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Minnesota Outdoor Recreation Task Force Meeting #3 July 20th & 21st, 2020

Welcome and hang tight! The meeting will begin soon.

If you would like to add live captioning to your screen, please visit:
<https://www.streamtext.net/player?event=DNR>

Housekeeping

- Notes for task force members:
 - If you have technical difficulties throughout the meeting, please reach out to Madison McGovern or Gratia Joice via chat
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Imperative

Minnesota's beautiful and varied outdoor resources contribute to our health and wellbeing, quality of life and economy.

Our imperative: understand and remove barriers that prevent all people—especially those disproportionately excluded, such as individuals with disabilities, low-income, underrepresented and BIPOC communities—from accessing Minnesota's outdoors.

Relevant Data

- Americans spend 90% of their time in enclosed areas such as buildings and vehicles. Youth spend less time outdoors than they did 20 years ago.
- Children and youth struggle with increasing mental health and obesity concerns.
- Concerns about public safety may deter underrepresented communities from accessing nearby parks and green spaces.
- Minnesota is home to some of the nation's most egregious gaps in educational opportunity, income equality, homeownership and health, based on race.
- Minnesota's population is aging and diversifying. By 2030 one fifth of our state's population will be 65+ and more than 50% of our state's population will be people of color.

Meanwhile...

- The most direct route to caring for the environment as an adult is participating in “wild nature activities” before the age of 11.
- Nature can improve academic outcomes, social-emotional skills, health and creativity.

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STRENGTHS

- Great parks, trails, green spaces across the state, and four seasons to participate
- Quality, cross-sector programs, resources and initiatives to explore and share learning
- Outdoor industry acknowledges disparities and wants to do better
- Existing networks promote getting outdoors
- Strong leadership in BIPOC, underrepresented communities to elevate and amplify

W

WEAKNESSES

- Outdoor industry-created barriers disproportionately affecting BIPOC and underrepresented communities
- Lack diversity in decision-making/leadership
- Economic barriers
- Lack of program support (transportation, gear, etc.)
- Safety
- Limiting definitions of outdoor recreation
- Barriers for individuals with disabilities

O

OPPORTUNITIES

- Promotion of relevancy, equity and inclusion
- Revenue models
- School-based opportunities
- COVID response
- Funding/grants
- Health and wellbeing

T/C

THREATS/ CHALLENGES

- Limited/negative outdoor experiences threaten next-gen outdoor enthusiasts
- Funding
- Lack authentic engagement with low-income, underrepresented, BIPOC communities
- Safety
- Systemic racism in the outdoor sector/industry
- Climate change/disregard for stewardship
- Collaboration requires time, resources, shared goals

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Discussion

- **When you think of access, in your geographic area or area of expertise, what are the most resonant barriers?**
- **What more should ORTF do to understand and address outdoor access issues?**
- **What's missing?**

THANK YOU!

Coordination

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STRENGTHS

Minnesota has an abundance of world-class outdoor resources, public and private outdoor organizations, and relatively high outdoor recreation participation rates.

There is a history of public - private partnerships and a genuine desire to work together to increase outdoor recreation opportunities in Minnesota.

Recognition among decision makers that Minnesota has an outdoor legacy that we need to maintain, promote and grow.

We have existing national, statewide, and regional communication networks that could be combined for a more comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation network.

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WEAKNESSES

No unifying plan, vision, or end goal, and no office/entity unifying a goal or coordinating a comprehensive plan

Organizations and populations from underserved communities are often not at the table.

Many associations work in a bubble, creating user group silos and leading to a redundancy of effort.

Lack of effective definition of outdoor recreation, which contributes to a lack of clarity in who to coordinate with.

O

OPPORTUNITIES

Create a master vision; a big giant goal; a state master vision/objective for outdoor recreation

* Expand and define the big tent of outdoor recreation

* Use the outdoors to promote the health and well being in a more coordinated health system.

* Create an office that can help us create a bigger plan for outdoor recreation to increase outdoor users and further group goals.

T/C

THREATS/ CHALLENGES

Territorial threat to change

- Existing State department or agency can default towards self-serving
- Or advocates can be self-righteous and over-zealous

Internal biases and stereotypes we have within broad outdoor recreation community

- Competing orgs, user groups, and companies may not want to work together. What's in it for me when we don't have a big picture to understand how we are all interconnected? How do we create a desire to work together without a plan we can all see ourselves within? What's the why?

• The definition on what is outdoor recreation is currently too narrow. An object isn't always needed to recreate outdoors.

No State agency focuses on engaging MN population in outdoor recreation as its primary mandate.

- If no one is responsible, no one does the work.
- And, if we don't have a budget to fund the agency, the work cannot be accomplished.

Economic Development

S**STRENGTHS****W****WEAKNESSES****O****OPPORTUNITIES****T/C****THREATS/
CHALLENGES****VISION:** Unite and invest in Minnesota's resources to drive a world-class outdoor economy that facilitates greater access, promotion, awareness, stewardship & conservation.**Seasonality****HQ'd stakeholders w/ resources**

Leisure & hospitality industry
 Outdoor equipment & service providers
 Consumers & citizenry
 Public agencies (local, regional, state & federal)
 Non-profits

Collaboration**Strong outdoor infrastructure & access**

Local, regional, state & federal parks, forests & trails
 State & federal transportation corridors
 Strong MN destinations

Regional geographies & landscapes

Forests
 Prairie / grasslands
 Waters
 Urban & rural
 Restorative (e.g., mining)
 Reclaimed

Coordination (connecting resources)

Rural vs. metro divide
 Disparate & insular stakeholders
 No central planning (goals, measures & monitoring)
 Reluctance to embrace 3P best practices
 Clunky resource allocation systems & processes
 Abundant, uncoordinated resources correlated to economic value
 Unskilled at Voice of Customer
 Aging population of decisionmakers

Information & technology

Messaging, marketing and branding that resonates with current & future customers
 Lack coordinated use of data & statistics

Economics & funding

Weak methods to connect value chain
 Strategic objectives & measures for ROI
 Ad hoc (project-by-project) appropriations model
 Insular market competition philosophy
 Weak, disjointed BD methodology (e.g., CVB partnerships)

Administration → Coordination

Oversight function for vision, mission, brand & execution to established objectives
 Clarity to leverage competitive advantages (e.g., resources, work ethic, partners)

Marketing & branding

Establish widely recognizable brand
 Translate brand into marketable messages
 Leverage omni-channel marketing strategy to expand delivery methods & reach
 Establish partners to distribute downstream
 Leverage facts/data to clarify ambiguous benefits of outdoor recreation (e.g., health/wellness)

Administration

Establish & fund permanent outdoor recreation entity

Public-Private Sector Collaboration

Incentive-based partnership models
 Create cross-spectrum programs encouraging 3P w/ SMEs (e.g., social, branding, demand creation)
 Encourage industry advocacy
 Create membership association (privately run, or nonprofit)
 Community-led solutions with emphasis D&I

Economic Impact

Identify, establish and support new revenue streams
 Create D&I programs w/ focus on expanded access
 Establish localized economic development methodologies for outdoor recreation
 Narratives demonstrating the economic value & opportunity of outdoor recreation
 Redistributive appropriations model collected revenues (e.g., RTP)
 Leverage data to right size OREC contribution

Education & Advocacy

Partnerships for tools & scalability
 Expanded multicultural education
 D&I analysis (e.g., policies, fees, procedures)

Fiscal

Lack of strategic plan-based funding
 Public resource constraints
 Socio-economic factors

Prioritization

Political will & divisive climate
 Competing policymaker funding priorities
 Competing customer priorities (e.g., work, school, time/distance)

Competitiveness

Not accepting free market principles for outdoor recreation (regional, state& int'l competitors)

Infrastructure

Balancing demand w/ availability & capacity of infrastructure
 Lack of modernization to meet consumer expectations (e.g., technology, facilities)

Awareness & Stewardship

Shifting population demographics
 Generational fragmentation to outdoors
 Gentrification & privatization of in-demand resources
 Environmental factors (e.g., climate, invasive species)
 Climate change
 Weak deterrents & enforcement of responsible recreation

Tuesday's Agenda

- Presentations from:
 - Promotion and Public Awareness
 - Stewardship and Conservation
- Full Group Discussion/Reflection
- Public Comments
- Next Steps



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Promotion and Public Awareness

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STRENGTHS

Passionate People (Strong Promoters) = grass roots promotion, conservation and public lands. Variety of user groups, clubs, etc.

Media coverage is rich, but most importantly consistent.

Engaged Agencies - state and local (DNR, EMT, CVB) reflected in Governor opener events

W

WEAKNESSES

Promotion of state too broad, need more niche marketing

MN marketing budget disproportionate to other states. Outdoor rec groups are separate vs working together to rival larger groups, ie, mining, etc.

EMT and DNR both tasked with promotion, EMT is spread thin / responsible to promote a lot of diverse activities and interests.

Utilizing technology to access various niche groups -- mediums are outdated (paper maps & PDFs)

Lack of macro, cohesive theme (of outdoors)

No industry group pulling together

No state outdoor office, a lot of cooks in the kitchen

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OPPORTUNITIES

Reach new type of outdoors user

MN Outdoor Industry group (create)

State Outdoor Office and/or Advisory board

Build more cohesive messaging around MN outdoors

Create a messaging/marketing plan with strong segmentation

Right now, COVID era has outdoor recreation numbers booming. Take advantage of this

Partnerships with private companies / organizations

Unify the outdoor recreation space by pulling groups together for more of a voice

In St. Paul, further establish (for the elected) the narrative that the outdoors and tourism has a similar worth/value/fiscal return-on-investment as stronger, larger or better funded industries

Focus on MN residents knowing and understanding how to fall in love with our "outside" first

T/C

THREATS/ CHALLENGES

Youth not having the interest in outdoor recreation

Many demographics getting older

Timing. The opportunity is now. Budgets due in Aug. Our timeline is Dec

State legislature not understanding the ROI of promotion and public awareness

Stewardship and Conservation

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STRENGTHS

Section I

- Great NGOs that promote conservation and stewardship (i.e. MN Land Trust, MN Outdoor Heritage Alliance, Minnesota Deer Hunters, Pheasants Forever, Wildlife Forever)
- Many organizations and groups doing great work around stewardship and conservation
- Many strong outdoor organizations /associations that promote conservation
 - Minnesota has great state agencies with a history of stewardship
 - Minnesota has established systems or models of funding stewardship

Section II

- A wealth of clean water and forests that support a diverse wildlife ecosystem
- Diverse Outdoor Rec. Infrastructure
- Outdoor recreation opportunities offered in each county

Section III

- Minnesota has a Legacy of taking care of its natural Spaces
- A culture in the state that believes in funding conservation and stewardship (e.g. Legacy Amendment)
- MN has a culture that values the outdoors
- MN is a Volunteering & Donating State
- MN Legacy Amendment
- MN values the outdoors

Section IV

- Connections, overlaps and gaps between the different recreation activities
- Comprehensive data on local, state and federal land in Minnesota
- Data on how those lands are used for recreation versus activities such as resource extraction
- Historical license and fee trends

W

WEAKNESSES

Section I

- A politicization of conservation so that it becomes partisan at times

Section II

- Backlogs of needs for maintaining recreational infrastructure.
- Lack of funding or resources to accomplish stewardship
- Decaying Outdoor Rec. Infrastructure –Capital planning for maintenance

Section III

- Lack of diverse voices to stand up for our recreational resources and infrastructure

Section IV

- No way to do outreach and push best practices to groups or communities around
- Stewardship.
- No Database exists of stewardship opportunities
- Education on How to tie stewardship to conservation
- STP – Same ten people seem to volunteer their time and talents
- Promoting the wins of good stewardship /conservation

Section V

- As a user group, it's more like a land grab, get everything you can before someone else gets it
- Most groups work in a bubble /silo approach
- Siloed work in groups and regions of state
- Too many silos of individual groups doing their own thing and sometimes competing against each other
- No clear plan or coordination between groups or a focused goal state wide
- Do we understand how users impact other users, are we planning for users to not impact each other, and still use the land/space to the most of it's potential
- We should also look at potential stumbling blocks of mutual respect and appreciation- bullet purple
- Many users all vying for the same natural resources

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OPPORTUNITIES

Section I

- To align groups towards a common vision for the future of outdoor rec and stewardship of wild places here in Minnesota
- Minnesota could use a good PR campaign highlighting outdoor recreation benefits/ opportunities and the diversity of constituents who engage in outdoor recreation
- Public-Private partnership
- To better engage a larger group of citizens (and tourists) in sampling the wonderful outdoor recreation opportunities that exist in our state
- Teach and promote best practices in how groups can best get involved in stewardship on a statewide level.
- Utilize groups and communities to steward Minnesota's outdoor recreation product to insure it stays world class
- Bring the people of Minnesota together around a common cause to both play in and protect our state.
- Better clarity, prioritization, communication and planning on conservation projects

Section II

- Connecting Stewardship to lower fee's, licenses or other outdoor opportunities
- To solve conservation funding shortfalls
- To think creatively about how these priorities get funded in the future

Section III

- To purposefully place the right outdoor adventure in the right outdoor amenity that serves the people who are closest to that location
- Understanding barriers (listening) cultural and finances
- Inclusion- Invitation to participate if we knew who to invite.

Section IV

- Create a state office of Recreation Economy to help coordinate stewardship efforts.
- Create a plan for stewardship and stewardship funding to help promote and fund it.

T/C

THREATS/ CHALLENGES

- Hunting and fishing is a majority funding source for conservation through excise tax and license sales. Hunting participation in particular is in rapid decline, so how will conservation through agencies like MN DNR be funded in the future if we don't a) get more people participating in hunting and fishing activities and b) look for new and alternative sources of conservation funding?
- If we do nothing the natural spaces we want to recreate in, promote and utilize as an economic driver will be at risk of being lost
- Finding a common theme or plan to work together on.
- Covid –Revenue Reductions or decline in volunteering
- How to tie in with overall Health & Wellness message
- User Generation of people
- Loss of focus in educational systems (what is a wetland)
- Loss of public land
- Balance of people and infrastructure
- The current model of funding for wildlife and conservation is breaking due to macro trends that are impacting the level of funds available
- Not all Minnesotans view outdoor recreation as important to quality of life.
- There is no process or clear path of how to do something on behalf of a state property or recreation amenity
- Overuse of natural resources can lead to destruction of resources

Group Reactions & Reflections

Public Comments, Questions & Answers

Next Steps

- As workgroups, reflect on SWOT(s):
 - Consider how to:
 - Reduce threats
 - Take advantage of opportunities
 - Exploit strengths
 - Remove weaknesses
 - Examine relationships between different aspects of your SWOT analysis/other groups' SWOTs
 - Brainstorm rough ideas for possible actionable recommendations

August Meeting(s)—August 26th & 27th, 9am-12pm

- Day 1: Each workgroup will share out ideas for potential recommendations; see where there are synergies and if there is any outstanding information you need as we move towards drafting recommendations
- Day 2: Guest speaker(s)/panel discussion on what other states are doing to accomplish this type of work