Economic opportunities for working landscapes: Outdoor Recreation

Joel Dunn, President and CEO, Chesapeake Conservancy
Outdoor recreation is part of the fabric of Maryland’s rural landscapes.

Cyclist at Catoctin Mountain Park. Credit: Rudi Riet

Kayakers at Mallows Bay Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary. Credit: Maryland GovPics

Goose hunting in Queen Anne’s County, Md. Credit: Chesapeake Bay Program

Fishing at Beaver Creek, Maryland. Credit: Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing
Outdoor recreation in Maryland: By the numbers

- $5.51 billion value added to Maryland economy in 2020
  - About 1.3% of total value added to Maryland economy
- 69,377 total employment in 2020
- $3.36 billion in total outdoor recreation compensation
  - 1.4% of total employment compensation in Maryland
- 2.4% average annual growth of outdoor recreation economy (excluding the year 2020)
- COVID-19 pandemic had significant negative impact on outdoor recreation in 2020
Outdoor recreation economy in Maryland

Total value added 2012 - 2020

Outdoors recreation: Total value added to Maryland economy, 2012 - 2020
(source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Dept. of Commerce)
• 2017: MORE Commission established by Gov. Hogan, co-chaired by MD Dept. of Natural Resources and MD Dept. of Commerce

• Membership: local government, recreation outfitters and businesses, sportsmen, and conservationists

• Commission charged with strengthening MD’s outdoor recreation and heritage tourism economy
  
  ❖ Enhance business climate for outdoor recreation industry & grow jobs
  ❖ Enhance MD brand as a premier destination
  ❖ Develop world-class outdoor and heritage tourism experiences
  ❖ Steward natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources
  ❖ Enhance opportunities for workforce development
1.) Incentivizing Sector Growth

❖ Establish an Office of Outdoor Recreation

❖ Work with counties to support outdoor recreation businesses

❖ Develop recruitment plan for outdoor lifestyle manufacturers

❖ Conduct economic impact studies with local universities

❖ Assess barriers and conduct training to further inclusion of minority owned businesses

❖ Create MD Outdoor Industry Leadership Summit

❖ Enhance Marketing and branding
Maryland Office of Outdoor Recreation

- Maryland Office of Outdoor Recreation established in 2021
- Tasked with implementing recommendations of the MORE Commission
- Led by Executive Director Daryl Anthony
2.) Improving Career Pipelines

- Conduct a study on existing outdoor recreation businesses and ID sectors with growth potential that could be helped by MORE recs
- Create toolkit on careers in outdoor recreation industry
- Strengthen MD Conservation Corps, Conservation Jobs Corps, and Veterans Conservation Corps and focus on underrepresented communities
- Implement Outdoor Equity Program to eliminate barriers for low income rural and urban youth
- Initiate recreation industry’s Live Near Your Work program
3.) Enhancing Recreational and Heritage Tourism Experiences

- Streamline DNR lease agreement to support public/private partnerships
- Increase procurement authority of DNR to reduce critical maintenance backlog on public lands
- Make MD Historic Revitalization Tax Credit Program available to tenants of historic properties owned by DNR
- Provide training opportunities to outfitters and service providers
- Assess & develop transportation from urban areas to outdoor recreation destinations
- Conduct customer service surveys
- Enhance Trails
America the beautiful and 30 x 30

- National goal to conserve 30% of nation’s lands and waters by 2030
- Responds to global biodiversity / species abundance crisis

**Desired outcomes as a part of this goal:**

1.) Creating more parks and safe outdoor opportunities in nature-deprived communities
2.) Supporting Tribally led conservation and restoration priorities
3.) Expanding collaborative conservation of fish and wildlife habitats and corridors
4.) Increasing access for outdoor recreation
5.) Incentivizing and rewarding the voluntary conservation efforts of fishers, ranchers, farmers, and forest owners
6.) Creating jobs by investing in restoration and resilience