



2019-2024

# SCORP

STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE  
OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

*ENSURING MISSISSIPPI'S OUTDOOR LEGACY*

DANA BROWN &  
Associates



**Prepared for:**

*Mississippi Department of  
Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks*



**Prepared by:**

*Dana Brown & Associates, Inc.*





PHIL BRYANT  
GOVERNOR

August 9, 2019

Dear Outdoor Enthusiast:

I am pleased to support this effort to ensure abundant outdoor recreational opportunities for all Mississippians and those who visit and enjoy Mississippi's parks and natural resources.

Mississippi Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) "Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy" 2019-2024 sets the standard for recreation policy throughout Mississippi and guides the disbursement of federal dollars from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to both our local and state recreation agencies.

"Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy" was developed with extensive input from citizens and experts from across the State. A special thanks to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, the SCORP Task Force Committee Members and Dana Brown & Associates for their expertise. This publication will act as a guide to recreational planners statewide and nationally.

I approve and submit "Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy" as the official plan for the State of Mississippi's recreational planning through 2024.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Bryant".

Phil Bryant  
Governor

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**EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



*Hammocking in John Kyle Park*

*Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy* is the 2019–2024 edition of Mississippi's *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)*. This plan identifies the demands, needs, and existing resources of outdoor recreation throughout the state. The *SCORP* addresses issues affecting outdoor recreation, and it sets goals and makes recommendations for future recreation facilities. This report complies with the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant criteria to allow the State of Mississippi to remain eligible for LWCF funds.

The plan's goals include encouraging residents to become active outdoors while attracting more visitors, including seniors and youth, to parks statewide. Additional goals include increasing universal access to state trails and outdoor recreation facilities, and expanding facilities with accessible, user-friendly, low-maintenance infrastructure that allows for year-round visitor use.

This plan satisfactorily meets the LWCF grant funding criteria, while also providing updated information on the status of outdoor recreation in Mississippi. This information was obtained through the issuance of

two surveys—one to residents and the other to park managers or providers. The resident survey produced responses from approximately 1,200 residents in nearly all counties, while the provider survey resulted in nearly 100 responses for facilities from city parks to state lakes. Summaries of the survey responses are included in this plan and copies of both surveys are located in the appendices.

In addition to the survey, a facilities inventory was generated that includes all state parks, national forests, state fishing lakes, wildlife management areas, and more. The inclusion of the survey and facility inventory allows for a comprehensive analysis of the opportunities that are available to residents and match their interests. For example, the survey responses show that the demand for trails surpasses the amount of facilities that are currently available, therefore a list of all trail lengths (state park trails, national park trails, and river trails) are included to document the current extent of trail systems in the state.

The report also includes an issues and actions plan that recognizes limitations or future concerns that impact outdoor recreation. The project’s Task Force Committee determined the chosen issues, based on their knowledge of ongoing conditions across the state. The issues include funding, maintenance, facility infrastructure, shifts in recreational activities, and evolving technology. Action items and successful programs are provided to address each issue, as well as future considerations for potential issues.

Mississippi is a land of natural beauty from its pine forests to the Gulf Coast. Continued proper planning to increase outdoor recreation will ensure residents’ quality of life and overall pride in their environment.



*Mississippi Native Pine Trees*



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# INTRODUCTION

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# INTRODUCTION



*Bikers along Tanglefoot Trail*

## PURPOSE

*Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy* is the 2019-2024 edition of Mississippi's *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)*. This plan identifies the demands, needs, and existing resources of outdoor recreation throughout the state. The *SCORP* addresses issues affecting outdoor recreation, and it sets goals and recommendations for the implementation of future facilities. This report complies with the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant criteria to allow the State of Mississippi to remain eligible for LWCF funds.

## SCOPE

*Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy* includes an analysis of outdoor recreation at federal, state, and local levels. The plan serves as a guide to enhance outdoor recreation by supplying outdoor recreation data on user participation and public demands across the state. The plan also suggests methods to improve existing facilities and provides ideas for future opportunities that are driven by the collected data.

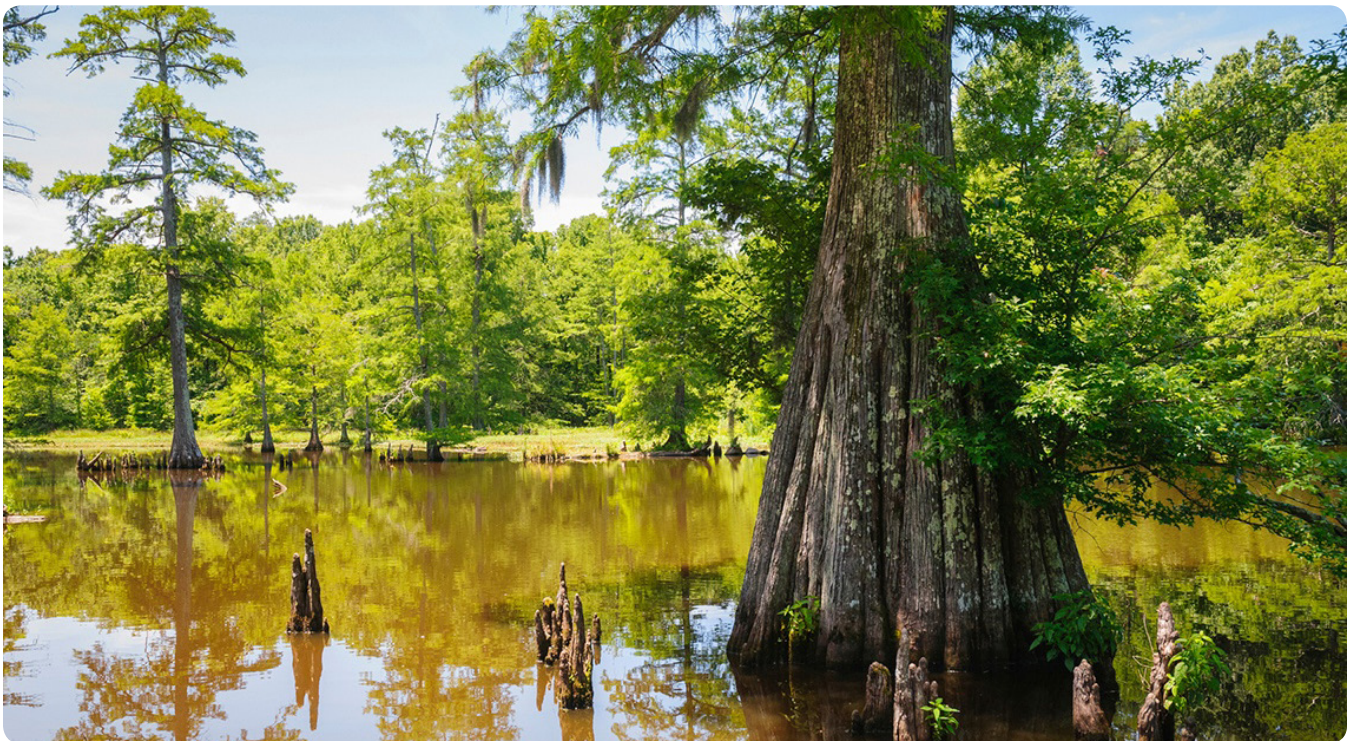
## REPORT BACKGROUND

The LWCF State Assistance Program was established in 1965 to stimulate a nationwide action program to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring for all citizens such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation opportunities with available resources. The program provides matching grants up to 50 percent to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation sites and facilities. Congress appropriates federal funds through the Department of Interior and administers funds through the National Park Service (NPS).

The Outdoor Recreation Grants (ORG) Division of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) awards LWCF grant funds to projects that align with the priorities established within this plan. Over the past 40 years, the LWCF's "state side" program has generated a national recreation investment of \$8.2 billion. To be eligible to receive these funds, states must maintain a *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* that is updated every five years. This edition serves as an update to the 2015-2019 Mississippi *SCORP* titled Making Strides. Additional information on LWCF funds and requirements is located in Section 8.

## VISION

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks will use the *SCORP* report as a manual to help guide outdoor recreation planning and development; and it will connect and coordinate both existing and future outdoor recreation improvement projects for the state.



*Cypress in Mississippi Wetland*

## GOALS

The plan's goals guide all recommendations for enhancing outdoor recreation. The project team's Task Force Committee (TFC), which will be introduced in the following section, developed the plan's goals.

Initially, the TFC gave priority to goals that sought to improve access to recreational facilities, trails/pathways connections between existing facilities, and overall resident interest in outdoor recreation. Further discussion and investigation led to adding the goals of: providing user-friendly, low-maintenance infrastructure at park facilities; expanding the availability of amenities; and aiding physically-impaired users through extended access along trails. The finalized list of goals are as follows:

- *Encourage residents to become active outdoors*
- *Attract more visitors, including seniors and youth, to parks statewide*
- *Increase universal access throughout state trails and outdoor recreation facilities*
- *Extend facilities with accessible, user-friendly, low-maintenance infrastructure that allows for year-round visitor use*

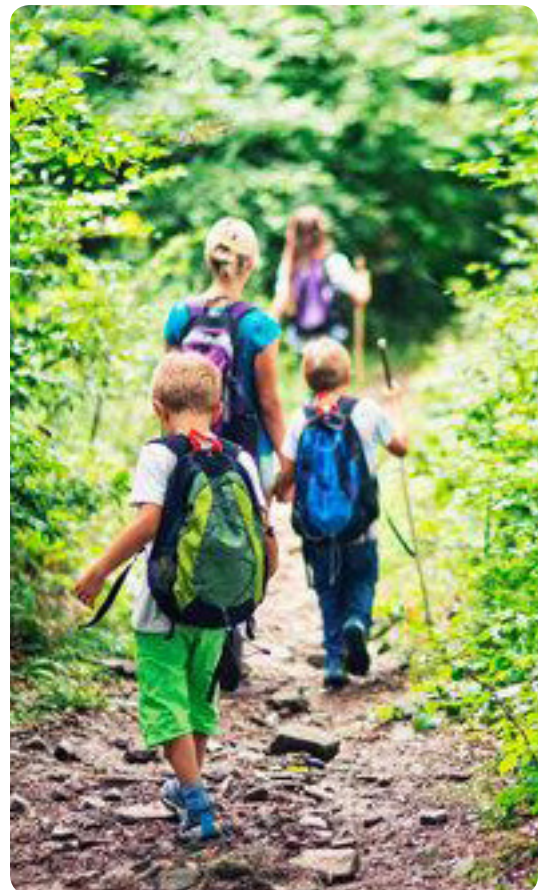
Still, these goals are non-exhaustive. The goals intend to continue supporting ongoing efforts and to mitigate trends that are in opposition to the improvement of outdoor recreation in Mississippi. The project team encourages the formation of future projects that will incorporate the intention of these goals in their objectives.

## CONCLUSION

*Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy* is Mississippi's *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* for 2019-2024. The plan reviews and analyzes the state of outdoor recreation within Mississippi based on the supply and demand of outdoor recreational facilities and recommends improvement strategies that are in alignment with the plan's goals.



*Seniors Exercising Outdoors*



*Family Hiking*

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# 2

## STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

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# STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



Lake Lee in Tombigbee State Park

## PLANNING PROCESS

The development of *Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy* evolved from a thorough planning process that included research, public participation, and professional collaboration. For example, the goals evolved during Task Force Committee meetings and public surveys contributed to the data that drives this report.

### Task Force Committee

Planning for the *SCORP* update began with a kick-off meeting in May 2018. In this meeting, MDWFP and its consultant, Dana Brown & Associates (DBA), a New Orleans-based landscape architecture and planning firm, developed a roster of members for the project's Task Force Committee. The TFC operated as the steering committee that guided the plan's development. Its ten members represent each of the state's planning and development districts (PDD). MDWFP and its consultant hosted five meetings at the MDWFP office. In the meetings, the TFC was invited to review and contribute to the plans' goals and development by offering diverse perspectives, informed recommendations, and insight in the conditions, wants, and needs for outdoor recreation in Mississippi. TFC meetings were held at the MDWFP office in Jackson on the following dates:

July 12, 2018

August 23, 2018

October 3, 2018

November 15, 2018

January 15, 2019

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The plan showcases the opinions of the state’s residents. The project team obtained resident input through public meetings, a project website, and a community survey.

### Public Meetings

The project team held five public meetings. Meetings were located at the MDWFP office in the state’s capital and in each of the four congressional districts. The project team advertised the meetings through public notice, flyers, postcards, social media, and the project website. Public notices advertising the meetings ran in three major newspapers across the state: The Clarion-Ledger, The Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal, and the Sun-Herald. The team delivered advertisements by mail directly to local boards of supervisors and mayor’s offices. Public meeting dates and locations include the following:

*October 3 at MDWFP Office in Jackson*

*October 4 at Roosevelt State Park in Morton (District 3)*

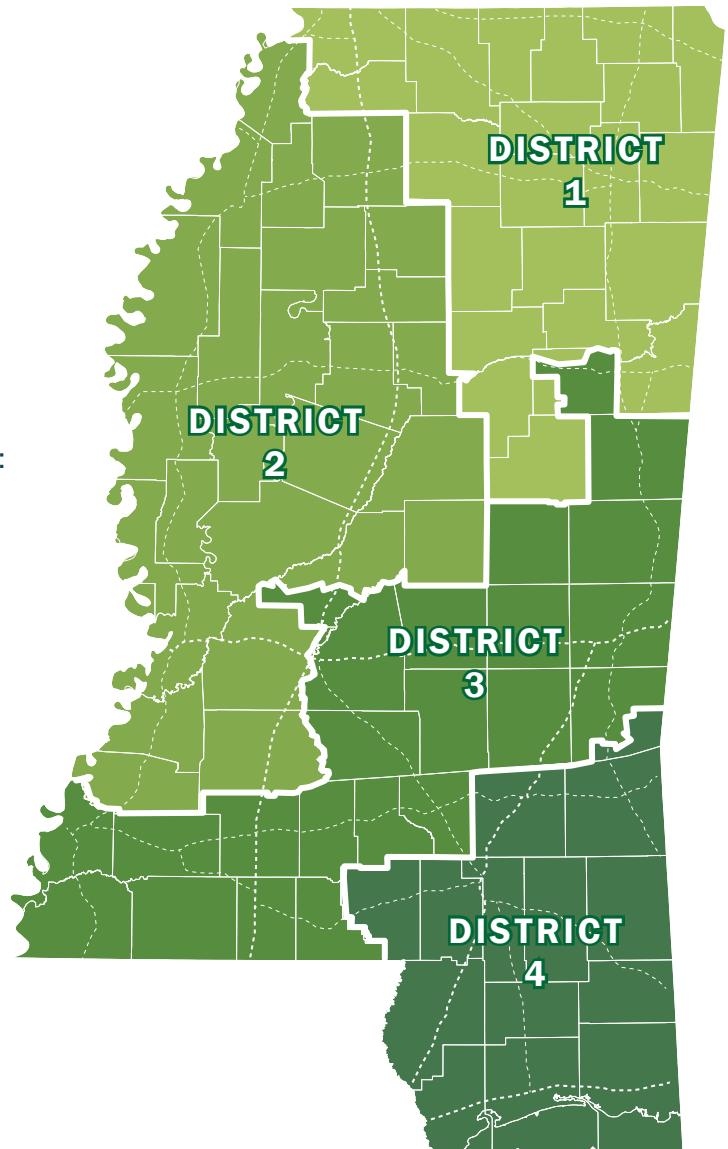
*October 10 at Tombigbee State Park in Tupelo (District 1)*

*October 11 at George P. Cossar State Park in Oakland (District 2)*

*October 18 at Buccaneer State Park in Waveland (District 4)*

### Website

The team developed a website to provide updated and accessible information to the public. The website, [www.mississippiincorp.com](http://www.mississippiincorp.com), included an overview of the report, links to the surveys, and the location and times of public meetings. A contact link was also included to provide opportunities for direct communication with the website and survey administrator.



State Congressional District Map

## Surveys

The team collected public input remotely through two survey types: provider and resident. The surveys were available for three months from August 1 to November 2, 2018. Distribution methods for both surveys included word-of-mouth, personal meetings, social media posts, website links, flyers and postcards, and mass and personal emails.

### *Provider Survey*

The team sent the provider survey only to managers of public recreational facilities and city officials; therefore, the provider survey was not visible on the project website without a direct link to prevent residents from mistakenly submitting the wrong survey. DBA visited local government offices to meet with mayors and park managers, while MDWFP encouraged state park agencies and the TFC encouraged local park agencies to complete the survey.

Topics of provider survey questions included

- *name of the organization responding*
- *new and abandoned recreational facilities managed by that organization*
- *total amount of individual facility types*
- *ranking of requested facilities by users*
- *greatest unmet need*

The complete provider survey is located in [Appendix A](#).

### *Resident Survey*

The resident survey was available online and as hard copies that were available at public meetings. The team distributed a link to the resident survey through emails, social media, flyers, postcards, and the project website. The team emailed and tagged in social media posts recreation clubs, libraries, schools, and other community leaders to extend outreach to popular organizations with strong community relationships.

Topics of resident survey questions included

- *hours per week that residents spend in parks*
- *recreational facilities used*
- *recreational activities participated in; reasons for participating*
- *willingness to travel to facilities; typical travel distance*
- *perceived safety of facilities*
- *general demographics*
- *length of state residency*

The complete resident survey is located in [Appendix B](#).

## Results

During the active survey period, the website had 3,789 page views. 54% of visits were from a mobile device, while 38% were from a desktop, and the remaining 8% were from a tablet or other device. Residents primarily accessed the website through direct links (47%), Facebook (29%), and the MDWFP website (16%). The survey pages were the most often visited portion of the website.

The provider survey resulted in 98 responses, while 1,214 residents completed the resident survey.

WEBSITE VISITS PER WEEK WITH OUTREACH PUSHES		
Week	Outreach Pushes	Website Visits
5-Aug	0	39
12-Aug	2	253
19-Aug	1	276
26-Aug	5	142
2-Sep	2	486
9-Sep	6	202
16-Sep	3	109
23-Sep	5	148
30-Sep	1	360
7-Oct	1	160
14-Oct	5	224
21-Oct	1	199
28-Oct	3	213

Website Visits per Week with Outreach Pushes

WEBSITE VISITS BY DEVICE TYPE AND SOURCE		
Device Type		
Mobile	1,573	56%
Desktop	1,067	38%
Tablet	177	6%
Source		
Direct Link	1,282	46%
Facebook	916	33%
MDWFP.com	416	15%
Google	53	2%
Others	150	5%

Website Visits by Device Type and Source

## CONCLUSION

The project team carried out the planning process to ensure that this report is representative of all areas of the state. The TFC provided local knowledge as well as professional experience to guide the plan's development. Engagement efforts through the website, survey, and personal contact were successful in generating public submission and comment.



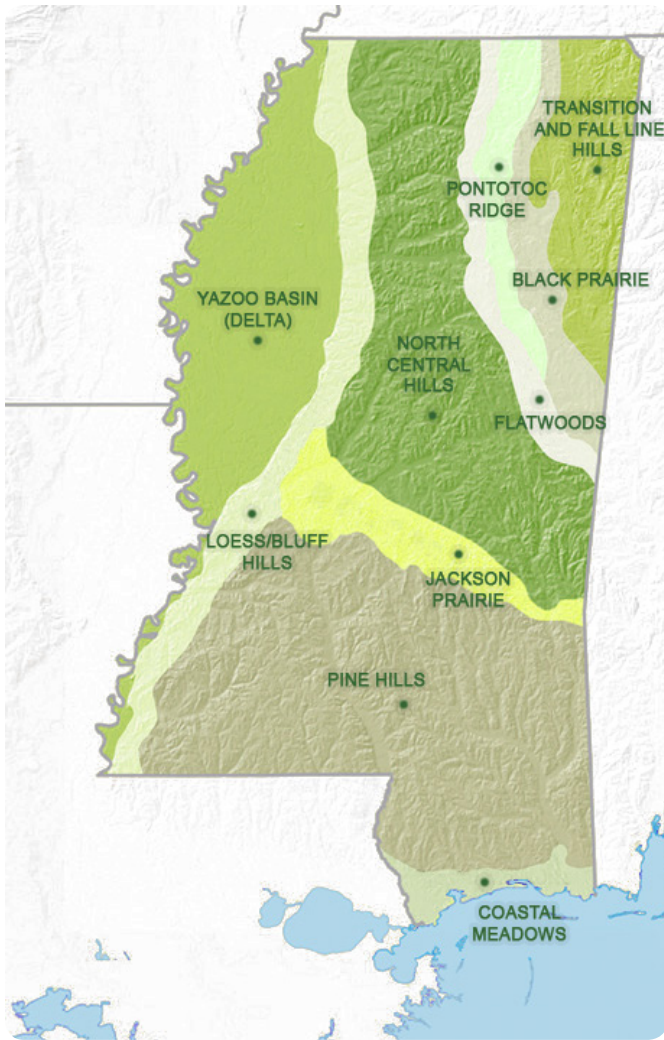
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## STATE OVERVIEW

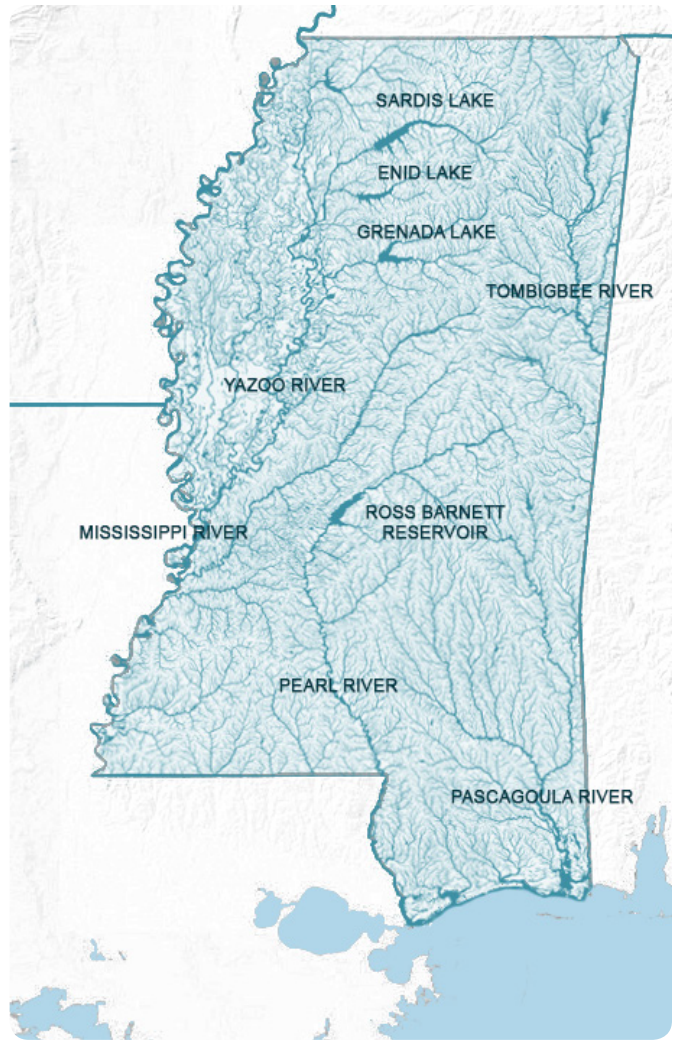
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## STATE OVERVIEW



*Geography of Mississippi*



*Hydrology of Mississippi*

## GEOGRAPHY AND HYDROLOGY

Mississippi encompasses 46,923 square miles of river delta, farmland, forested hills, coastal lands, and urban centers. The state lies between the Mississippi River Alluvial Plain and the Gulf Coastal Plain, causing it to be mostly low-lying. The Pontotoc Ridge and the Transition and Fall Line Hills in the Northeast contain the state's highest point, Woodall Mountain, at 806 feet. Floodplains and oxbow lakes make up the River Delta Region while the Gulf Coast Region contains bays, marshes, and swamps.

The Mississippi River stretches from north to south along the western state border. This river section is part of the third largest river system in the world. Other major local rivers include the Pearl River, Big Black River, and Yazoo River. Several natural and artificial lakes exist across the state, including Enid Lake, Grenada Lake, Sardis Lake, and the Ross Barnett Reservoir. Moreover, gulf bays line the coastline, calmed by the barrier islands of the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

## CLIMATE

Mississippi is within the subtropical climate region, which experiences temperate winters and long summers. The state typically experiences humid days from May to September. High temperatures exceed 90 degrees more than 100 days each year, yet the winters consistently bring freezing temperatures. Due to its geography, the northern and southern ends of the state contain slightly different climates.

### Northern

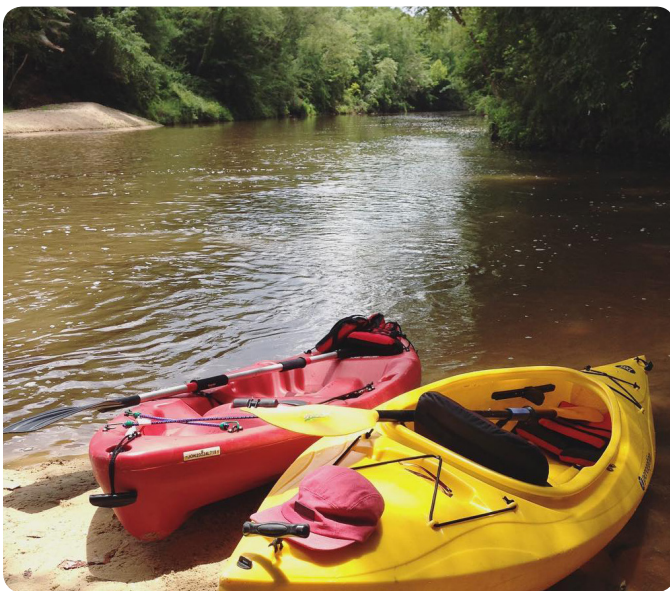
In the northern part of the state, the average daily temperature is 62 degrees. Annual precipitation averages approximately 50 inches. Nearly every year snow or sleet falls in some part of the state, yet the ground does not usually freeze and the winters are short.

### Southern

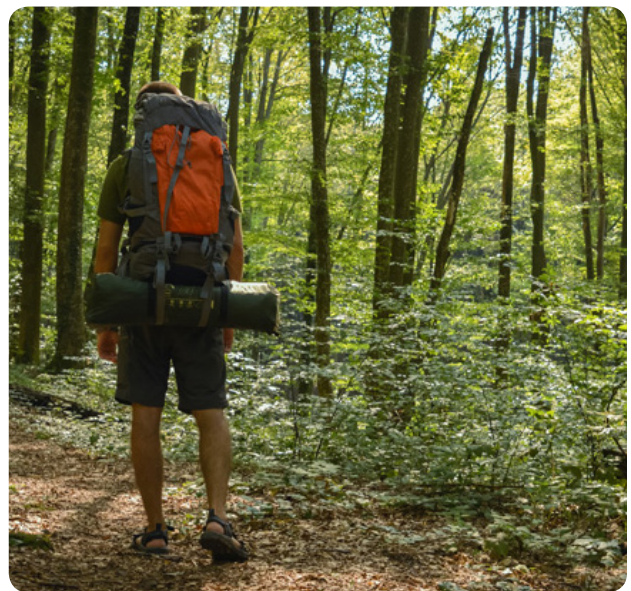
In the southern part of the state, the average daily temperature is slightly higher at 68 degrees. The Gulf of Mexico causes milder winters in this region. Here, annual precipitation averages over a foot more than in the north, with an average of 65 inches. Severe weather is common, occurring on an average of 60 days per year.<sup>1</sup> In particular, Southern Mississippi and its coast are prone to the impacts of tropical storms and hurricanes.



*Snow-Covered Pioneer Cabin in Tishomingo State Park*



*Kayaks on the Sunny Chunky River*



*Hiker on Partially-Shaded Trail*

<sup>1</sup> MissState GeoSciences <https://www.geosciences.msstate.edu/state-climatologist/climate/>

## POPULATION<sup>2</sup>

The most recent Census of 2010 recorded Mississippi to have a total population of 2,967,297. The population projection for 2018 estimates that the state's population increased by .57% to 2,984,100.

According to 2017\* projections, only six of eighty-two counties have a residency count of over 100,000. These include Hinds (239,497); Harrison (205,027); DeSoto (178,751); Rankin (152,080); Jackson (142,152); and Madison (104,618). An estimated increase in the population of Madison County qualified it for this list as of 2013 projections. From 2014 - 2017, there was an estimated 1.01% increase statewide. According to these population count estimates, without a significant increase in the state's population, there is a shift occurring from rural to urban counties. Data revealed that most residents live in counties surrounding the capital, near the Memphis metro area, or along the coast. Counties with the smallest populations are rural and include Issaquena (1,339), Sharkey (4,435), Jefferson (7,262), Quitman (7,269), and Franklin (7,765).

## Age and Sex<sup>3</sup>

Age and sex throughout the state is fairly diversified and in close comparison to national demographics. Overall, Mississippi has a younger and higher female demographic than the nation.

Based on 2017 estimates, the median age in Mississippi is 37.8 years, nearly one year younger than the national median age. Seniors age 65 and older account for only 23.9% of the state's population, compared to 22.6% nationally. Meanwhile, youth age 17 or younger, total 23.9% of the state population with 6.3% under the age of five. Youth nationally account for 22.6% of the population with 6.1% under the age of five.

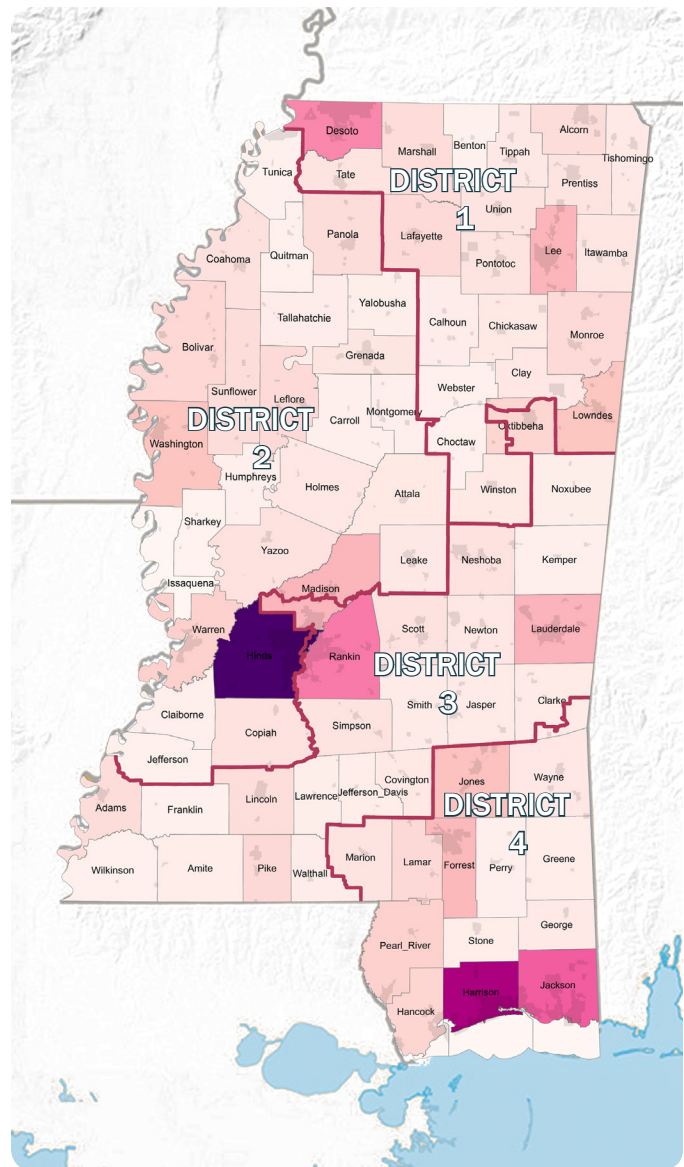
A nearly even divide between sexes exists; there are 94.2 males per 100 females in Mississippi and 97.0 males per 100 females nationally.

<sup>2</sup> 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, DP05  
<sup>3</sup> 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, S0101

\*2018 population projection is not available at the county level

### Congressional Districts

A congressional district is an area with a population of approximately 710,000 residents, represented by a single member of congress. There are four congressional districts in Mississippi.



Mississippi Congressional Districts

## Race and Ethnicity<sup>4</sup>

Compared to the nation, 2018 population estimates show that Mississippi has a significantly lower White population and higher African-American population while other races and ethnicities are very faintly represented.

Estimates show 59.2% of state residents to be White, whereas the national percentage is estimated to be 76.6%. Black or African-American residents account for 37.8% statewide and 13.4% nationally. Additional ethnicities and races identified within the state include persons of two or more races (1.1%), Asian (1.0%), American Indian or Alaska Native (0.6%), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (0.1%). 3.2% of Mississippians are Hispanic or Latino.

## ECONOMY

Manufacturing of products leads the state economy. Mississippi specializes in producing processed foods, furniture, and chemical products.<sup>5</sup> Motor vehicle manufacturing is also present; Toyota, Nissan, Yokohama, and Paccar all have manufacturing facilities located in Mississippi. Agriculture and forestry are other major contributors to the state's income. The harvesting of cotton, rice, soybeans, and chickens drives agriculture, in addition to aquaculture. Forest resources cover 65% of the state's total land area<sup>6</sup>, allowing foresters to produce \$12.8 billion in forest products<sup>7</sup>. In addition, the southern portion of the state profits from its coastline where fishing of finfish and seafood processing of shellfish is prominent<sup>8</sup>.

According to 2017 estimates, census data suggests that the state is poorer and experiencing higher unemployment than other states. The state's annual per capita income is \$22,500, much lower than the national average of \$31,177. The amount of income is somewhat balanced by a lower cost of living compared to other states. Still, unemployment is more extensive in Mississippi when compared to the country as a whole. The unemployment rate is 8.8% for the State of Mississippi, which is 2.2% higher than the national rate. Additionally, there is a higher percentage of families living below the poverty line in the state (16.6%) which is greater than the national percentage (10.5%).



*Farmland in Mississippi*

<sup>4</sup> 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, DP05

<sup>5</sup> 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, DP03

<sup>6</sup> The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th ed., 2012, Columbia University Press.

<sup>7</sup> Forest Economics. Mississippi State University Extension Service.

<sup>8</sup> Forestry in Mississippi, Research Bulletin FO464. Mississippi State University.

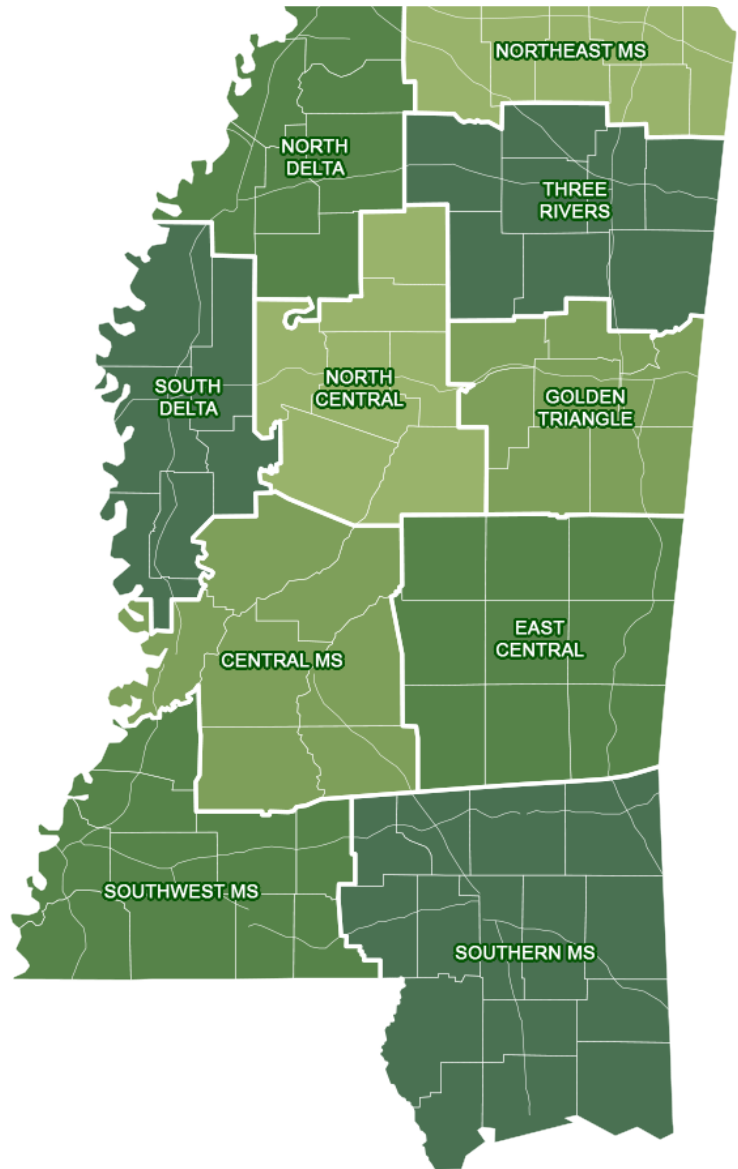
## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

In Mississippi, a planning and development district is an intergovernmental entity that addresses specific planning and development needs within its geographic area. Common PDD programs and services assist with aging, planning, community and economic development, and workforce development.

The ten PDDs within Mississippi were mostly established and defined in the 1960s. Each is organized under the Mississippi Association of Planning and Development Districts and governed by a board of directors. PDDs assist with short- and long-term community planning and provide many services, such as grant writing and administration for economic development projects. PDDs in Mississippi include: North Delta, South Delta, Northeast Mississippi, Southwest Mississippi, Three Rivers, Golden Triangle, North Central, Central Mississippi, East Central Mississippi, and South Mississippi. The map to the right shows locations for each.

## CONCLUSION

Mississippi is similar to its Gulf Coast neighbors that include climates and elevations that vary in range from north to south. This setting provides opportunities for numerous outdoor recreation activities. Population projections show that state residents are increasingly living in urban counties or along the coast. As urban communities become denser and expanding development fills in, more open spaces, parks, and outdoor facilities should remain a priority within neighborhoods. Doing so will provide residents with convenient benefits for physical and mental health and transportation alternatives through walking and biking. Still, the state's economy relies on rural spaces for large-scale production to continue. Outdoor recreation through the presence of state parks, national forests, and community parks should continue to be made available for residents working and living in these locations.



*Mississippi Planning and Development Districts*

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# 4

## OUTDOOR RECREATION

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## OUTDOOR RECREATION



*Youth Soccer*

Outdoor recreation is the term for activities performed in an outdoor setting. Examples of outdoor recreational activities include canoeing, camping, hunting, water sports, and horseback riding. Activities can also include team sports such as baseball, soccer, and golf. Outdoor recreation facilities are fields, rivers, parks, and other venues where these activities take place. Recreation Supply in Section 6 provides information on the extent of Mississippi’s outdoor recreation facilities.

Outdoor recreation facilities provide venues for physical exercise, social interaction, and connection to the environment. Outdoor recreation stimulates many personal benefits that can positively affect the following: personal health and wellness, communities and equities, and economic opportunities, including tourism. Following an overview of the state’s environment, the report addresses each of these categories based on current data, including state and national trends, and presence of park facilities.

## ENVIRONMENT

The physical environment and facilities that integrate the natural components of the environment, such as parks and trails through wetlands and forests, provide ideal locations for recreational activities.

One popular recreational activity throughout the state is hunting. The state has the densest population of white-tailed deer in the nation and the highest percentage of harvested bucks.<sup>9</sup> It also has one of the nation’s strongest duck harvests. Moreover, the state’s climate allows for one of the longest hunting seasons, typically from October to February.

Fishing is also popular in Mississippi. The Mississippi Fishing Index (MSFish) provides information on the size and amount of fish in many of the state’s lakes. The 2017 scores show that Lakes Pickwick, Moon, and Prentiss Walker have the highest number of largemouth bass, crappie, and bream, respectively.<sup>10</sup> These high scores make the lakes especially attractive to recreational anglers. The Gulf Coast also hosts 200 saltwater species including flounder, redfish, speckled trout, and king mackerel.<sup>11</sup>

Birding is another activity that thrives in the refuges of the state’s low-lying setting. Lakes and reservoirs host several species of waterfowl, while the beaches and barrier islands see visits from shorebirds and seabirds. The state includes the Mississippi Flyway, which has observed over 400 species of bird<sup>12</sup>; a few common species include the sandhill crane, least tern, red-cockaded woodpecker.<sup>13</sup> Many trails, reserves, and refuges are accessible to birdwatchers, including the six-county-wide Mississippi Coastal Birding Trail that contains 40 birding sites.<sup>14</sup>

The table that follows includes information from the National Park Service on the types and number of species in the Mississippi National River and Recreation Areas. The table only includes the amounts of known categorizations and excludes any unknown or missing information.

VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE SPECIES COUNTS						
	Mammals	Birds	Reptiles	Fish	Amphibians	Plants
Total Species	62	321	26	170	19	1,550
<b>Nativeness</b>						
Native	53	285	22	97	14	1,262
Non-native	4	7	0	2	0	286
<b>Abundance</b>						
Common	24	120	3	0	4	132
Occasional	1	23	0	0	0	5
Rare	3	48	7	8	0	43
Uncommon	6	79	3	0	0	3

### Vegetation and Wildlife Species

<sup>9</sup> <sup>11</sup> <sup>12</sup> Visit Mississippi. “2019 MS Tour Guide.”

<sup>10</sup> MDWFP. “2017 MSFish Scores Ranked by Lake.”

<sup>13</sup> Audubon Society. <https://www.audubon.org/news/birding-mississippi>

<sup>14</sup> MS Coastal Birding Trail. <http://mscoastbirdingtrail.audubon.org/>

## Wetlands

Mississippi contains many settings for outdoor recreation in water, including boating, swimming, fishing, and more. Mississippi's original (pre-1800s) wetland acreage was 9,872,000; its present acreage is less than half of that amount, at 4,067,000 acres. With each acre of wetlands that is lost, so are opportunities for water-based outdoor recreation. Major wetlands areas exist along the Mississippi River and near the Gulf Coast. As a coastal state, Mississippi contains many types of wetland environments, including bogs, swamps, riverbank pioneer habitats, bottom-land forests, bayheads, coastal flatwoods, and savannahs. Historically, major causes of land loss are due to the construction of levees and dams that manipulate the natural environment to sustain urban growth.

### Mississippi River

The sediment that the Mississippi River would supply the state's wetlands is being lost at the edge of the continental shelf rather than being allowed to build up wetland habitats. Shipping canals along the river permit saltwater intrusion and the extensive networks of oil and gas pipelines are disrupting these ecosystems.

### Gulf Coast

Saltwater intrusion is also affecting the Gulf Coast's waterways and wetlands. According to NOAA, Mississippi has a coastline of 44 miles. The coast is experiencing erosion and seasonal hazards, including tropical storms and hurricanes. Since 1980, coastal hazards have totaled nearly \$70 billion.

Lands in the wetland regions should be a top priority for acquisition for outdoor recreation and wetland conservation given their importance for both the environment and public recreation.

### Wetland Conservation Tools

Advocates for conservation are continuously developing tools to manage wetlands and mitigate land loss. Some current technologies related to wetland management include:

- *Mississippi's Wetland Restoration Assessment Procedure (WRAP), Modified-WRAP, and the Hydrogeomorphic model*
- *Wetland monitoring and assessment*
- *Mapping (National Wetlands Inventory)*



*Noxubee Wildlife Refuge*



*Mississippi Gulf Coast*

## Restoration and Protection

The State oversees wetland conservation through its Coastal Wetlands Protection Act (§ 49-27). The Wetlands Reserve Program ranked Mississippi third nationally for wetland acres enrolled in its program.<sup>15</sup> According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the state, mostly its western portion, has 150,000 acres of wetlands located within 430 protected Wetland Reserve easements.<sup>16</sup>

Mississippi's Wetlands Management District, located in the northern portion of the state, was established in 1989 and encompasses more than 30,000 acres.<sup>17</sup> The refuge provides habitat for migratory birds, as well as native endangered or threatened species. The land also aims to provide recreation and education opportunities.

Additional federal, state, and local regulations and incentives exist to encourage the restoration and protection of wetlands. Some of these programs are described in the table below.

WETLANDS REGULATIONS		
Program Title	Year Established	Description
Mississippi Coastal Wetlands Protection Act (Title 49, Chapter 27)	2003	The Wetlands Act established public policy for the state to protect and prevent destruction of coastal wetlands.
Coastal Zone Management Program	1972	The CZMP is a federal program that was established to address uncontrolled use of marine resources and growth. This is a voluntary partnership between the federal government and coastal states. Some of its objectives include developing economic public resources and providing environmental protection. It encourages permit review, Sea Grant monitoring, and special projects.
Mississippi Coastal Program	1972	The program operates under the Office of Coastal Resources. Responsibilities include coastal management, administering the Coast Preserves Program, permitting of wetlands, and other special projects.
Mississippi Wetlands Reserve Program (Repealed by Agricultural Conservation Easement Program in 2014)	1990	The MWRP was a national voluntary program. The program obtained wetlands that have been drained and converted for agricultural use. It allowed landowners to control access and maintain ownership of the land. Additional benefits were realized, such as improved water quality, enhanced wildlife habit, and reduced soil erosion and flooding. The validity and terms of its contracts are still honored.

### Wetlands Regulations

Special Area Management Plans (SAMPs) provide protection for development on land that is near and impacts coastal waters. SAMPs are a joint effort that involve federal and state agencies determining future development provisions and providing policy framework for protections of potential impacts. The plans are backed by the national Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972.

<sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> USDA. "Mississippi Wetlands Reserve Program."

<sup>17</sup> US Fish and Wildlife Service. "Mississippi Wetlands Management District."



Wetlands

## Environmental Integrity

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks is the state agency responsible for conserving, managing, and protecting natural resources and providing outdoor recreational opportunities. Efforts by MDWFP include acquiring lands and waters, providing technical information, educating the public, conducting research for future sustainability, and restoring and stocking wildlife populations. The mission of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks is to “conserve and enhance Mississippi’s wildlife, fisheries, and parks, provide quality outdoor recreation, and engage the public in natural resource conservation.”

*MDWFP promotes several ways for residents to contribute to conservation. Some methods include purchasing a Conserving Wildlife car tag, Wildlife Management Area user permit, or waterfowl stamp; volunteering with a conservation organization; or developing habitat on personal property.<sup>18</sup>*

Conservation is a continuous endeavor that requires a plan, dedicated practice, and necessary funding. Easements are available for the protection of habitats on private lands through the Mississippi Land Trust and Mississippi River Trust. Additional conservation resources include the Conservation Reserve Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program, and American Rivers’ Blue Trails program. Moreover, handbooks provided by Wildlife Mississippi extend technical conservation information to landowners.

When possible, officials should develop natural resource management plans. These plans identify objectives and related activities that will support the management of natural resources. Plans should include a resource assessment and management recommendations based on best management practices.

<sup>18</sup> MDWFP. Conservation: Get Involved. <https://www.mdwfp.com/conservation/get-involved/>

## Environmental Stewardship

Environmental stewardship refers to the responsible use of natural resources by its users. Stewardship is essential for the protection and sustainability of the natural environment. Educational programs, volunteer activities, and specialized funding can contribute to meeting this objective. Some popular programs that teach and enforce environmental stewardship include Outward Bound and the National Outdoor Leadership School.

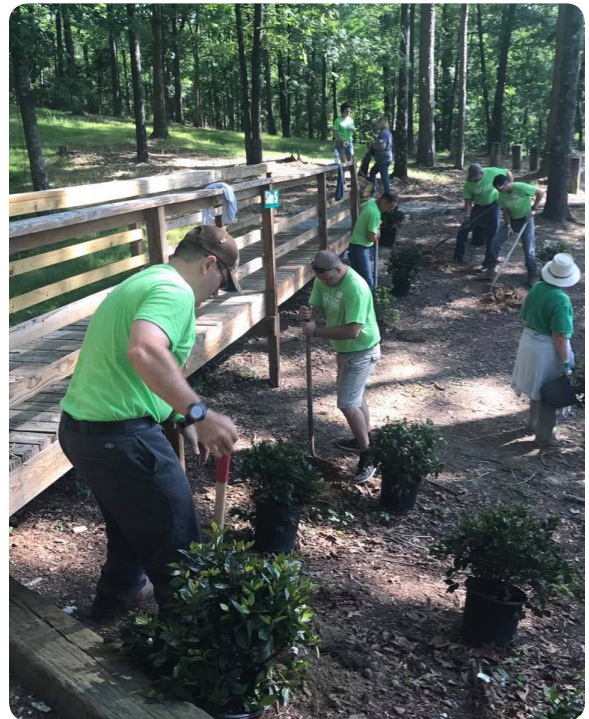
### *Corporate Sponsorship*

Mississippi Power frequently partners to support natural environments. Its Renew Our Rivers program is national award-winning. The program brings together corporations, government agencies, and community volunteers in promotion of environmental stewardship. The program scope is defined to Southeast Mississippi. Its impact for the years of 2016 and 2017 resulted in the removal of nearly 50 tons of debris from Mississippi waters. MS Power also participates in collection days to discourage littering and improve beautification of the environment. One annual event, called BRING IT!, has collected over 400 tons of hazardous household materials.<sup>19</sup>

Heritage Trails Partnership of the Mississippi Gulf Coast offers an Outdoor Recreation Leadership Training. The program seeks to connect youth to land and water-based trail projects. Participants are motivated to live active lives, learn about environmental awareness, and advance their local volunteerism.



*Toyota Employees Volunteering*



*Corporate Volunteers Planting*

<sup>19</sup> Mississippi Power. "Beautification Efforts."



*Oktibbeha County Heritage Museum Rain Garden*

## **Environmental Design Considerations**

Outdoor recreation facilities that incorporate nature can provide benefits for the environment through intentional design that uses natural management systems. Development and expansion of park systems should consider the natural environments that it may be affecting. During development, outdoor recreation facilities should take care to generate the least amount of impact on the environment, providing the most benefit to both the land and facility users. As a result, facility users can directly benefit from the environmental-based design improvements to air and water qualities. Plans for outdoor recreation facilities should consider ways to implement green infrastructure by planting trees and naturally managing stormwater.

### *Stormwater management*

Outdoor recreation facilities are not just places where people can interact with nature, they are also great locations to reestablish natural systems within an area previously disturbed by man. For example, the Trust for Public Lands declares that the water absorption rate of trees increases infiltration, which lessens the amount of runoff that enters stormwater drainage facilities. Integrating these natural water storage sites into the infrastructure system will decrease the frequency and extent to which stormwater management systems need to be managed and repaired. This is particularly useful in low-lying Mississippi where severe weather is common and often leads to localized flooding.

### *Air and water quality*

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) asserts that “parks and protected public lands are proven to improve water quality, protect groundwater, prevent flooding, improve the quality of the air we breathe, provide vegetative buffers to development, [and] produce habitat for wildlife.”<sup>20</sup>

### *Understanding the impact and extent of pollution in Mississippi*

Between 2014–2016 the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) recorded air pollution in Mississippi to have a value of 7.5.<sup>21</sup> The measurement was based on average public exposure to particulate matter of 2.5 microns (PM2.5) or less in size. This rating places Mississippi in 20th place nationally. Reducing this value can lower the risks to all-cause mortality, lung cancer, and cardiovascular disease.<sup>22</sup>

### *Results of water quality assessments*

The MDEQ conducts water quality assessments for rivers and streams within the state. For the year 2016, MDEQ determined that the largest percentage of impairments (36%) were biological. Additional pollutants include contaminated sediments that nonpoint source activities (ie. runoff) can carry into the site. One method to improve water quality in areas with parks is through the planting of trees for their ability to filter out pollutants.



*Volunteers Collecting Trash from Pearl River*



*Water Control Structures Improve Water Quality*

<sup>20</sup> NRPA, “Why Parks and Recreation are Essential Public Services.”

<sup>21</sup> MDEQ, Air Quality Data Summary, 2017.

<sup>22</sup> Lee, Kim, and Lee. “Air Pollution Exposure and Cardiovascular Disease.” 2014.



### *Best management practices to increase environmental integrity*

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) determined that non-structural or source control best management practices (BMP) consist of low-impact development solutions, such as limiting pesticide use and retaining rainwater on residential properties. Additional structural treatment BMPs consist of wet (retention) and dry (detention) ponds; infiltration basins; vegetated biofilters (bio swales and bioretention cells); and constructed wetlands.<sup>23</sup>

An efficient way to improve air and water qualities is by using green infrastructure, such as the planting of and subsequent care for trees. According to the National Arbor Day Foundation, one 50-year-old tree can generate \$31,250 worth of oxygen, provide \$62,000 worth of air pollution control, recycle \$37,500 worth of water, and control \$31,250 worth of soil erosion.<sup>24</sup> Trees serve as natural filters for environmental pollutants, reduce the “heat island effect” of urban areas, and purify, clean, and store water. Local governments can support the inclusion of green infrastructure by developing ordinances that mandate stormwater management systems. A 2017 EPA guide titled *Green Infrastructure in Parks: A Guide to Collaboration, Funding, and Community Engagement* provides information and resources for local governments looking to integrate stormwater management systems into parks.

*The Martin Luther King Park Stage in Clarksdale sits near the Sunflower River, a tributary of the Yazoo River. During sunny days, the stage hosts events such as Red’s Old-Timers Blues Festival; however, during storm events, the stage and its surrounding area provide ample space to contain high floodwaters.<sup>25</sup>*



*Martin Luther King, Jr. Stage in Clarksdale*

<sup>23</sup> EPA. “Description and Performance of Storm Water Best Management Practices.”

<sup>24</sup> National Arbor Day Foundation. “Tree Facts.”

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.brandonsms.org/brandon-amphitheater-announces-first-wave-shows/>

## Public Access, Connectivity, and Accessibility

Public access to parks correlates with the intensity of park usage. The likelihood of community members using parks and facilities and being physically active within them is related to the resident's proximity to and universal access to facilities. This report uses the term universal access to describe parks and facilities that are accessible to users regardless of their age or ability. Users feel connected to a recreational facility when it exists within their neighborhood or along a common commute. Familiarity also creates a sense of comfort and safety. Facility safety is concerned with the quality of equipment, as well as objective and perceived safety.

Accessibility is often limited in low socioeconomic areas. Unequal development of facilities and acceptable conditions of the facilities, as developed and maintained by local agencies, exists throughout the state and the country. Thus, aside from metro regions, majority African-American communities have less access to recreational opportunities.<sup>26</sup> This description strongly correlates with the setting and demographics of the state and should be carefully considered in the development of any additional outdoor recreation facilities.

The 2017 Center for Disease Control and Prevention State Indicator Report on Physical Activity considered policy and environmental indicators at the state-level. One evaluated strategy considered the need for municipalities and townships to increase or enhance access to safe places for physical activity. It determined that only 30% of Mississippi youth have parks, community centers, and sidewalks in their neighborhood.

However, some national programs and organizations, including the following, assist or promote public access, connectivity, and accessibility and have developed precedents within Mississippi.



*Easter Egg Hunt in Yazoo City*



*Avent Park in Oxford*

<sup>26</sup> NRPA. "Americans' Use and Perceptions of Local Recreation and Park Services: A Nationwide Reassessment."

### *Safe Routes to Parks Program*

Safe Routes to Parks is a national campaign that the NRPA launched in 2006. It seeks to ensure access to parks that is safe and equitable. The program highlights essential elements of safe routes, including comfort, convenience, access, design, and quality. Obstacles to walkability and park access include proximity, lack of infrastructure, crime and traffic safety concerns, and partnership-building with government agencies and local organizations.

Creating safe routes is a shared responsibility between and within agencies and organizations. Potential program partners include transportation committees, planners, developers, schools, health departments, and law enforcement agencies.

### *Rails-to-Trails Conservancy*

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) is a nationwide nonprofit organization started in 1986 that advocates and supports the development and transformation of former railroad lines into trail systems. Mississippi hosts 13 rail-trails that total 110 miles in length. There are three ongoing projects, with a remaining 45 miles of potential rail-trail available.<sup>27</sup>

*The most recognized rail-trail in Mississippi is the Tanglefoot Trail. The Tanglefoot Trail in northeast Mississippi was completed in 2013 and consists of nearly 44 miles of rail-trail. The trail has an asphalt path that provides a safe route for walkers, bikers, skaters, and wheelchair users. It is a designated National Recreational Trail and is recognized by the National Geographic Geotourism Stewardship Council for its contribution to the U.S. Gulf States Tourism Program. Support and maintenance for the trail is provided by sponsorships, donations, grants, and the Gulf, Mobile, and Ohio (GM&O) Railroad Rails-to-Trails District. Success of the trail has resulted in the opening of new businesses and an increase in tourism along its route.*

*Another local and successful rails-to-trails project is the Longleaf Trace in the southern half of the state, which opened in 2000 and is a designated National Recreation Trail. Longleaf has an overall length of 40.2 miles and hosts over 100,000 facility users annually.<sup>28</sup>*



*Tanglefoot Trail Mile Marker*

<sup>27</sup> Rails to Trails Conservancy. "Mississippi."

<sup>28</sup> Hattiesburg American. "Longleaf Trace looking at upgrades and extensions." 2015.



Center for Disease Control Recommendation

## PERSONAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Outdoor recreation facilities provide many opportunities for physical activity. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends every person participate in one hour of physical activity or exercise each day. This recommendation intends to apply its proven linkage to improved physical and mental health. Exercise and outdoor recreation also provide social activities for youth, keeping children safe and healthy.

### *Outdoor recreation participation can improve health scores in Mississippi.*

For the past two years Mississippi has ranked lowest in the United States for overall health.<sup>29</sup> Specifically, the state's most vulnerable residents are suffering. The state ranked 50th for senior health and has the lowest life expectancy rate at 75.0 years, with a rate of 10,950 of 100,000 people dying before the age of 75. In addition, the state ranked worst for the health of women and children and for premature death.<sup>30</sup> Participating in outdoor recreation is a healthy and sustainable life change that all residents can make to improve their health.

Daily recreation can preclude lifelong impacts of poor physical health. Mississippi ranked 49th for both physical inactivity and obesity, with 71% of survey participants reporting being overweight<sup>31</sup> and 37.3% of its population deemed obese.<sup>32</sup> Relatedly, 30% of those survey respondents report having participated in no leisure time physical activity in the past 30 days.<sup>33</sup>

### *Citizens who participate in outdoor recreation can lower their health care costs.*

Health care costs can become a compounding issue for suffering patients. By beginning a carefully designed exercise routine, residents can improve these scores and lower the accompanying financial responsibilities to health care costs.

Outdoor recreation providers should secure any resources available to extend recreational facilities to become more accessible and attractive to residents with the purpose of improving public health.

<sup>29</sup> <sup>30</sup> America's Health Rankings Annual Report, 2017

<sup>31</sup> <sup>32</sup> Behavior Risk Factor Survey, 2016

<sup>33</sup> America's Health Rankings Annual Report, 2017

### *Outdoor experiences can improve mental well-being.*

Mississippi also suffers from frequent mental distress. 15.9% of residents reported poor mental health for more than 14 days in the past 30 days, ranking it 46th nationally.<sup>34</sup> Interactions with nature, such as “green exercise,” can improve personal mental states. A study by physiologists found that simply exposure to natural environments reduces endocrine markers in the body’s two main stress systems.<sup>35</sup>

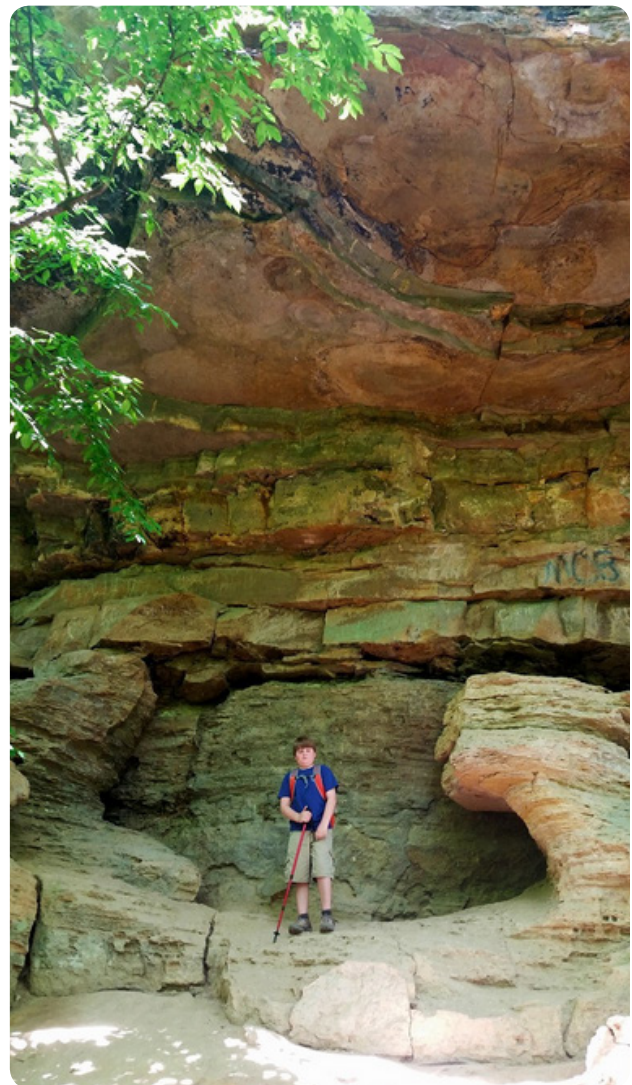
### *Green Exercise*

*Green exercise consists of physical activity while exposed to nature. Green exercise can exist in the form of nature walks, gardening, rock climbing, swimming, and more. The natural setting may be viewed by participants as an additional benefit during the act of physical exertion, therefore increasing their willingness to choose to be active outdoors.*

### *Outdoor recreation and physical activity can mitigate youth risk behavior.*

Youth risk behavior is significant within the state. 78.8% of surveyed students do not participate in the recommended duration of at least 60 minutes of daily physical activity, compared to 14.3% nationally. This percentage worsened by 4.7% from 2013 to 2015.<sup>36</sup> This trend can be related to youth leisure time choices. For example, 33.4% of Mississippi students watch television three or more hours per day on an average school day, compared to 24.7% nationally.<sup>37</sup> Concerningly, the percentage of students who have asthma is also worsening, having significantly increased from 17.2% in 2007 to 25.6% in 2015.<sup>38</sup> Physical education programs at schools and after-school activities can assist in increasing the health of children statewide and educate them on living active lifestyles.

*Archery in Mississippi Schools (AIMS) is a MDWFP-hosted program that teaches archery to students grades 4-12. The program was started in 2005; it now has an annual participation count of 80,000 students in over 500 schools.<sup>39</sup> MDWFP promotes archery as a method to teaching safety, mental concentration, physical fitness, and self-improvement.<sup>40</sup> The growing popularity of archery exists throughout the state and the nation. Mississippi is frequently ranked as a top participant in national rankings. In 2019, students can participate in the State Championship for \$10.<sup>41</sup>*



Hiking in Tishomingo State Park

<sup>34</sup> CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2017.

<sup>35</sup> The great outdoors: how a green exercise environment can benefit all

<sup>36</sup> <sup>37</sup> <sup>38</sup> Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2015

<sup>39</sup> MDWFP. Archery in MS Schools.

<sup>40</sup> MDWFP. Benefits of AIMS.

<sup>41</sup> AIMS Invoice.

*State, national, and corporate initiative programs may support local objectives.*

There are many organizations and companies located in Mississippi that give back to the community through funding, park development, or health programs. Some of these include:

- *Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Mississippi, Inc. supports environmental programs and funds requests that benefit many residents and target youth development*
- *AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities recognizes local elected officials' commitment to create health communities for senior residents. The four chosen locations in 2018 included Holly Springs, Jackson, Southaven, and Vicksburg.*
- *Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation acknowledges community health and wellness through its Healthy Hometown Awards Program. Awards exist at the \$25,000 level for three town sizes and \$50,000 for the winning municipality. 2017 winners include Meridian, Hernando, Mantachie, and the overall winner, Moss Point. The program was established in 2010.*



*Morton Wins 2016 Healthiest Hometown*



*Moss Point Wins 2017 Healthiest Hometown*



*Ridgeland Wins 2018 Healthiest Hometown*

## COMMUNITIES AND EQUITY

Outdoor recreation facilities can have positive impacts on their surrounding environments and enhance socioeconomic factors. Community parks, in particular, provide accessible space for youth sports programs, hosting picnic gatherings, and initiating interactions among neighbors. Green spaces can grow community pride and result in citizens taking personal care for their neighborhood and their neighbors.

Outdoor recreation can improve the quality of life in these communities and strengthen social groups. While the state ranked second-worst for behaviors and 44th for community and environment<sup>42</sup>, integrating parks and outdoor recreation facilities can improve these rankings in the following ways:

- *Developing recreational facilities can be a method for activating vacant space*
- *Parks can lead to the formation of social communities*
- *The presence of recreational facilities can reduce crime*

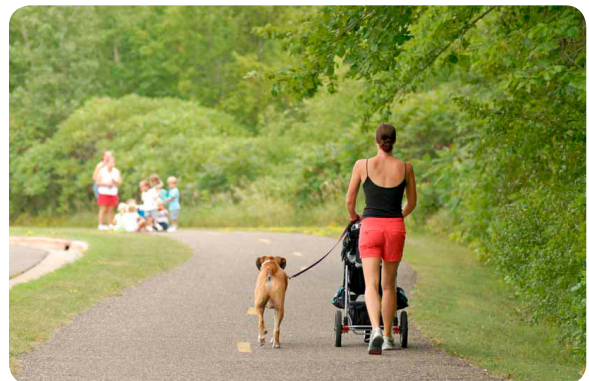
Nationwide, many sectors of the public, including minorities and physically-challenged individuals, feel discouraged from participating in outdoor recreation, even though they may stand to gain the most from the benefits of green exercise. The top barriers to inclusion are a shortage of funding for related initiatives and a lack of understanding of needs of these community members.

The following are associations and programs that encourage the inclusion of people of all personal backgrounds and abilities to participate in outdoor recreation.

- *The National Recreation and Park Association, in partnership with the Lakeshore Foundation and National Centers for Health, Physical Activity and Disability, are committed to a pledge titled Parks for Inclusion. The pledge advocates for improved built environments, aims for better policy development, and supplies best practices related to inclusion.*
- *The Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education (AORE) address the lack of inclusion and diversity within outdoor recreation by developing social events and educational trainings that welcome and promote diversity. It uses direct outreach to connect with underrepresented populations of outdoor participants. Partnerships are available to access this organization's resources.*

As Mississippi continues to address these challenges, the state has made noteworthy accomplishments.

*In Mississippi, physically-challenged or -impaired residents may be permitted special privileges at recreational facilities. These persons may also be exempt from the requirement to purchase a hunting or fishing license. Accessible amenities are available at 20 State Parks, 30 Wildlife Management Areas, and 18 State Lakes.*



*Accessible Trails for All Users*

<sup>42</sup> America's Health Rankings Annual Report, 2017

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND TOURISM

The federal Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act of 2016, or Outdoor REC Act, passed to analyze the extent to which the outdoor industry affects the national economy. This act became a significant piece of legislation to recognize the expanding industry and its businesses, including outdoor recreation, tourism, and related activities. Officials should jointly consider tourism and outdoor recreation visitation to maximize the benefits of out-of-state resident expenditures.

Outdoor recreation facilities in close proximity to residences or agritourism farms can increase equity for landowners and improve local economic development. The American Planning Association (APA) determined that city parks can increase real property values thus increasing municipal tax revenues. It also found that parks located adjacent to a residential area can retain affluent retirees, attract knowledgeable workers and talent to live and work, and draw-in homebuyers to that area.<sup>43</sup>



*RV Travel through the Natchez Trace Parkway*

### Economy of Outdoor Recreation

The Outdoor Industry Association states that outdoor recreation in Mississippi generates \$8.0 billion in consumer spending annually; 79,000 direct jobs; \$2.1 billion in wages and salaries; and \$620 million in state and local tax revenue.<sup>44</sup>

The primary outdoor opportunities in Mississippi include fishing, hunting, and wildlife-related activities. These activities escalate sales of food, lodging, transportation, fuel, sports equipment, and auxiliary expenses. The state's 2017 Tourism Economic Impact Report found that anglers alone contribute approximately \$240 million to the state's economy, creating an economic impact of \$1.5 billion.<sup>45</sup> The report documents that there were 6,677,715 visitors to the state's national parks in FY2017, creating an economic benefit of \$197,400,000.<sup>46</sup> Between 2016 and 2017, state park visitation declined 12.4%.<sup>47</sup> Yet, nonresident hunting and fishing license sales increased from \$9.24 million to \$9.7 million.<sup>48</sup>



*Hunters in Protective Orange*

<sup>43</sup> American Planning Association. "How cities use parks for economic development."

<sup>44</sup> Outdoor Industry Association. "Mississippi."

<sup>45</sup> <sup>46</sup> <sup>47</sup> Visit Mississippi. "Tourism Economic Impact Report." 2017.

<sup>48</sup> National Park Service. "Working with Mississippi: By the Numbers." 2017.



## Tourism

Tourism is a major contributor to every state’s economy. The arrival of visitors is an opportunity for Mississippi to show-off its natural beauty while encouraging tourists to spend money on outdoor activities. In Mississippi, total travel and tourism expenditures by visitors in the 2017 fiscal year sum to \$6,342,974,647. Travel and tourism directly employ 87,335 persons or 7.6% of the state’s employed population.<sup>49</sup>

There are five tourism regions within the state: Capital/River, Coastal, Delta, Hills, and Pines.<sup>50</sup> The table that follows lists the main attractions for each.

TOURISM REGIONS	
Region	Main Attractions
Capital/River	Southern history; Battle of Vicksburg; Mississippi State Capitol
Coastal	Gulf Coast; National Seashore; University of Southern Mississippi; casinos
Delta	Native American Indian mounds; cotton fields; Mississippi River
Hills	Museums for Elvis Presley and William Faulkner; University of Mississippi; Rust College; Native American Indian mounds
Pines	Jimmie Rodgers Museum; Clarkco State Park; Neshoba County Fair; Mississippi State University

### Tourism Regions

As shown, tourism attractions across the state are diverse; visitors can do everything from touring Native American Indian mounds to swimming in the Gulf of Mexico. For longer trips, tourists can connect many of these attractions by walking or biking along historic trails and scenic byways. The table on the following page lists each of these route types.

TOURISM EXPENDITURES BY VISITORS	
Region	Expenditures (\$)
Coastal	2,468,880,407
Capital/River	1,294,001,702
Hills	1,057,890,994
Delta	809,903,364
Pines	551,301,015

### Tourism Expenditures by Visitors

HISTORIC AND TOURISM TRAILS	
Trail Name	Length
Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail	64 miles
-Rocky Springs Trail	10 miles
-Tupelo Trail	6 miles
-Ridgeland Trail	24 miles
-Leipers Trail	24 miles
Grand Gulf-Raymond Scenic Byway	47 miles
The Great River Road	3000 miles (total)
US-45	1300 miles (total)
Mississippi Blues Trail	120 sites, non-linear
Hot Tamale Trail	48 sites, non-linear

### Historic and Tourism Trails

<sup>49</sup> National Park Service. "Working with Mississippi: By the Numbers." 2017.

<sup>50</sup> Mississippi Tourism Association. "Explore Mississippi."

## SCENIC BYWAYS

Byway Name	Miles	Duration
Beach Boulevard Scenic Byway	11.8	30 min
Brice's Crossroads Battlefield-Chief Tishomingo Scenic Byway	13.8	30 min
Grand Gulf - Raymond Scenic Byway	50	120 min
Great River Road - Mississippi	275	N/A
Lower Mississippi Historic Scenic Byway	101.1	120 min
Mississippi Delta Great River Road	250	300 min
NASA Scenic Byway to Space	36.6	80 min
Natchez Trace Parkway - Mississippi	312	1-2 days

*Scenic Byways*

### *Agritourism*

Agritourism is an expanding component of the tourism market. It provides a rural escape for city dwellers, and it is one of the state's fastest growing tourism markets. For Mississippi landowners, agritourism is an opportunity to supplement their household income. For recreationalists, it provides rural outdoor exercise and food source education opportunities. Examples of activities include touring rice fields and participating in quail and duck hunts.

According to the Mississippi Division of Tourism, there are currently 95 agritourism-related farms or businesses in the state, ranging in attractions from wineries to alpaca farms.<sup>51</sup> The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce estimates that state's agritourism market contributes approximately \$150 million annually. It is likely that agritourism in Mississippi has growth potential since the state is home to 42,000 farms currently in operation.<sup>52</sup>

Mississippi State University's Natural Resources Enterprises program assists landowners in understanding recreational opportunities for their properties. It provides resources on financial planning, operational methods, cost sharing, and other programs. Additionally, it addresses legal and insurance concerns on behalf of landowners.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture has developed a mobile app to promote agritourism by inventorying operations across the state. The department also celebrates Agritourism Month during October.<sup>53</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Outdoor recreation and public health data show that residents statewide are experiencing difficulty maintaining healthy and active lifestyles. To combat this, infrastructure, such as rail-trails, has been built to provide residents with access to outdoor recreation facilities. Landowners can help facilitate outdoor recreation by donating their land or allowing for entry to it for recreational access. Moreover, local programs and facilities can incorporate existing, successful programs used across the nation to continue increasing participation by youth and access for minorities.

<sup>51</sup> Mississippi State University. "Agritourism in Mississippi: Effects and Impacts." POD-04-14.

<sup>52</sup> Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. "Mississippi Agritourism."

<sup>53</sup> Mississippi Business Journal. "Department of Agriculture launches new agritourism mobile app." 2014.



# 5

## PROVIDER AND RESIDENT SURVEYS

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# PROVIDER AND RESIDENT SURVEY



## Resident Survey

1. Which County do you live in? \*

Select

Adams

2. How many hours per week do you and / or a member of your family spend in a park?

- None
- 1 - 10 hours
- 11 - 20 hours
- 21 - 30 hours
- 31 - 40 hours
- 40 +

3. Which of the following types of facilities do you visit most often?

(select all that apply)

- City Parks
- County Parks
- State Parks
- National Parks
- US Forest Service Facilities
- Water District Facilities
- Private Facilities

Other

(please specify)

4. Select all recreational activities in your area that you OR members of your family have and / or would like to participate in.

Resident Survey Screenshot

The project team conducted surveys to obtain information from outdoor recreation facility managers and facility users concerning needs, preferences, use, and availability. The surveys were widely distributed and resulted in crucial feedback that guided development of the [SCORP](#).

## PROVIDER SURVEY

There were 94 applicable responses to the provider survey. Providers are mostly from cities and state agencies across the state. Cumulatively, providers inventoried over 5,000 facilities, accounting for facilities that have been added and abandoned in recent years. Providers also identified and ranked requests for new or improved facilities by users.

### Provider Survey Methodology

The project team created the provider survey to obtain information from park managers or responsible public officials. The team hosted the survey online through the project website, that was only accessible through a direct link given to providers through email, phone, and postcards. A spreadsheet directly populated survey responses that the team used to analyze the data, develop graphics, and track responses. While the survey was open, the team contacted counties and state parks that had not yet submitted the survey to request its completion. The team also encouraged TFC members to promote the survey within their districts.

### Provider Survey Findings

#### Organization Type and Location

Providers represent 55 of 82 counties, with a fairly even spatial distribution among those counties. Counties with the most responses were from Scott, Adams, and Hinds. Providers were mostly from city (50%) and state agencies (40%), followed by counties (6%), and nonprofit organizations (4%).

#### Facility Inventory

The provider survey asked providers to inventory facilities in their area, including the number of facilities added or abandoned since the previous SCORP. A total of 5,334 facilities were documented as being currently available in the 94 participating locations. Since 2015, the responding parks added 282 and abandoned 114 facility types. The facility types that were most commonly added are also those that were the most commonly abandoned; these include picnic areas, campsites, playgrounds, and baseball/softball fields.

PROVIDER ORGANIZATIONS	
Organization Type	Number of Type
City	46
College / University	0
County	5
School	0
State Agency	37
Federal Agency	0
Nonprofit	4
<b>Total Providers</b>	<b>92</b>

Provider Organizations

AMOUNT OF FACILITIES	
<b>Total Facilities</b>	<b>5,334</b>
Identified Facility Types Added	187
Others Facility Types Added	95
<b>Total Added</b>	<b>282</b>
Facility Types Abandoned	20
Others Abandoned	94
<b>Total Abandoned</b>	<b>114</b>

Amount of Facilities

### Recreational Needs

The provider survey asked providers to identify the greatest recreational need for their area. The table to the right shows the five most common needs as determined by respondents. 23 of the 94 providers (25%) indicated that more trails are needed in their parks.

The provider survey also asked providers to rank the strength of requests by facility users. Request strengths ranged from one (strongest) to twenty (weakest). Providers shared that the strongest user requests include playgrounds (5.1); picnic areas (6.7); and trails (8.3).

### Summary of Provider Input

Provider input is based on the 94 provider survey responses. Over the past five years, providers added or abandoned facilities, many being the same facility types. The project team considers this result to be due to differing needs in areas, a balancing of facility types across areas, and the replacement of facilities.

A comparison of the Recreational Needs tables shows that providers and users are both aware of the need for the addition or expansion of facilities, particularly trails, playgrounds, picnic areas, splash pads, campsites, and baseball/softball fields.

GREATEST UNMET RECREATIONAL NEEDS	
Facility Type	Total Indicated
Trails	23
Playgrounds	19
Campsites	14
Baseball/Softball	13
Splash Pads	12

*Greatest Unmet Recreational Needs*

REQUESTS FOR FACILITY TYPES	
Facility Type	Average Strength of Request
Playgrounds	5.1
Picnic Areas	6.7
Trails	8.3
Water Parks	8.6
Campsites	8.6
Events, Festivals	8.7
Baseball/Softball	8.9
Health/Fitness	9.4
Boating/Fishing	9.6
Biking Areas	9.8
Tennis/Pickleball	9.9
Swimming Pools	10.3
Football/Soccer	10.7
Canoeing/Kayaking	11.4
Hunting	11.7
Nature Centers	12.3
OHV Trails	12.5
Skate Parks	12.8
Rappelling	13.1
Equestrian	14.0

*Requests for Facility Types*

*Note: Strength is ranked where 1 is strongest*

## RESIDENT SURVEY

There were 1,213 responses to the resident survey, yet not all respondents completed every question in the survey. According to the data received, most respondents spend 1-10 hours per week in a park. They most commonly visit city parks for the enjoyment of being outdoors and perceive their parks to be safe. To participate in recreation, residents are willing to extend their travel distance into neighboring states. Most residents learn of recreational opportunities through email and websites. Over three-fourths indicated that they would like to receive a newsletter about recreation.

### Resident Survey Methodology

Like the provider survey, the resident survey was available online through the project website. However, the resident survey was available publicly and heavily promoted. The project team shared the survey link through email, phone, social media, postcards, and flyers. Again, the team managed a spreadsheet that populated survey responses, from which the team tracked and analyzed results.

### Resident Survey Findings

#### Location

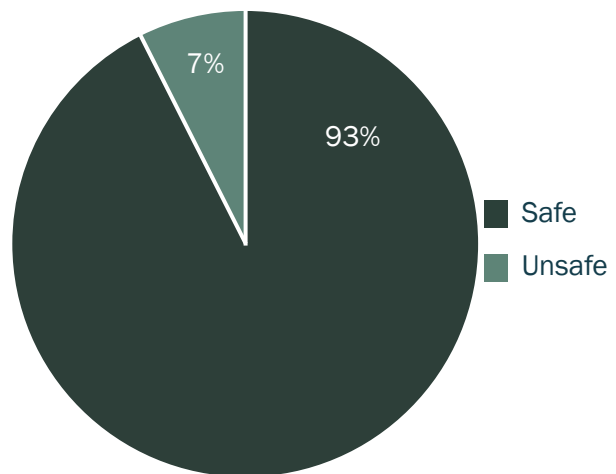
Residents, who indicated their location, responded from all counties, with the exceptions of Claiborne and DeSoto. The most responses were from Rankin (108), Hinds (87), Adams (69), Tishomingo (67), and Madison (62) counties.

#### Frequency of Use

The resident survey asked how many hours per week residents spend in parks. A significant one-third responded that they spend 1-10 hours per week in parks, while approximately one-fourth of respondents indicated they spend less than one hour in parks per week.

#### Safety

The survey also assessed the perception of safety for recreation facilities. A large majority (93%) perceive facilities to be safe.

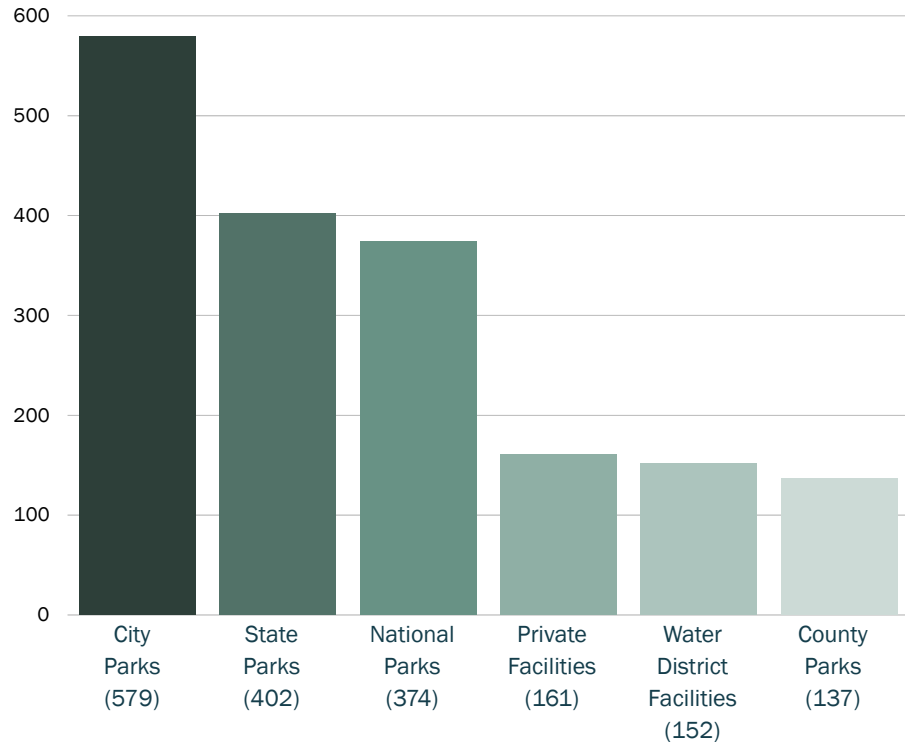


Perceived Safety of Public Recreation Facilities

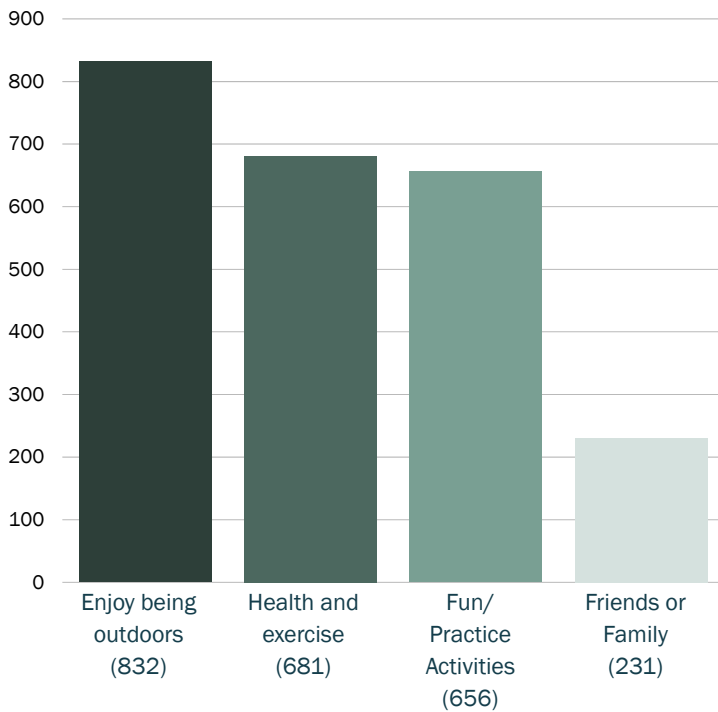


### Types of Facilities Visited

The resident survey asked residents which types of facilities they most often visit. Respondents could select more than one response. City parks were found to be visited most often (579 respondents, 32%); followed by state parks (402 respondents, 22%), national parks (374 respondents, 21%), private facilities (161 respondents, 9%), water district facilities (152 respondents, 8%), and county parks (137 respondents, 8%). The remaining said that they visit facilities hosted by the US Forest Service, and none selected that they visit “other” facilities.



Number of Respondents Who Visit Facilities, by Type



Reasons for Participating in Park Activities

### Reasons for Participation

The resident survey asked residents why they choose to participate in park activities, multiple answers were allowed. The survey found that the main reason chosen by 832 respondents (35%) was the enjoyment of being outdoors, followed by reasons including health and exercise (28% out of 681 respondents) and for fun or to practice activities (27% out of 656 respondents). While, the remaining responses (10% out of 231 respondents) involved simply using parks as a means to spend time with friends and/or family.

### Participation by Facility Type

The resident survey asked residents to indicate their previous experiences and desire to participate in various recreational activities in the future. The following table shows the twenty activities with the highest counts of respondents who have participated in each category. Bar graphs on the following pages include the full list of participation.

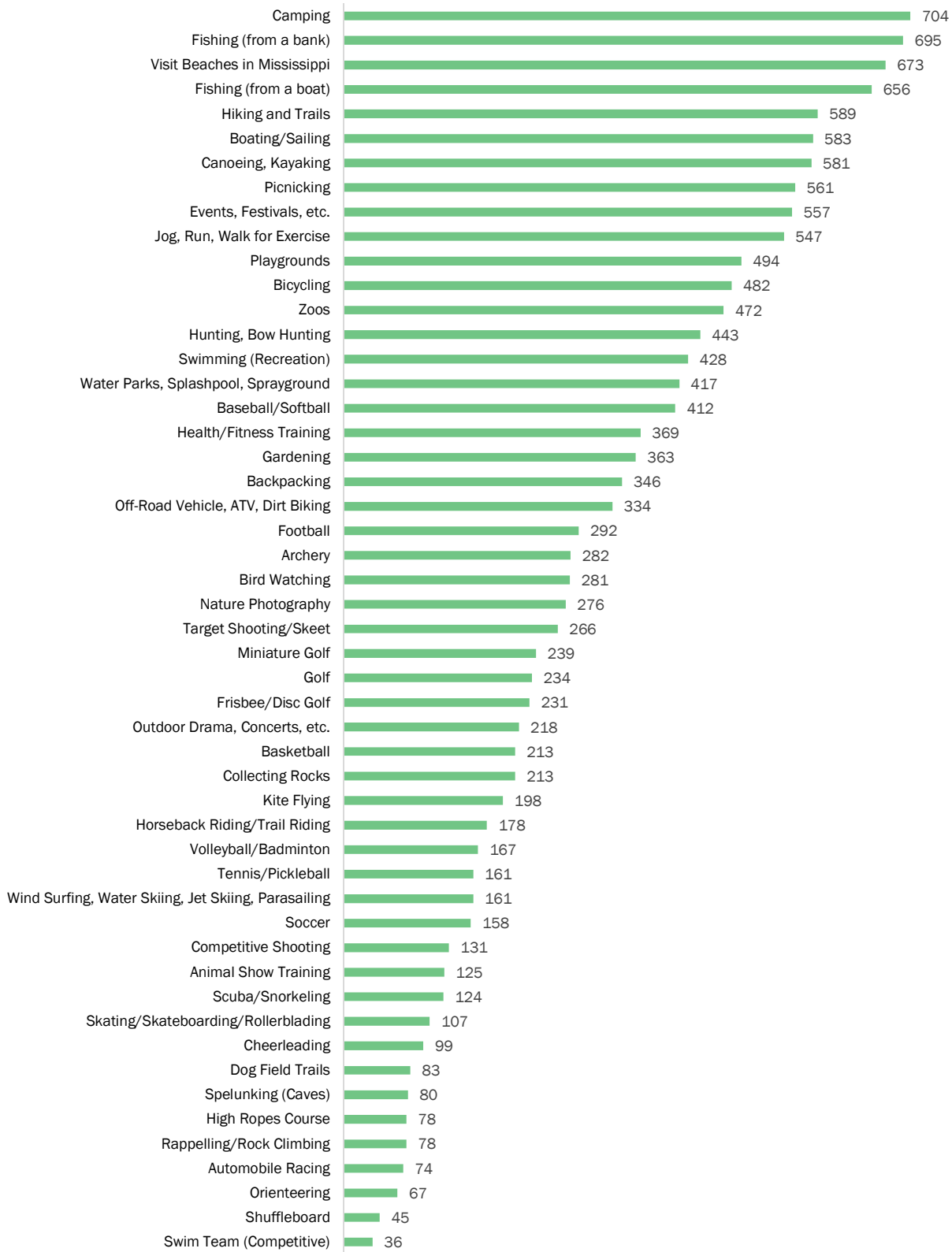
TOP TWENTY ACTIVITIES BASED ON RESIDENT PARTICIPATION INTEREST		
Have Participated	Would Like to Participate	Have Participated & Would Like to Participate
1 Camping	Rappelling/Rock Climbing	Hiking and Trails
2 Fishing (from a bank)	Competitive Shooting	Visit Beaches in Mississippi
3 Visit Beaches in Mississippi	Archery	Camping
4 Fishing (from a boat)	Backpacking	Canoeing, Kayaking
5 Hiking and Trails	High Ropes Course	Picnicking
6 Boating/Sailing	Scuba/Snorkeling	Events, Festivals, etc.
7 Canoeing, Kayaking	Spelunking (Caves)	Fishing (from a bank)
8 Picnicking	Canoeing, Kayaking	Jog, Run, Walk for Exercise
9 Events, Festivals, etc.	Target Shooting/Skeet	Fishing (from a boat)
10 Jog, Run, Walk for Exercise	Horseback Riding/Trail Riding	Zoos
11 Playgrounds	Outdoor Drama, Concerts, etc.	Swimming (Recreation)
12 Bicycling	Off-Road Vehicle, ATV, Dirt Biking	Water Parks, Splashpool, Sprayground
13 Zoos	Animal Show Training	Boating/Sailing
14 Hunting, Bow Hunting	Miniature Golf	Backpacking
15 Swimming (Recreation)	Nature Photography	Bicycling
16 Water Parks, Splashpool, Sprayground	Dog Field Trails	Playgrounds
17 Baseball/Softball	Bird Watching	Health/Fitness Training
18 Health/Fitness Training	Bicycling	Hunting, Bow Hunting
19 Gardening	Hiking and Trails	Nature Photography
20 Backpacking	Orienteering	Target Shooting/Skeet

*Top Twenty Activities for Resident Participation Interest*

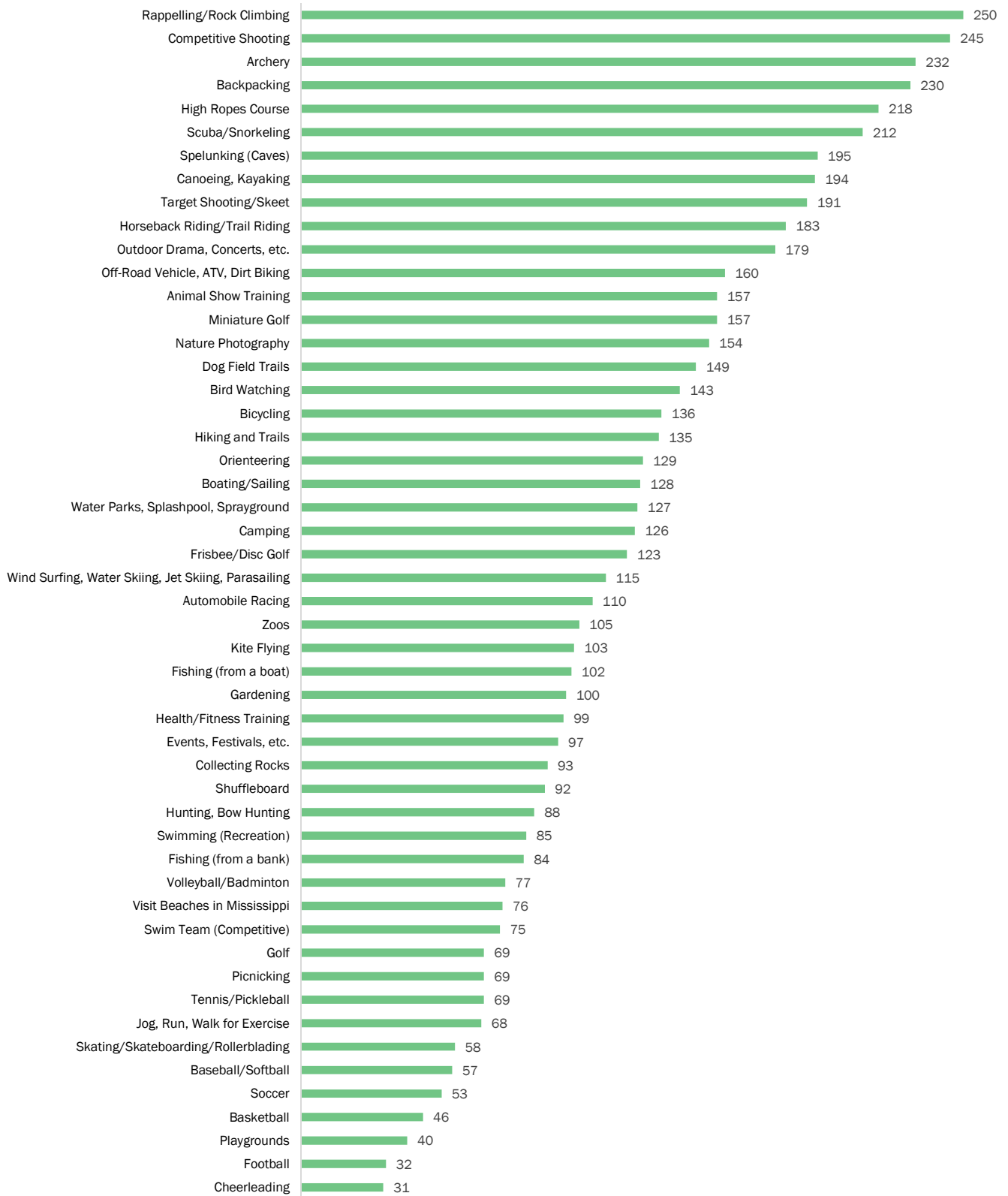
Many respondents indicated that they have participated in team sports. They also participate in activities such as fishing, hunting, and visiting the beach that are supplied by Mississippi’s natural amenities such as waterways and the coastline.

There is a strong balance of activities that residents have participated in and would like to continue participating in. The response list includes leisure activities like picnicking, visiting the beach, nature photography, and camping, as well as event-based activities such as festivals and concerts. Family-friendly choices are also preferred with many residents going to zoos, playgrounds, and water parks.

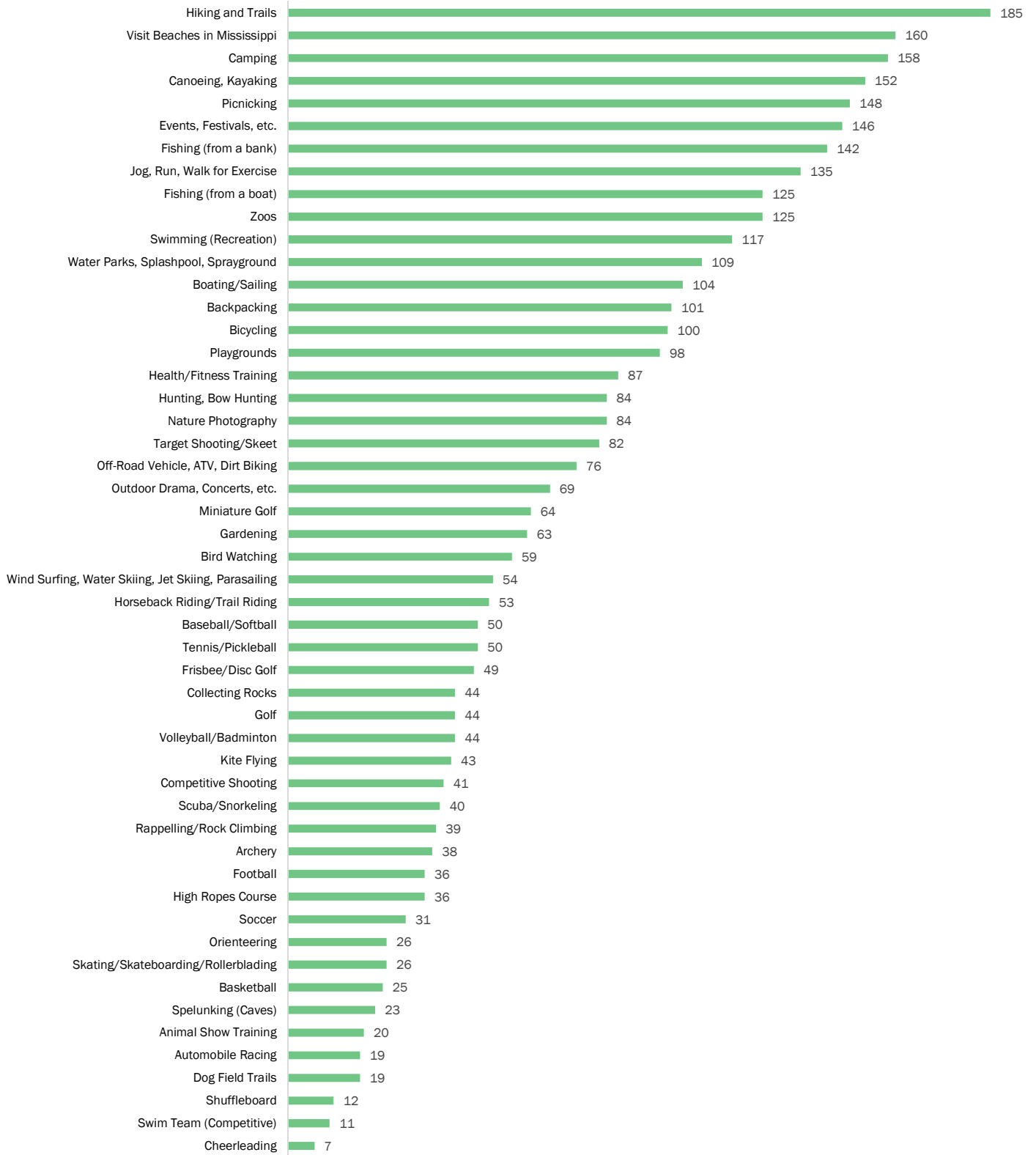
Activities in which residents would like to participate include some that the state’s natural landscape does not provide equally across the state. These include spelunking, repelling, and snorkeling.



*Activities In Which Residents Have Participated*



Activities In Which Residents Would Like to Participate



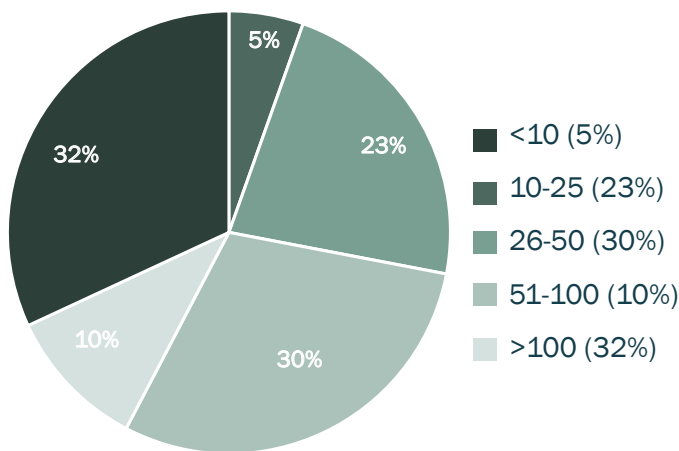
Activities In Which Residents Have Participated and Would Like to Participate

## Travel

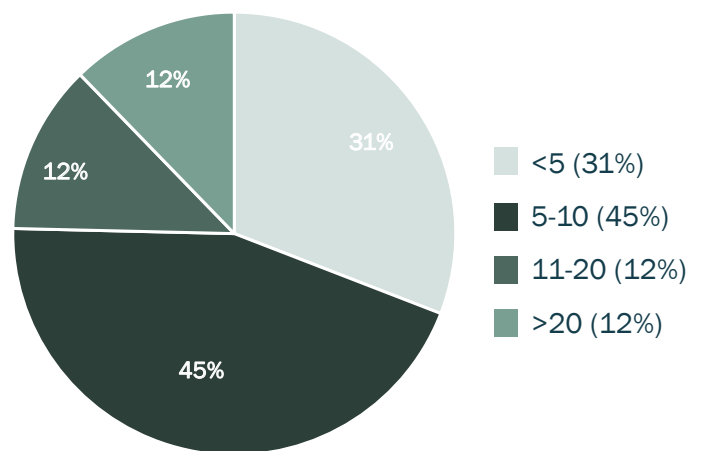
The survey identified the willingness, extent, and limitations of travel to parks. The resident survey asked residents how far they are willing to drive, bike, or walk to parks; the following charts display the breakdown of responses.

The survey asked those who indicated that they are not willing to walk or bike to parks to explain their reasoning. The most common explanations include safety concerns due to a lack of adequate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure; existing disability or physical limitation; poor health; distance to parks; and hot weather.

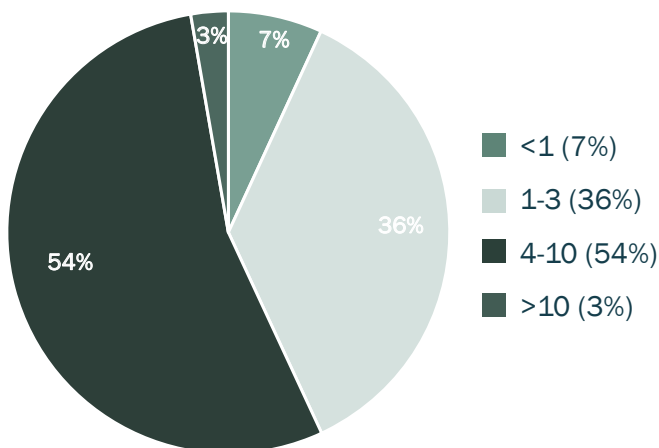
Beyond local parks, nearly three-quarters of resident respondents are willing to visit parks outside of Mississippi. The most popular locations include the neighboring states of Alabama, Arkansas, and Louisiana.



Driving Distance - Miles



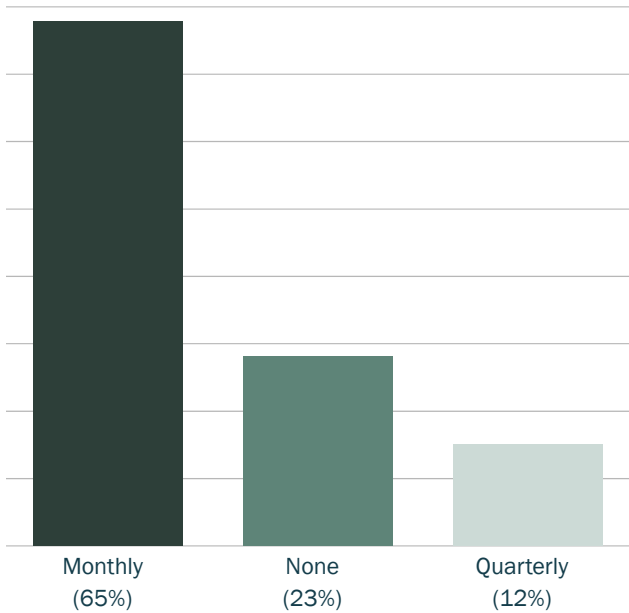
Bicycling Distance - Miles



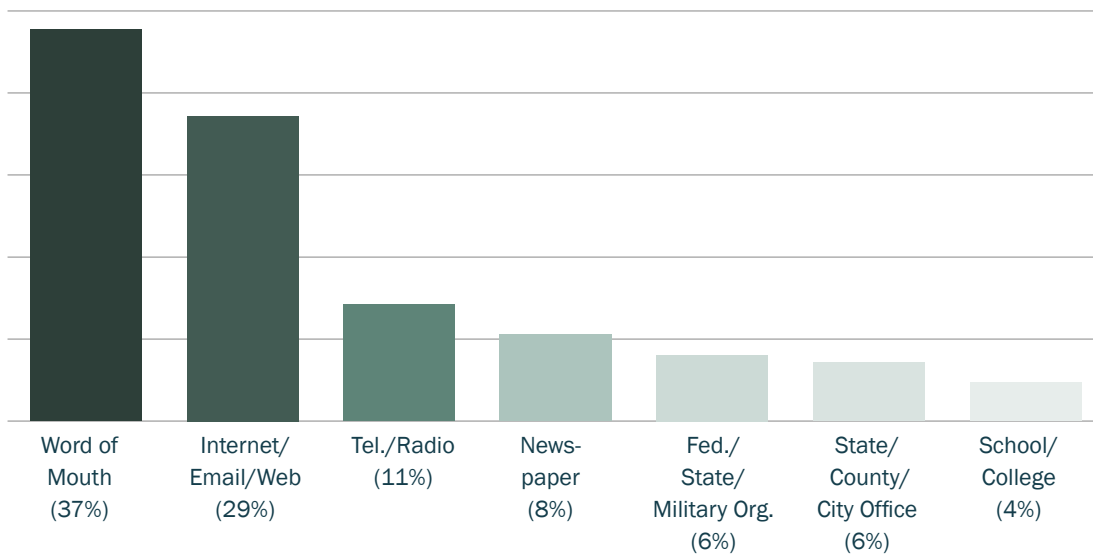
Walking Distance - Miles

## Marketing

The resident survey asked residents how they regularly find out about recreational facility locations and activities. Respondents discover opportunities through emails (electronic newsletters) 77% and through websites 75%. The survey sought the level of interest for regular newsletters. 65% would receive a newsletter monthly; 12% quarterly; and 23% were not interested.



## Subscription Preference



## Recreational Opportunity Marketing

## Resident Respondent Demographics

The resident survey recorded respondent demographics. The purpose of these questions was to identify who is responding, marginally-represented outliers, and any skewed distributions. The following is a breakdown of characteristics of resident survey respondents.

### *Age, Gender, and Ethnicity*

The ages of residents followed the intended bell-curve shape. One-third of respondents are between the ages of 35 and 64 years old. Two-thirds of respondents are male, and an overwhelming majority are white.

### *Background and Lifestyle*

Most respondents (88%) have been a state resident for over 20 years. 85% own their home, while 10% rent, and 5% do not fit into either category. 74% are married, 13% have never married, and 10% are divorced or widowed. 70% have a household income of more than \$40,000. Education levels vary greatly with residents holding: a bachelor degree (30%), no degree (18%), master degree (16%).

## Summary of Resident Survey Input

The project team compared results of the resident survey to those of the previous **SCORP** report. According to the surveys, residents are still primarily participating in park activities for the enjoyment of being outdoors. More residents are now visiting parks for health benefits and to excel in activities than to spend time with friends and family.

The most popular types of facilities visited remain the same—city, state, and national parks. Travel preferences suggest that resident will visit highly desired facilities in a car up to any distance or by bike or foot up to 10 miles. The willingness of residents to travel outside of the state for recreational opportunities continues to grow.

A large majority perceive their parks to be safe, alluding to their attractiveness to families and the corresponding one-fifth of respondents who say they visit parks to spend time with their friends and families.

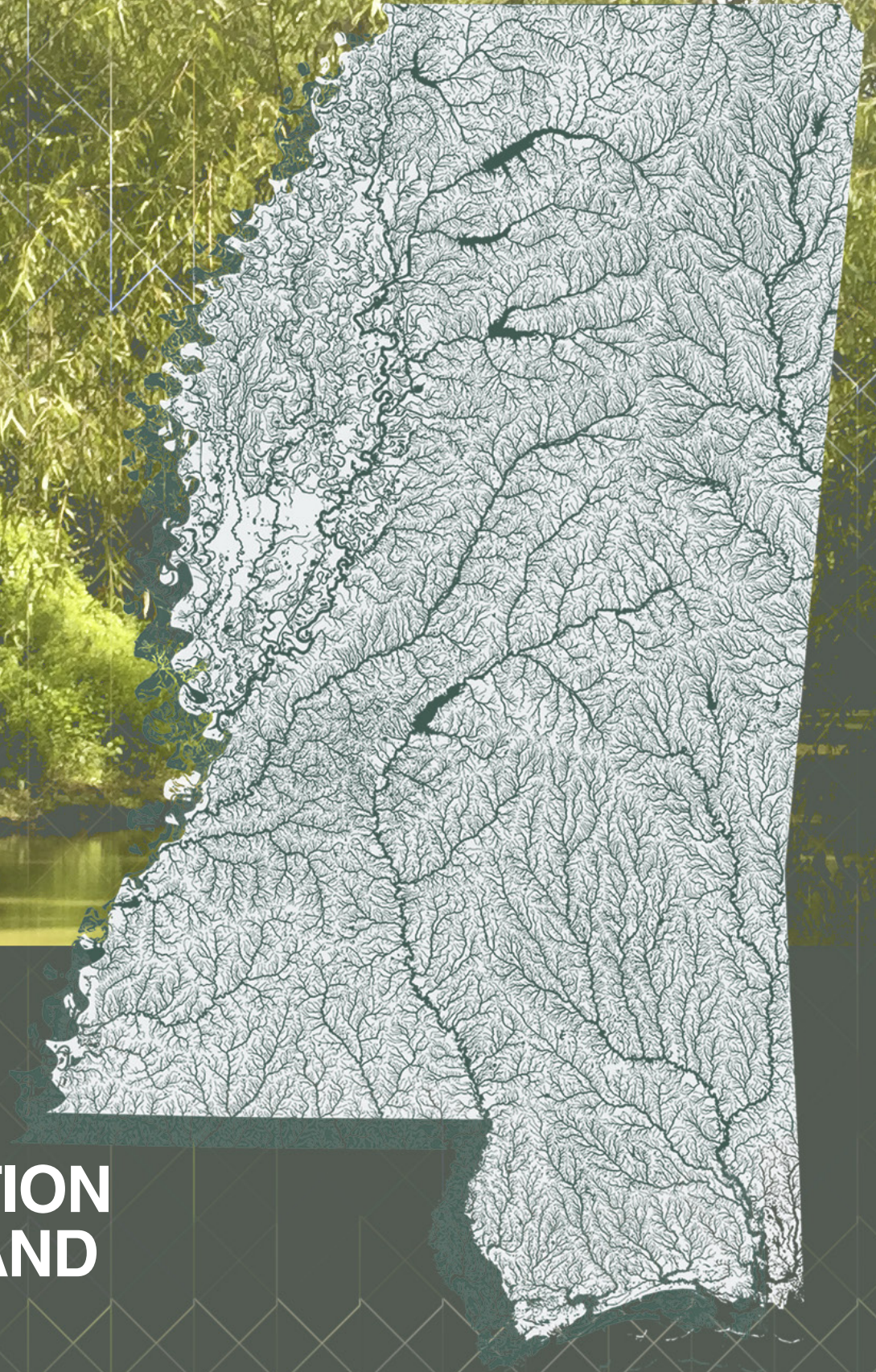
## CONCLUSION

Provider and resident surveys proved to be beneficial in understanding the present state of outdoor recreation in Mississippi. The project team used survey results as a direct source of information for analyses of recreation supply and demand that follow.



# 6

## RECREATION SUPPLY AND DEMAND



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## RECREATION SUPPLY AND DEMAND



*Inclusive Playground in Olive Branch*

The project team determined recreation supply and demand from public engagement, provider input, and facility databases. The team reviewed information from provider survey responses, online recreation databases, and an MDWFP database of grant funded projects. The team determined recreation demand by evaluating resident and provider survey responses and collecting comments from *SCORP* social media postings. The team analyzed these findings and developed recommendations for providers to respond to public demand.

## RECREATION SUPPLY

Recreation supply considers the amounts and types of facilities that are currently available within the state.

### Input

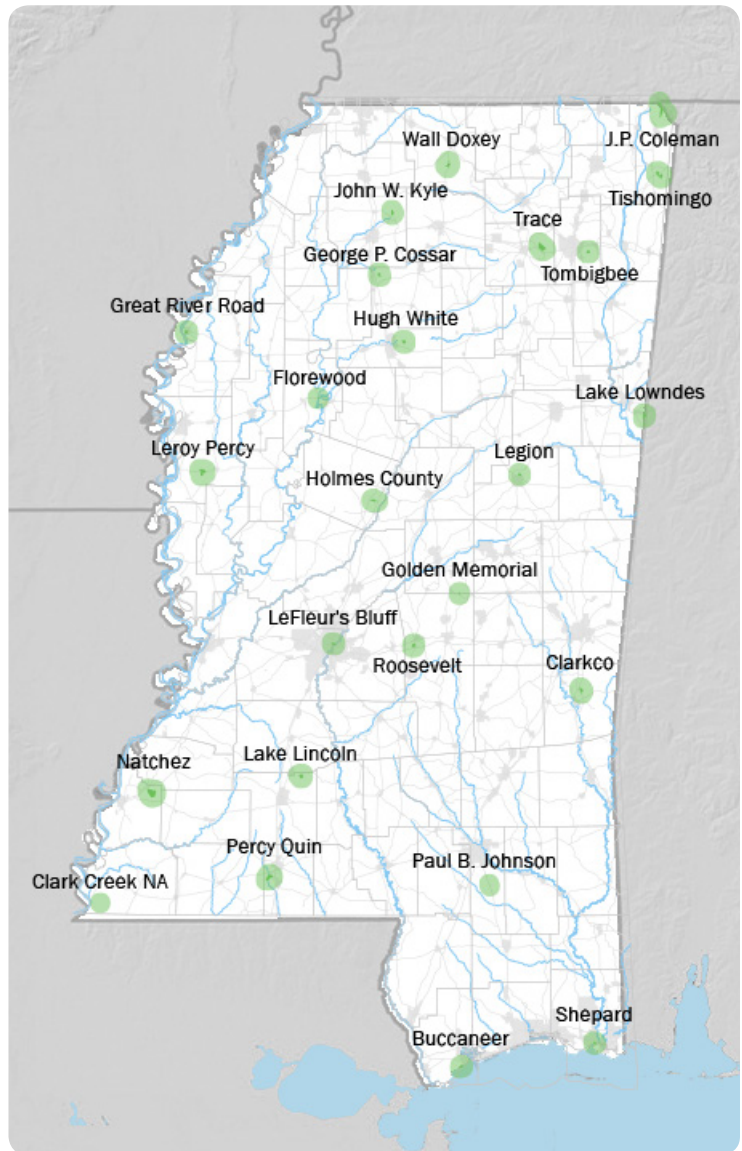
Research and databases show that Mississippi is home to many federal, state, and local lands and waters that are available for recreation.

Mississippi has 25 state parks, most of which are distributed evenly throughout the state and near the interstate-highway system.

The three state parks with the highest visitation counts are all located in the southern region of the state: Buccaneer (148,975); Percy Quin (131,915); and Paul B. Johnson (112,407).

HIGHEST STATE PARK VISITATION	
State Park	Visitor Count
Buccaneer	148,975
Percy Quin	131,915
Paul B. Johnson	112,407
Roosevelt	90,336
Tishomingo	65,597
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,043,143</b>

*Highest State Park Visitation*



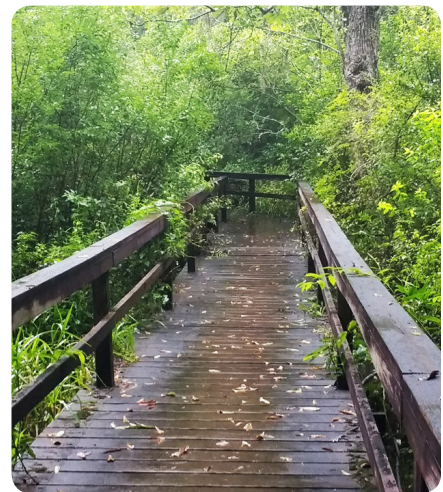
*Mississippi State Parks*

Trails are a popular feature for any park. MDWFP lists a total of 37 recreational trails for state-owned parks. In addition, there are 36 trails in the state's National Forests. Types of trails include nature, mountain bike (MTB), equestrian, and all-terrain vehicle (ATV). Trail names, locations, and lengths can be found in the tables, including a summary table for state, national, and river trails.

STATE PARK TRAILS		
Trail Name	Location	Length (mi)
1. Pirate's Alley Nature Trail	Buccaneer State Park	1.80
2. Clark Creek Trail	Clark Creek State Park	4.38
3. Clarkco Nature Trail	Clarkco State Park	5.00
4. George P. Cossar Nature Trail	George P. Cossar State Park	2.50
5. Golden Memorial	Golden Memorial State Park	0.50
6. Lake Lincoln Nature Trail	Lake Lincoln State Park	1.00
7. Lake Lowndes Equestrian/MTB Trail	Lake Lowndes State Park	7.00
8. Opossum Nature Trail	Lake Lowndes State Park	3.50
9. Legion Nature Trail	Legion State Park	1.60
10. Alligator Lake Nature Trail	Leroy Percy State Park	1.50
11. Natchez Park Nature Trail	Natchez State Park	0.75
12. Trail of Southern Pines Nature Trail	Paul B. Johnson State Park	1.50
13. Percy Quin Nature Trail	Percy Quin State Park	4.00
14. Beaver Dam Trail	Roosevelt State Park	1.20
15. Civil War Hill Trail	Roosevelt State Park	2.00
16. Lakeview Trail	Roosevelt State Park	0.40
17. Muscadine Trail	Roosevelt State Park	0.50
18. Pinelane Trail	Roosevelt State Park	0.40
19. Rolling Hill Trail	Roosevelt State Park	0.30
20. Shepard Park Nature Trail	Shepard State Park	8.00
21. The Blue Nature Trail	Shepard State Park	0.36
22. The Green Nature Trail	Shepard State Park	0.21
23. The Purple Nature Trail	Shepard State Park	0.49
24. The Red Nature Trail	Shepard State Park	0.32
25. The Yellow Nature Trail	Shepard State Park	0.16
26. Bear Creek Nature Trail	Tishomingo State Park	1.50
27. CCC Camp Nature Trail	Tishomingo State Park	3.00
28. CCC Pond Nature Trail	Tishomingo State Park	0.75
29. Flat Rock Nature Trail	Tishomingo State Park	3.00
30. Natchez Trace Nature Trail	Tishomingo State Park	2.00
31. Outcroppings Nature Trail	Tishomingo State Park	2.00
32. Saddleback Ridge Nature Trail	Tishomingo State Park	0.75
33. Tree Trunk Nature Trail	Tombigbee State Park	1.50
34. Noxubee Hills MTB/Hiking Trail	Tombigbee State Park	32.00
35. Trace Park Equestrian/ATV Trail	Trace State Park	35.00
36. Trace Park Hiking/MTB Trail	Trace State Park	14.00
37. Wall Doxey Nature Trail	Wall Doxey State Park	2.50
<b>Total Length</b>		<b>147.37</b>



*Clark Creek Nature Trail*



*Percy Quin Nature Trail*

*State Park Trails*

## NATIONAL FOREST TRAILS

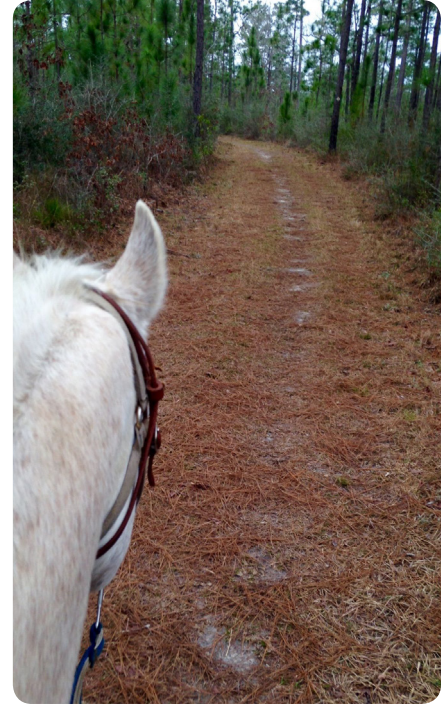
Trail Name	National Forest	Length (mi)
1. Office Trail	Bienville	0.75
2. Shockaloe Horse/MTB Trail	Bienville	23.00
3. Shongelo Lake Trail	Bienville	0.50
4. Marathon Lake Trail	Bienville	1.70
5. Turkey Fork Trail	Chickasawhay	0.90
6. Airey Lake	DeSoto	21.00
7. Ashe Lake	DeSoto	43.00
8. Big Creek Landing	DeSoto	20.00
9. Big Hoot Horse Trail	DeSoto	23.00
10. Black Creek Hiking Trail	DeSoto	39.00
11. Leaf Hiking Trail	DeSoto	1.50
12. Tuxachanie National Hiking Trail	DeSoto	11.90
13. Little Tiger ATV/Motorcycle Trail	DeSoto	12.00
14. Long Leaf Horse Trail	DeSoto	21.00
15. Bethel OHV Trail	DeSoto	43.00
16. Bethel Bicycle/Motrocycle Trail	DeSoto	20.00
17. Big Hoot Horse Trail	DeSoto	23.00
18. Black Creek Hiking Trail	DeSoto	42.00
19. Rattlesnake Bay OHV Trail	DeSoto	31.00
20. South Bethel Motorcycle Trail	DeSoto	17.00
21. Tuxachanie Hiking Trail	DeSoto	14.00
22. Delta Forest Multiple-Use Trails (20 Trails from 0.75 to 4.5 miles)	Delta	52.50
23. Puskus Lake Trail	Delta	1.00
24. North Cypress Non-Motorized Trail	Holly Springs	3.30
25. Brushy Creek Horse Trail	Homochitto	5.50
26. Choctaw Lake	Homochitto	3.00
27. Richardson Creek Trail	Homochitto	10.00
28. Witch Dance Horse Trail	Tombigbee	15.00
29. Noxubee Hills Mountain Bike Trail	Tombigbee	32.00
30. Chickasaw ATV/Motorcycle Trail	Tombigbee	12.00
<b>Total Length</b>		<b>543.55</b>

### National Forest Trails

## TRAIL SYSTEM TOTALS

Trail System Type	Amount of Trails	Total Length (mi)
State Park	88	130
National Forest	17	544
River	26	1,551

### Trail System Totals



Big Hoot Horse Trail



Little Tiger ATV Trail



Noxubee Hills Mountain Bike Trail

Aside from state parks, Mississippi has 54 Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) that include over 685,595 acres. MDWFP finds that hunters are the primary users of WMAs.<sup>54</sup>

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS		
Area Name	Region	Acreage
1. Charlie Capps	Delta	26,136
2. Howard Miller	Delta	5,673
3. Lake George	Delta	10,900
4. Leroy Percy	Delta	26,000
5. Mahannah	Delta	3,587
6. Muscadine Farms	Delta	28,000
7. O'Keefe	Delta	29,875
8. Riverfront	Delta	4,000
9. Shipland	Delta	600
10. Sky Lake	Delta	27,259
11. Stoneville	Delta	30,000
12. Sunflower	Delta	24,314
13. Twin Oaks	Delta	6,810
14. William C. (Billy) Deviney	Delta	650
15. Blake Prairie	East Central	15,337
16. Choctaw	East Central	1,400
17. John W. Starr	East Central	2,284
18. Nanih Waiya	East Central	2,420
19. Okatibbee	East Central	3,135
20. Trim Cane	East Central	8,244
21. Yockanookany	East Central	8,383
22. Canal Section	Northeast	42,000
23. Chickasaw	Northeast	1,342
24. Divide Section	Northeast	14,540
25. Hell Creek	Northeast	12,675
26. John Bell Williams	Northeast	9,696
27. Tuscomb	Northeast	7,200
28. Calhoun County	Northwest	28,000
29. Charles Ray Nix	Northwest	3,046
30. Cossar State Park	Northwest	7,655
31. Malmaison	Northwest	2,261
32. Sardis Waterfowl	Northwest	6,883
33. Upper Sardis	Northwest	6,239
34. Chickasawhay	Southeast	14,764
35. Leaf River	Southeast	36,549
36. Little Biloxi	Southeast	6,925
37. Mason Creek	Southeast	22,789
38. Old River	Southeast	1,000

*Wildlife Management Areas*

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS, CONT.		
Area Name	Region	Acreage
39. Pascagoula River	Southeast	16,407
40. Red Creek	Southeast	3,700
41. Theodore Mars	Southeast	3,642
42. Ward Bayou	Southeast	4,306
43. Wolf River	Southeast	2,500
44. Bienville	Southwest	58,480
45. Canemount	Southwest	28,120
46. Caney Creek	Southwest	896
47. Caston Creek	Southwest	891
48. Copiah County	Southwest	2,436
49. Graham Lake	Southwest	5,675
50. Marion County	Southwest	42,274
51. Natchez State Park	Southwest	13,234
52. Pearl River	Southwest	1,203
53. Sandy Creek	Southwest	10,881
54. Tallahala	Southwest	2,379



*Sunflower Wildlife Management Area*



*Pascagoula River Wildlife Management Area*

<sup>54</sup> MDWFP. Mississippi Outdoor Digest, 2018-2019.

There are also eight National Park Service units within the state that include three National Heritage Areas, one National Trail, 40 National Historic Landmarks, and five National Natural Landmarks. Plus, the state has six National Forests that encompass 1.2 million acres.<sup>55</sup> The following tables list National Forests, NPS service units, and National Natural Landmarks.

### NATIONAL FORESTS

District Name	Forest Name
Bienville Ranger District	Bienville National Forest
Chickasawhay Ranger District	*DeSoto National Forest
Delta Ranger District	Delta National Forest
DeSoto Ranger District	*DeSoto National Forest
Holly Springs Ranger District	Holly Springs National Forest
Homochitto Ranger District	Homochitto National Forest
Tombigbee Ranger District	Tombigbee National Forest

*National Forests*

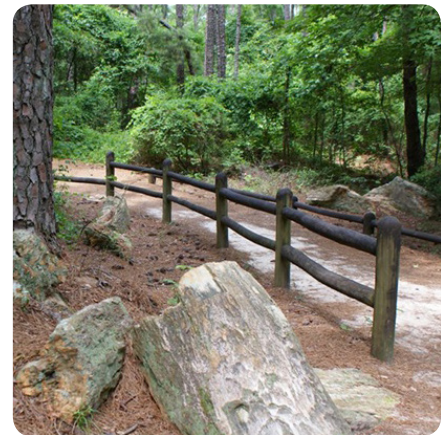


*Delta National Forest*

### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UNITS

Service Unit Name	Location
Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield	Baldwyn
Gulf Islands National Seashore	Ocean Springs
Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area	Delta Region
Mississippi Gulf National Heritage Area	Gulf Coast Region
Natchez National Historical Park	Natchez
Natchez Trace Parkway	Varies
Shiloh National Military Park	Corinth
Tupelo National Battlefield	Tupelo
Vicksburg National Military Park	Vicksburg

*National Park Service Units*



*Mississippi Petrified Forest*

### NATIONAL NATURAL LANDMARKS

Landmark Name	County	Acres	Ownership
Bienville Pines Scenic Area	Scott	223	Federal
Chestnut Oak Disjunct	Calhoun	12	Private
Green Ash-Overcup Oak-Sweetgum	Sharkey	181	Federal
Research Natural Areas			
Harrell Prairie Hill	Scott	122	Federal
Mississippi Petrified Forest	Madison	40	Private

*National Natural Landmarks*



*Vicksburg National Military Park*

<sup>55</sup> US Forest Service. National Forests in Mississippi: Recreation.



The state's geography provides extensive and popular opportunities to recreate in water bodies through boating, skiing, kayaking, swimming, tubing, and more. There are 199 public lakes, 123,000 miles of stream, and 225,000 acres of freshwater.<sup>56</sup> This amount includes 20 state lakes that encompass 4,000 acres of surface water. All state lakes are in the southern or eastern portions of the state and include restrictions to recreation, such as allowing fishing but not water skiing. The following tables list accessible lakes and rivers for recreation.



Holmes County Lake



Roosevelt State Park Lake

#### STATE FISHING LAKES

##### Lake Name

Calling Panther Lake  
 Elvis Presley Lake  
 Holmes County Lake  
 Kemper County Lake  
 Lake Bill Waller  
 Lake Bouge Homa  
 Lake Claude Bennett  
 Lake Columbia  
 Lake Jeff Davis  
 Lake Lamar Bruce  
 Lake Mary Crawford  
 Lake Mike Conner  
 Lake Monroe  
 Lake Perry  
 Lake Tom Bailey  
 Lake Walthall  
 Neshoba County Lake  
 Prentiss Walker Lake  
 Simpson County Lake  
 Tippah County Lake

#### State Fishing Lakes

#### STATE PARK LAKES

##### Lake Name

Clarkco State Park - Ivy Lake  
 Golden Memorial State Park - Golden Memorial Lake  
 Great River Road State Park - Perry Martin Lake  
 Holmes County State Park Lake - English Lake, Odum Lake  
 Lake Lowndes State Park - Lake Lowndes  
 LeFleur's Bluff State Park - Mayes Lake  
 Legion State Park - Legion Lake  
 Leroy Percy State Park - Gamble Lake, Alligator Lake  
 Lake Lincoln State Park - Lake Lincoln  
 Natchez State Park Lake  
 Paul B. Johnson State Park - Geiger Lake  
 Percy Quin State Park - Lake Tangipahoa  
 Roosevelt State Park - Shadow Lake  
 Tishomingo State Park - Haynes Lake  
 Tombigbee State Park - Lake Lee  
 Trace State Park - Old Natchez Trace Lake  
 Wall Doxey State Park - Spring Lake

#### State Park Lakes

<sup>56</sup> MDWFP. Fishing and Boating: Public Waters Program.

Camping and recreational vehicles (RV) are a substantial part of travel and tourism in the state. A 2017 study found that Mississippi has 13,910 RV spaces with on-site electrical hook-ups and water, and an additional 1,932 campsites without hook-ups or water. State parks host 1,628 of those campsites.<sup>57</sup>

*ASPIRA (previously ReserveAmerica), the reservation host used by Mississippi State Parks, includes several sites from Mississippi in its ranking of Top 100, out of more than 4,000 locations. Those ranked include seven state parks, four bird watching spots, one canoeing spot, seven fishing spots, three hiking spots, one park beach, and four kid-friendly parks.<sup>58</sup>*

### NATIONAL FOREST LAKES/RESERVOIRS/RECREATION AREAS

Name	County
Airey Lake Recreation Area	DeSoto
Ashe Lake	DeSoto
Beaver Lake	Bienville
Big Biloxi Recreation Area	DeSoto
Blue Lake Recreation Area	Delta
Chewalla Lake Recreation Area	Holly Springs
Choctaw Lake Recreation Area	Tombigbee
Clear Springs Recreation Area	Homochitto
Davis Lake Recreation Area	Tombigbee
Greentree Reservoir	Bienville
Little Sunflower River Recreation Area	Delta
Marathon Lake Recreation Area	Bienville
Name	National Forest
Okhissa Lake Recreation Area	Homochitto
POW Lake Recreation Area	DeSoto
Pukus Lake Recreation Area	Holly Springs
Shongelo Lake	Bienville
Tillatoba Lake Recreation Area	Holly Springs
Tishkill Lake	Bienville
Turkey Fork Recreation Area	DeSoto

*National Forest Lakes/Reservoirs/Recreation Areas*

### RIVERS AND CREEKS

River/Creek Name	Length (mi)
Bayou Pierre	103
Big Black Creek	6
Big Black River	242
Black Creek	53
Black Creek	40
Bluff Creek	27
Bogue Chitto River	38
Bouie River	22
Buttahatchee River	45
Chickasawhay River	149
Chunky River	8
Chunky River	26
Hatchie River	10
Homochitto River	70
Jourdan River	16
Leaf River	51
Magees Creek	11
Noxubee River	114
Okatoma River	28
Pascagoula River	67
Pearl River	132
Red Creek	90
Strong River	86
Tchoutacabouffa River	22
Tuxachanie Creek	32
Wolf River	63
Total Length	1551

*Rivers and Creeks*

<sup>57</sup> Visit Mississippi. 2017 Tourism Economic Impact Report.

<sup>58</sup> MDWFP. Parks and Destinations: MS State Parks Earn National Rankings.

## Analysis

From the survey and database information, researchers identified parks at the county and PDD levels. Parks may be considered as either active or passive—active often being found in urban areas with development of recreational facilities and passive consisting of more open space and less development and consequent maintenance.

An MDWFP database provided totals for active and passive parks across the state. This information is presented in a summary below and in its entirety on the following pages. Using this data researchers determined that there are 1,731 total parks, 47% active and 53% passive. Based on the comparable calculation of parks to counties and planning and development districts, there is an average of 10.55 parks in each county and 86.50 parks in each PDD. The project team compared the amount of active and passive recreation facilities to population data to determine the percentage rates of parks that are available per 1,000 people. To represent the time since the most recent census, the team used population data from two surveys, the 2010 US Census and 2017 Annual Estimates. Based on the averaged data, statewide there are an estimated 0.24 active parks and 0.39 passive parks per 1,000 residents.

The team further calculated the data to represent the PDD level and determine the amount and locations of highest needs for additional facilities. It was found that the fewest active and passive parks are located in the Northeast Mississippi PDD. Moreover, there are three counties that have a combined total of three or fewer active and passive parks: Montgomery, Noxubee, and Quitman.

Survey responses highlighted that the most significant lack of opportunities exists for leisure and family-friendly opportunities. The recreational needs identified by providers suggest that there are strong demands by facility users for direct interactions with nature on trails and at campsites and for activities for children at playgrounds and splash pads. Answers addressing the greatest recreational needs are in close alignment with the strengths of requests for facility types.

### ACTIVE AND PASSIVE PARKS SUMMARY

Total Parks	1,731
Percent Active	47%
Percent Passive	53%
Average Parks per County	10.55
Average Active per County	9.90
Average Passive per County	11.21
Average Parks per PDD	86.50
Average Active per PDD	81.20
Average Passive per PDD	91.80

*Active and Passive Parks Summary*

## ACTIVE AND PASSIVE FACILITIES BY COUNTY

County	Census Population (2010)	Population Projection (2017)	Total Active Facilities	Active Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2010)
Adams	32,297	31,003	10	0.31
Alcorn	37,057	37,210	7	0.19
Amite	13,131	12,447	3	0.23
Attala	19,564	18,477	4	0.20
Benton	8,729	8,312	1	0.11
Bolivar	34,145	31,945	13	0.38
Calhoun	14,962	14,492	2	0.13
Carroll	10,597	10,139	4	0.38
Chickasaw	17,392	17,146	6	0.34
Choctaw	8,547	8,278	10	1.17
Claiborne	9,604	8,950	0	0.00
Clarke	16,732	15,828	0	0.00
Clay	20,634	19,640	0	0.00
Coahoma	26,151	23,154	4	0.15
Copiah	29,449	28,516	6	0.20
Covington	19,568	19,079	5	0.26
DeSoto	161,252	178,751	44	0.27
Forrest	74,934	75,471	18	0.24
Franklin	8,118	7,765	1	0.12
George	22,578	24,094	5	0.22
Greene	14,400	13,345	1	0.07
Grenada	21,906	21,087	3	0.14
Hancock	43,929	47,053	10	0.23
Harrison	187,105	205,027	102	0.55
Hinds	245,285	239,497	81	0.33
Holmes	19,198	17,739	2	0.10
Humphreys	9,375	8,342	3	0.32
Issaquena	1,406	1,339	0	0.00
Itawamba	23,401	23,508	3	0.13
Jackson	139,668	142,152	37	0.26
Jasper	17,062	16,582	3	0.18
Jefferson	7,726	7,262	2	0.26
Jefferson Davis	12,487	11,314	1	0.08
Jones	67,761	67,930	12	0.18
Kemper	10,456	9,883	2	0.19
Lafayette	47,351	54,374	10	0.21
Lamar	55,658	61,374	12	0.22
Lauderdale	80,261	76,155	32	0.40
Lawrence	12,929	12,643	2	0.15
Leake	23,805	22,715	3	0.13
Lee	82,910	84,933	31	0.37

Active and Passive Facilities by County

Active Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2017)	Total Passive Facilities	Passive Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2010)	Passive Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2017)
0.32	12	0.37	0.39
0.19	8	0.22	0.21
0.24	3	0.23	0.24
0.22	7	0.36	0.38
0.12	0	0.00	0.00
0.41	13	0.38	0.41
0.14	4	0.27	0.28
0.39	2	0.19	0.20
0.35	9	0.52	0.52
1.21	7	0.82	0.85
0.00	5	0.52	0.56
0.00	13	0.78	0.82
0.00	10	0.48	0.51
0.17	5	0.19	0.22
0.21	8	0.27	0.28
0.26	7	0.36	0.37
0.25	30	0.19	0.17
0.24	21	0.28	0.28
0.13	7	0.86	0.90
0.21	4	0.18	0.17
0.07	2	0.14	0.15
0.14	24	1.10	1.14
0.21	28	0.64	0.60
0.50	81	0.43	0.40
0.34	48	0.20	0.20
0.11	9	0.47	0.51
0.36	2	0.21	0.24
0.00	0	0.00	0.00
0.13	8	0.34	0.34
0.26	44	0.32	0.31
0.18	3	0.18	0.18
0.28	0	0.00	0.00
0.09	6	0.48	0.53
0.18	17	0.25	0.25
0.20	0	0.00	0.00
0.18	15	0.32	0.28
0.20	9	0.16	0.15
0.42	23	0.29	0.30
0.16	4	0.31	0.32
0.13	8	0.34	0.35
0.36	28	0.34	0.33

\*Table to be read with pg.74

**ACTIVE AND PASSIVE FACILITIES BY COUNTY, CONT.**

County	Census Population (2010)	Population Projection (2017)	Total Active Facilities	Active Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2010)
Leflore	32,317	29,223	10	0.31
Lincoln	34,869	34,347	5	0.14
Lowndes	59,779	59,186	16	0.27
Madison	95,203	104,618	12	0.13
Marion	27,088	25,069	6	0.22
Marshall	37,144	35,619	5	0.13
Monroe	36,989	35,872	19	0.51
Montgomery	10,925	10,173	2	0.18
Neshoba	29,676	29,369	9	0.30
Newton	21,720	21,185	8	0.37
Noxubee	11,545	10,742	1	0.09
Oktibbeha	47,671	49,799	18	0.38
Panola	34,707	33,994	6	0.17
Pearl River	55,834	55,270	7	0.13
Perry	12,250	12,032	3	0.24
Pike	40,404	39,468	11	0.27
Pontotoc	29,957	31,640	9	0.30
Prentiss	25,276	25,261	6	0.24
Quitman	8,223	7,269	1	0.12
Rankin	141,617	152,080	32	0.23
Scott	28,264	28,420	6	0.21
Sharkey	4,916	4,435	2	0.41
Simpson	27,503	26,947	4	0.15
Smith	16,491	16,078	1	0.06
Stone	17,786	18,112	4	0.22
Sunflower	29,450	25,981	10	0.34
Tallahatchie	15,378	14,125	5	0.33
Tate	28,886	28,441	5	0.17
Tippah	22,232	21,969	3	0.13
Tishomingo	19,593	19,542	9	0.46
Tunica	10,778	10,024	6	0.56
Union	27,134	28,556	5	0.18
Walthall	15,443	14,499	2	0.13
Warren	48,773	46,768	15	0.31
Washington	51,137	46,221	38	0.74
Wayne	20,747	20,446	4	0.19
Webster	10,253	9,765	1	0.10
Wilkinson	9,878	8,804	1	0.10
Winston	19,198	18,246	4	0.21
Yalobusha	12,678	12,497	3	0.24
Yazoo	28,065	27,057	3	0.11

Active Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2017)	Total Passive Facilities	Passive Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2010)	Passive Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2017)
0.34	15	0.46	0.51
0.15	6	0.17	0.17
0.27	17	0.28	0.29
0.11	19	0.20	0.18
0.24	5	0.18	0.20
0.14	9	0.24	0.25
0.53	14	0.38	0.39
0.20	1	0.09	0.10
0.31	9	0.30	0.31
0.38	7	0.32	0.33
0.09	2	0.17	0.19
0.36	13	0.27	0.26
0.18	22	0.63	0.65
0.13	4	0.07	0.07
0.25	13	1.06	1.08
0.28	11	0.27	0.28
0.28	9	0.30	0.28
0.24	7	0.28	0.28
0.14	0	0.00	4.13
0.21	30	0.21	0.20
0.21	12	0.42	0.42
0.45	8	1.63	1.80
0.15	5	0.18	0.19
0.06	7	0.42	0.44
0.22	13	0.73	0.72
0.38	8	0.27	0.31
0.35	1	0.07	0.07
0.18	6	0.21	0.21
0.14	2	0.09	0.09
0.46	22	1.12	1.13
0.60	5	0.46	0.50
0.18	6	0.22	0.21
0.14	3	0.19	0.21
0.32	11	0.23	0.24
0.82	26	0.51	0.56
0.20	8	0.39	0.39
0.10	3	0.29	0.31
0.11	4	0.40	0.45
0.22	7	0.36	0.38
0.24	12	0.95	0.96
0.11	3	0.11	0.11

\*Table to be read with pg.76 and connects to tables on pg 74 & 75

### ACTIVE FACILITIES BY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (PDD)

PDD	Census Population (2010)	Population Projection (2017)	Total Active Facilities	Active Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2010)	Active Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2017)
Central Mississippi	615,895	625,483	153	0.25	0.24
East Central	244,467	236,215	70	0.29	0.30
Golden Triangle	177,627	175,656	54	0.30	0.31
North Central	127,185	119,335	24	0.19	0.20
North Delta	285,375	295,758	71	0.25	0.24
Northeast Mississippi	150,031	147,913	31	0.21	0.21
South Delta	130,429	118,263	66	0.51	0.56
Southern Mississippi	771,793	797,768	227	0.29	0.28
Southwest Mississippi	184,399	177,188	37	0.20	0.21
Three Rivers	281,779	290,521	79	0.28	0.27

*Active Facilities by Planning and Development District*

### PASSIVE FACILITIES BY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (PDD)

PDD	Census Population (2010)	Population Projection (2017)	Total Passive Facilities	Passive Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2010)	Passive Facilities per 1,000 Residents (2017)
Central Mississippi	615,895	625,483	124	0.20	0.20
East Central	244,467	236,215	82	0.34	0.35
Golden Triangle	177,627	175,656	59	0.33	0.34
North Central	127,185	119,335	70	0.55	0.59
North Delta	285,375	295,758	69	0.24	0.23
Northeast Mississippi	150,031	147,913	48	0.32	0.32
South Delta	130,429	118,263	57	0.44	0.48
Southern Mississippi	771,793	797,768	261	0.34	0.33
Southwest Mississippi	184,399	177,188	55	0.30	0.31
Three Rivers	281,779	290,521	93	0.33	0.32

*Passive Facilities by Planning and Development District*



## RECREATION DEMAND

Recreation demand considers trends in registrations, survey responses by both providers and residents, and public comments received through social media.

### Input

As previously mentioned, hunting and fishing are popular activities across the state. In 2011, there were 651,000 licensed anglers, including 57,500 non-residents. 94% of them fish in bodies of freshwater, 72% live in rural areas, and 44% are female. Furthermore, the surveys show that heightened interests exist for playground, picnic areas, and trails.

Providers should expand on opportunities for participation based on resident survey responses concerning activities in which residents would like to participate. Backpacking, archery, and high ropes courses are in high demand. Providers should locate any new facilities for these activities evenly across the state to provide access to all state residents. By providing these facilities, there will be less of a need for residents to travel to out-of-state parks to participate. However, other activities are more difficult to supply evenly and will need extensive marketing to draw residents from across the state. Examples of high-demand activities that require specific geological locations include scuba, spelunking, and rappelling. While included in the survey, these activities are understood to be popular while limited due to the state's geography.

### *Recreation Demand Comments on Social Media*

Comments on *SCORP* social media posts included the public voicing the need for:

- *Well-staffed facilities*
- *Designated wildlife corridors within city limits*
- *Pet-friendly accommodations*
- *Hiking and backpacking trails, for foot-traffic only*
- *Swimming areas or splash pads at state lakes*



*Bird Hunting*



*Mississippi College Archer*

## Analysis

Most public feedback requests are for expansion within existing facilities. Provider survey responses show that the highest requests are for facilities that offer playgrounds, picnic areas, and trails. As shown by the recreation supply totals, many of these facilities already exist, therefore a need exists for an increase in their extent or marketing to increase awareness of their presence.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

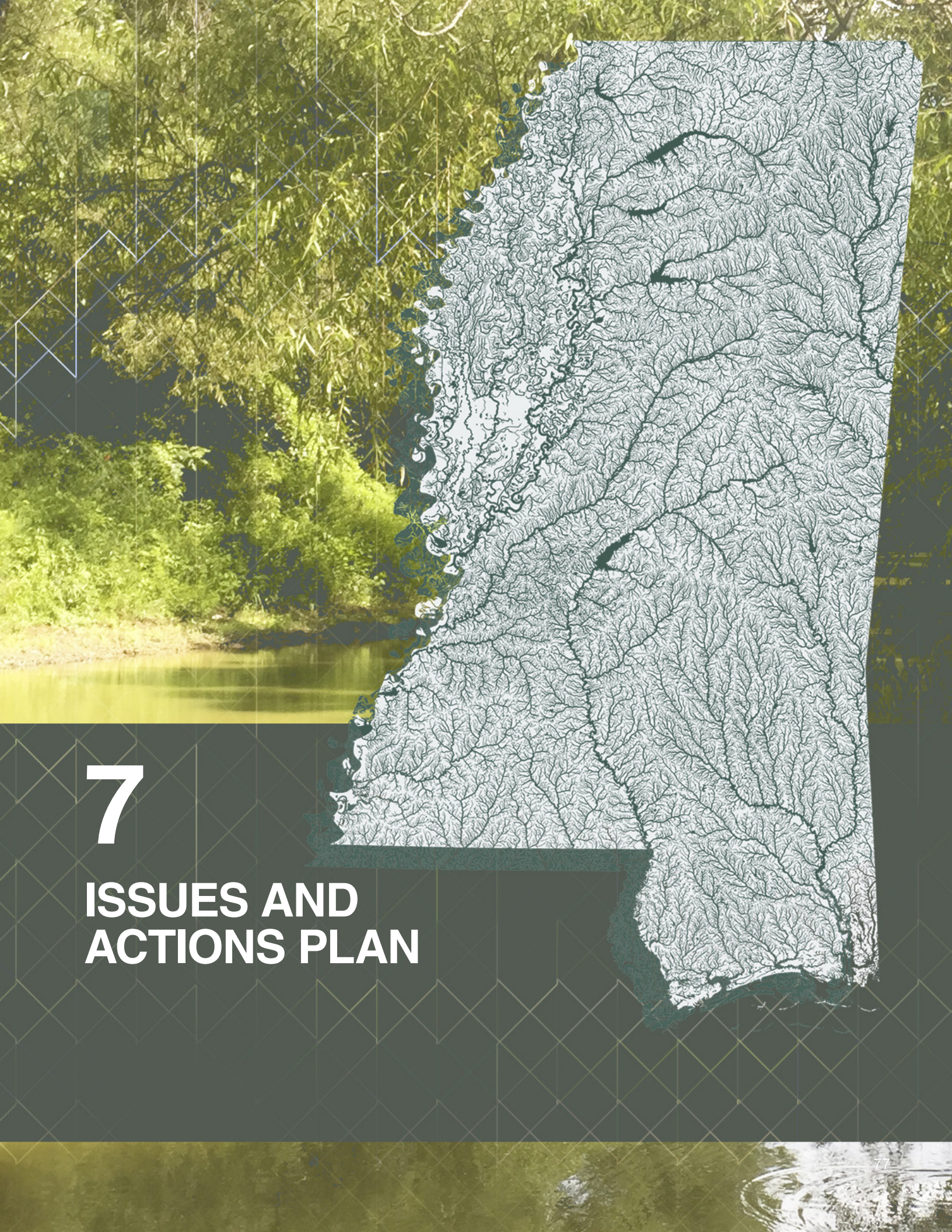
Statewide, residents should be encouraged to participate in outdoor recreation through programs and events that promote various types of activities and strongly encourage participation by all residents. All methods should seek to increase the amount of people as well as the length of time spent participating in outdoor activities.

Officials should conduct further outreach to determine which activities Mississippi residents seek outside of the state. Based on this understanding, providers should create facilities that provide opportunities to participate in these activities to maintain and increase resident interest within the state and allow tourists or non-residents to travel to Mississippi to participate.

Many requests for improvements involve the expansion of facility infrastructure or other amenities that require additional funding. The Issues and Actions section that follows includes proposed solutions. However, providers may address some improvements through volunteer-based programs and events that can provide or supply additional labor and maintenance.

## CONCLUSION

The project team's study of outdoor recreation supply and demand found that there are many facilities available to residents across the state. Hunting and fishing opportunities are the most prevalent with 54 Wildlife Management Areas and 219 public or state-owned lakes. Public demand for recreation improvements primarily focus on facility and staffing expansion. Recommendations include connecting the public to parks and addressing means for expansion.



# 7

## ISSUES AND ACTIONS PLAN

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# ISSUES AND ACTIONS PLAN



Visitors at Red Bluff in Morgantown

The issues and actions plan illuminates current issues, as determined by the TFC, which limit or prevent the use of outdoor recreation facilities and activity participation. These issues include:

- *Funding*
- *Maintenance*
- *Facility Infrastructure*
- *Shifts in Recreational Activities*
- *Technology*

Following a description of each issue, actions are suggested to reduce or reconcile its impact. Additional prospective issues are included for further yet essential consideration.

## FUNDING

### Specific information found on issue.

A larger funding issue is the limited sources that provide assistance to parks. Currently, the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) are partial funding suppliers for parks. LWCF and RTP funds are allocated for the development and improvement of parks. According to a 2017 count, there are 586 LWCF and 316 RTP projects statewide. Mississippi has effectively used these funding programs to develop parks across the state; awarding an average of 45 LWCF projects between 2014-2016.

### Actions to address the issue.

Funding through LWCF will allow the state to continue its progress in developing and improving parks. Funds have typically been used for adding additional amenities to existing parks and outdoor recreation facilities, including playground equipment, soccer fields, lighting, and more.

Providers can also leverage private funding opportunities to maximize benefits for neighborhood parks. One example of private funds may involve membership fees to mega-park facilities. Businesses are also becoming increasingly active in funding facilities and activities that are beneficial to the public, while at the same time many are becoming more environmentally conscious. Moreover, whenever possible, private investments in outdoor recreation should be encouraged, particularly if efforts will result in an increase of accessibility or connectivity to existing facilities.

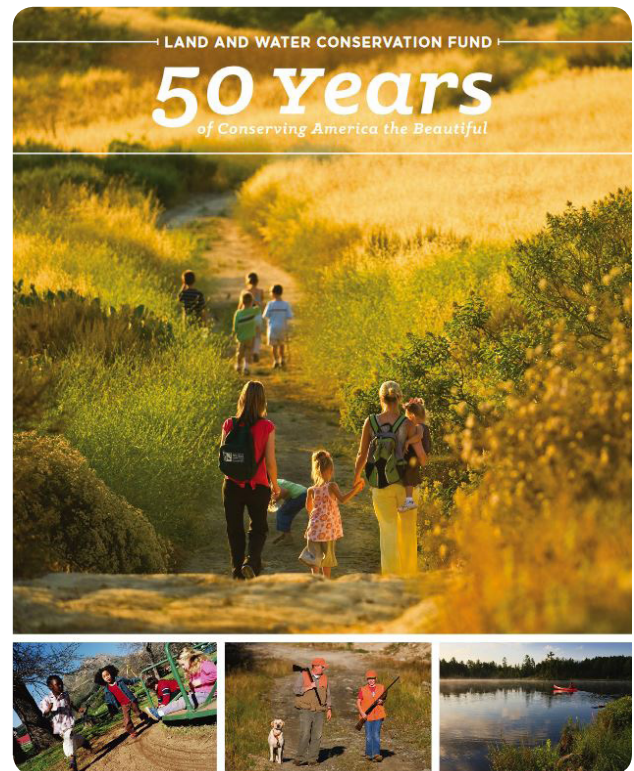
The following list includes additional funding mechanisms or strategies suggested for creating, improving, or operating parks.

#### *Funding mechanisms to create or improve parks*

- *Development Agreements*
- *Tourism Funds*
- *Bonds*
- *Gifts and Bequests*

#### *Funding mechanisms to create and operate parks*

- *Special Taxes*
  - *Parcel Taxes*
  - *Transaction and Use Taxes*
  - *Utility User Taxes, Transient Occupancy Taxes, and Business License Taxes*



*Land and Water Conservation Fund Report*

- *Special Assessments*
- *Shared Use of Existing Facilities*
- *Public-Private Partnerships (P3)*

### *Funding mechanisms to assist with the operation of parks*

- *User Fees*
- *Volunteers*

The following list includes grant opportunities administered or suggested by the NRPA.

### *Current NRPA Grant Opportunities*

- *10-Minute Walk Technical Assistance*
- *Instructor Training Grants for Physical Activity Programs*

### *Other Grant Opportunities*

- *GameTime Playground Grants*
- *Community Change Grant Program*
- *Powering Healthy Lives*
- *Inclusive Recreation: Tommy Wilson Memorial Grant*
- *American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Shade Structure Program*
- *Baseball Tomorrow Fund (BTW) Grants*
- *Baseball Tomorrow Fund/Major League Baseball Field Maintenance Education Program*
- *Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program – Rural Communities*
- *Keep America Beautiful’s Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund*
- *United States Golf Association (USGA) Alliance Grant Program*
- *United State Tennis Association (USTA) Facility Assistance Program*

Other states have found funding through additional sources such as the Growing Smarter Program and the Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Fund Program. Partner agency grants include the Heritage Fund, Local Sportsmen’s Group, The Outdoor Foundation, Cabela’s Outdoor Fund, and Greenfield’s Outdoor Fitness.

Mississippi cities such as Houston, Carthage, and New Albany have all successfully used tourism funds to improve outdoor recreation in their neighborhoods.

*“Senate Bill 1723, as passed by the 2016 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature, authorizes a special 2% tax to be levied on the gross proceeds of hotel and motel room rentals and the gross proceeds of sales of restaurants on businesses located in the corporate limits of the City of Carthage, Mississippi.”*

## MAINTENANCE

### Specific information found on issue.

A substantial amount of money is required to keep parks operating at a satisfactory level. Moreover, the quality of a park is going to determine its likelihood of use. There are constant threats to the condition of a facility, including vandalism, littering, maintenance, and repairs. Therefore, it is essential for providers to uphold facility maintenance.

### Actions to address the issue.

Park and Recreation Facility Maintenance Standards should be developed and implemented. These standards should include staffing and volunteer needs, an operation manual, training, performance measures, and customer satisfaction goals. All municipalities should recommend these standards to ensure conservation of current facilities and the highest use by residents.

Officials and park managers should encourage volunteerism to not only aid maintenance and establish clean-up days, but to also fortify ownership by the residents that will reinforce the need to care for public amenities.



Keep America Beautiful Community Service



## FACILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

### Specific information found on issue.

Beyond the practice of limited maintenance at a park facility, the public may deem facilities as being insufficient if they do not provide basic infrastructure or complete accessibility. Basic infrastructure includes utility amenities such as sinks with running water, water fountains, and flushable toilets. By not providing these, many residents may not use or may limit their time at a facility. Accessibility is a crucial need at all facilities. Whereas today there are many parks that promote having facilities that include physically-impaired accessibility, the majority of these are limited to bathhouses, fishing piers, and overnight accommodation, and less so along long-distance trails and other outdoor recreation facilities.

### Actions to address the issue.

One strategy for addressing infrastructure is to create a local utility plan that uses design standards to incorporate utility planning. Utility plans can include water, gas, and electric service, sanitary sewer lines, grease traps, and on-site fire protections. Plans should aim to be cost-effective, reliable, and environmentally compatible. One example exists near Moon Lake/ Yazoo Pass where the installation of a self-contained toilet that requires minimum maintenance eliminates the requirement of connections to infrastructure and operates “off-the-grid.”

Providers should extend accessibility to additional facilities and continue to make available adapted activities, including accessibility along nature trails, into splash pads, and at sports fields. This should be promoted to the extent where open access becomes expected.



*Restroom Facility at Ross Barnett Reservoir*



*Parking at Boat Ramp in Bay St. Louis*

## SHIFTS IN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

### Specific information found on issue.

Mississippi has a strong tradition of hunting and fishing. This tradition has lived on through long-term residents but has begun to decrease in recent years. The number of registered hunting and fishing licenses has declined from 473,430 in 2016 to 441,366 in 2018 (13.5% decrease). The Task Force Committee thoroughly discussed the issue and determined that there is simply a shift occurring in chosen recreational activities.

In contrast to hunting and boating, which can require extended hours, expensive equipment, and additional permitting for participation; high-demand requests for facility improvements relate to leisure, “back to nature,” and family-friendly activities. These activities provide residents relaxing recreational opportunities with low-cost demands.

There is also a changing dynamic of who is using the facilities. Despite the resident survey demographics, facility providers mentioned an increase of females participating in recreation, including shooting ranges.

There is also concern that young users are not participating to the extent that they have participated in the past; this may be due to the overwhelming presence of technology and a difference in priorities. Technology can create detachment from the physical environment. Through the use of technology, someone interested in the sport of shooting can play a shooting game on a screen using a console in their living room, rather than travelling to a range with additional considerations of operating hours, weather, travel time, and more. (See more on Technology in the following section.) There is a strong need by providers to supply methods that will attract these potential users.

### Actions to address the issue.

Providers will need to continue addressing these shifting trends to ensure they are providing full inclusion and achieving maximum participation. Providers should prioritize marketing that includes all people—women, youth, and minorities—to meet these goals. (See more in the Non-Inclusionary Environments section below.) Many youth and young adult programs and initiatives exist to increase youth participation. National examples include the Let’s Move! Outside initiative; the Children and Nature Network; and the Outdoors Alliance for Kids’ Every Child Healthy Outdoors program, which provides a toolkit that aids in civic organization and a comprehensive assessment tool. State or local chapters should be developed to extend these programs to Mississippi.

*MDWFP hosts a number of youth programs including a statewide squirrel hunt (seven locations), AIMS archery program, fishing rodeos, hunter education for ages 10 and up, and the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science educational program. Additional local programs include Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and a deer hunt for youth with disabilities.*

## TECHNOLOGY

There is a growing concern that technology is surpassing parks in popularity, causing people to stay “wired” indoors rather than experiencing recreation in natural environments. Despite the slow progress or lack of interest in parks providing technology-related infrastructure updates (ie. wi-fi hot spots), people should not misunderstand technology to lead to the eventual demise of park usage altogether. Instead, they can choose to embrace the “back-to-nature” trend that technology sometimes creates. Many people now desire the simplicities of primitive amenities and accommodations, in contrast to the fast-paced world that technology has created. While this does not permit parks to slack on their responsibility to provide adequate facilities, it should create a positive association with technology and a strong market to potential users as an escape from the digital burden of daily life.



MDWFP Mobile App

Moreover, MDWFP, park managers, and municipal governments have found methods to embrace technology as an outreach method and resource for facility users. Recently, MDWFP released a mobile app. The app provides hunting and fishing license and boat registration information and a purchase/renewal option; hunting and fishing rules and regulations; an alligator application; a GIS-supported map of WMAs with layers that include prohibited areas; fishing reports with feeding times and outlooks; and a field guide that provides information on chronic wasting disease and electroshocking for fish population counts. MDWFP can continue to develop this app as opportunities for additional features arise.

The MDWFP app can benefit recreationalists in tandem with other fitness and nature apps such as Strava, iNaturalist, and c:geo. These interactions can generate an ongoing desire to continue participating in green exercise and experiences in nature.

*Over Under and Through, Students Informally Discover the Environment (OUTSIDE) OUTSIDE is a study conducted through the University of Southern Mississippi that seeks to understand methods of connecting students to nature. The process uses informal science education (ISE) to teach underrepresented middle school students about Science, Engineering, Technology, and Math (STEM) topics. OUTSIDE incorporates technology using iPads to increase student involvement.*

## CONCLUSION

The issues that face outdoor recreation in Mississippi vary, but continued expansion on developing positive impacts (ie. the new MDWFP app) or strategic programmatic planning based on national models can address each. Park managers can consider and evaluate the listed issues to focus on those that apply locally. If park managers identify any, their input on and implementation of suggested action plans could lead to improved recreation opportunities for the public.

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# 8

## LWCF STATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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## LWCF STATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



*Birdwatching from a Canoe*

MDWFP's Outdoor Recreation Grants (ORG) division administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program. According to Mississippi Code #55-3-71, the Executive Director of MDWFP, unless otherwise appointed by the governor, is directed to carry out and utilize the *SCORP* document.

The Outdoor Recreation Grants division serves as the official state agency liaison with NPS. MDWFP is also the official state agency to receive and disburse LWCF funds for outdoor recreational acquisition and/or development and planning. LWCF grants in Mississippi are typically awarded on a two-year funding cycle, when available.

## OPEN PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

The program operates using an open project selection process that must make all state and local applicants aware of the opportunity to receive LWCF assistance. Notification of funding is distributed to every mayor, board of supervisors' president, eligible state agency director, all PDDs, and other recreation consultants and planners. The application is posted online, where it is available for download. Information describing technical information for the application is also posted.

The application due date is posted online with the announcement of the grant open funding cycle. The application must include information about the project, an environmental assessment, and a dated project boundary map. The application should also include a measurable link to specific outdoor recreation needs and priorities identified by the **SCORP** report.

Site visits occur after receiving all applications. Site visits are conducted to see and document the project sites and proposed development locations. Sites are then ranked using an objective standardized rating system.

Applications are then evaluated and funding decisions are determined. Not all project applications will receive funding due to the limited amount of funds that are available; funding is allocated to projects in order of their ranking.

## PRIORITY RATING SYSTEM

Under the open project selection process, all states must create a priority rating system. The priority rating system used in evaluating applications is divided into two sections: local governments and state agencies.

### Local governments

- *Minimum requirements are evaluated from data on the application forms. The project application description on the following page includes a list of regulations, assurances of matching funds, citizen participation procedures, and compliance with the **SCORP**, dated boundary map, and environmental assessment.*
- *Measured criteria allow a variable number of points for:*
  - *Per capita income, with more points awarded for the proposed project being aimed at serving lower income communities;*
  - *Planning considerations, including local and regional plans and factors effecting project area;*
  - *Site alteration which allows more points when a greater percentage of the total project is used for facility development;*
  - *Degree of citizen participation, allowing for additional credit.*
- *Incentive criteria allow bonus points for meeting criteria such as obtaining engineering or consultant services, land donations, projects in low-income and underserved areas, and multiple use facilities.*



## State agencies

- Needs – containing evidence of statewide need in the **SCORP**, individual agency plans, and state legislation mandating specific development.
- Special consideration – including acquisition of land to expand project (park) boundaries, land acquisition to preserve natural or endangered areas, acquisition of wetlands, emergency acquisition, and the public, including minority populations, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, and other underserved populations.

## LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND PROJECT APPLICATION

### Minimum Assurances and Requirements

Before proceeding with this application, the applicant must be able to demonstrate compliance with the following:

- *Applicant Requirements* - The applicant must be a legally constituted governmental entity responsible for administering local recreation program, such as cities/mayors, counties/presidents of the boards of supervisors, tribal governments/chiefs, and state agency directors.
- *Application* - The applicant must submit the completed application form with all supplemental documentation, which includes a property map and site plan identifying the construction requested in the application. Please note, attached should be an additional narrative describing the proposed recreational facilities.
- *Property Boundary Map* - The applicant must provide a dated property boundary map on 8 ½ x 11 size paper showing metes and bounds, footages of each, and the surrounding land use.
- *Environmental Assessment* - The applicant will be required to submit environmental assessment documentation with the application. An environmental assessment packet is provided with the application packet.
- *Public Participation* - Mississippi's open project selection process requires public participation in the formulation of the project. During the early phases of the project, prior to submitting the application, an applicant must document public involvement. In the ranking criteria, additional credit is given if the potential sponsor has invited and received broad citizen input on determining priority recreation needs (sites and facilities). A detailed description of the procedure used to obtain local citizen input along with a summary of the results obtained must be submitted in writing. The applicant must insure citizen participation in the formulation of the proposed project or have demonstrated significant and representative input into seeking recreational priorities.
- *Matching Funding* - The applicant must have budgeted the 50% matching requirements or have a resolution attesting to the availability of the matching requirement. They must also identify sources of other federal funds used as matching share, when applicable. Please note, if land acquisition is involved, plans of the property must be provided with full description.
- *Facilities Inventory* - The applicant must document that a need for the outdoor recreation grant exists. Need, as perceived by a small group of individuals, will not be considered sufficient documentation to meet this requirement. Applicant must identify local or regional recreational plan(s), if available. The project must also be consistent with the goals of the **SCORP** document.

- *Assurances - The applicant must assure ORG, in writing, that project initiation will commence immediately upon notification by NPS that the grant has been approved.*
- *Checklist - A checklist of the components of the application will be submitted along with the application. The checklist will be signed and dated by the applicant.*

## Additional Assurances

Submission of the application is evidence that the applicant has read and understands all applicable federal and state rules, regulations, and assurances pertaining to the LWCF-supported projects. These requirements have either been detailed or incorporated by reference in this application document. Each of the following must be complied, with an agreement signed by the applicant to that effect, before a project can be selected for funding.

- *The applicant must sign assurances that compliance with all federal and state laws and Outdoor Recreation Grants guidelines will be guaranteed, i.e. PL 88-352 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Department of Interior Regulations (43-CFR 17), and all other assurances assigned to applicable federal and state law.*
- *Property acquired or developed with assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (under Section 6F3 of the LWCF Act), shall be retained and used for "public outdoor recreation" in perpetuity. In the event that this property is converted to other than outdoor recreation use, knowingly or unknowingly, by the project sponsor, it will constitute a conversion. In order to rectify such a conversion, the project sponsor must first notify the State Liaison Officer for assistance. Then a federal land appraisal will need to be conducted to determine the "fair market value" of the loss, and equal value replacement property must be acquired and developed at the Sponsors expense. The National Park Service will have final approval of this process. Limitation of use must become a part of the warranty deed and be recorded in the county courthouse.*
- *Evidence of this recording must be furnished to this office before reimbursement of funds is made.*

### **Limitation of Use - Record in the Deed of Property**

#### *Restrictive Deed Wording*

*The following language is to be incorporated into the deed and recorded in the city, town, or county court house of the project area:*

*The property identified below has been acquired or developed with federal assistance provided by the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior in accordance with the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 45601-5 et seq. (170 ed.). Pursuant to a requirement of that law, this property may not be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses (whether by transfer, sale, or in any other manner) without the express written approval of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and the Secretary of the Department of the Interior. By law, the Secretary shall approve such conversion only if it is in accord with the then existing Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and only upon such condition as the substitution of other recreation properties are of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location.*

- *Each grant recipient must designate a coordinator that will be responsible for assuring compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This act requires a self-evaluation of facilities to determine accessibility by the handicapped, and grievance procedure to follow, in event of a complaint of discrimination.*
- *Each grant recipient must provide the ORG staff a copy of the official city/county comprehensive audit that includes all transactions relative to the LWCF grant. Audit exemptions must be resolved within six months of the report. If reimbursement is needed, it must be issued within the 60 days following the resolution.*
- *Each grant recipient agrees that project initiation will commence immediately upon notification by the National Park Service that the grant has been approved. This includes an immediate land appraisal (if applicable), bid advertisements, contract acceptance procedures and facility construction. Inability to adhere to this assurance can result in project withdrawal.*
- *Each grant recipient will operate and maintain the proposed development in a manner that is aesthetically pleasing, sanitary, safe and open for public use. The recipient will also maintain an attractive LWCF site sign at all times and adhere to all guidelines included in the National Park Service regulations.*
- *Each grant recipient will agree to adhere to new federal regulations regarding lobbying, contractor debarment, federal grant notification procedures, and other federal guidelines deemed essential.*

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

The open project selection process recognizes the need for proposed projects, to the greatest extent practicable, to be accessible to all segments of the general public including minority populations, seniors, and those with physical limitations. This information enables the Outdoor Recreation Grants staff to analyze the need for the proposed site as well as determine its accessibility to all segments of the general public.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Assistance is available to potential sponsors needing help to complete the application process. If a potential sponsor fails to comply with minimum requirements, technical assistance will be available to assure that they meet these requirements for the next funding cycle. Considerable effort is made to make personal contact with potential sponsors through meetings, pre-award inspections, and telephone communication. By providing help early in the grant process, ORG is able to develop high-quality projects while reducing later grant problems.

## **CONCLUSION**

Mississippi has developed an open project selection process that emphasizes public involvement in the initial development of a project scope by the project sponsor. This process helps to ensure that a project evolves throughout the process with citizen input.

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## GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

ACS	American Community Survey
AORE	Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education
APA	American Planning Association
ATV	All-Terrain Vehicle
BMP	Best Management Practice
CDC	Center for Disease Control
DBA	Dana Brown and Associates
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
GIS	Geographic Information System
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
MDEQ	Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
MDOT	Mississippi Department of Transportation
MDWFP	Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
MTB	Mountain Bike
NPS	National Park Service
NRPA	National Recreation and Park Association
ORG	Outdoor Recreational Grants
PCI	Physically-Challenged Individual
PDD	Planning and Development District
RTC	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
RTP	Recreational Trails Program
RV	Recreational Vehicle
<i>SCORP</i>	<i>Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan</i>
TFC	Task Force Committee
WMA	Wildlife Management Area

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2019-2024

# SCORP

STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE  
OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

*ENSURING MISSISSIPPI'S OUTDOOR LEGACY*

APPENDICES A-C

DANA BROWN &  
Associates



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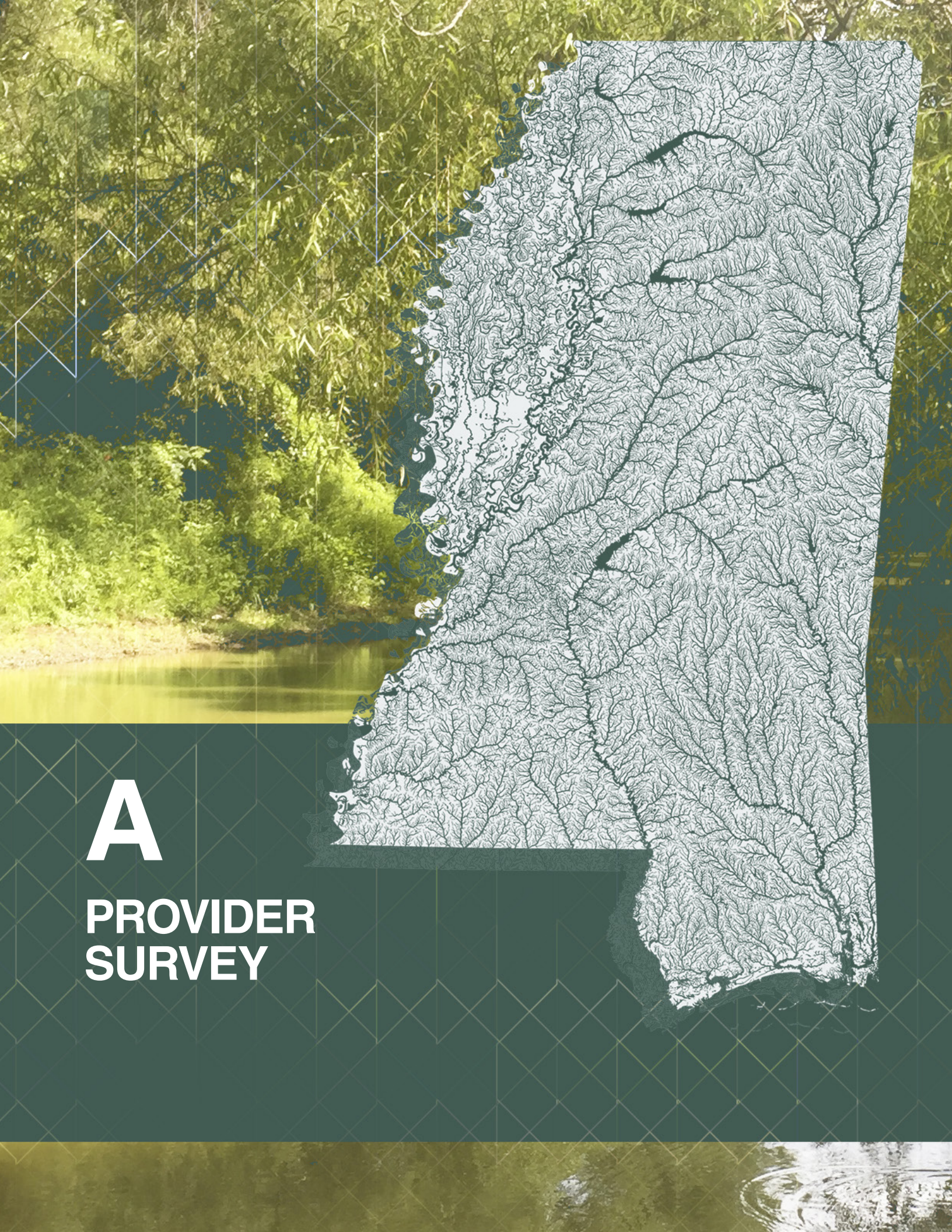


# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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**A**

**PROVIDER  
SURVEY**

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# PROVIDER SURVEY

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks is currently updating the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). As a provider, we need your assistance in determining the number of new and/or abandoned facilities in the state in order to update the inventory list. Your help is greatly appreciated. Please complete the survey by November 2, 2018.

Thank you,  
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

---

**1. Please provide the name of your agency/department/organization.**

.....  
.....

**2. Which type of organization do you represent?**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> City                 | <input type="radio"/> Local Park Agency |
| <input type="radio"/> College / University | <input type="radio"/> State Agency      |
| <input type="radio"/> County               | <input type="radio"/> Federal Agency    |
| <input type="radio"/> School               | <input type="radio"/> Nonprofit         |

---

**3. Please provide your contact information.**

Name: .....

Organization: .....

Address: .....

Address 2: .....

City/Town: .....

State: .....

ZIP: .....

Phone Number: .....

Email Address: .....

**4. Since 2015, has your agency added NEW recreational facilities in your area?**

	Yes	No	How many added?		Yes	No	How many added?
Baseball, Softball Fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Picnic Areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Basketball Courts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Boating / Canoeing Areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Soccer Fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Campsites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Skate Parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Disc Golf Courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Splash Pads	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Football Fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Swimming Pools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Golf Courses (18-Hole)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Target Shooting Ranges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Horseback Riding Trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Tennis Courts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Off-Road (OHV) Trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Paved Trails / Greenways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Outdoor Concert Facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Unpaved Trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....

Since 2015, has your agency added any OTHER new recreation facilities in your area? How many added?

Please specify the type of facility .....

**5. Since 2015, has your agency ABANDONED any recreational facilities in your area?**

	Yes	No	How many abandoned?		Yes	No	How many abandoned?
Baseball, Softball Fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Picnic Areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Basketball Courts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Boating / Canoeing Areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Soccer Fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Campsites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Skate Parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Disc Golf Courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Splash Pads	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Football Fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Swimming Pools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Golf Courses (18-Hole)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Target Shooting Ranges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Horseback Riding Trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Tennis Courts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Off-Road (OHV) Trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Paved Trails / Greenways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....
Outdoor Concert Facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....	Unpaved Trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	.....

Since 2015, has your agency abandoned any OTHER recreation facilities in your area? How many abandoned?

Please specify the facility .....

---

**6. In order to have an accurate count, please list the TOTAL amount of the items below (i.e. number of fields, courts, etc.)**

Baseball, Softball Fields .....	Picnic Areas .....
Basketball Courts .....	Playgrounds .....
Boating / Canoeing Areas .....	Soccer Fields .....
Campsites .....	Skate Parks .....
Disc Golf Courses .....	Splash Pads .....
Football Fields .....	Swimming Pools .....
Golf Courses (18-Hole) .....	Target Shooting Ranges .....
Horseback Riding Trails .....	Tennis Courts .....
Off-Road (OHV) Trails .....	Paved Trails / Greenways .....
Outdoor Concert Facilities .....	Unpaved Trails .....

---

**7. In addition, does your agency / department provide any of the following facilities? If so, please list the amount (i.e. number of fields, courts, etc.)**

Archery Ranges .....	Miniature Golf Courses .....
BMX Tracks .....	Mountain Biking Trails .....
Community Gardens .....	Museums/Historic Sites .....
Conference Centers/Rental Facilities .....	Nature Centers .....
Dog Parks .....	Non-Competition Pools .....
Driving Ranges .....	Ocean/Beach Access Sites .....
Fitness Centers / Community Centers .....	Picnic Areas with Shelter .....
Gardens / Arboreta .....	Pickle Ball Courts .....
Gyms .....	Rappelling/ Rock Climbing Facilities .....
Skating Rinks .....	Sports Stadiums/Arenas .....
Lake/River Access Sites .....	Synthetic Fields .....
Libraries .....	Theaters/Performing Arts Centers .....
Marinas .....	Volleyball Courts .....
Other .....	

**8. Rank these facilities from 1-20 in order of MOST REQUESTED (1) to LEAST REQUESTED (20) by users in your area.**

- ..... Baseball / Softball Fields
- ..... Biking Areas
- ..... Boating & Fishing Areas
- ..... Campsites
- ..... Canoeing, Kayaking, Rafting, and Tubing Areas
- ..... Events, Festivals, Concerts, etc.
- ..... Equestrian / Horse Facilities
- ..... Football / Soccer Fields
- ..... Health / Fitness Facilities
- ..... Nature / Interpretive Centers
- ..... Off-Road (OHV) Trails
- ..... Picnic Areas
- ..... Playgrounds
- ..... Public Hunting Areas
- ..... Rappelling / Rock Climbing Facilities
- ..... Skate Parks
- ..... Swimming Pools
- ..... Tennis Courts / Pickleball Courts
- ..... Trails (Hiking / Biking / Jogging)
- ..... Water Parks, Splashpool, Spraygrounds

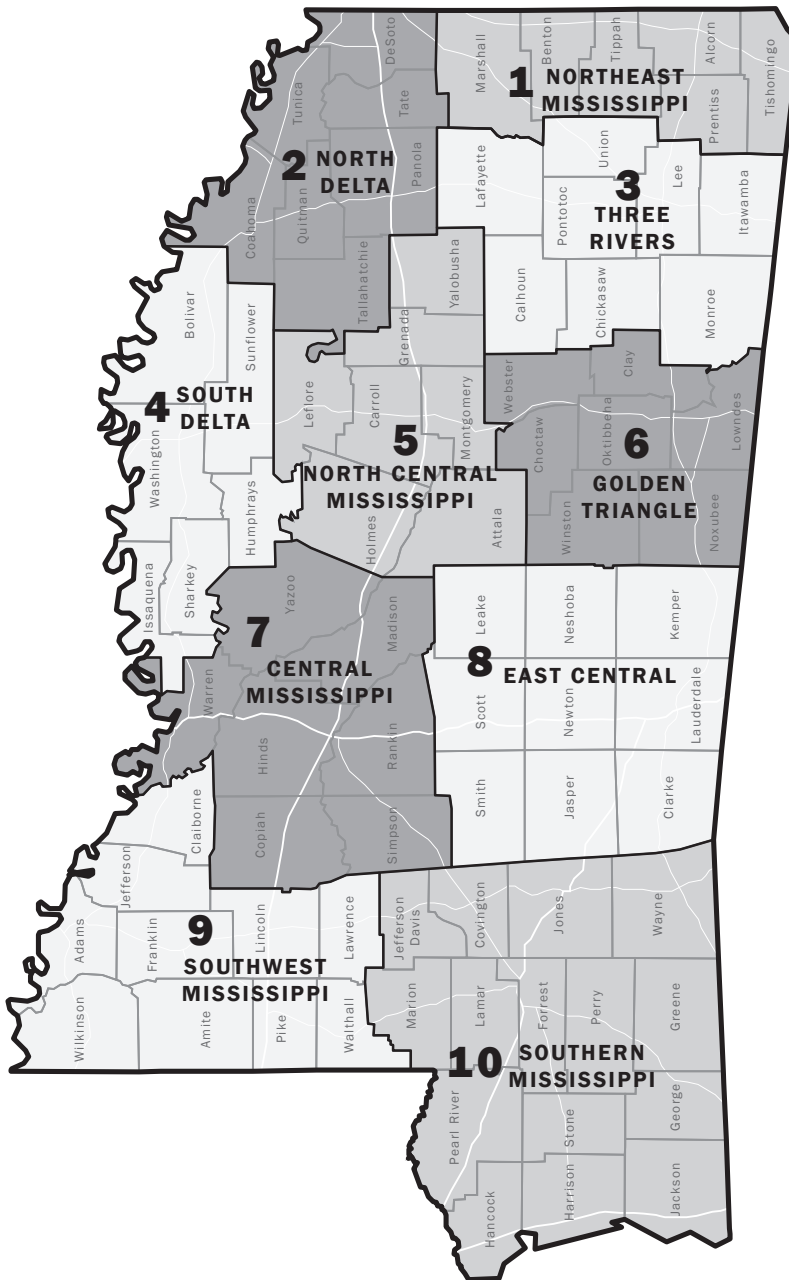
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**9. What is the greatest recreational need in your area that is not currently provided?  
(List and describe below)**



10. Circle the number that represents the region where your facility is located.  
(Refer to the map and list of counties below.)

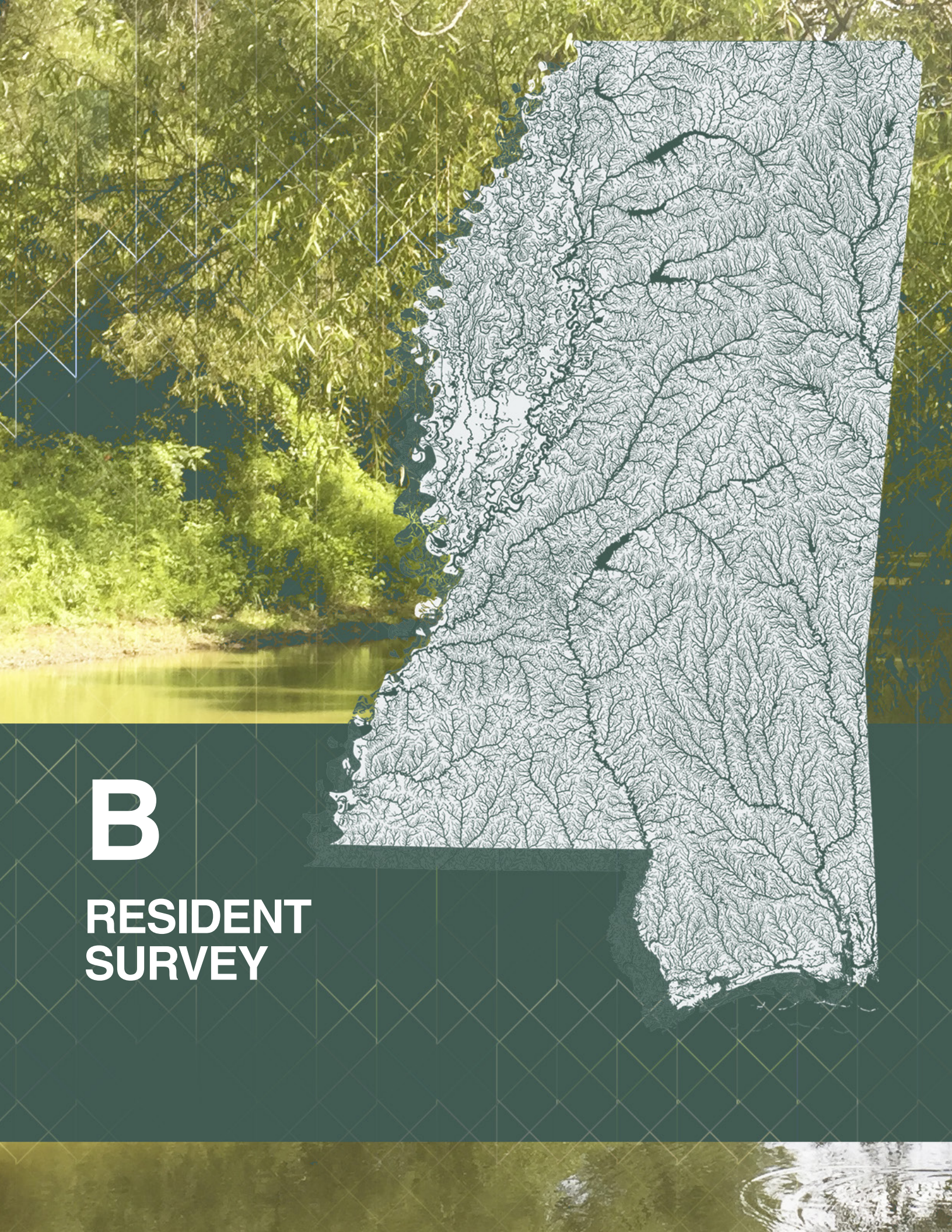
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----



- 1** **NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI**  
Alcorn  
Benton  
Marshall  
Prentiss  
Tippah  
Tishomingo
- 2** **NORTH DELTA**  
Coahoma  
DeSoto  
Panola  
Quitman  
Tallahatchie  
Tate  
Tunica
- 3** **THREE RIVERS**  
Calhoun  
Chickasaw  
Itawamba  
Lafayette  
Lee  
Pontotoc  
Union
- 4** **SOUTH DELTA**  
Bolivar  
Humphreys  
Issaquena  
Sharkey  
Sunflower  
Washington
- 5** **NORTH CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI**  
Attala  
Choctaw  
Holmes  
Leflore  
Montgomery  
Webster  
Winston
- 6** **GOLDEN TRIANGLE**  
Clay  
Lowndes  
Noxubee  
Oktibbeha  
Webster  
Winston
- 7** **CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI**  
Copiah  
Hinds  
Madison  
Rankin  
Simpson  
Warren  
Yazoo
- 8** **EAST CENTRAL**  
Clarke  
Jasper  
Kemper  
Lauderdale  
Leake  
Neshoba  
Newton  
Scott  
Smith
- 9** **SOUTHWEST MISSISSIPPI**  
Adams  
Amite  
Claiborne  
Franklin  
Jefferson  
Lawrence  
Lincoln  
Pike  
Walthall  
Wilkinson
- 10** **SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**  
Covington  
Forrest  
George  
Greene  
Hancock  
Harrison  
Jackson  
Jefferson Davis  
Jones  
Lamar  
Marion  
Pearl River  
Perry  
Stone  
Wayne

**THANK YOU,**  
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

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**B**

**RESIDENT  
SURVEY**

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# RESIDENT SURVEY

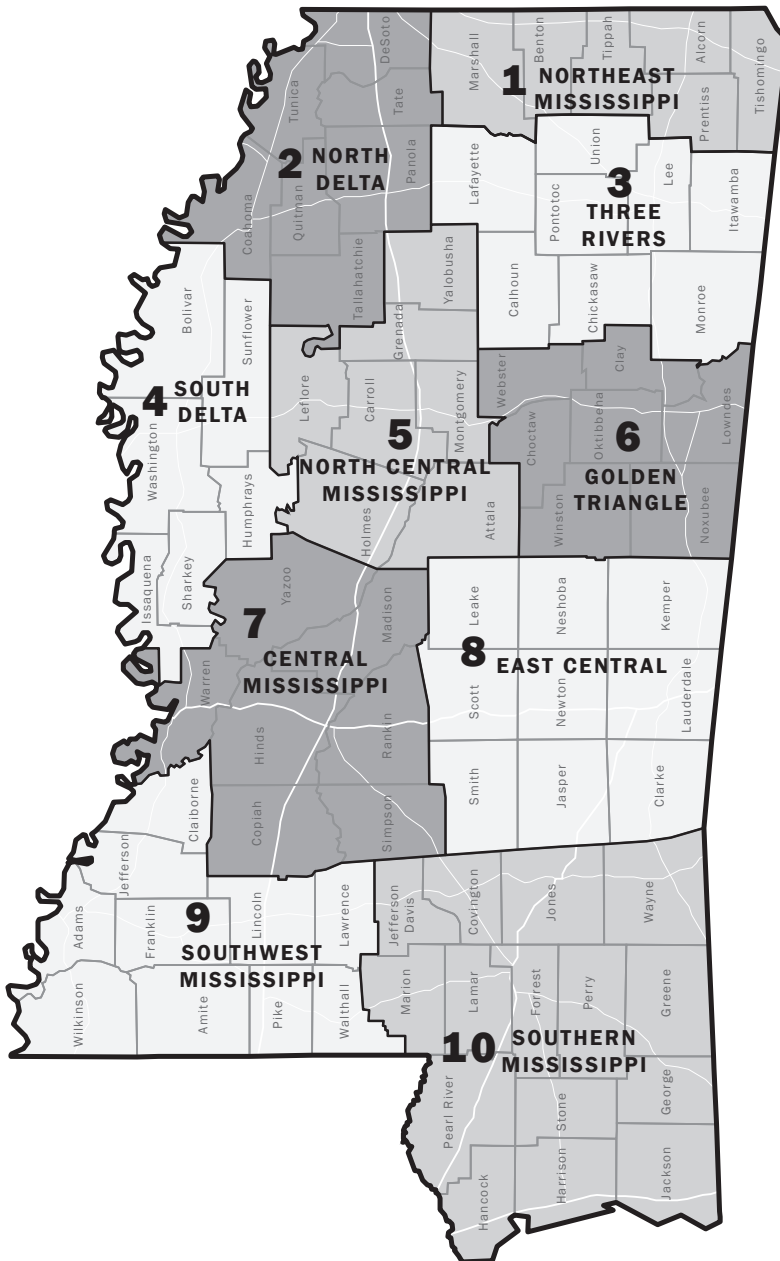
## RESIDENT SURVEY

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks is currently updating the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). As a resident of Mississippi, we need your input. Your help is greatly appreciated. Please complete the survey by November 2, 2018.

Thank you,  
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

**1. Circle the number to the right that represents the region where your household is located. (Refer to the map and list of counties below.)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----



**1 NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI**

- Alcorn
- Benton
- Marshall
- Prentiss
- Tippah
- Tishomingo

**7 CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI**

- Copiah
- Hinds
- Madison
- Rankin
- Simpson
- Warren
- Yazoo

**2 NORTH DELTA**

- Coahoma
- DeSoto
- Panola
- Quitman
- Tallahatchie
- Tate
- Tunica

**8 EAST CENTRAL**

- Clarke
- Jasper
- Kemper
- Lauderdale
- Leake
- Neshoba
- Newton
- Scott
- Smith

**3 THREE RIVERS**

- Calhoun
- Chickasaw
- Itawamba
- Lafayette
- Lee
- Pontotoc
- Monroe
- Union

**9 SOUTHWEST MISSISSIPPI**

- Adams
- Amite
- Claiborne
- Franklin
- Jefferson
- Lawrence
- Lincoln
- Pike
- Walthall
- Wilkinson

**4 SOUTH DELTA**

- Bolivar
- Humphreys
- Issaquena
- Sharkey
- Sunflower
- Washington

**5 NORTH CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI**

- Attala
- Carroll
- Grenada
- Holmes
- Leflore
- Montgomery
- Yalobusha

**10 SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**

- Covington
- Forrest
- George
- Greene
- Hancock
- Harrison
- Jackson
- Jefferson Davis
- Jones
- Lamar
- Marion
- Pearl River
- Perry
- Stone
- Wayne

**6 GOLDEN TRIANGLE**

- Choctaw
- Clay
- Lowndes
- Noxubee
- Oktibbeha
- Webster
- Winston

**2. How many hours per week do you and /or a member of your family spend in a park?**

- None                       11 - 20                       31 - 40  
 1 - 10                       21 - 30                       40 +

**3. Which of the following types of recreational facilities do you visit most often? (select all that apply)**

- City Parks                       US Forest Service Facilities                       Other (please specify)  
 County Parks                       Water District Facilities  
 State Parks                       Private Facilities  
 National Parks

**4. Select all recreational activities in your area that you OR members of your family have and / or would like to participate in.**

	Have Participated	Would Like to Participate		Have Participated	Would Like to Participate
Animal Training / Showing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Off-Road Vehicle, ATV, Dirt Biking (motorized)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Archery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Orienteering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Automobile Racing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor Drama, Concerts, Cultural Events, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Backpacking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Picnicking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baseball / Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basketball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rappelling / Rock Climbing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bicycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scuba / Snorkeling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bird Watching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shuffleboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boating / Sailing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Skating / Skateboarding / Rollerblading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Camping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Soccer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Canoeing, Kayaking, Rafting, Tubing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spelunking (Caves)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheerleading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Swim Team (Competitive)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collecting Rocks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming (Recreation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Competitive Shooting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Target Shooting / Skeet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dog Field Trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tennis / Pickleball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Events, Festivals, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visit Beaches in Mississippi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing (on a bank or pier)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volleyball / Badminton	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing (on a boat)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Parks, Splashpool, Sprayground	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Football	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wind Surfing, Water Skiing, Jet Skiing, Parasailing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frisbee / Disc Golf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Zoos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gardening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Golf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Health / Fitness Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
High Ropes Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Hiking and Trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Horseback Riding / Trail Riding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Hunting, Bow Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Jog, Run, Walk for Exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Kite Flying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Miniature Golf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Nature Photography	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

**5. What is the reason you and /or your family participate in park activities? (select all that apply)**

- For health reasons
  - To be with friends and /or family
  - Enjoy being outdoors
  - For fun or to practice activities
- 

**6. Do you travel outside of Mississippi to use other parks and recreation facilities?**

- Yes  No

If so, where?

---

**7. How far would you be willing to walk, drive, or ride a bicycle to visit parks and recreation facilities, if safe multi-use trails, sidewalks, or bicycle lanes were available?**

Walk  miles      Drive  miles      Ride a Bicycle  miles

If you would not walk or bicycle, why?

---

**8. Are the public recreation facilities that you and / or members of your household visit SAFE TO USE?**

If NO, what factors at your recreation places are UNSAFE? (specify place and condition)

---

**9. Please indicate your age.**

- |                                    |                               |  |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 14 and under | <input type="radio"/> 35 - 44 | <input type="radio"/> 65 - 74              |
| <input type="radio"/> 15 - 24      | <input type="radio"/> 45 - 54 | <input type="radio"/> 75 and up            |
| <input type="radio"/> 25 - 34      | <input type="radio"/> 55 - 64 | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to answer |

**10. What is your gender?**

- Male  Female  Prefer not to answer
- 

**11. What is your ethnicity? (select all that apply)**

- White  American Indian or Alaska Native  Prefer not to answer  
 Black or African American  Asian  
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  Other
- 

**12. Please check your housing status.**

- Homeowner  Renter  Other
- 

**13. Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?**

- Married  Separated  
 Widowed  Never married  
 Divorced  Prefer not to answer
- 

**14. What is your approximate average household income?**

- Under \$20,000  
 \$20,000 - \$40,000  
 \$40,000 - \$70,000  
 \$70,000 - \$100,000  
 Over \$100,000  
 Prefer not to answer
- 

**15. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

- Some high school, no diploma  
 High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (GED)  
 Some college credit, no degree  
 Trade / technical / vocational training  
 Associate degree  
 Bachelor's degree  
 Master's degree  
 Professional degree  
 Doctorate degree  
 Prefer not to answer



**16. How long have you lived in Mississippi?**

- 0 - 5 years
  - 6 - 10 years
  - 11 - 20 years
  - Over 20 years
- 

**17. How do you regularly find out about recreation places and activities? (select all that apply)**

- Word of mouth
- State, County, or City Office
- School or College
- Newspaper
- Television, Radio
- Internet, Email, Website
- Federal, State Agency, or Military Organization
- Other (please specify)

**18. Would you like to receive a monthly or quarterly newsletter via email to inform you and your family of upcoming recreation programs and special events?**

- |           | Yes                   | No                    |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Monthly   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Quarterly | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
- 

**19. Do you have any additional comments? If so, please list them in the box below.**

**THANK YOU,**  
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

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**C**

**OUTREACH**

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# OUTREACH SCHEDULE

## RESIDENT SURVEY

### MDWFP Social Media Posts

August 15  
August 30  
September 13  
September 28  
October 10  
October 16  
October 29

### DBA Social Media Posts

August 15  
September 5  
September 26  
October 15  
October 29

### Mass Emails

Library Systems  
August 30  
September 14

Outreach Groups  
September 5  
September 24

Newspapers, Radios  
September 5

Cycling and Running Clubs  
September 17

Counties with low survey participation  
September 24

## PROVIDER SURVEY

### Mass Emails

Provider List and State Park Managers  
August 21

State Parks  
August 30  
September 10

MDWFP Grant List  
August 29  
September 10  
September 28

Colleges and Universities  
September 10

Parks and Recreation Departments  
September 13

Tennis and Golf  
September 17

Shooting Ranges  
September 17

Combined List of Previous Categories  
October 16  
November 2

Previous SCORP Provider Survey Respondents  
October 17, 2018

Boys & Girls Clubs  
October 18, 2018

### Phone Calls

Parks and Recreation Departments  
October 23

### Postcards

County Boards of Supervisors, Mayor's Offices  
October 1

# PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE SAMPLE

**County:** Harrison  
**Printed In:** Sun-Herald  
**Printed On:** 2018/09/21

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public meetings to discuss the 2019-2024 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). An updated SCORP report is required for the state to remain eligible for federal funding. The public meetings invite Mississippi residents to learn more about this process and give Mississippi residents an opportunity to provide feedback on their outdoor recreation experiences and interests. Public meetings will be held at the following times and locations: Meeting #1 MDWFP Jackson Office, 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211 on Wednesday October 3 at 3:00pm Meeting #2 Roosevelt State Park, 2149 Highway 13 South, Morton, MS 39117 on Thursday October 4 at 3:30pm Meeting #3 Tombigbee State Park, 264 Cabin Drive, Tupelo, MS 38804 on Wednesday October 10 at 3:30pm Meeting #4 George P. Cossar State Park, 165 County Road 170, Oakland, MS 38948 on Thursday October 11 at 3:30pm Meeting #5 Buccaneer State Park, 1150 South Beach Blvd., Waveland, MS 39576 on Thursday October 18 at 3:30pm Dana Brown & Associates has been contracted to facilitate the public meetings. Please contact Blake Crow at (504) 345-2639 with questions regarding the meetings. Publish 9/21, 9/27, 10/5, 10/12

**Public Notice ID:** 3857712

# PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE LISTINGS SAMPLE

A SERVICE OF MISSISSIPPI PRESS ASSOCIATION

## PUBLIC NOTICES MISSISSIPPI



Date	Public Notice Preview	Publication		
2018/10/15	<a href="#">LEGAL NOTICE The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be h</a>	Clarion-Ledger		<a href="#">Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a>
2018/10/08	<a href="#">LEGAL NOTICE The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be h</a>	Clarion-Ledger	2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a> Sun-Herald
2018/10/01	<a href="#">LEGAL NOTICE The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be h</a>	Clarion-Ledger	2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a> Sun-Herald
2018/09/24	<a href="#">LEGAL NOTICE The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be h</a>	Clarion-Ledger	2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a> Sun-Herald
2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a>	Sun-Herald	2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a> Sun-Herald
2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a>	Sun-Herald	2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a> Sun-Herald
2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a>	Sun-Herald	2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a> Sun-Herald
2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a>	Sun-Herald	2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a> Sun-Herald
2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a>	Sun-Herald	2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a> Sun-Herald
2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a>	Sun-Herald	2018/09/21	<a href="#">The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) will be hosting five public me</a> Sun-Herald

# MISSISSIPPI

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan  
Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy

**What are your favorite outdoor recreational activities?**

**Share your thoughts!  
Take the Mississippi SCORP Resident Survey.**  
[www.mississippicorp.com/survey](http://www.mississippicorp.com/survey)

*and*

**Attend a public meeting.**

**Wednesday, October 3 @ 3:00pm**  
MDWFP - Jackson Office  
1505 Eastover Drive  
Jackson, MS 39211

**Thursday, October 4 @ 3:30pm**  
Roosevelt State Park  
2149 Hwy 13 South  
Morton, MS 39117

**Wednesday, October 10 @ 3:30pm**  
Tombigbee State Park  
264 Cabin Drive  
Tupelo, MS 38804

**Thursday, October 11 @ 3:30pm**  
George P. Cossar State Park  
165 County Road 170  
Oakland, MS 38948

**Thursday, October 18 @ 3:30pm**  
Buccaneer State Park  
1150 South Beach Blvd.  
Waveland, MS 39576





# PUBLIC MEETING POSTCARD : PROVIDER



**Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan**  
Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy

**Outdoor Recreation Providers**

Do you receive requests for additional opportunities at your facilities?

**Share your feedback!**



Take the Mississippi SCORP Provider Survey  
[www.mississippiscorp.com/providersurvey](http://www.mississippiscorp.com/providersurvey)

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## Public Meeting Schedule

**Wednesday, October 3 @ 3:00pm**  
MDWFP - Jackson Office  
1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211

**Thursday, October 4 @ 3:30pm**  
Roosevelt State Park  
2149 Hwy 13 South, Morton, MS 39117

**Wednesday, October 10 @ 3:30pm**  
Tombigbee State Park  
264 Cabin Drive, Tupelo, MS 38804

**Thursday, October 11 @ 3:30pm**  
George P. Cossar State Park  
165 County Road 170, Oakland, MS 38948

**Thursday, October 18 @ 3:30pm**  
Buccaneer State Park  
1150 South Beach Blvd, Waveland, MS 39576

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# PUBLIC MEETING POSTCARD : RESIDENT



**MISSISSIPPI**  
Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan  
Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy

**Outdoor Enthusiasts and Park Users**

Do you have ideas for improving Mississippi's public recreational facilities, parks, and trails?

**Share your thoughts!**

Take the Mississippi SCORP Resident Survey



[www.mississippicorp.com/survey](http://www.mississippicorp.com/survey)

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Waveland, MS 39576**

# SOCIAL MEDIA EXAMPLES



**Complete the resident survey!**

**2019 - 2024**

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan  
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

Image: @insidetheframes



MISSISSIPPI  
Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy  
**SCORP**

**Complete the resident survey!**

**2019 - 2024**

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan  
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

MISSISSIPPI  
Ensuring Mississippi's Outdoor Legacy  
**SCORP**



Image: VisitMississippi.org