



Nature Based Tourism

Peter Piconi – SBDC / CEI

Housekeeping

- ▶ This webinar will be sent to you after the presentation.
- ▶ Please keep yourself on mute.
- ▶ Submit any questions in the chat.



A silhouette of a person standing on the peak of a mountain, with other mountain peaks visible in the background. The scene is set against a dark, hazy sky. A solid red rectangle is located in the top right corner of the image.

Guest Speakers

Peter Piconi – Maine SBDC / CEI

Brian Threlkeld – Maine Outdoor Brands

Hannah Collins – Maine Office of Tourism

Peter Piconi

SBDC Mid Coast

“Where Biological meets Business”

- ▶ Empathic, Seeker
- ▶ Business Strategy
- ▶ Ideation
- ▶ Connector

Always chasing fish somewhere.....



What Does The SBDC Do?

Free Business advising to Maine businesses and entrepreneurs

Business Planning and Startups

Credit and Financing

Financial Analysis

Marketing and Sales

Operations and Management

Succession Planning



Need Advising?

Use the QR Code
to register

[Click to Register](#)

No-Cost, Confidential
Business Advising



Creation, Growth, Success
AMERICA'S

Roadmap

- ▶ Outdoor Industry Metrics – MOB
- ▶ Principles of Nature Based Tourism
 - ▶ Ecotourism Models
- ▶ Industry Updates: MOT



A scenic photograph of two hikers standing on a rocky mountain peak. The hiker on the left is wearing a blue jacket and shorts, with a large blue backpack and trekking poles. The hiker on the right is wearing a red jacket and shorts, with a white backpack. They are looking out over a vast landscape of green pine trees and distant mountains under a clear blue sky. The sun is visible in the upper right corner, creating a lens flare effect.

MAINE

OUTDOOR BRANDS

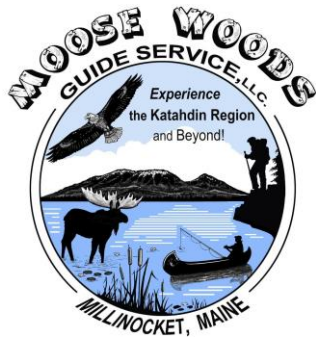
State of the Outdoor Industry
Maine SBDC
March 20, 2024

ELEVATING MAINE'S OUTDOOR INDUSTRY

MAINE
OUTDOOR BRANDS







OUR MISSION

Unite and provide a voice for Maine's outdoor product, service, and retail companies.

OUR VISION

A connected and thriving outdoor recreation industry in Maine that innovates and collaborates to support a sustainable economy and get more people outside.



MOB BY THE NUMBERS

12 BOARD MEMBERS

4 MEMBER LED WORKING GROUPS

180 MEMBERS IN EVERY COUNTY IN MAINE

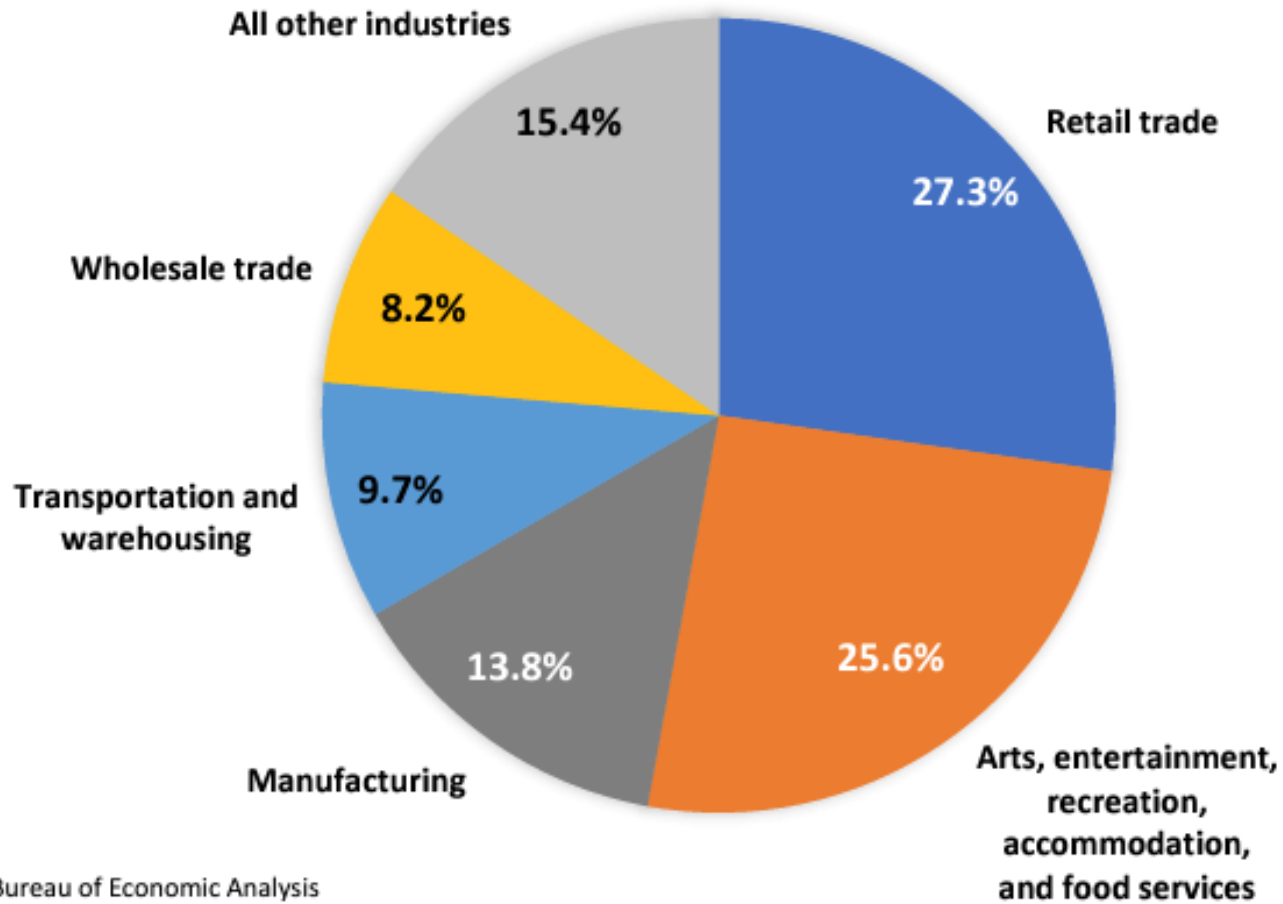
29% OF MOB BUSINESSES ARE WOMEN-OWNED

31 NEW MEMBERS

MAINE
OUTDOOR BRANDS

**Chart 4. Industry Share of Outdoor Recreation,
Current Dollar Value Added, 2022**

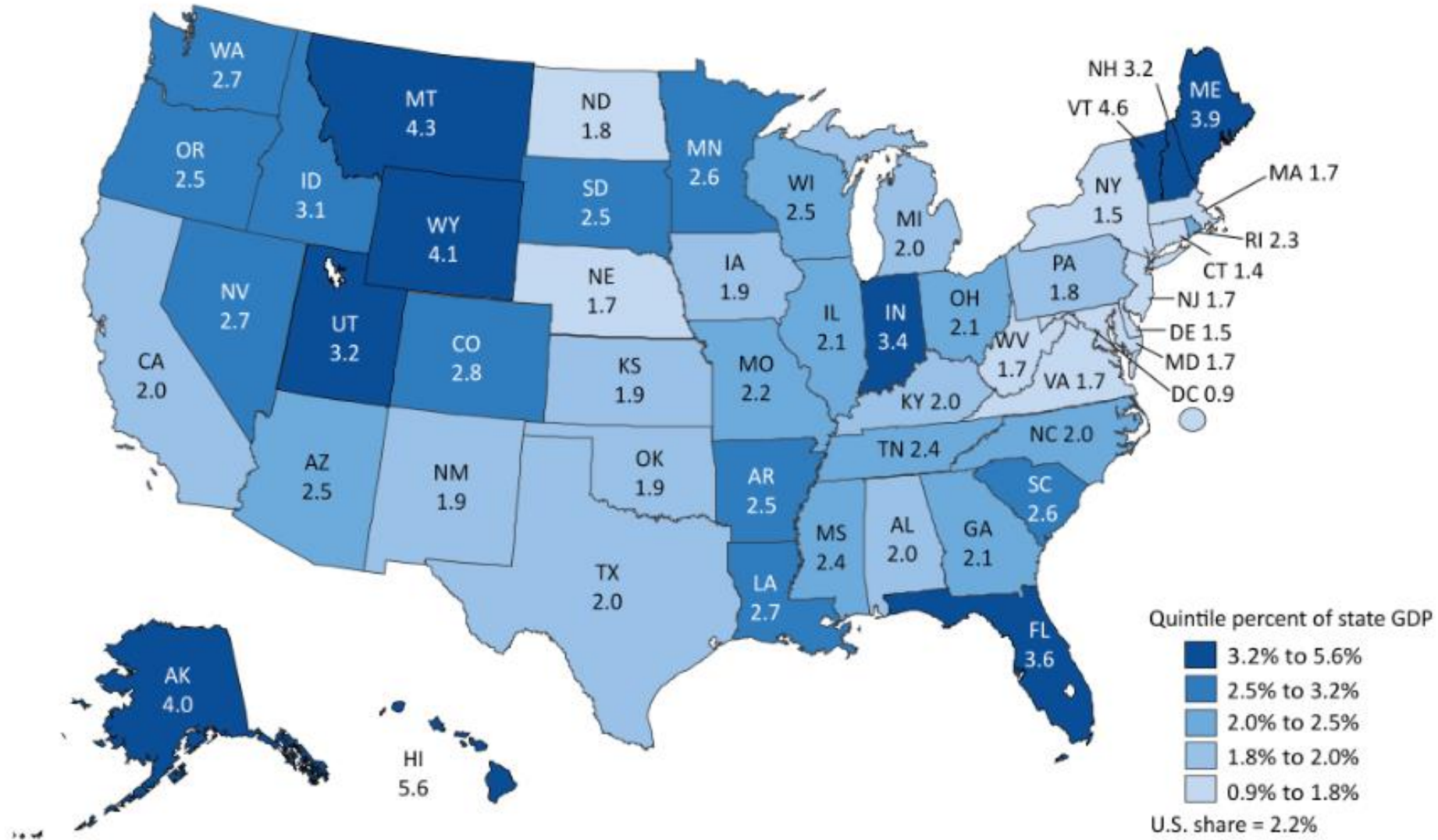
Outdoor recreation value added was \$563.7B



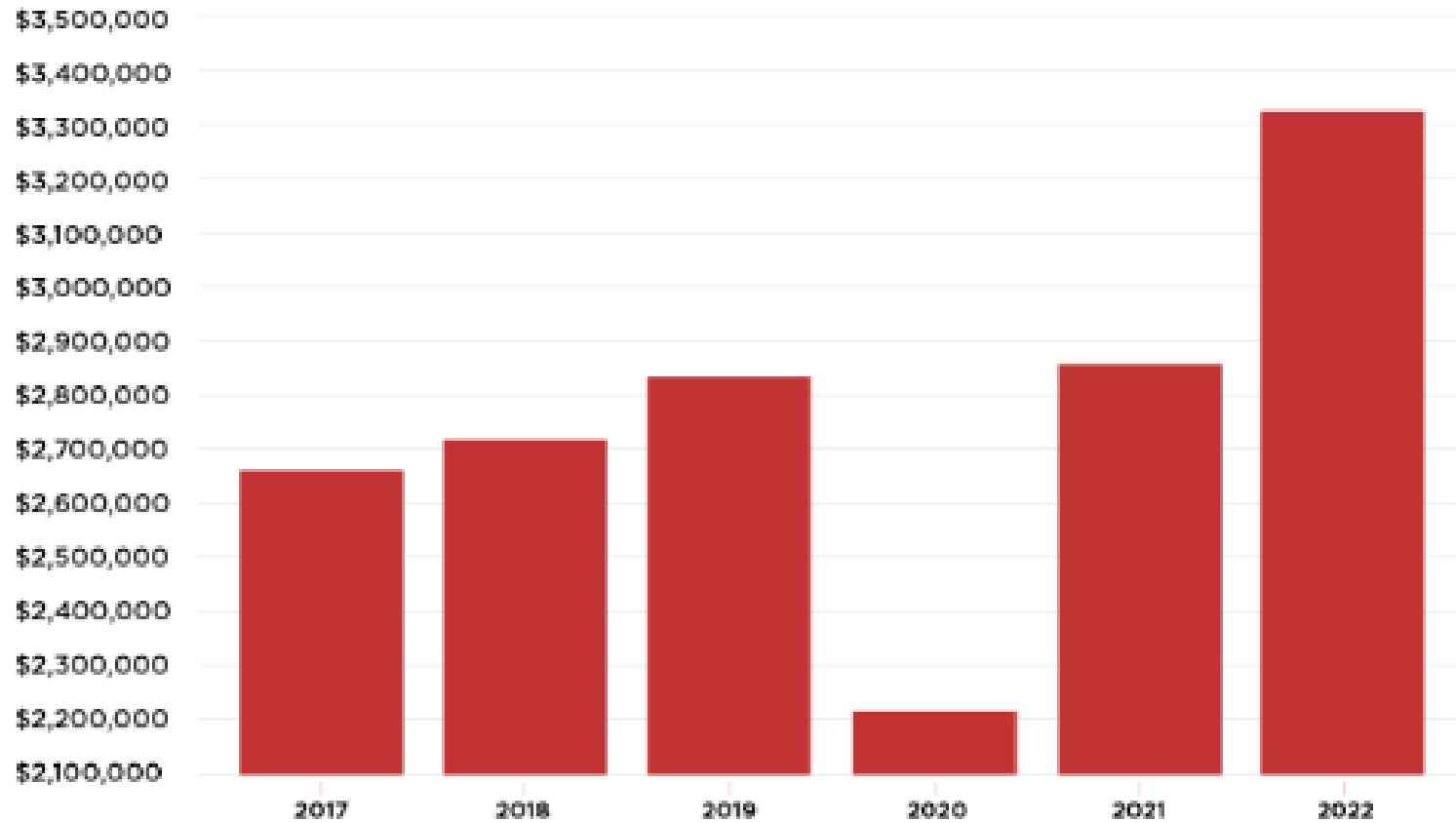
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis



State Outdoor Recreation Value Added as a Percent of State GDP, 2022



Outdoor Recreation Value Added to Maine's Economy



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

MAINE'S OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

Maine's outdoor recreation economy is large, growing faster than the overall economy, and providing jobs for tens of thousands of Maine workers.

MAINE
OUTDOOR BRANDS

Maine ranks

6TH

In The Nation

for the Value Outdoor Recreation Provides to the State's Economy

Outdoor Recreation
Contributes

**\$3.3
BILLION**

to Maine's Economy

OUTDOOR RETAIL
Contributes Nearly

**\$850
MILLION**

to the State's Economy

3.9%
of Maine's
Economy
Is from Outdoor
Recreation

That's more than
DOUBLE the national
average

Maine's
**OUTDOOR
RECREATION
Economy**

**IS GROWING
FASTER THAN THE
STATE'S ECONOMY!**

In Maine
**OUTDOOR
RECREATION**

Accounts for

5%

of All Jobs in the State—
Supporting More Than
32,000 Total



Manufacturing
Contributes

\$352M

to The State's Economy

**NOTEWORTHY
INCREASES
OVER 2021:**


Climbing, Hiking &
Tent Camping
UP 16%


Sailing
UP 20%

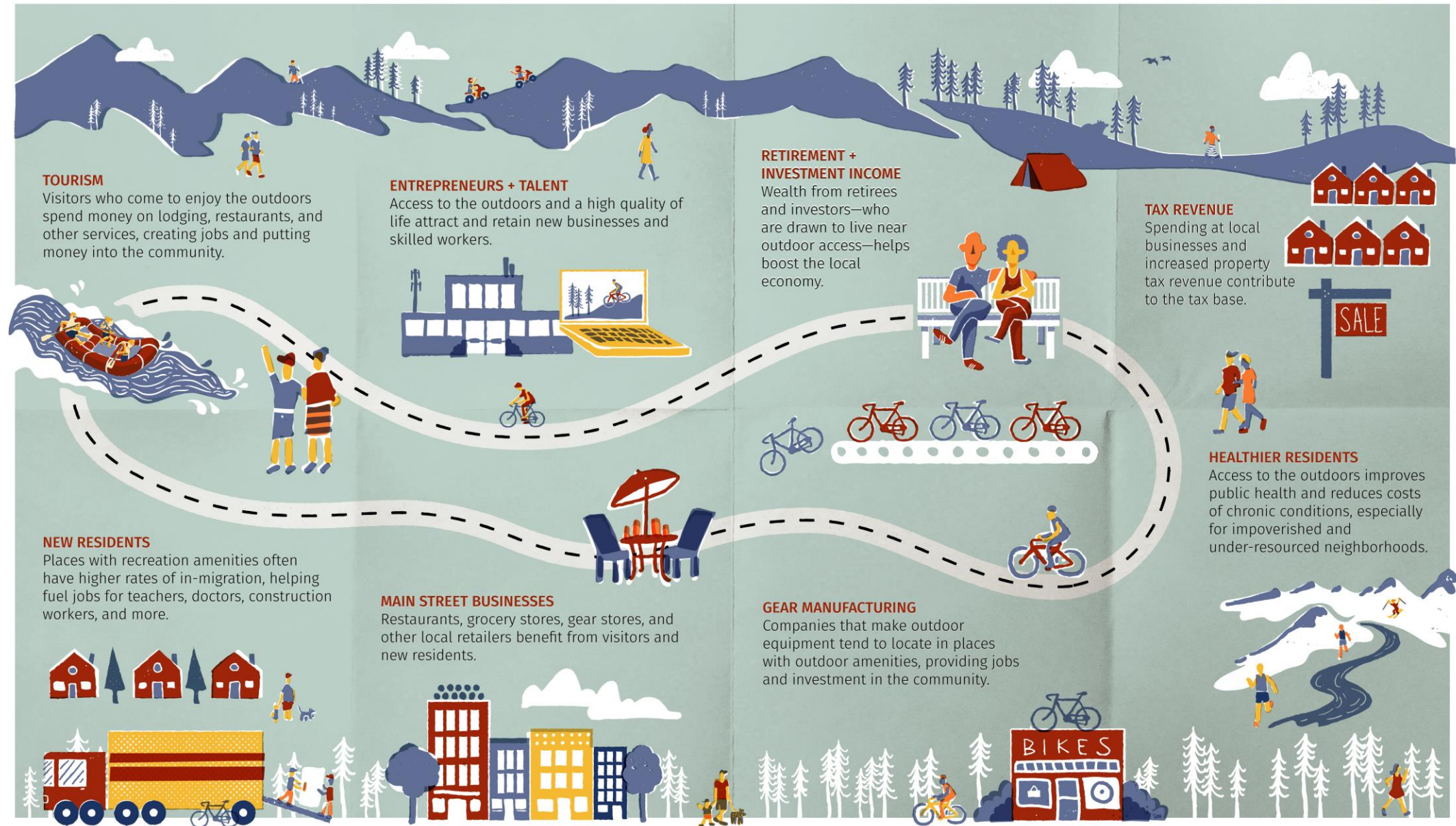

Snow Activities
UP 36%


Guided Tours &
Outfitted Travel
UP 26%

Data source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, ORSA 2022

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Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.



TOURISM

Visitors who come to enjoy the outdoors spend money on lodging, restaurants, and other services, creating jobs and putting money into the community.

ENTREPRENEURS + TALENT

Access to the outdoors and a high quality of life attract and retain new businesses and skilled workers.

RETIREMENT + INVESTMENT INCOME

Wealth from retirees and investors—who are drawn to live near outdoor access—helps boost the local economy.

TAX REVENUE

Spending at local businesses and increased property tax revenue contribute to the tax base.

NEW RESIDENTS

Places with recreation amenities often have higher rates of in-migration, helping fuel jobs for teachers, doctors, construction workers, and more.

MAIN STREET BUSINESSES

Restaurants, grocery stores, gear stores, and other local retailers benefit from visitors and new residents.

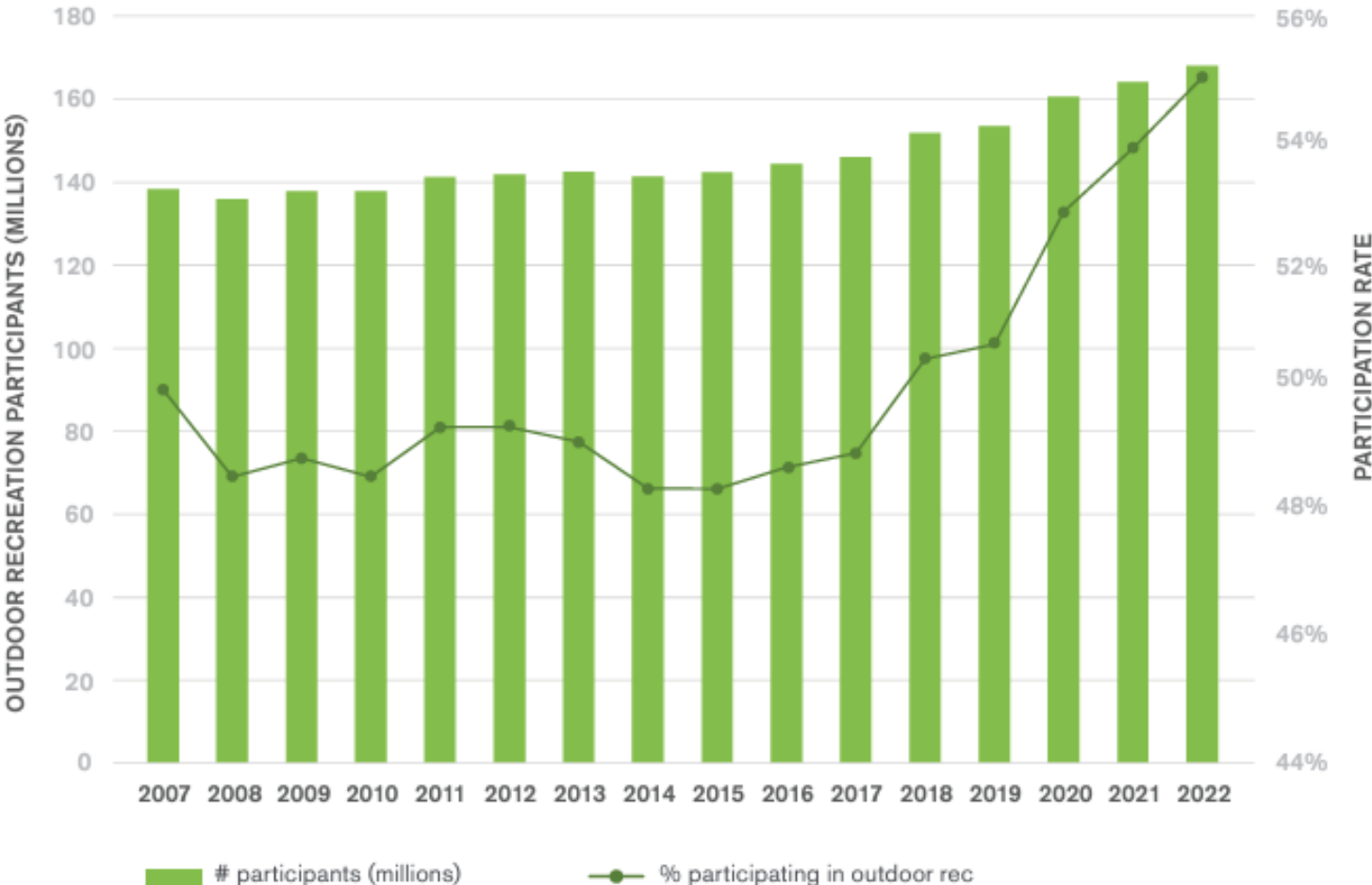
GEAR MANUFACTURING

Companies that make outdoor equipment tend to locate in places with outdoor amenities, providing jobs and investment in the community.

HEALTHIER RESIDENTS

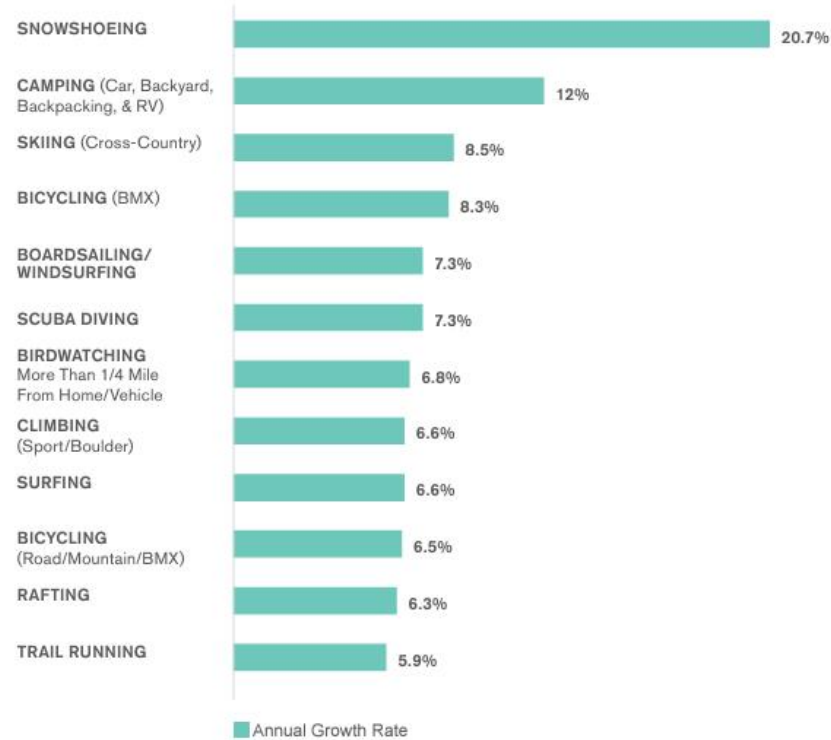
Access to the outdoors improves public health and reduces costs of chronic conditions, especially for impoverished and under-resourced neighborhoods.

OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPANT COUNT AND PARTICIPATION RATE 2007 TO 2022



OUTDOOR ACTIVITY GROWTH RATES

ANNUAL GROWTH RATE 2021 TO 2022



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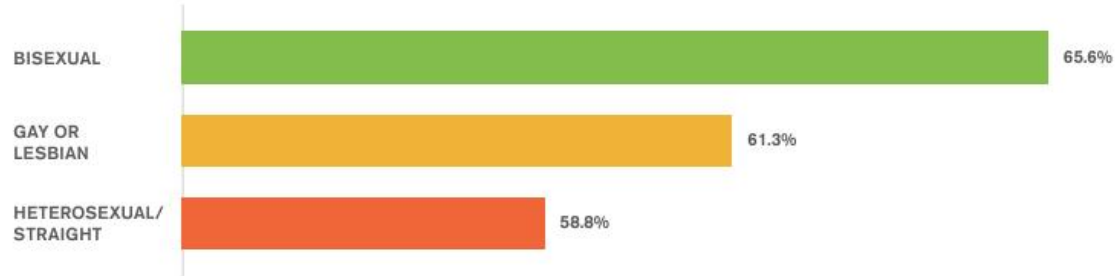
**OUTDOOR
INDUSTRY**
ASSOCIATION

MAINE
OUTDOOR BRANDS

LGBTQIA+ PARTICIPANT PROFILE

Slightly more than one in 10 outdoor participants identified as LGBTQIA+ in 2022. LGBTQIA+ people participate in outdoor recreation at higher rates than cisgender (people who retain the gender that was presumed for them at birth) heterosexual Americans. In 2022, participation rates by gender and sexual orientation in outdoor recreation reached record levels in all categories. In 2022, 60% of male people, 50% of female people, and 61% of LGBTQIA+ people of all genders participated in outdoor recreation. In 2022, more than 18 million outdoor recreation participants identified as LGBTQIA+ people, up from 15.8 million in 2021. Outdoor recreation participants who identify as bisexual had the highest participation rate at 65.6%, followed by gay and lesbian people at 61.3%, by male cisgender people at 60.2% and cisgender heterosexual women at 50%.

OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION RATES BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION





ALLAGASH QUEER CANOE TRIP

AUGUST 8-15 2024

GAYS IN BOATS



MOB PRIORITIES



**COLLABORATIVE
MARKETING**



**ADVOCACY +
AWARENESS**



**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**



**NETWORKING +
EDUCATION**

“Our business has seen an uptick over the years of working with Maine Outdoor Brands and it will be an integral part of our business going forward.”

- Noah Kleiner

Owner/Lead Guide, Equinox Guiding Service LLC

CONTACT: JENNY@MAINEOUTDOORBRANDS.COM OR 207-464-0017

MAINEOUTDOORBRANDS.COM



TRAILBLAZER

MAINE'S 10-YEAR OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY ROADMAP



GOALS OF THE ROADMAP



Provide a current analysis of the economic value of the outdoor economy to the State of Maine



Define and increase awareness of the different sectors that make up Maine's outdoor recreation economy.



Identify key strategies and investment needed to fuel the growth of the outdoor economy state-wide for the next 10 years



Form partnerships and collaborations necessary to secure additional investment to implement the strategies identified

GET IN TOUCH!



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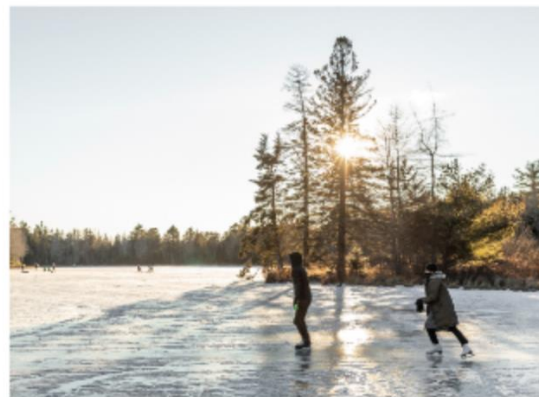
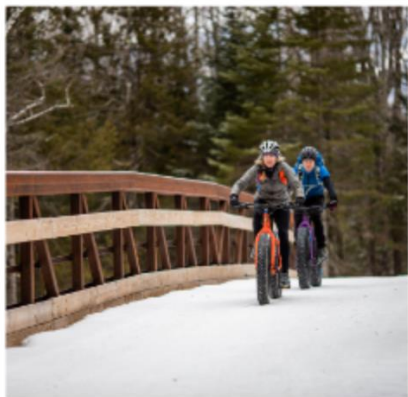
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Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation



CONTACT



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[Business Assistance Resources](#)

PRESS KIT

**2022
YEAR IN REVIEW**

A white canoe is beached on a sandy shore next to a calm lake. The sky is bright blue with scattered white clouds. In the background, a dense line of green trees borders the water. The scene is peaceful and natural.

Principles of Ecotourism

- Sustainable Business Practices
- Community Development
- Environmental Stewardship
- Promote travel to unspoiled natural resources
 - minimize the impact of visitors
 - providing jobs to local populations



The Outdoors

In 2020 people flocked to the outdoors as a safe-haven, many for the first time, seeking health and wellness benefits. Studies support it's not just for the short-term.

- An antidote to the mental health consequences of the pandemic.
- A method to maintain the focus on what is important in life.
- A safe and accessible way to spend time with friends and family.

MOVING
MAINE
FORWARD
GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON TOURISM



Trends

“Adventure tourism sector shows early signs of recovery and is one of fastest growing segments.” *World Travel & Tourism Council*

- Travel as a force for good; travel with purpose
- Travel to regenerate; wellness & adventure
- Going hyperlocal; road trips; off-the-beaten path

Marine Tourism

- Sailing
- Fishing
- Light House tours
- Wildlife viewing tours
- Sea Farm Tours
- Coastal Encounters
- Whale Watching
- Sea Kayaking
- Stand Up Paddleboard – SUP
- Lobster tours
- Island Remote lodging
- Photo tours
- Harbor – dinner cruise





Saltwater Fishing

Photo Credit: Coastal Fly Angler



Sailing



Whale Watching



Birding Tours



Startup: Northeast Ramblers



SUP – Stand Up Paddleboard



Coastal Kayak



Successful businesses:

- Family oriented options
- Low barrier to entry excursions
- Easy time frames
- Minimize impact
- Education based routines
- Create environmental stewardship
- Strong community engagement



Coast Encounters - Tidepooling

Island Tours



360° Tours

Around Swan's Island



River / Lake Ecotourism



Hiking / Camping



Fishing

Photo Credit: Bob Romano



**BIRD &
NATURE
TOURS**

by Down East Nature Tours

The leader in Ecological Tourism
for the Down East Region of Maine.

A detailed illustration of a woodpecker, likely a Downy Woodpecker, perched on a vertical tree trunk. The woodpecker is facing left, and its body is covered in characteristic black and white speckled patterns.



Hunting / Rock Climbing



Outdoor Photography



Backpacking

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Maine SBDC – Nature Based Tourism

March 20, 2024



Who are we?

The **Maine Office of Tourism** is a state agency within the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) that leads, convenes, and advances the state's tourism economy by providing resources and education to strengthen the tourism industry, fostering a culture of stakeholder collaboration, and developing strategy and best practices to promote and enhance the Maine experience for all.

Our Values

1. We are passionate about sharing Maine's extraordinary beauty and culture with the world.
2. We are resourceful in our work to support the people and places that make Maine one of a kind.
3. We are responsible stewards of Maine's communities, culture, resources, and natural assets.
4. We strive to help others in their efforts to advance the prosperity of Maine.
5. We cherish teamwork and collaboration as vital pathways to the successful attainment of our Vision for Maine tourism.

Strategic Imperatives of the Maine Office of Tourism



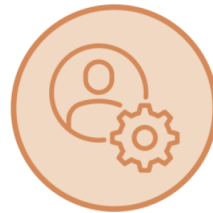
Imperative 1
Optimize Long-Term Economic Impact



Imperative 4
Prioritize Collaboration and Partnership



Imperative 2
Promote Destination Stewardship



Imperative 5
Enhance Organizational Effectiveness



Imperative 3
Advance Destination Development

Destination Stewardship

Together with the Maine tourism industry stakeholders and residents, the Office of Tourism established benchmarks that support destination stewardship.

BALANCE

- Industry's **growth**
- Residential **quality of life**
- **Qualities** that have always drawn visitors to Maine



Stewardship Principles



Empowering the industry through collaboration and education



Cultivating a unified brand and elevated visitor experience



Educating through impactful storytelling that captures the multi-faceted historical and cultural identity of Maine's communities



Preserving and celebrating the authentic character of Maine



Encouraging responsible practices and behaviors that protect the flora, fauna, and aquatic environments that are central to Maine's vitality



Balancing the promotion of Maine's iconic popular destinations with Maine's lesser-known hidden gems



Safeguarding Maine's natural assets, resources, and off-the-beaten-path locations



Upholding Maine's authenticity by showcasing Maine's local makers, artists, farmers, fishermen, and other independently-owned businesses



Empowering Maine's tourism workforce to reinforce their confidence in career choice and livelihood

Sustainable Tourism and Destination Stewardship

An increased focus on the sustainable development of tourism, driven by consumer concerns, industry trends, and community engagement, is leading to new approaches to destination marketing, management, and governance.

Sustainable development of tourism incorporates a strategic perspective as well as concern for immediate needs. It focuses on enhancing the quality of life of resident communities by maximizing benefits from tourism for the local economy, social and cultural life of the destination, and the environment.

Collaborative

- Stakeholders
- Community members
- Tourism Industry
- Visitors

Destination Stewardship seeks to balance and meet the economic, environmental, and social/cultural needs of a destination with active participation from the public and private sectors as well as the local community.

Maine Office of Tourism Destination Management Plan

In January 2022, the Maine Office of Tourism began work on creating a state-wide destination management plan. Together with Maine tourism industry stakeholders and residents, the MOT worked to establish a plan that supports destination stewardship and balances our industry's growth with residential quality of life and the inherent qualities that have always drawn visitors to Maine.

Tourism is an important [economic engine for Maine](#) with an estimated 15.4 million visitors in 2022 and direct expenditures of approximately \$8.6 billion.

To ensure the sustainability of tourism in Maine, a destination management plan was designed that balances the tourism economy with natural resource and cultural stewardship to protect the DNA of our State now and for the future. The state recognizes that supporting quality of life for Maine residents is key to supporting a quality experience for our visitors.

View/Download

[Maine Office of Tourism Destination Management Plan](#)

[Plan Highlights One-sheet](#)

Additional Materials:

[Maine Office of Tourism Stewardship Principles](#)

[A Practical Guide to Destination Stewardship and Sustainable Tourism](#)

Questions?

Send us an email at DestinationPlan@maine.gov

<https://motpartners.com/destination-management-plan/>

Expedia Travel Trends

Consumers are looking to engage **with local communities and cultures**, as 64% said they are interested in learning more about travel options that support local cultures and communities. Destinations must think about the best ways to **highlight accessibility, diversity, and cultural experiences**

Sustainable Travel Options

90% look for sustainable travel options when traveling, and 7 in 10 say they have avoided a travel destination or transportation option due to skepticism that the commitment to sustainable practices was real.

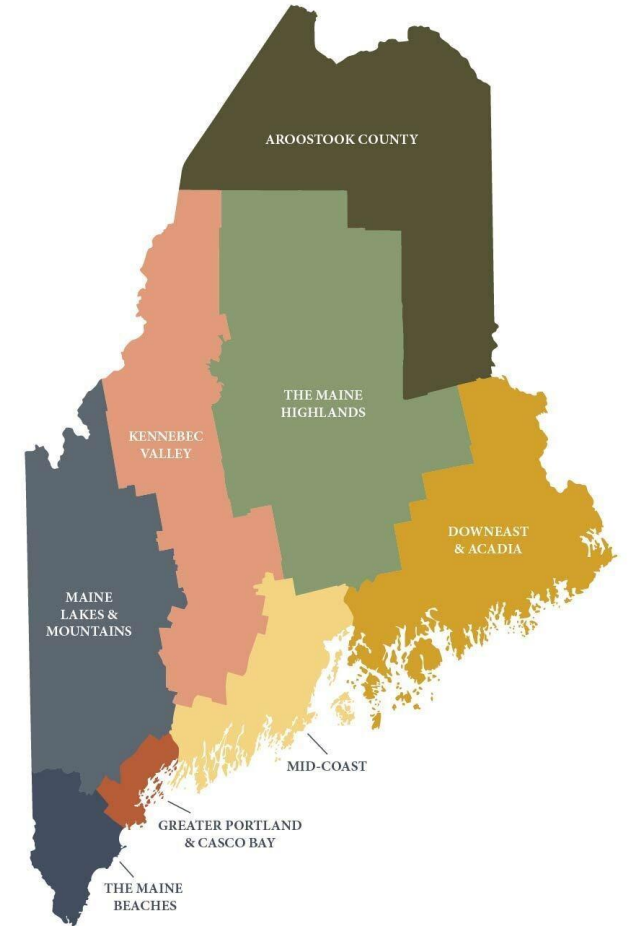
- Outdoor Adventure
- Wellness



Economic Impact

2023 by the numbers

1. Visitation – 15 million
2. Direct Tourism Expenditures - \$8.6 billion
3. Total Economic Impact - \$15.8 billion
4. Jobs Supported – 151,000



Regional Research can be found here: <https://motpartners.com/research/domestic-visitation/>

TOP REASONS FOR VISITING



33% Relax and unwind



32% Sightseeing and touring



28% Visit friends/family



19% Nature and bird watching

TOP VISITOR ACTIVITIES*



73%
Food/beverage/culinary



54% Touring/sightseeing



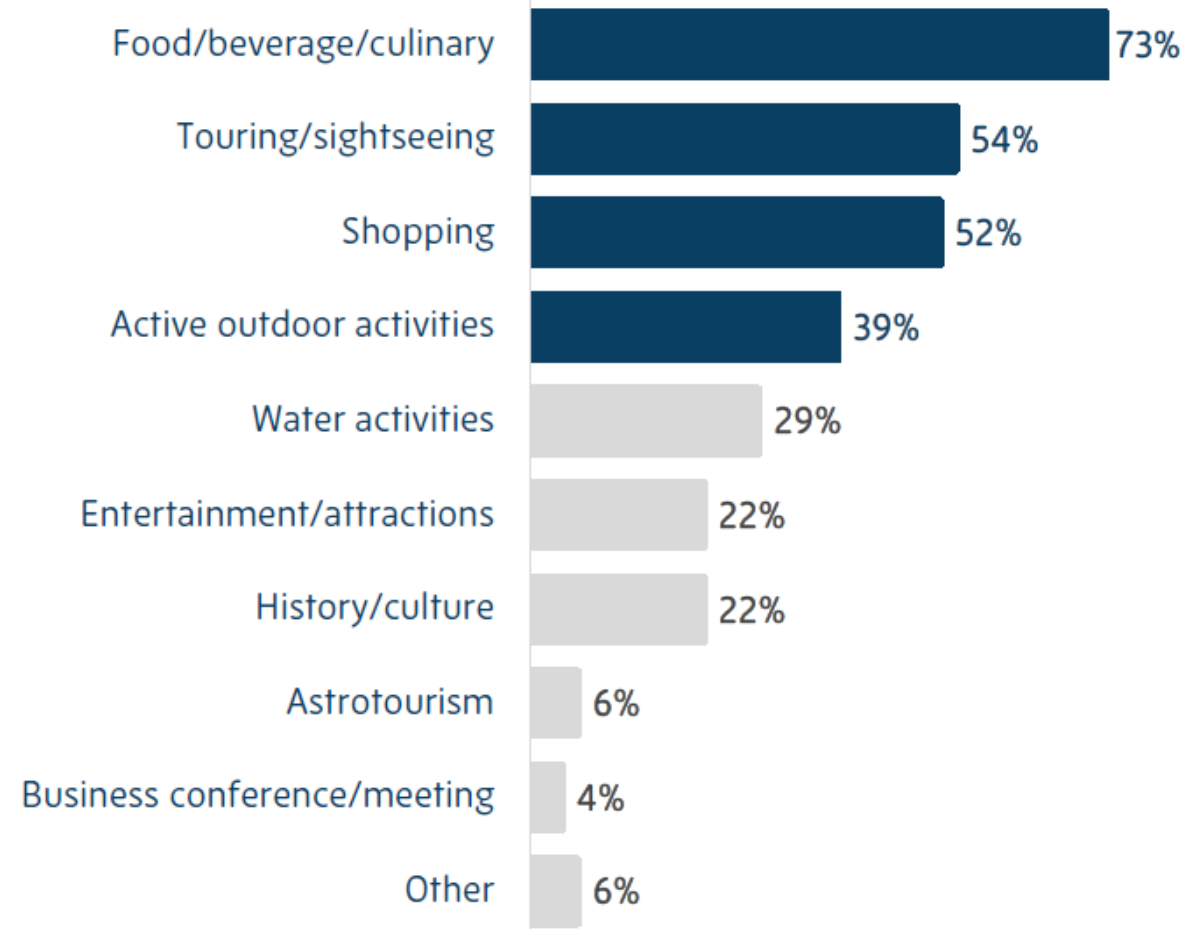
52% Shopping



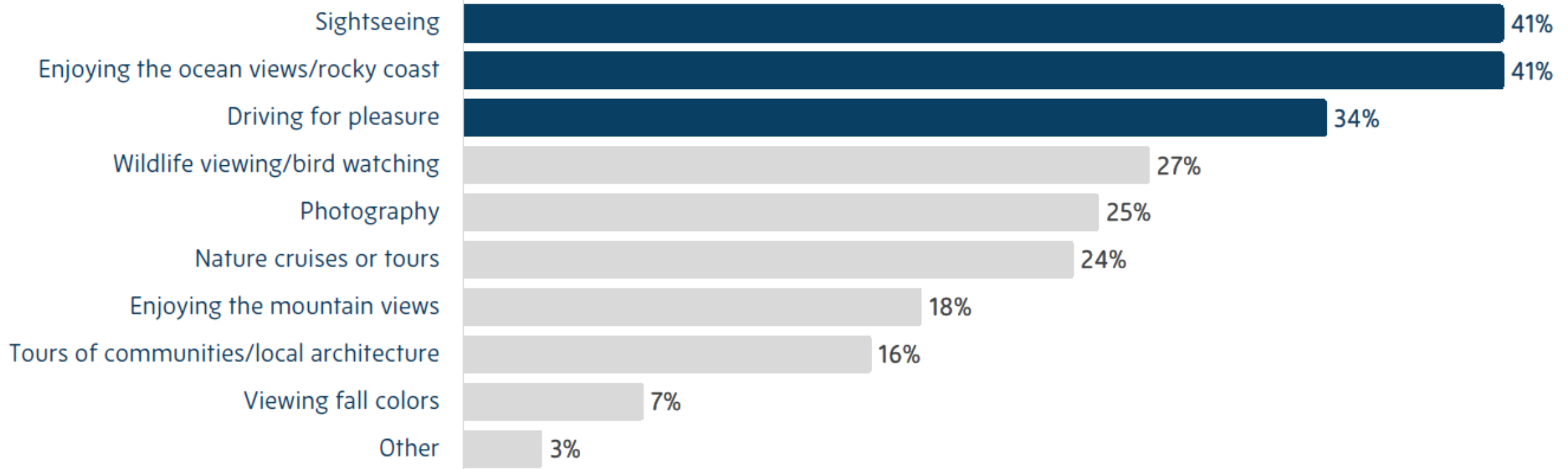
39% Active outdoor activities

VISITOR ACTIVITIES*

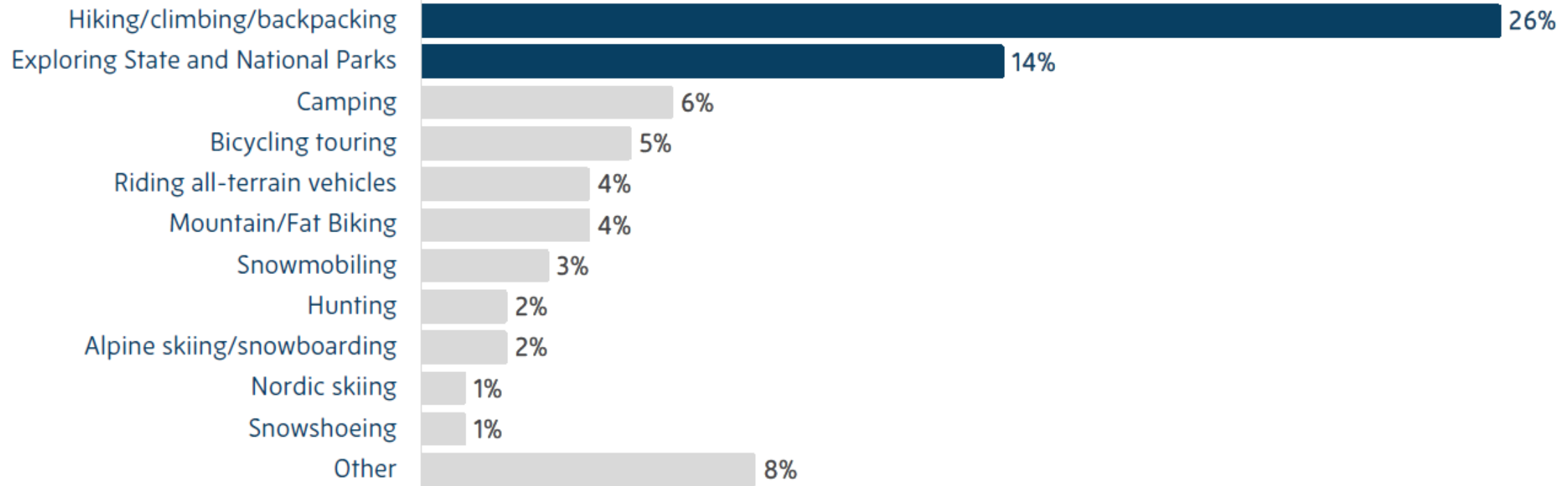
- » 73% of visitors engaged in food/beverage/culinary activities during their trip to Maine
- » Over half of visitors went touring/sightseeing and shopping during their trip to Maine



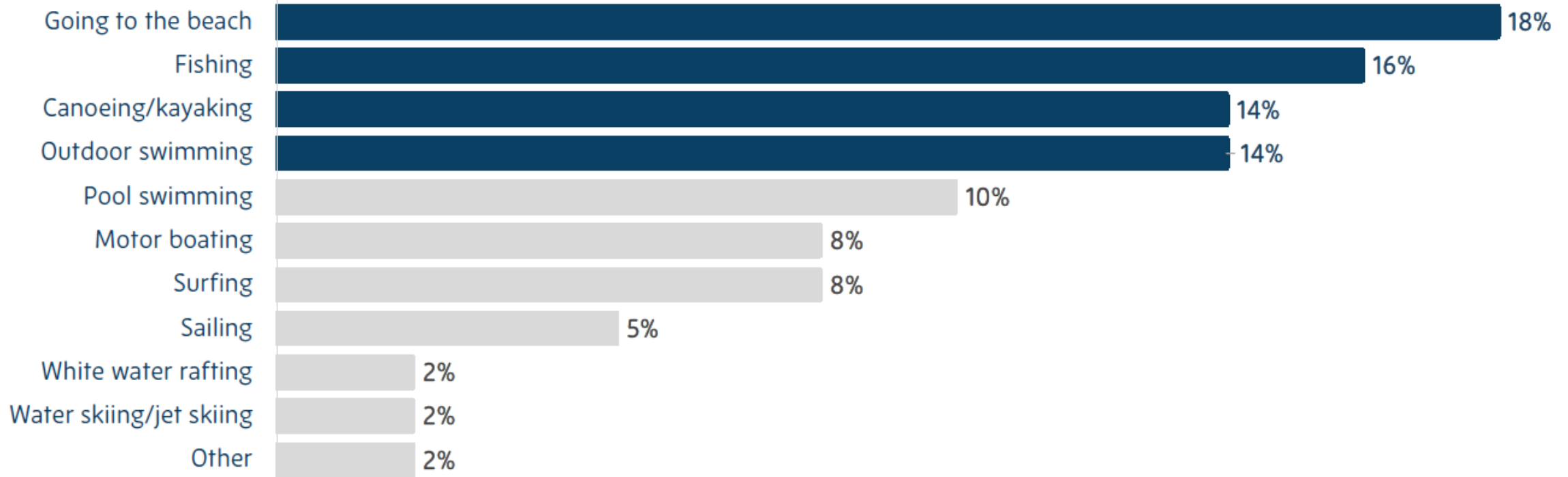
TOURING & SIGHTSEEING ACTIVITIES*



ACTIVE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES*



WATER ACTIVITIES*



Office of Tourism Resources

- [MOTPartners.com](https://www.motpartners.com)
- [VisitMaine.com](https://www.visitmaine.com) Listings
- PR/Media Outreach and [PR Partners program](#)
- [Tourism Partner News](#) – signup for monthly tourism news, trends, and updates
- [Welcome ME Frontline Service Training](#)
- [R-Way Training](#) - history and heritage and the balance between the working forests and tourism.
- [Maine Film Office](#) – location/services listings
- Governor’s Conference on Tourism - www.mainetourismconference.com/

[DOWNLOAD INDUSTRY RESOURCES
CHECKLIST & STAFF DIRECTORY](#)



Check/Update/Claim Your Google Listing

DESTINATION OPTIMIZATION **MAINE.**
VISITMAINE.COM

Fundamentals of a Successful Google Business Profile

1. CLAIM YOUR BUSINESS

Google provides free tools to help you manage and maintain your content. But first, you have to claim your listing and follow their verification process to establish ownership.

2. KEEP HOURS CURRENT

Hours/Open Now is the information most frequently searched about a business and the most likely to be incorrect. Keep your regular business hours, holiday hours and other special open/close times up to date.

3. ADD CATEGORIES, AMENITIES & MENUS

The more information your listing includes about your products and



Need Help? Get Free Support!

The specialists at Miles Partnership are available to help your business maximize its online exposure.

- Need assistance claiming your business on Google, Tripadvisor, Bing or Apple Maps?

5 Things You Can Do Today

44% have visited closed locations as a result of inaccurate business hours within the past year.

73% indicated that they are unlikely to return if it's listed as open online but is closed upon arrival.

5 Things You Can Do Today

1. CLAIM YOUR BUSINESS
2. KEEP HOURS CURRENT
3. ADD CATEGORIES, AMENITIES & MENUS
4. POST NEW PHOTOS REGULARLY
5. RESPOND TO CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

5 Things You Can Do Today - Handout

Additional Google Training videos at:

<https://motpartners.com/programs-services/destination-optimization/>

- Sign up for free support or participate in the Google Business Check-Up Tool

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2024 Governor's Conference on Tourism

April 24-25, 2024

Holiday Inn By The Bay, Portland, Maine

Day 1 Workshop topics:

- Advanced SEO for DMOs and Small Business
- Building an Inclusive Workforce
- Efficiency Maine Hospitality-Focused Grants
- Outdoor Recreation Economy Roadmap

Day 2 Breakout session topics:

- Wabanki Cultural Tourism Initiative
- "Feast of the Earth" Food-Tourism Initiative
- Sustainable Tourism – Telling Our Story
- Generative AI's Impacts in Talent Acquisition



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Questions?

peter.piconi@ceimaine.org

Resources

A wooden paddle with a white plastic bag tied around the handle, resting on a wooden surface. The background is a blurred blue and green, suggesting water and a forest.

Maine Outdoor Brands: <https://maineoutdoorbrands.com/>

Governor's Conference on Tourism - <https://www.mainetourismconference.com/>

Maine Office of Tourism: <https://www.maine.gov/decd/maine-office-of-tourism>

SBDC Maine: <https://www.mainesbdc.org/>

Visit Maine: <https://visitmaine.com/>

Maine Outdoors: <http://www.maineoutdoors.com/>

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