



CHAPTER 7

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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This 2014-2018 SCORP for Montana provides a framework for collective action by providing a solid vision, based on data and public input, and offering recommendations for making the vision into a reality. Recommendations are grouped into four priority areas which, for the next five years, will serve as a guiding list for all stakeholders in outdoor recreation. Implementing the recommendations in this SCORP will bring Montana to the forefront of outdoor recreation in the nation, and provide a model for quality of life, economic vitality, long-term sustainability, and high quality service provision.

GOAL 1

IMPROVE
QUALITY
OF LIFE

GOAL 2

SUSTAIN
ECONOMIC
VITALITY

GOAL 3

PROMOTE
STEWARDSHIP &
SUSTAINABILITY

GOAL 4

ENHANCE
AGENCY
COORDINATION
& SERVICE
PROVISION

Anticipated partners in the implementation of the recommendations provided in 2014-2018 SCORP are detailed after each recommendation. The SCORP is a guiding document, and as such, it is up to agencies to take initiative and move forward with recommendations. Still, it can be expected that some agencies and partners will take leadership to ensure we are moving forward with the SCORP recommendations. Those leaders are indicated, however all partners are encouraged to participate. The anticipated list of partners, although not exhaustive, includes the following agencies and institutional organizations:

FEDERAL	STATE	LOCAL	INSTITUTIONAL
U.S. FOREST SERVICE (USFS)	FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS (FWP)	CITY GOVERNMENTS (CITIES)	MONTANA TRAILS, RECREATION & PARKS ASSOCIATION (MTRPA)
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM)	DEPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (DPHHS)	COUNTY GOVERNMENTS (COUNTIES)	MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (MACO)
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (NPS)	DEPT. OF COMMERCE (MDC)	MONTANA TOURISM REGIONS (TOURISM REGIONS)	MONTANA LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS (MLCT)
U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE (USFWS)	DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION (MDT)	CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE (CC)	MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM (MUS)
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION (BOR)	DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION (DNRC)	BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BID)	MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF PLANNERS (MAP)
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (ACOE)	DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (DPI)	TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS (TRIBES)	TRIBAL COLLEGES

GOAL 1: IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

OBJECTIVE: STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS BETWEEN OUTDOOR RECREATION, HEALTHY LIFESTYLES, PUBLIC SAFETY AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES.

GOAL 1

IMPROVE
QUALITY
OF LIFE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH THE OUTDOORS:

- 1** Improve access to outdoor recreation resources, facilities, and trails to connect public lands to communities and encourage routine, daily outdoor activity everywhere Montanans live, work, learn, and play.
 - *Federal, State, Local, Institutional partners*
- 2** Collaborate with educational professionals, institutions, and organizations to align and support programs that encourage outdoor education and environmental learning opportunities on public lands and advance awareness and understanding of the benefits of nature.
 - *FWP, DPI, MUS, Counties, Cities, Tribes, Tribal Colleges*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY:

- 3** Expand the availability of Montana-specific data on the health benefits of recreation for analysis, distribution, and public awareness.
 - *DPHHS, Counties, Cities, MUS*
- 4** Provide priority for Montana State Parks-administered trail grant requests that enhance Montanans' connections to the outdoors, encourage healthy and active lifestyles, and support close-to-home trail acquisition and development, as identified through a local or regional planning process.
 - *FWP*
- 5** Support efforts to expand trails prescription programs (e.g. Montana Trails Rx) into all Montana communities through the utilization of local trails and partnerships with local health care providers, professionals, and insurance agencies. Promote the development of walking and bicycling facilities that encourage physical activity for all ages and abilities.
 - *FWP, DPHHS, MTRPA, MACO, MLCT, Cities, Counties, Tribes*
- 6** Support the adoption of workplace health promotion programs in Montana.
 - *Federal, State, Local, Institutional partners*
- 7** Promote and expand programs, initiatives, and facilities that encourage winter outdoor activities, especially cross-country skiing/snowshoe trails, sledding/tubing areas, and outdoor ice rinks. Work with partners to develop messaging and identify opportunities to encourage safe and healthy participation in all outdoor recreation activities during the winter.
 - *FWP, Federal partners, MTRPA, Cities, Counties, Tribes, Tourism Regions*
- 8** Actively monitor safety incidents and disseminate information regarding the inherent risks associated with outdoor recreation programs (e.g. weather, terrain, boating and water safety, human-wildlife conflicts, avalanche safety, snowmobile and OHV safety) through education, outreach and multi-media.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, MTRPA*
- 9** Integrate public safety and risk management into the design, construction, maintenance, operations and management of outdoor recreational facilities and areas.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, MTRPA*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS:

- 10** Advocate for the adoption of policies in Montana communities that support walking and bicycling through all aspects of community planning and transportation documents, policies, and design guidelines to connect neighborhoods and expand community networks.
 - *DPHHS, MDT, FWP, MTRPA, MACO, MLCT, MAP, Cities, Counties, Tribes*
- 11** Identify opportunities with the Montana Department of Transportation and local transportation departments to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian facilities in road re-development. Make greater use of transportation right-of-ways and easements for recreational trail development.
 - *DPHHS, MTRPA, MDT, FWP, Counties, Cities, Tribes, MAP*
- 12** Encourage development/expansion of new or existing alternative transportation systems to parks, open spaces, and public lands, including ADA accessible transportation by bus, rail, and non-motorized systems such as pedestrian and bicycle trails. Investigate opportunities to expand privately-owned/enterprise shuttle services to public and private recreation areas. Investigate transportation solutions to bring programming to youth where they live, learn, and play that helps get them outside and active.
 - *MTRPA, MDT, FWP, Local partners*
- 13** Support the continued expansion of Safe Routes to Schools program for Montana communities, particularly rural communities, and encourage development of a Safe Routes to Nature program connecting schools and communities to public lands.
 - *MDT, DPI, MTRPA, Cities, Counties, Tribes, CC, BID, FWP*
- 14** Revise and update the Montana Statewide Trails Plan with input from federal, state, local, and tribal agencies, as well as advocacy and user groups. In the plan, identify regional trails for development and funding sources for consideration.
 - *FWP, Federal partners, MDT, Counties, Cities, MTRPA, MACO, MLCT, MAP, Tribes*
- 15** Conduct a review of current recreation opportunities offered for youth, seniors, low-income individuals, and people with disabilities. Identify methods to promote these facilities better to these groups.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, MTRPA, Cities, Counties, Tribes, DPHHS*
- 16** Integrate universal design principles into the design, construction and maintenance of outdoor recreation facilities to improve accessibility for people of all abilities. Work cooperatively to improve the accessibility, safety, and use of trails and facilities through universal design principles.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, Counties, Cities, Tribes*
- 17** Continue to acquire and develop lake and river access sites to meet water-based recreation needs.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, Counties, Cities*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT:

- 18** Collaboratively develop strategies and initiatives among recreation providers, Montana Trails, Recreation and Parks Association, and partners to engage Montana's youth in outdoor activities and on public lands. Encourage development of a Montana Youth Outdoor Bill of Rights that promotes activities for youth at different ages.
 - *FWP, Federal partners, MTRPA*
- 19** Expand recreation opportunities and connections for youth winter activities through the development of public facilities, partnership programs, and alternative modes of transportation.
 - *MTRPA, Counties, Cities, Federal partners, FWP*
- 20** Develop a statewide program for youth/young adult participation and empowerment on boards and commissions at the federal, state, and local level to foster the next generation of leaders and advocate for the influence of young voices Montana government.
 - *Federal partners, State partners, Counties, Cities*
- 21** Foster the next generation of outdoor recreation professionals by expanding opportunities for youth/young adult employment in the parks and recreation field through internships, volunteer programs, mentoring, and partnerships with federal, state, and local recreation agencies, Montana educational institutions, Tribal colleges, Montana State Parks AmeriCorps program, and Montana Conservation Corps.
 - *Federal partners, State partners, Counties, Cities, MUS, Tribes, Tribal Colleges*
- 22** Implement innovative youth programs and opportunities for unstructured nature appreciation and exploration that gets children offline, outside, and beyond traditional playgrounds.
 - *MTRPA, FWP, Counties, Cities, USFS, NPS, Tribes*

GOAL 2: SUSTAIN ECONOMIC VITALITY

OBJECTIVE: ASSESS AND ADAPT TO THE GROWING RECREATION AND TOURISM DEMANDS AND CHANGING PREFERENCES OF RESIDENTS AND VISITORS, AND PROMOTE THE BENEFITS OF RECREATION TO STATE AND LOCAL ECONOMIES.

GOAL 2

SUSTAIN ECONOMIC VITALITY

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1** Coordinate marketing and messaging with community, regional, and state tourism information providers and local lodging associations and chambers of commerce to keep information about facilities and recreation opportunities up-to-date, compelling and relevant for visitors and local users.
 - *MDC, MTRPA, Federal partners, FWP, DNRC, Local partners*
- 2** Expand programming and broaden services/opportunities to attract and engage populations not traditionally served through varied, innovative, and culturally relevant offerings, including youth, Native Americans, seniors, and people with disabilities.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, DPHHS, Local Partners, MTRPA, Tribes, MUS, Tribal Colleges*
- 3** Promote new technology, signage and wayfinding standards in communities and areas to help visitors of all abilities identify and access information quickly, easily, and efficiently about local trails, recreation amenities, community hubs, and nearby public lands for recreation. Work with the Montana Department of Transportation, local government, community development and tourism organizations to keep content, signage, and technology current.
 - *Local partners, MDC, MTRPA, MDT, MACO, MLCT, DPHHS, Tribes*
- 4** Encourage the development of natural, cultural and/or heritage-themed tours of communities, public lands, and Tribal Nations across Montana that connects visitors to recreation resources for both motorized and non-motorized modes of travel. Evaluate amenities and overnight opportunities that will enhance these experiences.
 - *Tourism Regions, MDC, CC, BID, Federal partners, FWP, Counties, Cities, Tribes*
- 5** Develop a Montana interactive public lands information platform to establish consistent, seamless public information, enhance knowledge of public lands access, and enable the public to see the full scope of available recreation opportunities. Develop and disseminate a database to promote paths and trails across the state, identifying activity types, distance and degree of difficulty.
 - *FWP, Federal partners, Local partners, MTRPA, MDC*
- 6** Work with recreation user groups to develop and promote recreational opportunities and amenities in communities through connections with tourism organizations and service providers.
 - *Local partners, FWP, MDC, MTRPA*
- 7** Encourage federal, state, city, county, and Tribal recreation providers to share their visitation data on an annual basis to the Montana Office of Tourism, the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, and other tourism stakeholders to facilitate a stronger understanding of tourism-related recreation trends.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, Local partners*
- 8** Research and understand the impacts of energy development and population growth on Montana recreation providers, communities, and tourism demands and preferences.
 - *Institutional partners, Local partners, MDC, FWP, Federal partners*

GOAL 3: PROMOTE STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

OBJECTIVE A: PROTECT AND ENHANCE MONTANA'S NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND HERITAGE ASSETS BY GROWING A RESPONSIBLE RECREATION LAND ETHIC AMONG RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1** Work with outdoor recreation ethics organizations (e.g. Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics and Tread Lightly!) to develop and distribute promotional materials and messages to promote safe and responsible recreational use of public lands. Support educational efforts with public service announcements, signage, and interpretive programs.
 - *FWP, Federal partners, Local partners, MTRPA*
- 2** Provide priority for urban refuge and wetland conservation grant requests that enhance awareness and connectivity between wetlands and communities through partnerships to increase the urban refuge and wetland presence in Montana cities.
 - *FWP, USFWS, Cities*
- 3** Encourage management of public lands and waters within a larger landscape context to adapt to changing conditions, and conserve and restore ecosystems and watershed health.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, DNRC, Counties, Cities*
- 4** Support efforts of the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Montana Historical Society, Tribal Historic Preservation Office, and the State Parks & Recreation Board to address growing preservation and maintenance needs on historic site and cultural properties throughout the state.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, MTRPA, Tourism Regions*
- 5** Promote and support programs that teach about and connect residents and visitors to Montana's diverse natural and cultural heritage. Encourage interagency heritage programming within a larger recreation context to deliver cohesive experiences with other related historic sites and cultural properties.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, MDC, Tourism Regions*
- 6** Establish an interagency working group to implement strategies that address vandalism, adverse resource impacts and inappropriate use on public lands. Develop and distribute educational messages to raise awareness of problem and identify measures for land managers and the public to combat and mitigate vandalism.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, Counties, Cities, MTRPA, MACO, MLCT, MDC, Tourism Regions*
- 7** Develop programming that discusses the challenges and opportunities of the urban/rural interface, including fire, weed control, wildlife encounters, and habitat conservation.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, DNRC*
- 8** Provide education and awareness of how recreation uses can impact the natural resources along with actions to reduce those impacts. Partner with related organizations and user groups to deliver educational and interpretive messages.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, DNRC, Counties, Cities, Tribes, MUS, Tribal Colleges*



OBJECTIVE B: DEVELOP CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDS FOR ROUTINE AND PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE OF CURRENT FACILITIES, AS WELL AS EXPAND DEVELOPMENT OF FACILITIES TO MEET THE GROWING NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1** Explore opportunities to develop a Montana State Parks-administered grant program based on new revenue sources to adequately fund state and local recreation trails projects and programs that enhance access for all Montanans.
 - *FWP, MTRPA*
- 2** Establish regional working groups with federal, state, local, and Tribal governments and other stakeholders to investigate opportunities for interagency partnerships to share staff, expertise, and resources to reduce operations and maintenance costs.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, DNRC, MDT, Counties, Cities, Tribes*
- 3** Investigate funding opportunities for state and local park and recreation agencies to replace failing public recreation infrastructure and/or provide capacity to meet increased service demand due to growth.
 - *FWP, Counties, Cities, Tribes*
- 4** Provide municipalities the ability to acquire, at low or no cost, surplus vehicles and equipment from state and federal agencies for use by city and county recreation programs.
 - *MACO, MLCT, Cities, Counties, Federal partners, FWP, DNRC, MDT, Tribes*
- 5** Develop sustainable operation recommendations for parks and recreation providers to reduce operation and maintenance costs, including volunteer recruitment and engagement on maintenance and stewardship projects.
 - *FWP, MTRPA, Federal partners*
- 6** Support an open and public dialogue that analyzes recreation data and trends to proactively address management challenges and determine if the correct recreation needs are being met at the correct recreation sites and facilities.
 - *Federal partners, FWP, Counties, Cities, MTRPA, Tourism Regions*
- 7** Work with the Montana Dept. of Commerce various financial and technical assistance programs to identify additional resources (e.g. Community Development Block Grant Program, Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund, Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program Grant) to fund recreation projects and improvements connected to housing and community development projects and neighborhood renewal projects.
 - *FWP, MDC*

- 8** Encourage public land and recreation-focused nonprofit organizations in Montana to identify more stable sources of financial and in-kind support for local and state recreation programs. Encourage non-traditional funding for the development, maintenance, and renovation of outdoor recreation facilities and resources, including private-public partnerships.
- *FWP, MTRPA, Cities, Counties*
- 9** Increase the capacity and efficiency of public lands friends groups, volunteers and user groups to provide support for recreation facilities and initiatives while meeting the goals of public land managers. Support advocacy building and development of new friends and user groups.
- *FWP, MTPRA, Federal partners, Cities, Counties*
- 10** Explore strategies to meet the growing demand for new recreation facility development at the local level through public-private partnerships, concessionaires, user groups, grant programs, and revenue-generating programs. Consider outdoor aquatic facilities (i.e. outdoor pools, splash/spray decks), ice facilities (i.e. hockey, skating, curling), sports facilities (i.e. sport courts, fields, disc golf courses), and outdoor climbing areas. Explore strategies to reduce long-term costs for operations and maintenance.
- *MTPRA, Cities, Counties, FWP, Tribes*
- 11** Advocate for the reauthorization of the LWCF Act in 2015 to full funding and at equitable levels between federal and stateside apportionments. Encourage broadening the funding criteria to reflect maintenance costs, and to allow communities to more easily repurpose previously funded recreation developments to reflect changes in demand.
- *State, Local, Institutional partners*
- 12** Support reauthorization of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to allow federal agencies to generate revenue for improved sites while maintaining free access to undeveloped sites and lands.
- *State, Local, Institutional partners*

GOAL 4: ENHANCE AGENCY COORDINATION, COOPERATION AND SERVICE PROVISION

OBJECTIVE: PROMOTE A SEAMLESS SYSTEM OF COORDINATED MANAGEMENT AMONG RECREATION PROVIDERS AND AGENCIES AT ALL LEVELS.

GOAL 4 ENHANCE AGENCY COORDINATION & SERVICE PROVISION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1** Provide collective leadership on recreation challenges in Montana, promote resources and information exchange, and expand opportunities on public lands.
 - *Federal, State, Local, Institutional partners*
- 2** Partner on projects that span agency boundaries and link communities to their public lands and provide access from community staging areas to adjacent public recreation opportunities and settings.
 - *Federal, FWP, Cities, Counties, Tribes*
- 3** Actively participate in recreation planning efforts on regional and statewide levels to collaboratively develop direction for recreation programs and facilities that enhance communities and compliment recreation opportunities and settings provided by other agencies and providers.
 - *Federal, State, Local, Institutional partners*
- 4** Promote and support interagency efforts for the America's Great Outdoors Initiative and the Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation to achieve more cooperation and collaboration among federal and state agencies for outdoor recreation management.
 - *Federal partners, FWP*
- 5** Advocate and develop standards for recreation policies that encourage recreation planning and enhance active living for Montanans of all abilities as part of long range planning at the city and county level.
 - *State, Local, Institutional partners*
- 6** Provide resources and technical information on best practices for management, maintenance and other related topics for parks and recreation for small departments in local governments, who have limited resources and ability to research these topics.
 - *MTRPA, FWP, Cities, Counties, MACO, MLCT, MAP, Tribes*

7 Seek ways to integrate Montana State Parks-administered grant programs into broader efforts to generate more effective linkages between local outdoor recreation efforts and other community development goals, including economic development, livability, human health, conservation, community identify, and cultural preservation and enhancement.

• *FWP, DPHHS, MDC, Tourism Regions, MTRPA*

8 Develop a statewide inventory of outdoor recreation facilities, amenities, and trails on public lands and create a central source for distribution.

• *FWP, Federal partners, Local partners, MTRPA*

9 Develop baseline metrics for parks, trails, and open spaces at the city and county level. Create, maintain, and disseminate a spatial platform for development of community recreation standards that promote recreation research and analysis.

• *FWP, MTRPA, MUS, MAP, Cities, Counties*

10 Promote the SCORP survey results among partners, and encourage recreation providers and associations to use SCORP data to develop messages and communication tools to build local and statewide political, community, and financial support for parks and recreation in Montana. Recruit new data sources for future analysis.

• *Federal, State, Local, Institutional partners*

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