? *(Please check one)*

- I did not stay overnight – 8.7%
- Friend or relative's home – 13.7%
- RV camping – 22.0%
- Hotel/motel – 20.7%
- Cabin/yurt – 8.6%
- Bed and breakfast – 0.9%
- Vacation rental home (e.g., AirBnB, VRBO, etc.) – 6.3%
- Luxury accommodations (e.g., high-end hotel or resort) – 0.9%
- Primitive/tent camping – 14.0%

7. For each of the following outdoor activities, please enter the approximate number of days in 2019 that you participated in each region of Kansas. Even if you are not sure of the number of days, please enter your best guess. *If you DID NOT participate in an activity or you did not participate in an activity in a particular region, please **leave that activity blank.** (results for those who chose that activity).*

Average Number of Days for:

Trail/road Activities

- 69 - Walking
- 60 - Jogging/running (outdoors)
- 22 - Horseback riding
- 36 - Road biking
- 27 - Mountain biking
- 39 - Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) or 4-wheeling/motorcycling

Water-based Activities

- 20 - Swimming (outdoors)
- 18 - Power boating/jet skiing
- 15 - Water skiing
- 11 - Sailing
- 11 - Canoeing
- 14 - Kayaking
- 8 - Rafting
- 10 - Stand up paddleboarding

Winter Activities

- 7 - Sledding/tubing
- 17 - Snowmobiling
- 9 - Snowshoeing/cross country skiing

Wildlife-related Activities

- 16 - Hunting (if hunting is chosen, participant will be asked to specific type, deer, turkey, etc)
- 23 - Fishing
- 60 - Bird watching
- 45 - Wildlife viewing (excluding bird watching)
- 9 - Ice fishing

Other Outdoor Activities

- 15 - RV camping/cabins
- 7 - Tent camping
- 12 - Picnicking
- 33 - Team or individual sports (outdoors) (e.g., basketball, golf, tennis, etc.)
- 14 - Target or skeet shooting
- 23 - Archery
- 30 - Playground activities
- 10 - Splash pads
- 25 - Ball fields
- 21 - Swimming pools

8. Please rank your top five (5) activities from your previous answers.
- Top five activities = hunting, fishing, walking, RV camping/cabins, swimming (outdoors).
9. If you hunted, what type of hunting did you participate in during 2019?
- Deer – 38.2%
 - Turkey – 18.8%
 - Game birds other than turkey – 34.6%
 - Other – 8.4%
10. Would you be willing to pay increased fees for more and/or improved facilities for any of the following?
(please check all that apply – *percent* yes).
- Entrance fees – 12.1%
 - Annual passes – 16.2%
 - Camping – 12.0%
 - Hunting license – 15.1%
 - Fishing license – 12.8%
 - I would not be willing to pay increase fees – 31.7%
- 9a. If yes, what percentage more would you be willing to pay?
- Average = 15.8% more
11. Did you travel outside of Kansas in 2019 to participate in outdoor recreation activities?
- No - 30.8%
 - Yes – 69.2%
- 11a. IF YES, WHAT STATE was your **primary** destination?
- Colorado and Missouri were most popular destinations

Reasons to Recreate, and Barriers to Future Participation

12. How important to you is each of the following reasons to recreate outdoors in Kansas? *(Please check only one response per reason)*

	Not important	Slightly important	Neither important nor unimportant	Moderately important	Very important
To relax	4.2%	5.2%	5.6%	29.3%	55.6%
To exercise/improve physical health	11.6%	11.3%	15.5%	33.2%	28.4%
To spend time with friends/family	4.0%	4.2%	5.6%	29.2%	57.0%
To spend time in nature	2.2%	4.0%	6.4%	32.7%	54.7%
To do something new	15.3%	12.3%	28.9%	27.9%	15.7%
To learn about nature (e.g., wildlife, plants, etc.)	12.0%	14.1%	24.0%	31.0%	18.9%
For spiritual/cultural purposes	32.5%	12.6%	27.4%	16.3%	11.3%
For fun/thrill/excitement	6.1%	7.3%	14.9%	39.2%	32.5%
For solitude	8.4%	8.0%	15.2%	34.0%	35.0%

13. The following is a list of possible reasons that may limit your participation in outdoor recreation. For each one, please indicate how much of a barrier it is in preventing you from participating in outdoor recreation in Kansas. *(Please check only one response per reason)*

	Not a barrier	Slight barrier	Moderate barrier	Major barrier	Unsure
Limited access to outdoor recreation areas	37.9%	18.1%	24.5%	16.7%	2.9%
No one to go with	62.8%	18.9%	13.0%	4.2%	1.1%
Health concerns	70.5%	14.7%	9.3%	4.5%	0.9%
Cost of equipment/gear needed to participate	48.8%	25.9%	18.9%	5.5%	0.9%
Outdoor recreation areas are too crowded	25.3%	23.9%	28.6%	20.3%	1.9%
Lack of or high costs associated with transportation	52.6%	26.4%	15.9%	4.0%	1.3%
Outdoor recreation areas are not developed enough (e.g., limited picnic tables, restrooms, etc.)	56.3%	21.6%	14.2%	6.0%	1.9%
Concern about safety/crime in outdoor recreation areas	68.5%	17.6%	8.6%	3.9%	1.3%
Not enough information about outdoor recreation	60.5%	20.8%	12.8%	4.2%	1.8%
High costs associated with entrance, parking, or other user fees	52.7%	24.2%	14.8%	6.5%	1.8%
Limited access for those with physical disabilities	79.6%	8.8%	5.8%	2.9%	3.0%
Traffic congestion (e.g., I-70; I-35)	73.3%	14.1%	6.6%	2.3%	1.7%
Nearby outdoor recreation areas are dirty or poorly maintained	53.6%	21.6%	13.7%	8.1%	3.0%

Health and Outdoor Recreation

14. During a typical week, other than your regular job, do you participate in any physical activities or exercises in the outdoors? *(Please check one)*

- No – 18.0%
- Yes – 82.0%

15. About how many hours per week do you spend being physically active in the outdoors?

- Hours/Week – Average – 4.5

16. How could outdoor recreation areas/facilities assist you in achieving your health and fitness goals or priorities? *(Please check all that apply)*

- Provide more long distance trails/pathways - 24.2%
- Provide more fitness/exercise stations at outdoor areas/facilities – 8.4%
- Provide informative and educational health-related signage – 4.6%
- Protect and encourage more natural settings at outdoor recreation areas/facilities – 25.0%
- Support health and fitness community events (e.g., 5K races, adventure races, etc) – 8.0%
- I don't have health/fitness goals or priorities – 22.4%
- Other (Please specify): 7.2%

17. Does your workplace/current employer provide programs, incentives, or opportunities for you to participate in outdoor recreational activities? (e.g., paid “walk breaks”) *(Please check one)*

- No – 73.9%
- Yes – 21.0%
- I am not sure – 5.0%

17a. If Yes... Do you participate in any of these programs, incentives, or opportunities? *(Please check one.)*

- No – 29.4%
- Yes – 70.6%

Services and Types of Recreation Opportunities

18. How much of a priority do you feel each of the following types of recreation areas should be for future investment **where you live?** (Please check one for each item)

	Essential Priority	High Priority	Moderate Priority	Low Priority	Not a priority	Unsure
Playgrounds and play areas built with natural materials (e.g., logs, water, sand, trees)	8.9%	18.0%	35.4%	15.2%	17.1%	5.3%
Playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured materials (e.g., swing sets, slides)	5.8%	12.3%	35.4%	20.2%	21.0%	5.4%
Picnic areas and shelters for small groups	6.9%	19.1%	42.1%	16.8%	11.8%	3.3%
Picnic areas and shelters for large groups	5.4%	11.5%	35.9%	26.7%	17.1%	3.5%
Paved/hard surface walking trails and paths	7.2%	16.1%	30.1%	23.6%	19.7%	3.2%
Dirt/soft surface walking trails and paths	8.9%	22.5%	35.7%	16.6%	13.1%	3.2%
Off-highway vehicle trails/areas	6.8%	12.0%	23.4%	22.7%	30.4%	4.7%
Nature and wildlife viewing areas	11.7%	24.1%	35.6%	15.6%	10.3%	2.7%
Multi-use fields for soccer, football, baseball, etc.	5.1%	10.9%	24.8%	23.8%	30.5%	5.0%
Off-leash dog areas	6.9%	13.1%	25.3%	20.5%	29.4%	4.7%

19. Outdoor recreation providers often need to prioritize their efforts. How do you think that recreation providers should prioritize the following activities on recreation areas in Kansas? *(Please check one for each item)*

	Essential priority	High Priority	Moderate Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority	Unsure
Providing educational programs and visitor services	5.0%	13.4%	42.2%	22.7%	12.9%	3.9%
Operation and maintenance of existing infrastructure and facilities	21.8%	38.8%	28.6%	4.5%	3.8%	2.6%
Acquisition of new parks and open space	13.2%	25.5%	36.6%	14.9%	6.9%	3.0%
Development of new facilities at existing recreation sites	10.3%	26.2%	40.2%	14.2%	6.2%	2.9%
Local, regional, and statewide trails	13.2%	23.8%	34.6%	16.1%	9.3%	3.0%
Long-term planning and management	26.7%	32.3%	27.8%	6.1%	4.2%	3.0%

About You

20. In what year were you born?

- Average age = 54

21. With what gender do you identify? *(Please check one)*

- Male – 83.5%
- Female – 15.4%
- Non-binary/third gender – 0.2%
- Prefer not to say – 0.9%

22. What is your current zip code? *See figure 3 and 4 in report*

23. Approximately how many years have you lived in Kansas? *(Please write-in your response here)*

- Average = 39 years

24. How would you describe your racial or ethnic background? *(Select all that apply)*

- White, non-Hispanic/Latinx – 92.6%
- Hispanic/Latinx – 1.4%
- Black or African American – 0.7%
- American Indian or Native Alaskan – 2.0%
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander – 0.2%
- Middle Eastern – 0.1%
- Asian – 0.6%
- Other (Please specify): 2.5%

25. What is your approximate annual household income? *(Please check one)*

- Less than \$20,000 per year – 1.8%
- \$20,000 to \$39,999 per year – 12.1%
- \$40,000 to \$59,999 per year – 20.5%
- \$60,000 to \$79,999 per year – 14.6%
- \$80,000 to \$99,999 per year – 21.6%
- \$100,000 to \$149,999 per year – 21.6%
- Over \$150,000 per year -16.7%
- Prefer not to answer – 12.9%

26. What is the highest degree or level of education you have achieved? *(Please check one)*

- Some high school – 0.8%
- High school – 11.7%
- Some college – 21.1%
- Associate's degree – 10.7%
- Bachelor's degree – 31.2%
- Post-graduate degree – 19.7%
- Trade school – 4.8%

27. Please use the space below to provide any additional comments you may have about outdoor recreation in Kansas.

(OPTIONAL SECTION) In this section, we ask about the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic in your community and your access to nature, green space, and natural areas.

- *Approximately 6,000 participants decided to complete this section – results for this section are supplemental and not included in the body of the report.*

1. Did social distancing and/or stay-at-home orders due to COVID-19 affect your outdoor recreation participation?

- No – 49.1%
- Yes – 50.1%
- I am not sure – 0.9%

1a. If Yes...

Did you participate in outdoor recreation activities more or less than before COVID-19 restrictions?

- More – 32.9%
- Less – 25.5%
- About the Same – 41.6%

2. Did you participate in outdoor recreation activities closer to home during COVID-19 restrictions than you normally would have?

- Yes – 57.7%
- No – 42.3%

3. During the statewide stay-at-home order, how frequently did you spend time in nature at:

	Never	Less than once a week	1-2 times a week	3-6 times a week	Daily
Natural Areas	15.1%	30.3%	27.7%	16.0%	11.0%
Outdoors in your neighborhood	8.3%	13.4%	21.1%	25.7%	31.5%
In your yard	1.8%	3.4%	11.1%	24.7%	59.0%
Garden	27.0%	9.7%	14.8%	17.1%	31.5%
Public Park	42.7%	32.9%	15.5%	6.1%	2.8%

4. Will the pandemic impact your long-term outdoor recreation participation? *(percent yes)*

- more local participation – 25.8%
- less traveling out of state – 34.6%
- more pre-trip planning – 16.7%
- less overnight stays – 15.2%
- Other -7.7%

5. For the items below, please **select up to 3 activities** that you have either increased or decreased your participation the most because of the COVID-19 pandemic since March 11, 2020 (the date when the World Health Organization officially designated COVID-19 as a pandemic)? *(Percent selected)*

- Backpacking – 1.8%
- Bicycling – 6.2%
- Birdwatching or wildlife viewing – 5.5%
- Boating or sailing – 7.4%
- Canoeing, kayaking, rafting, or stand-up paddleboarding – 5.5%
- Climbing (outdoor) – 0.2%
- Equestrian – 0.8%
- Fishing – 22.9%
- Gardening – 8.8%
- Hiking – 8.1%
- Hunting or trapping – 10.3%
- Motorcycling or ATVing – 3.4%
- Recreational flying – 0.5%
- Running (outdoor) – 3.5%
- Shooting or archery – 8.7%

6. Of those activities selected in the previous question, to what degree have you either increased or decreased your participation since March 11, 2020 (the date when the World Health Organization officially designated COVID-19 as a pandemic)?

	>3x less often	3x less often	2x less often	1x less often	1x more often	2x more often	3x more often	>3x more often
Backpacking	19.3%	6.6%	9.1%	12.7%	17.1%	21.1%	5.5%	8.7%
Bicycling	6.8%	2.8%	7.4%	5.1%	19.7%	30.8%	14.2%	13.3%
Bird watching or wildlife viewing	7.5%	3.6%	5.4%	4.7%	19.6%	27.9%	16.6%	14.7%
Boating or sailing	14.1%	5.3%	9.5%	7.0%	17.2%	25.5%	10.5%	10.8%
Canoeing, kayaking, rafting, or stand-up paddleboarding	12.0%	4.4%	10.7%	7.4%	18.6%	26.4%	11.0%	9.6%
Climbing (outdoor)	25.7%	8.6%	14.3%	11.4%	17.1%	14.3%	5.7%	2.9%
Equestrian	12.3%	6.6%	13.1%	4.9%	12.3%	23.8%	11.5%	15.6%
Fishing	10.8%	4.8%	8.8%	7.3%	17.3%	25.3%	13.6%	12.0%
Gardening	1.9%	1.1%	0.8%	1.9%	18.1%	28.3%	21.2%	26.6%
Hiking	10.8%	5.2%	8.1%	6.6%	19.5%	25.9%	14.0%	10.1%
Hunting or Trapping	12.8%	5.0%	9.2%	14.0%	24.5%	19.9%	7.6%	7.0%
Motorcycling or ATVing	8.2%	5.1%	7.4%	6.6%	16.4%	30.7%	12.9%	12.7%
Recreational flying	28.2%	1.4%	11.3%	12.7%	21.1%	16.9%	2.8%	5.6%
Running (outdoor)	7.6%	2.1%	5.0%	5.3%	21.0%	28.6%	14.9%	15.6%
Shooting or archery	13.6%	5.6%	8.4%	3.8%	11.6%	17.2%	13.8%	19.5%

7. Please indicate by what amount you have changed your use of the following types of recreation areas since March 11th, 2020 (the date when the World Health Organization officially designated COVID-19 as a pandemic)?

	>3x less often	3x less often	2x less often	1x less often	1x more often	2x more often	3x more often	>3x more often
Private land or waters	12.3%	2.6%	5.5%	18.5%	26.5%	17.2%	8.8%	8.5%
Neighborhood or city streets	15.5%	5.8%	10.7%	20.5%	19.4%	15.2%	7.1%	5.8%
City or town parks	25.9%	8.0%	11.7%	23.2%	15.7%	9.7%	3.3%	2.5%
County or regional parks	22.5%	6.7%	10.9%	24.6%	19.0%	10.7%	2.9%	2.7%
Land trust or conservancy lands	24.4%	5.2%	7.7%	35.5%	18.9%	5.0%	1.6%	1.7%
State parks	17.3%	5.8%	9.2%	20.1%	20.2%	15.2%	7.1%	5.2%
State forests	23.2%	5.6%	8.0%	32.7%	19.0%	6.7%	2.5%	2.0%
State game management lands	19.0%	5.2%	8.3%	25.1%	21.2%	12.8%	4.7%	3.7%
National forests or grasslands	23.3%	5.7%	7.9%	32.2%	19.3%	6.9%	2.5%	2.2%

8. How likely are you to continue or return to your preferred recreation behaviors/patterns when you perceive the threat of COVID-19 has become minimal?

- Extremely likely – 68.0%
- Moderately likely – 14.2%
- Slightly likely – 4.0%
- Neither likely nor unlikely – 10.5%
- Slightly unlikely – 1.4%
- Moderately unlikely – 0.9%
- Extremely unlikely – 1.1%

9. Do you perceive that your outdoor recreation behavior (i.e. where, when, how, and with whom) will change in the long-term following the World Health Organization’s official announcement ending the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes – 38.1%
- No – 61.9%

Appendix B



Manager Survey & Results Summary

Managing Lands and Providing Outdoor Recreation Opportunities in Kansas

Background

1. Please indicate which of the following agencies or organizations you work for. *(Please check only one)*

- Federal agency – 7.7%
- State agency – 46.2%
- Private institution – 0%
- City/Town – 25.7%
- County – 5.1%
- Metro districts/Municipality – 2.6%
- Land Trust – 5.1%
- Other (please specify): 7.7%

2. Please indicate your current job title: See report

3. Please provide your e-mail address: n/a

Agency/organization characteristics

4. Does your agency/organization have one or more planning documents that guide decisions related to the use/management of parks, trails, and/or open space? *(Please check one)*

- No – 6.3%
- Yes – 93.8%

5. Which of the following characterizes your agency/organization's planning document(s)? *(Percent checked)*

- Addresses specific natural resource management alternatives (e.g., noxious weed management, habitat restoration, etc.) – 12.4%
- Encourages public/stakeholder engagement throughout the planning process – 10.7%
- Formally adopted by governing body (e.g., city council, county commissioners, board of directors) – 8.3%
- Leverages volunteers or partners to support land stewardship – 8.3%
- Includes educational programs engaging people in outdoor conservation – 11.8%
- Addresses gaps in outdoor recreation needs – 8.9%
- Addresses facility needs (e.g., new buildings/updates) – 15.4%
- Outlines regulatory policies and enforcement strategies – 10.7%
- Identifies strategies for increasing diversity, inclusion, and equity in outdoor recreation - 9.5%

Outdoor recreation profile

6. Please select the type(s) of land, park, open space, etc. your agency/organization is responsible for managing (*Percent checked*)

- Neighborhood or community parks – 9.4%
- Special use parks (e.g., dog parks, skateboard parks, playgrounds, etc.) – 14.0%
- State Parks or State Wildlife Areas – 16.8%
- Open lands (e.g., open space, natural areas, mountain parks) – 15.9%
- Conservation or access easements – 7.5%
- Federal lands (e.g., National Parks, National Forests, wilderness areas, etc.) – 5.6%
- Reservoir parks – 10.3%
- Regional, county, or local trails/greenways – 8.4%

7. Approximately how many acres of land, open space, parks, etc. do **you** manage within **your jurisdiction**? To note: If unknown, please leave blank.

- Range from 8 to 108,000 acres

8. Approximately how many miles of trails/greenways do **you** manage within **your jurisdiction**?

- Average 72 miles

9. Does your agency/organization offer programs related to the following topics? (*Please check one per topic*)

	No	Yes	Yes, but programs are provided by another partner or outside group	Unsure
Health: Wellness, nutritional guidance, weight loss initiative, etc.	45.2%	41.9%	9.7%	3.2%
Environmental/Conservation education: Interpretive, outdoor, or environmental education programs	16.1%	74.2%	6.5%	3.2%
Recreation: Sports, fitness, athletics	32.3%	45.2%	19.4%	3.2%

10. Approximately how many people, on average, annually attend the following types of programs offered by your agency/organization? Note: If your agency does not offer a particular program, please enter zero (“0”). (*Average number of people*)

- Health: Wellness, nutritional guidance, weight loss initiative, etc. - 926
- Environmental/Conservation education: Interpretive, outdoor, or environmental education programs – 5,247
- Recreation: Sports, fitness, athletics – 50,562

Volunteers

11. Do volunteers assist your agency/organization in providing any of the following? *(Please check only one per item)*

	No	Yes	Unsure
Visitor services	41.9%	58.1%	0%
Maintenance or construction	21.9%	78.1%	0%
Natural resource management	41.9%	54.8%	3.2%
Cultural resource management	46.9%	53.1%	0%
Administrative or clerical services	54.8%	41.9%	3.2%
Informal education (e.g. <i>interpretive/naturalist</i>)	38.7%	61.3%	0%
Formal education (e.g. <i>school programs</i>)	53.1%	43.8%	0%
Wildlife research/citizen science	56.3%	43.9%	7.1%

12. Does your agency/organization track annual volunteer hours? *(Please check one.)*

- Yes, we track **total hours** only – 43.8%
- Yes, we track total hours by volunteer **project/service** – 34.4%
- No, we do not track hours – 21.9%

13. Approximately how many total volunteer hours did your agency/organization track during the previous 12-month period? *(Please write-in your best estimate here)*

- Median hours reported = 1,172

Funding and investment needs

14. Please indicate whether your agency/organization receives dedicated funding for park, open space, trail investments, etc. through any of the following. *(Percent checked)*

- Fee-in-Lieu – 28.2%
- Use or property tax – 12.8%
- Congressional appropriations – 7.7%
- Sales tax – 10.3%
- Bonds – 0%
- Impact fees – 0%
- Local government general funds (no dedicated source) – 10.3
- My agency does not have dedicated funding for park, open space, trail investments etc. – 23.1%

15. How significant are the following **funding issues** related to outdoor recreation, parks, open-space, etc. for your agency/organization? (Please check only **one** response for **each** potential funding issue)

	Not at all significant	Somewhat significant	Moderately significant	Very significant
Fee-in-Lieu	25.0%	0%	12.5%	62.5%
Use or property tax	7.7%	15.4%	7.7%	69.2%
Congressional appropriations	25.0%	25.0%	0%	50.0%
Sales tax	23.1%	0%	15.4%	61.5%
Bonds	18.2%	18.2%	27.3%	36.4%
Impact fees	55.6%	11.1%	0%	33.3%
Local government general funds (no dedicated source)	21.4%	7.1%	21.4%	50.0%
My agency does not have dedicated funding for park, open space, trail investments etc.	40.0%	0%	0%	60.0%

16. Approximately what is your agency/organization's unmet financial need related to outdoor recreation, parks, open-space, etc. in Kansas? (Percent checked)

- No unmet financial need -3.7%
- Less than \$50,000 annually – 18.5%
- \$50,001 - \$150,000 annually – 11.1%
- \$150,001 - \$350,000 annually – 3.7%
- \$350,001 - \$550,000 annually – 7.4%
- \$550,001 - \$1,000,000 annually – 0%
- \$1,000,001 - \$3,000,000 annually – 22.2%
- Greater than \$3,000,000 annually – 33.3%

17. Which of the following has your agency/organization done during times of financial shortfall?
(Percent checked)

- Applied for grants – 17.0%
- Increased user fees – 14.3%
- Sought sponsorship or donations – 15.2%
- Reduced services or staff – 18.8%
- Relied on additional volunteer services – 17.0%
- Held fundraisers – 5.4%
- Increased taxes (property/sales) – 2.7%
- Bonds measure – 0.9%
- None of the above – 1.8%

18. Please indicate the extent to which your efforts were successful at meeting your agency’s/ organization’s unmet financial need. (Please check one response per effort)

	Not at all successful	Somewhat successful	Moderately successful	Very successful
Applied for grants	8.0%	32.0%	40.0%	20.0%
Increased user fees	5.6%	27.8%	55.6%	11.1%
Sought sponsorship or donations	17.7%	47.1%	23.5%	11.8%
Reduced services or staff	21.7%	47.8%	21.7%	8.7
Relied on additional volunteer services	15.0%	60.0%	10.0%	15.0%
Held fundraisers	*	*	*	*
Increased taxes	*	*	*	*
Bond measure	*	*	*	*
None of the above	*	*	*	*

*not enough data to report

Management issues

19. How significant are the following **management issues** for your agency/organization? (*Please check only one response per management issue*)

	Not at all significant	Somewhat significant	Moderately significant	Very significant
Capacity to serve a growing population (e.g., crowding/overuse of parks, trails, etc.)	0%	14.8%	29.6%	55.6%
Coordination/cooperation with other outdoor recreation	7.4%	22.2%	33.3%	37.0%
Maintaining existing recreation infrastructure or resources	0%	0%	3.6%	96.4%
Adapting to changing user needs/preferences	0%	11.1%	33.3%	55.7%
Conflicts among recreationists	28.0%	28.0%	32.0%	12.0%
Human-wildlife interactions	44.0%	32.0%	8.0%	16.0%
Off-leash dogs	14.8%	22.2%	29.6%	33.3%
Capacity to manage volunteers	11.5%	23.1%	34.6%	30.8%
Displaced or homeless community members	44.0%	36.0%	8.0%	12.0%
Creating or updating your agency/organization's parks, trails, and/or open space plan	8.0%	16.0%	28.0%	48.0%
Vandalism	15.4%	30.8%	26.9%	26.9%
Engaging partner organizations for programs or agency/organization needs	8.0%	24.0%	40.0%	28.0%
Engaging volunteer or youth corps assistance for programs/agency needs	8.0%	28.0%	36.0%	28.0%
Adapting to climate change	37.5%	29.2%	8.3%	25.0%

Recreational access to rivers	26.1%	13.0%	43.5%	17.4%
Educating public on user ethics	7.7%	34.6%	11.5%	46.2%
Promoting tourism and economic development	12.5%	16.7%	16.7%	54.2%

Visitor Service Issues

20. How significant are the following **visitor service issues** for your agency/organization? (*Please check only one response per management issue*)

	Not at all significant	Somewhat significant	Moderately significant	Very significant
Being able to offer interpretive/outdoor education programs	4.0%	20.0%	36.0%	40.0%
Providing access for people with disabilities	3.6%	17.9%	10.7%	67.9%
Addressing trail connectivity issues	3.9%	26.9%	34.6%	34.6%
Providing recreation programs/opportunities for <i>seniors</i>	3.6%	19.2%	26.9%	50.0%
Providing recreation programs/opportunities for <i>youth</i>	7.4%	7.4%	14.8%	70.4%
Providing public information about facilities and programs	0%	11.1%	33.3%	55.6%
Providing adequate trail and interpretive signage	3.9%	7.7%	42.3%	46.2%
Maintaining visitor safety and protection	3.7%	7.4%	7.4%	81.5%
Enforcing responsible visitor use	3.9%	7.7%	23.1%	65.4%

Natural Resource Management/Conservation Issues

21. What is the **most significant** threat your agency/organization is currently facing with respect to **conserving natural resources** in Kansas? *(Please use the space below to write-in your response)*

- Lack of adequate funding, dealing with inadequate staffing numbers and aging infrastructure most cited.

Outdoor recreation needs

22. Looking ahead at the next five years, how much of a priority do you think the following types of **new** outdoor recreation sites or activities will be for your agency/organization? *(Please check only one response per item)*

	Not a priority	Low Priority	Somewhat of a priority	Moderate Priority	High Priority
Expanding the amount of open lands	8.0%	20.0%	24.0%	16.0%	32.0%
Developing neighborhood, community or special use parks or facilities (e.g., playgrounds)	7.7%	7.7%	42.3%	26.9%	15.4%
Obtaining access easements or rights of way	16.7%	20.8%	45.8%	4.2%	12.5%
Developing team sports facilities	29.2%	25.0%	25.0%	8.3%	12.5%
Expanding opportunities or access for water-based recreation	16.0%	12.0%	12.0%	28.0%	32.0%
Expanding opportunities for hunting or fishing	11.5%	23.1%	7.7%	38.5%	19.2%
Expanding community trail systems	11.1%	0%	14.8%	22.2%	51.6%
Connecting regional trail systems	8.0%	8.0%	20.0%	28.0%	36.0%
Developing local agriculture (e.g. community gardens, beekeeping, etc.)	29.2%	33.3%	16.7%	16.7%	4.2%
Improving outdoor interpretive/educational facilities or programs	7.4%	7.4%	29.6%	14.8%	40.7%

Developing swimming pools/water parks	34.6%	23.1%	15.4%	11.5%	15.4%
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Trails

23. Please indicate the extent to which any of the following represent current trail-related priorities of your agency/organization. *(Please check one response per priority)*

	Not a priority	Low Priority	Somewhat of a priority	Moderate Priority	High Priority
Reducing user conflicts	11.5%	26.9%	23.1%	26.9%	11.5%
Connecting community assets (e.g., a park to a neighborhood or school)	8.3%	12.5%	33.3%	29.2%	16.7%
Creating opportunities for motorized trail users (e.g., OHVs)	29.6%	22.2%	22.2%	18.5%	7.4%
Creating opportunities for non-motorized trail users (e.g., hikers, mountain bikers)	7.4%	7.4%	11.1%	33.3%	40.7%
Maintaining existing trails	3.6%	3.6%	7.1%	25.0%	60.7%
Providing connections between existing trails	3.9%	11.5%	7.7%	34.6%	42.3%
Re-routing/improving trails to modern, sustainable design	7.4%	14.8%	11.1%	22.2%	44.4%
Providing education and interpretive opportunities	7.7%	3.9%	23.1%	23.1%	42.3%
Providing adequate parking/access to existing trails	17.9%	10.7%	17.9%	35.7%	17.9%
Enhancing trails/trailheads with amenities (e.g., bathroom facilities)	14.8%	14.8%	7.4%	22.2%	40.7%

In this section, we ask about how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your park or protected areas. Results for this section are supplemental and not included in the body of the report.

24. Did your park or protected area close at any time due to the pandemic?

- Yes – 28.6%
- No – 71.4%

24a. If yes, how long, in days, was your park or protected area closed?

- 45-60 days

25. Since reopening, or if you remained open during the pandemic, have you seen:

- an increase in visitation – 89.3%
- a decrease in visitation – 3.6%
- visitation has remained stable – 7.1%

26. Have you observed visitors practicing social distancing measures:

- Yes – 78.6%
- No – 17.9%
- Unsure – 3.6%

26a. If yes, are the *majority* of visitors observing social distancing recommendations?

- Yes – 78.3%
- No – 21.7%

27. Have you observed visitors wearing masks:

- Yes – 53.6%
- No – 39.3%
- Unsure – 7.1%

27a. If yes, are the *majority* of visitors wearing masks?

- Yes – 29.4%
- No – 70.6%

28. How likely do you feel visitors are to continue or return to their preferred recreation behaviors/patterns when they perceive the threat of COVID-19 has become minimal?

- Extremely likely – 46.4%
- Very likely – 32.1%
- Moderately likely – 14.3%
- Slightly likely – 7.1%
- Not at all likely – 0%

29. Do you perceive that your visitors' outdoor recreation behavior (i.e. where, when, how, and with whom) will change in the long-term following the World Health Organization's official announcement ending the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes – 53.6%
- No – 46.4%

About You

30. Approximately how many years have you worked for your agency/organization?

- 0 - 5 years – 17.9%
- 6 - 10 years – 14.3%
- 11 - 15 years – 17.9%
- 16 - 20 years – 21.4%
- 21 - 25 years – 10.7%
- 26 - 30 years – 14.3%
- 31 years or more – 3.6%

