



GEORGIA OUTDOOR RECREATION COALITION

Why do we need a state office dedicated to outdoor recreation?



// Hollis Bennett

Outdoor recreation contributes \$12.3 billion to Georgia's economy each year. Many states with dedicated offices have seen that number grow significantly—all the while improving quality of life for residents, increasing equitable access to recreation and ensuring a healthier environment.



At least 17 states have offices dedicated to outdoor recreation.



\$12.3 Billion



\$9 Billion

Georgia has had an office dedicated to the film industry for more than 40 years. With a similar approach, we have a tremendous opportunity to grow the economic impact of outdoor recreation—which already outpaces the film industry.

A State Office of Outdoor Recreation will:

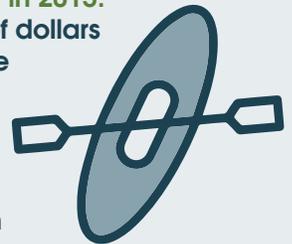
Convene and increase cooperation between federal, state and local policymakers and agencies, businesses, nonprofit partners, and seemingly unrelated entities such as transportation agencies, health partners and economic development departments, which can lead to more efficient use of resources and new opportunities.

Promote Georgia's outdoor recreation assets not only as a means to expand tourism but to help attract new companies and investment, improving the business climate, and providing good jobs and an expanded tax base.

Collaborate with county and city governments to help them leverage outdoor recreation to support economic growth and community pride.

Encourage healthy lifestyles and advocate for enhanced access to the outdoors, close-to-home – which can reduce healthcare costs, increase community cohesion and improve safety.

More than 150,000 paddlers have visited Columbus, Georgia since whitewater operations began in 2013. These people spent millions of dollars that would not have otherwise come to the city. There are other opportunities for this kind of investment around rural Georgia, and a state outdoor recreation office can help incubate ideas and secure investments that support local jobs and community pride.



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Contact Daniel Jessee at info@gaoutdoors.org