

State Funding for Outdoor Recreation and Tourism in Utah

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Utah State Capitol and City Creek

New report documents state funding for outdoor recreation and tourism in Utah

Logan, Utah – It is no surprise the Utah legislature values outdoor recreation and the many ways it improves the quality of life for residents as well as the millions of tourists who travel to the state each year to hike, climb, ski, float, bike, or enjoy any of the other opportunities available within Utah. There are a variety of legislative appropriations, revenue generating mechanisms, taxes, and federal programs that are administered by different agencies and governments within the state. The number and diversity of programs and funding mechanisms that support outdoor recreation within the state have gradually expanded over the past several decades, so much so that it can be difficult to understand exactly how each of these programs and funding mechanisms operates and, more importantly, how they can work together to maintain and develop high-quality outdoor recreation experiences.

In our ongoing work to develop a strategic plan for outdoor recreation within Utah, and support the Utah Outdoor Adventure Commission, we've assembled the first comprehensive review of all the state-led programs and funding mechanisms that support outdoor recreation and tourism within Utah. The review describes how and to what extent existing programs and mechanisms are funded, outlines how they support outdoor recreation and

tourism, and highlights opportunities where the state can strategically capitalize on existing programs.

Some key take-aways from the report include:

- Revenues generated through taxes and use fees related to outdoor recreation and tourism activity have grown notably over the past decade.
- County governments play an integral role in shaping outdoor recreation and tourism through the collection, and use, of tax revenues.
- There is a need for more funding dedicated to both the **maintenance** of outdoor recreation resources within the state as well the **education** of recreationists about safe and responsible recreation behavior.
- There are a variety of opportunities for the state to partner with federal land management agencies to collaboratively-fund the maintenance and management of outdoor recreation resources

Read the full report at: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/envs_facpub/1648/