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## **Outdoor recreation remains a powerful economic driver across North Carolina, according to U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis**

*Seventh year of economic data shows outdoor industry provides job growth, builds healthy communities, and supports the economy at the state and national levels.*

**NORTH CAROLINA. — November 26, 2024** — The U.S. Department of Commerce’s Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) has released new [economic data](#) exhibiting outdoor recreation’s powerful and positive economic impact on North Carolina’s economy. According to the latest data from the BEA Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, outdoor recreation created **\$16.2 billion** in value added for North Carolina, accounts for **2.1% of North Carolina’s GDP** and includes **145,433 jobs** in 2023. According to newly revised data in this year’s release, the outdoor recreation economy in North Carolina has grown **9.6%** since 2022.

“These are exciting numbers for North Carolina and highlight outdoor recreation as a cornerstone of our economy, generating jobs, supporting entrepreneurship and small businesses, and providing essential opportunities for North Carolinians to engage with the outdoors for physical and mental health, and quality of life,” says NC Outdoor Economy Office Director, Amy Allison.

According to [Outdoor Recreation Roundtable](#), at a national level, these new figures show that outdoor recreation generated **\$1.2 trillion** in economic output (2.3% of GDP), comprised 3.1% of U.S. employees and accounted for **5 million jobs** in 2023. This means the outdoor recreation economy contributes more to the U.S. economy than farming, oil and gas extraction, mining, and utilities. Similarly impressive to North Carolina’s growth, the release shows that the outdoor recreation economy has grown 36% nationally in real terms since 2012.

North Carolina has maintained its year-over-year strength in core outdoor recreation sectors, supported by an interconnected network of land management, economic development, entrepreneurial support, business alliances, conservation, tourism, user group advocacy and more. As access, opportunities, investment in greater equity and statewide outdoor investment expand, so do outdoor recreational activities in their economic impact and participation.

As Western North Carolina continues its long-term recovery after the devastating impacts of Hurricane Helene, continued support and investment in outdoor recreation infrastructure and outdoor industry is vital to maintain and expand this pillar of the state’s economy.

The coordinated efforts of the MADE X MTNS Partnership, Outdoor Business Alliance of WNC, NC Outdoor Economy Office, NC Outdoor Recreation Coalition, Appalachian Regional

Commission, and the Dogwood Health Trust further fortify North Carolina's strong national standing in the outdoor economy.

The recent data shows that, in 2023:

- North Carolina remains ranked 11th among all states in regards to outdoor recreation's *value-added economic impact*.
- North Carolina remains ranked 9th among all states in *employment (2.8%)*.
- North Carolina is ranked 11th in outdoor recreation employee *compensation*.

The consistency of these annual reports signals a clear return on investing in our natural spaces, public health, and fostering an environment conducive to entrepreneurship, small business growth, and workforce quality of life. Communities across North Carolina are leaning on their outdoor assets as means to increase their resiliency and recovery.

See the full [national](#) and [state](#) report, and visit [madexmtns.com](https://madexmtns.com) for more information about MADE X MTNS's mission to grow the outdoor economy and catalyze rural development across Western North Carolina.

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#### **About MADE X MTNS Partnership**

The MADE X MTNS (Made By Mountains) Partnership is working to expand the outdoor industry and economy across North Carolina's Appalachian region and catalyze rural development by building vibrant outdoor communities, driving outdoor industry growth, and empowering regional storytelling. For more information, visit [madexmtns.com](https://madexmtns.com) or [@madexmtns](#)