



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Doug Levy 425-922-3999

Big Tent Outdoor Coalition points to new report showing outdoor recreation as big business in Washington—worth \$22.5 billion

The Big Tent Outdoor Coalition, an alliance of more than two-dozen organizations, is pointing to a new study that shows outdoor recreation is an economic powerhouse in Washington State and across the country.

The Outdoor Industry Association's (OIA) recently released report provides both national and state-by-state figures – and its data show that Washington State has the sixth-highest number of outdoor recreation sector jobs in the nation. Over 63% of Washingtonians participate in outdoor recreation activities each year.

The overall data for Washington State is stunning. \$22.5 billion is spent each year on outdoor recreation here, directly supporting 226,600 jobs and generating \$1.6 billion in state and local tax revenue. Direct jobs include the design and development of outdoor gear and apparel; wholesaling and retailing those products; providing lodging and transportation services; serving as guides and outfitters; and more.

“Here in Washington, we’ve always believed that outdoor recreation opportunities and quality of life are inseparable from the economy,” said Kaleen Cottingham, Director, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. “Finally, we have current data that demonstrates that these activities are not only an important part of our culture—they’re big business for the state and our local communities.”

This is the first comprehensive update of the economic impact of outdoor recreation since the OIA released figures in 2006 and the new data show significant increases in consumer spending and jobs. It is important to note that this report does not include equestrian, sailing and diving activities—popular pursuits in Washington that likely push these numbers even higher.

“Protecting our natural areas and our legacy of outdoor recreation is the right thing to do – and it’s pretty clear from this data that it’s the economic thing to do as well,” said Martinique Grigg, Executive Director of The Mountaineers.

Peter Schrappen, Government Affairs Director for the Northwest Marine Trade Association, points out that Washington State’s history of investing in public access to the outdoors has helped build a thriving recreation industry. “Outdoors businesses are successful in Washington because our state has had the foresight to ensure access to public lands, waterways and trails. Those investments are not just smart from a quality of life standpoint but smart from a dollars and sense standpoint,” he said.

The Big Tent Coalition believes the OIA data bolsters and reinforces the need for Washington lawmakers to protect dedicated capital accounts for outdoor recreation activities, to provide general fund assistance for State Parks, and to support significant funding for programs such as Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.

The national report as well as a one page fact sheet for each U.S. state is available on the OIA website at outdoorindustry.org/recreationeconomy.

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Big Tent Outdoor Coalition

American Whitewater

Back Country Horsemen of Washington

Bicycle Alliance of Washington

Citizens for Parks & Recreation

Coastal Conservation Association

Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance

Fish Northwest

Northwest Marine Trade Association

Northwest Motorcycle Association

Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association

Northwest Yacht Brokers Association

Puget Sound Anglers

Recreational Boating Association of Washington

REI

Ski Washington

The Mountaineers

The Nature Conservancy

The Trust for Public Land

The Wilderness Society

Washington Scuba Alliance

Washington State Motorsports Dealers Association

Washington State Parks Foundation

Washington State Snowmobile Association

Washington Trails Association

Washington Environmental Council

Washington Off Highway Vehicle Alliance

Washington Public Ports Association

Washington Recreation & Park Association

Washington Wildlife & Recreation Coalition

Participating State Agencies:

Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Washington State Parks

Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office