



EXECUTIVE ORDER 2024-03

WHEREAS, North Dakota's diverse landscapes, including prairies, lakes, forests and Badlands, offer abundant outdoor recreation opportunities that attract residents and visitors alike; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota's abundant hunting and fishing opportunities, including nearly 3.2 million acres of land open to the public for hunting and over 400 lakes with public access, are integral to our state's outdoor heritage and economy, fostering a deep connection to our natural resources and sustaining traditional practices; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota's state park system provides unparalleled opportunities for outdoor recreation, conservation education and cultural enrichment, drawing over 1 million visitors and 300,000 overnight stays in 2023, and serves as an invaluable asset that strengthens health and well-being and promotes community ties; and

WHEREAS, iconic destinations such as Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the International Peace Garden showcase North Dakota's natural beauty and cultural significance, drawing visitors from around the globe and enriching our state's reputation as a premier outdoor recreation destination; and

WHEREAS, the diversity of North Dakota's terrain and water bodies supports a wide range of recreational activities, including motorized recreation such as off-highway vehicles (OHVs), all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and snowmobiles as well as boating, sailing and kayaking, that provide unique opportunities for adventure and exploration; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota's winter landscape is a playground for outdoor enthusiasts, offering an array of thrilling activities such as skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, ice fishing and snowmobiling. These winter wonders foster a sense of adventure and community engagement, invigorate spirits and contribute to the vibrant tapestry of North Dakota's outdoor culture; and

WHEREAS, numerous studies have demonstrated the profound health and well-being benefits of outdoor recreation, with research showing that spending time in nature reduces stress, lowers blood pressure and improves overall mental health. Furthermore, health officials have highlighted the role of outdoor physical activity in reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease and diabetes. These findings underscore the importance of promoting outdoor recreation as a means to enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of North Dakota's residents; and



EXECUTIVE ORDER 2024-03

WHEREAS, North Dakota's diverse landscapes, including prairies, lakes, forests and Badlands, offer abundant outdoor recreation opportunities that attract residents and visitors alike; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota's abundant hunting and fishing opportunities, including nearly 3.2 million acres of land open to the public for hunting and over 400 lakes with public access, are integral to our state's outdoor heritage and economy, fostering a deep connection to our natural resources and sustaining traditional practices; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota's state park system provides unparalleled opportunities for outdoor recreation, conservation education and cultural enrichment, drawing over 1 million visitors and 300,000 overnight stays in 2023, and serves as an invaluable asset that strengthens health and well-being and promotes community ties; and

WHEREAS, iconic destinations such as Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the International Peace Garden showcase North Dakota's natural beauty and cultural significance, drawing visitors from around the globe and enriching our state's reputation as a premier outdoor recreation destination; and

WHEREAS, the diversity of North Dakota's terrain supports a wide range of recreational activities, including motorized recreation such as off-highway vehicles (OHVs), all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and snowmobiles that provide unique opportunities for adventure and exploration; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota's winter landscape is a playground for outdoor enthusiasts, offering an array of thrilling activities such as skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, ice fishing and snowmobiling. These winter wonders foster a sense of adventure and community engagement, invigorate spirits and contribute to the vibrant tapestry of North Dakota's outdoor culture; and

WHEREAS, numerous studies have demonstrated the profound health and well-being benefits of outdoor recreation, with research showing that spending time in nature reduces stress, lowers blood pressure and improves overall mental health. Furthermore, health officials have highlighted the role of outdoor physical activity in reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease and diabetes. These findings underscore the importance of promoting outdoor recreation as a means to enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of North Dakota's residents; and

WHEREAS, an opportunity exists to establish a more coordinated effort to engage private and public sector stakeholders to maximize the impact of outdoor recreation opportunities, strengthen the recreation economy and expand outdoor recreation initiatives across the state; and

WHEREAS, outdoor recreation plays a vital role in North Dakota, contributing over \$1.3 billion annually to the economy and accounting for over 14,000 jobs in the state; and

WHEREAS, North Dakota consistently is near or at the lowest unemployment rate in the country, and outdoor recreation plays a critical role in attracting future workforce and retaining North Dakota youth; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to responsibly manage North Dakota's natural resources and outdoor recreation assets to promote economic growth, enhance quality of life and preserve the state's unique heritage; and

WHEREAS, The Outdoor Recreation Industry Confluence of States was established in recognition of the impact and importance of the outdoor recreation industry to the future prosperity and health of our nation through conservation and stewardship, education and workforce training, economic development, and public health and wellness.

NOW THEREFORE, Doug Burgum, Governor of North Dakota, by virtue of the authority set forth in Article V, Section 1 of the North Dakota Constitution, does hereby create the North Dakota Office of Outdoor Recreation ("NDOOR") as follows:

I. Establishment and Composition

1. The NDOOR shall be established within North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department's Outreach and Engagement Division, and the Outreach and Engagement Chief shall serve as Director of the NDOOR.
2. A multiagency body comprised of representatives from Parks and Recreation Department, Department of Commerce, Game and Fish Department, Forest Service, Indian Affairs Commission, Health and Human Services Department, Department of Public Instruction, Department of Transportation, Job Service ND, Department of Water Resources, Department of Trust Lands, North Dakota Historical Society, and the Outdoor Heritage Fund shall convene regularly with the Director of NDOOR to ensure outdoor recreation initiatives and the recreation economy are strategic and impactful.

II. Mission and Responsibilities

The NDOOR shall have the following mission and responsibilities:

1. The mission of the North Dakota Office of Outdoor Recreation shall be to plan and implement comprehensive strategies that drive the economic impact of outdoor

recreation in North Dakota. Through targeted initiatives, collaborative partnerships and effective resource management, the NDOOR shall aim to increase the utilization of outdoor recreational assets, attract tourists and stimulate the economy at the state and local level. By fostering innovation, promoting sustainable practices, reducing overly burdensome regulations and enhancing access to outdoor experiences, the NDOOR shall strive to maximize the economic benefits and return on investment derived from North Dakota's natural landscapes while preserving them for future generations.

2. Coordinate with relevant state agencies, federal and local governments, tribal partners and private entities to advance outdoor recreation initiatives.
3. Lead the effort to conduct North Dakota's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).
4. Conduct outreach and engagement efforts to educate the public about outdoor recreation opportunities and responsible stewardship of natural resources.
5. Serve as a resource and support system for outdoor recreation businesses, nonprofit organizations and community groups.
6. Collaborate with stakeholders to identify and address challenges and barriers to outdoor recreation access, participation and development.
7. Monitor and evaluate the economic impact of outdoor recreation in North Dakota and advocate for policies that support its growth and sustainability.
8. Develop partnerships with neighboring states, provinces, federal agencies and regional organizations to promote cross-border outdoor recreation opportunities.
9. Identify legislative initiatives and external funding opportunities to benefit outdoor recreation in North Dakota.

III. Partners Council

The NDOOR shall establish a partners council composed of broad and diverse representatives from key private and public sector outdoor recreation organizations including manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, conservation organizations, the tourism industry, economic development organizations and local, state and federal government. The council shall provide guidance and recommendations to the NDOOR on strategic priorities, program development and policy initiatives.

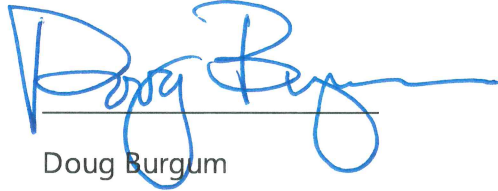
IV. Reporting and Accountability

The NDOOR shall provide annual reports to the Governor and the legislature on its activities, accomplishments and recommendations for advancing outdoor recreation in

North Dakota. The Parks and Recreation Director shall oversee the NDOOR's budget, operations and performance.

V. This order is effective immediately.

Executed at Bismarck, North Dakota, this 9th day of May, 2024.



Doug Burgum

Governor of North Dakota

Attest:



Michael Howe

Secretary of State