



AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

TRAVEL, TOURISM AND OUTDOOR RECREATION FACT SHEET

EDA Awards 185 Grants to Rebuild and Strengthen American Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation

The U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA) [Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation](#) program invests \$750 million in [American Rescue Plan](#) funding to support communities across the country whose economies were hard hit by damage to these sectors from the COVID-19 pandemic. With funding going to every state and territory across 185 awards, EDA's investments are rebuilding the travel and tourism sector and creating a more equitable, competitive, and resilient industry.

The Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation program is divided into two components—**\$510 million awards directly allocated to every U.S. state and territory and a \$240 million competitive grant program.** Each state or territory is utilizing its directly allocated funds to engage in activities that best support their travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation sectors. These activities include but are not limited to workforce training, new construction or upgrades to existing tourism infrastructure, tourism marketing and promotion, and tourism-related economic planning. The competitive grant program is distributed across 126 awards to support communities across the country as they rebuild and strengthen their travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation sectors. The competitive funding is expected to generate \$1.1 billion in private investment and to create or save 10,291 jobs. This program was designed to prioritize equity, and as a result, more than 50% of competitive awards are expected to directly benefit historically underserved communities and populations. In addition, \$29.3 million across 12 awards is supporting coal communities and \$21.2 million across 9 awards is supporting Indigenous communities.

The 126 competitive Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation awards include:

- 64 awards (\$145.4 million) to build or upgrade tourist attractions—such as museums, event venues, and hiking trails—that will attract visitors and commercial activity to American communities
- 34 awards (\$77.8 million) to build enabling infrastructure that create the conditions for tourism businesses and other local businesses to succeed
- 22 awards (\$9.9 million) for communities to engage in economic development planning and receive the technical assistance needed to recover from the pandemic and build a more resilient economic future
- 3 awards (\$3.4 million) to build new business support facilities or provide equipment that enables commercial growth
- 3 awards (\$3.4 million) to provide workers with the skills and supports needed to secure high-quality jobs and to build facilities to support that training

BY THE NUMBERS Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation



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COMPETITIVE GRANTS

\$240M
FUNDING

126 PROJECTS

EXPECTED IMPACT ACCORDING TO GRANTEE ESTIMATES

10,291
JOBS CREATED OR SAVED

\$1.1B
PRIVATE INVESTMENT

E·D·A
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

SPOTLIGHT ON OUTDOOR RECREATION

Many communities, especially those that have traditionally struggled to attract tourist visitors, recognize the opportunity presented by the increase in demand for outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism since the start of the pandemic. In response, these communities are leveraging their rich natural assets to build or renovate outdoor recreation attractions. By investing in outdoor recreation these communities are diversifying their economies and generating commercial activity that benefits all local businesses.

Across EDA's competitive Travel and Tourism grant portfolio, approximately **58 awards representing \$111 million in funding** are supporting the outdoor recreation sector. EDA has also awarded a **Research** grant to the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and its sub-awardee Oregon State University's Center for Outdoor Economy. The grantee will develop best practices, case studies, and policy recommendations by studying EDA's outdoor recreation portfolio.

EXAMPLES OF GRANTS SUPPORTING OUTDOOR RECREATION INCLUDE:

**Hiking Trails**

In Alaska, the [City of Valdez](#) is building new hiking trails in Meals Hill Park. This grant aims to boost tourism by supporting the development of outdoor recreational infrastructure and is expected to create or retain 115 jobs. *(\$2.5 million)*

**Camping**

In Delaware, the [Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control](#) is renovating all five of its state park campgrounds. This EDA investment will boost Delaware's critical \$3 billion tourism and hospitality industries while building resiliency in the region's economy. *(\$3.2 million)*

**White-Water Rapids**

In Maine, the [Town of Skowhegan](#) is building the new Skowhegan River Park by redeveloping an industrial downtown river corridor into a white-water attraction. This project will provide a unique opportunity to expand the capacity of visitors to experience Maine's natural splendor and is expected to create 40 jobs, retain 136 jobs, and generate \$38 million in private investment. *(\$4.9 million)*

**Bike Paths**

In Rhode Island, the [City of Pawtucket](#) is building the Blackstone River Bikeway which will connect Pawtucket and Slater Mill Historic Park. The two programs are designed to accelerate the recovery of communities that rely on the travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation sectors and are expected to create 538 jobs. *(\$4.8 million)*

**Multi-Use Paths**

In Tennessee, the [Riverfront Development Corporation](#) is building the Tailout Trail, a new canopy boardwalk along the Mississippi River. This funding will accelerate the already-impressive transformation of the downtown Memphis riverfront. *(\$3.7 million)*

**Mountain Biking**

In West Virginia, the [West Virginia Division of Natural Resources](#) is developing and expanding mountain bike infrastructure in the state's Eastern Panhandle. The programs are designed to accelerate the recovery of communities that rely on the travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation sectors and are expected to help create 36 jobs, retain 46 jobs, and generate \$934,000 in private investment. *(\$2.8 million)*

CORE THEMES

Equitably Supporting Local Communities

The Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation portfolio is designed to ensure the benefits of tourism-related growth extend to all communities, including historically underserved communities. By generating tremendous interest from first-time applicants, this portfolio has enabled EDA to support several highly distressed communities. In partnership with these communities, EDA's awards are helping diversify their economies and attract much-needed commercial activity.

- In Ohio, the [Ohio Department of Natural Resources](#) is making upgrades to the Burr Oak State Park by adding new campsite amenities, trail segments, and docks at their marina. An Appalachian region that has been impacted by the decline of the coal industry, Athens and Morgan counties will attract new visitors with this investment in its abundant natural resources. (*\$2.4 million*)
- In Utah, the [National Ability Center](#) is increasing its offerings to people with disabilities by purchasing new equipment, expanding instructor staff, and expanding programs in activities including alpine skiing, snowboarding, cycling, rafting, and water-skiing. This project will attract more visitors to the community to engage in accessible outdoor recreation activities. (*\$372,000*)

Enabling Small Businesses Growth

EDA is seeding new business growth by supporting the construction of new and expanded tourist attractions. After years of growth, the COVID-19 pandemic led to a sharp decline in American tourism, which hurt small businesses and economies across the country. With its investments, EDA is helping these businesses get back on their feet.

- In Michigan, the [Sault Ste. Marie Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) is enhancing its International 500 Snowmobile Raceway. An attraction that draws thousands of snow sports enthusiasts each year, this investment will help the area recover from the pandemic and prepare for the 54th Annual 2023 International Snowmobile Race, one of the "most grueling and prestigious" snowmobile races in the world. (*\$2 million*)
- In Vermont, the [Retreat Farm](#), a non-profit historic property on the edge of downtown Brattleboro, will convert its 6,275-square-foot barn into a new event venue. With plans to attract year-round events including conferences, exhibitions, and concerts, this awardee is working with EDA to grow the events industry in southern Vermont. (*\$1.4 million*)

Building a Resilient Travel and Tourism Industry

Through activities ranging from strategic tourism planning to workforce training to basic infrastructure, the Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation portfolio is building a more resilient and sustainable tourism industry that is prepared for future economic, natural, and climate-related shocks.

- In Alaska, [Kawerak Inc.](#) is developing a master plan for the preservation of the Pilgrim Hotsprings to support the City of Nome's development as a tourism destination. This investment will ensure an Indigenous-owned tourism attraction—with a rich history, camping space, and geothermal pools—is maintained for the community and future generations. (*\$646,000*)
- In Washington, the [Port Angeles Waterfront Center](#), in partnership with Peninsula College, will train workers for high-paying, high-demand jobs in the Olympic Peninsula's rapidly growing travel and tourism industry. This investment will allow a rural region whose rich natural resources are now threatened by climate change to attract visitors to the area and diversify its economy in a growing and sustainable sector. (*\$1 million*)

For more information about the Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation program, please visit www.eda.gov/arpa/travel-tourism/.



For more information about Economic Development Administration's six American Rescue Plan Programs, collectively called Investing in America's Communities, please click here.