

The Natural Resources & Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund benefits



Economic Development

The Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund and its formula provide quality of life components like trails, outdoor recreation and access to public land that lowans demand. These quality of life initiatives will ensure that Iowa can attract and retain a qualified workforce while also guaranteeing that Iowa and its communities reap the economic benefits and vibrancy that is generated by ecotourism.

Outdoor recreation is a huge economic driving force. Annually, outdoor recreation in Iowa generates \$8.7 billion in consumer spending, \$649 million in local and state tax revenue, 83,000 direct jobs and \$2.7 billion in wages and salaries.

Iowa's ability to capitalize on the economic opportunities of outdoor recreation is stunted by limited resources. Less than 3 percent of Iowa's land is open to the public, ranking 47th in the nation. Studies show that about 25% of lowans do not engage in any physical activity outside of their regular jobs. The inactivity of lowans also has a significant economic impact. Inactivity costs the state over \$5.3 billion through lost worker productivity, increased medical costs and increased worker's compensation.

The Iowa's Water and Land Legacy coalition encourages the 2019 Iowa Legislature to pass a sales tax increase to fund the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund and help Iowa live up to its economic development potential.

In a recent survey by the Iowa Economic Development Authority, when people were asked what they think about Iowa as a place to live or have a business, they stated that "access to natural landscapes and outdoor activities" is one of their top priorities.

- Of the more than \$180 million in estimated annual revenue for the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund, 16 to 20 percent would be generated by out of state visitors.
- Iowa's 134 lakes generate an estimated \$1 billion dollars in direct spending in Iowa communities.
- Iowa's trail systems are used by nearly 2 million people each year and generate over \$17.8 million in consumer spending.
- The High Trestle Trail has more than 250,000 annual visits, which supports 135 jobs in trail communities and results in \$6.7 million in direct spending in Dallas and Boone counties.
- Studies also indicate that people that live near trails are 50% more likely to meet physical activity guidelines, saving on medical costs and increasing worker productivity.
- Over the last two decades, Iowa has lost more than 1.6 million acres of habitat suitable for pheasants and other small game, driving away potential hunters from both in and out of the state.

