



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Outdoor recreation economy surges in Utah, according to U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Salt Lake City — The U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) has released economic data for 2021 exhibiting outdoor recreation's powerful and positive economic impact on the U.S. economy. The outdoor recreation economy in Utah grew 27.3% from 2020 to 2021, according to the BEA Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account. This year's report shows that outdoor recreation creates \$6.1 billion in value added for Utah, accounts for 2.7% of Utah GDP and includes 66,736 jobs.

This is the largest recorded measure for Utah since the BEA started calculating the size of the outdoor recreation economy in 2012.

"Time and time again, the outdoor recreation industry has been a consistent economic and jobs driver for Utah, and our communities throughout the state are seeing the economic benefits from access to the outdoors," said Tara McKee, Division of Outdoor Recreation's associate director of grants and planning. "These numbers confirm what we've seen on the ground: people are flocking to the outdoors like never before, and we will continue to work to ensure that all Utahns can live a healthy and active lifestyle through outdoor recreation."

Key Highlights from the 2021 data on the outdoor recreation economy in Utah:

- *\$6.1 billion in economic output*
- *2.7% of Utah GDP*
- *66,736 jobs*
- *Largest recorded measure for Utah since the BEA started calculating the size of the outdoor recreation economy in 2012*

At a national level, these new numbers show outdoor recreation generates **\$862** billion in economic output, comprises 3% of U.S. employees and creates 4.5 million jobs. This means the outdoor recreation economy contributes more to the U.S. economy than farming, oil and gas extraction, mining, and utilities. ([Link to ORR Website](#))

This is the fifth consecutive year that BEA has released government data on this critical industry sector. Today's release shows how the outdoor industry, which played a vital economic and social role

throughout the pandemic, has since sustained remarkable growth and continued to bolster local economies. The outdoor recreation economy came back stronger than ever after the COVID-19 pandemic and remains a steady source of strength nationally and a booming job creator locally.

“The BEA data underscores how important it is to invest in public lands, waters and recreation infrastructure from coast to coast and for recreation activities of all types,” said Jessica Turner, president of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR). “From the creation of jobs and increased profit for small businesses in local economies to larger boons to our national economy, this sector is a consistent driver, even in times of economic uncertainty. The strength of the outdoor recreation economy reflects what many in the industry have long known to be true: there are infinite benefits that come from more people spending time outdoors, and they’ll only grow with continued investment.”

For more information, visit recreation.utah.gov.

About Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation

In 2022, the Utah State Legislature recognized the growing importance of the outdoors to Utah’s economic prosperity and quality of life and created the Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation (DOR). As part of the Utah Department of Natural Resources, DOR combines the nation’s first Office of Outdoor Recreation with other state recreation management programs, including Utah’s Boating Program, Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Program, and recreation law enforcement officers. DOR is committed to ensuring every Utahn can live a healthy and active lifestyle through outdoor recreation and access to natural space. DOR’s areas of focus include recreational access; safety and education; stewardship and sustainable visitation; and economic growth and opportunity through outdoor recreation.