



State

of Iowa

Executive Department

IN THE NAME AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE OF IOWA

**EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER NINETEEN**

**WHEREAS**, outdoor recreation is a major economic force in Iowa, contributing an estimated \$5.9 billion to the state's gross domestic product in 2024, per the Bureau of Economic Analysis. This impact supports 47,807 jobs in the state.

**WHEREAS**, outdoor experiences – from cycling Iowa's 2,000+ miles of bike trail to paddling Iowa's river trails and fishing Iowa's lakes to camping in our state parks – are an integral part of Iowa's culture, economy and quality of life, and;

**WHEREAS**, tourism is a vital and growing industry in Iowa, contributing significantly to local economies across all 99 counties through job creation, small business growth and community investment; and

**WHEREAS**, Iowa's abundant natural resources, scenic landscapes and welcoming communities attract millions of visitors each year, fueling economic activity and strengthening the state's outdoor and tourism sectors alike; and

**WHEREAS**, public and private stakeholders, including local governments, nonprofit organizations, outfitters, manufacturers, guides, conservation groups and volunteer advocates are actively investing in outdoor recreation but lack a centralized structure to coordinate efforts, expand strategic partnerships and promote cohesive growth; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a clear and ongoing need for the State of Iowa to support, enhance and expand its outdoor recreation sector while ensuring the responsible stewardship of its natural landscapes for future generations.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kimberly K. Reynolds**, Governor of the State of Iowa, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the State of Iowa do hereby **ORDER** and **DIRECT** the following:

Establish the Iowa Office of Outdoor Recreation as an extension of the Iowa Tourism Office, a division of the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

**MISSION**

- I. The Office of Outdoor Recreation shall:
1. Promote and expand outdoor recreation opportunities to elevate Iowa's image as a premier outdoor recreation and tourism destination, both regionally and nationally.
  2. Coordinate and strengthen relationships among public agencies, private businesses and community partners engaged in outdoor recreation.
  3. Collaborate with the Iowa Tourism Office to align marketing campaigns, branding initiatives and storytelling that highlight the state's outdoor assets and experiences.

4. Develop strategies to grow Iowa's outdoor recreation economy, enhance its tourism appeal and support workforce and business development in recreation-related industries.
5. Serve as a central point of contact for outdoor recreation initiatives and collaboration across federal, state and local agencies.

#### **PURPOSE & DUTIES**

I. The purpose and duties of the Office of Outdoor Recreation are:

1. Financing and Implementation
  - a. Evolve and advance funding strategies.
  - b. Fundraise to leverage and match state funds with private investments to expand the reach and sustainability of outdoor projects.
  - c. Partner with rural development organizations to advance local and regional outdoor infrastructure.
  - d. Further goals and initiatives of the Iowa DNR's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).
2. Education and Marketing
  - a. Incorporate outdoor recreation as a central pillar in tourism marketing to enhance Iowa's competitiveness and visitor appeal.
  - b. Market and promote outdoor recreation to Iowans as a key contributor to quality of life, community health and resident satisfaction.
3. Community Vision and Capacity Building
  - a. Convene outdoor recreation organizations, local governments and stakeholders to ensure collaboration and shared strategy across infrastructure development efforts.
  - b. Provide technical assistance and planning support to communities to assess feasibility and maximize local benefit.
  - c. Foster partnerships between outdoor assets and nearby private businesses to strengthen economic and tourism outcomes.
  - d. Build local capacity through outreach, training and resources that empower communities to develop recreation infrastructure.
4. Resilience and Wellbeing
  - a. Integrate outdoor recreation into initiatives related to public health, community vitality, talent attraction and cultural enrichment.
  - b. Promote recreation as a driver of resilience and wellbeing for individuals and communities across Iowa.
5. Innovation and Data Development
  - a. Lead research and data collection efforts to measure the economic, social and health impacts of outdoor recreation in Iowa.
  - b. Develop models and metrics to evaluate success of Iowa's outdoor recreation economy.
  - c. Explore innovative strategies to integrate outdoor recreation into Iowa's broader economic development and sustainability vision.

#### **ORGANIZATION & OPERATION**

- I. This Office shall be led by an *Office of Outdoor Recreation Manager*, appointed by the Iowa Economic Development Authority Director and reporting to the Iowa Tourism Office.
- II. The Manager shall consider the advisory guidance included in the final report of the *Outdoor Recreation Task Force* and coordinate closely with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Transportation, and other relevant entities to advance the goals of this office.

III. The Outdoor Recreation Task Force:

1. Shall consist of not more than 10 members, appointed by the Governor.
  2. Membership shall reflect the diversity of Iowa's outdoor recreation stakeholders, including tourism leaders, conservation professionals, community representatives and private-sector partners.
  3. The Governor shall designate one member to serve as Chair.
  4. Task Force members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor and without compensation.
- IV. The Task Force shall submit a report to the Governor and the Office of Outdoor Recreation Manager within 120 days from issuance of this Executive Order, making recommendations to advance outdoor recreation in Iowa.
- V. The work of the task force shall be done in a manner consistent with the laws and regulations of the State of Iowa, and the laws and regulations of the United States.
- VI. All departments, agencies, boards, commissions, or other political subdivisions of the state and any local government shall fully cooperate with requests made by the task force. The task force may seek expertise and services of individuals and entities outside of its membership for research, advice, and other needs, as necessary or appropriate, to accomplish its mission.
- VII. The task force shall expire upon submission of the final report to the Governor, unless extended in writing by the Governor.

**INTERPRETATION**

- I. This Executive Order shall be interpreted in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations and shall not supersede any laws or regulations in place as of its effective date. If any provision of this Executive Order is found to be invalid, unenforceable, or otherwise contrary to applicable law, then the remaining provisions of this Executive Order, as applied to any person or circumstance, shall continue in full force and effect, and shall not be affected by such finding of invalidity or unenforceability.
- II. This Executive Order does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural enforceable at law or in equity, by any party against the State of Iowa, its state agencies, or its officers, employees, agents, or any other persons.
- III. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and apply prospectively only as of its effective date.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I HAVE HEREUNTO  
SUBSCRIBED MY NAME AND CAUSED THE  
GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF IOWA TO BE  
AFFIXED AT DES MOINES, IOWA THIS EIGHTH  
DAY OF JUNE IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD TWO  
THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

  
KIMBERLY K. REYNOLDS GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

  
PAUL D. PATE  
SECRETARY OF STATE