

2009-2013 Louisiana SCORP



Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

BOBBY JINDAL
Governor



State of Louisiana
Office of the Governor

July 16, 2009

Ms. Edwelyn Dooley Higgins
Chief, Recreation Programs Branch
National Park Service Southeast Region
Atlanta Federal Center - 1924 Building
100 Alabama St SW
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Higgins:

Enclosed is the 2009-2013 Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the State of Louisiana. This policy plan provides a foundation for guiding the decision-making process for management of outdoor recreation in Louisiana.

Ample opportunity for public participation has taken place in the development of this plan. It was produced by the staff of the Office of State Parks, Division of Outreach and Outdoor Recreation with the involvement of both public and private agencies and individuals with recreation, conservation, and wetlands preservation interests. In addition, it has been widely available for review on the Office of State Parks website and has been the subject of discussion at extensively-advertised public workshops. The plan follows all procedures regarding the U.S. Department of the Interior, Land and Water Conservation Fund guidelines, including that of public participation.

I urge favorable consideration of the plan and look forward to our continued partnership with the National Park Service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobby Jindal", written over the word "Sincerely,".

Bobby Jindal
Governor

jw

Attachments

cc: Honorable Mitchell Landrieu, Lieutenant Governor
Stuart Johnson, Ph.D., Assistant Secretary, Office of State Parks

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2009-2013, was prepared for the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Office of State Parks, Division of Outdoor Recreation with input from federal, state, and local officials, public opinion leaders, outdoor recreation use organizations, numerous communities and parishes, and the recreating public.

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM

Lieutenant Governor Mitchell Landrieu

Pam Breaux, Secretary

OFFICE OF STATE PARKS

Dr. Stuart Johnson, Assistant Secretary

Dianne Mouton-Allen, Deputy Assistant Secretary

DIVISION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

Cleve Hardman, Director

Suzette Simms, Recreation Resource Planner



The following organizations/photographers have contributed photos to the SCORP:

Louisiana Office of State Parks
Baton Rouge Recreation and Park Commission
Ruston Parks and Recreation
BROWN+DANOS land**design**, inc.

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Note:

Appendix available online at: <http://www.crt.state.la.us/> or by request from the Louisiana Office of State Parks 225-342-8111.

ACRONYMS USED IN THIS PLAN

Federal Agencies

USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
NPS	National Park Services
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
NRPA	National Recreation and Park Association
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act

State Agencies

DCRT	Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism
LDWF	Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
OSP	Louisiana Office of State Parks
LDAF	Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry
DOTD	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

Other Acronyms Frequently Used

SCORP	Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
TFAC	Task Force Advisory Committee
LORF	Louisiana Outdoor Recreational Forum
B+D	Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.
JACOBS	Jacobs Engineering Group, inc.
FP	Fernandez Plans, LLC
GIS	Geographic Information System
LRO	Louisiana Recreational Opportunities database

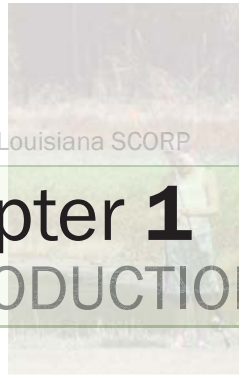
The preparation of this plan was financed in part through a planning grant from the National Park Service, Department of Interior, under the provisions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (P.L. 88-578). All of this agency's public programs and activities are operated free from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against or who would like further information regarding the prohibition of discrimination should write to the following agency and address:

National Park Service
Equal Opportunity Office (010)
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

2009-2013 Louisiana SCORP

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION



SCORP Purpose

Louisiana's 2009-2014 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) has been prepared to help guide the development of the state's outdoor recreation resources for the next five years. The SCORP's purpose is to identify the most significant recreational issues and needs of the state. This information is used to guide recreational development of Louisiana as required by the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The purpose of the SCORP document is defined in the LWCF Act of 1965, Public Law 88-578, as amended.

"A comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan shall be required prior to the consideration by the Secretary of financial assistance for acquisition or development projects."¹

The goal and objective of the SCORP is defined in the LWCF State Assistance Program Manual Chapter 2-1 as, *"Provide each State the maximum opportunity and flexibility to develop and implement its plan²."* To download additional information about the LWCF project selection criteria and its association with the SCORP, refer to LWCF's website: <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/pub.htm>

This is the state's eighth report since the passage of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act in 1965. Throughout the planning process, common issues and needs emerged and are outlined in this report.

SCORP Authority

The Office of State Parks (OSP), Department of Culture and Tourism (DCRT) is required by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to submit the

SCORP document to acquire federal funding for outdoor recreation to Louisiana. LWCF legislation R.S. 56:1682.5 gives DCRT the responsibility for overseeing the administration of the State's portion of the federal program and provides that:

"The Office of State Parks is hereby authorized and directed to have as its purpose service to the people of Louisiana and their visitors by:
(5) Performing functions of the state relating to outdoor recreation development and trails.³
OSP's authority is further defined by in the state law sections, LWCF in sections R.S 56:1801 to 1803.

SCORP Team

The SCORP team was established to facilitate the comprehensive development of the report and submit the document to acquire federal funding for outdoor recreation to Louisiana. Office of State Parks hired BROWN + DANOS, landdesign inc (B+D), a Louisiana landscape architecture firm, to develop and conduct the methodology of the 2009-2014 SCORP document. B+D established a group of consultants and a SCORP Task Force Advisory Committee (TFAC), all members with a professional background in Louisiana recreation, to ensure the successful development of a comprehensive SCORP document. The consultant team worked closely with members of OSP throughout the SCORP process. Those involved the SCORP process are listed below.

Louisiana Department of Culture,
Recreation and Tourism (DCRT):
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Mitchell Landrieu, *Lieutenant Governor*
Pam Breaux, *Secretary*

Office of State Parks (OSP)
Dr. Stuart Johnson, *Assistant Secretary*

Research shows that for every \$1 million the state spends on tourism grants, the economy gains \$14 million in benefits - a 14-1 return on investment.⁴

Office of State Parks-Division of Outdoor Recreation

Cleve Hardman, *Director*
Suzette Simms, *Recreation Resource Planner*

BROWN+DANOS landdesign, inc. (B+D)

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Matt Mathes, *Park Planner*

Fernandez Plans, LLC (FP)

Karen Fernandez, *Planner*

Task Force Advisory Committee (TFAC)

Timothy Wachtel; *Park Planner, Shreveport Public Assembly & Recreation*
Larry Kinlaw; *Consultant, Larry Kinlaw & Associates*
Rodney Stone; *District Ranger, USFS, Catahoula Ranger District*
Dan Jatres; *Director of Bicycle & Pedestrian, Regional Planning Commission*
Mark Northington; *Retired, Department of Culture, Recreation, & Tourism*

SCORP Process

The 2009-2014 SCORP is the culmination of a planning and review process that involved research and public participation. The 2009-2014 Louisiana SCORP report identifies the

state's outdoor recreational needs, goals, and strategies in order to efficiently coordinate the efforts of devoted individuals, groups, organizations, agencies, municipalities, and parishes involved in recreation.

Vision Statement

Louisiana's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan examines our state's outdoor recreation resources and needs and is intended to provide federal, state, and local outdoor recreation providers a tool used to balance conservation, management, and protection of our natural and cultural resources during planning processes. This organic, accessible document is to support state resident quality of life and tourist enjoyment of Louisiana's resources now and in the future.

This document also describes the setting for the state's outdoor recreation activities, with emphasis on recent trends and a revised outlook for the next five to ten years. It also describes in considerable detail, the fast-tracked planning and review process used to involve hundreds of Louisiana residents in the identification of outdoor recreational priorities. These identified priorities aided the development of statewide strategies to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities. The methodologies used to identify Louisiana outdoor recreation issues, perceptions, priorities, needs, and strategies include:

1. Task Force Committee Input and Review (6 Meetings held from July 2008 - March 2009)
2. Resident Surveys completed by citizens across Louisiana
3. Provider Surveys completed by federal, state, parish, and municipal agencies
4. Development of Louisiana Outdoor Recreational GIS Database (LRO)
5. Louisiana Outdoor Recreation Forums (LORF)

1. Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. USC Pub.L. 88-578. Title 16. 1965.

2. Land and Water Conservation Fund. State Assistance Program. 2008

3. Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. USC Pub.L. 88-578. Title 16. 1965. R.S 56:1801-1803, 1965.

4. Investing in Louisiana Cultural Economy: Grants Programs of the Office of LT. Governor Mitchell J. Landrieu and the Department of Culture, Recreation, & Tourism 24 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.crt.state.la.us/document-archive/grants/CRTgrantsbrochure.pdf>>

At the SCORP Task Force meetings, the TFAC and OSP staff reviewed preliminary drafts of the SCORP report, LORF results, and the process and results of the 2008 Residents and Providers surveys. The official submission of the draft to NPS staff was made in mid January, 2009. In April, 2009, the preliminary SCORP document was posted on the project web site to allow for public comments. The final document was submitted to NPS for approval on April 29, 2009. Letter of approval was received from NPS on May 28, 2009.

General Findings

Regional

Statewide population fluctuation, influenced by recent storms, and the inherent regional differences demanded a regional approach and analysis throughout the development of the SCORP. The eight LORFs (Louisiana Outdoor Recreation Forums) and the residents' ranking of important activities and priorities in Louisiana served as the foundation for the 2009-2014



Figure 1: Louisiana Regional Map
Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

analysis of regional needs documentation. To strengthen the validity of the resident survey and to allow a regional analysis, the survey data was weighted. Additional information regarding the LORF and survey process can be found in the Louisiana Recreation Use chapter or appendix of this document.

Region 1

LORF Priorities: Effectively identify and meet community recreational needs and utilize innovative and sustainable design methods. This reflects the impact of the recent hurricanes devastating the regions, pushing residents to appreciate sustainable building practices and participate in community planning efforts.
Resident priorities: More recreational land and variety that is accessible, safe, and promoted.

Region 2

LORF Priorities: Access and utilize Louisiana's natural resources for recreation, connect state and parish recreation, identify realistic community needs, promote community education, and train maintenance personnel.
Resident priorities: More recreational land and variety that is accessible, safe, and promoted.

Region 3

LORF Priorities: Identify and coordinate community recreation opportunities amongst multiple jurisdictions (support facilities for existing recreation facilities), utilize recreation facilities as an economic generator and quality of life attractor, and market existing recreational opportunities.
Resident priorities: More recreational land and variety that is accessible, safe, maintained, and promoted.

Region 4

LORF Priorities: Provide additional funding for maintenance and operations, create a culturally appropriate and long term recreation vision, and

Annual expenditures related to non-commercial fishing in Louisiana can amount to between \$895 million (LDWF 2005) & \$1.2 billion (Gentner et al 2001)⁵

⁵. "Louisiana Coastal Facts," 7 Oct. 2008 <<http://dnr.louisiana.gov/crm/webfact-sheet%2010-07-08.pdf>>

provide safe access to recreation.

Resident priorities: Diverse, indicating a region with multiple recreational needs.

Region 5

LORF Priorities: Acquire additional funding for recreation and property acquisition, service rural residents, and provide professional and technical support to local jurisdictions.

Resident priorities: More recreational land and variety that is accessible, safe, and highly promoted.

Region 6

LORF Priorities: Create a comprehensive park system master plan to determine necessary services and eliminate duplication of services, and additional funding for maintenance and operations.

Resident priorities: Diverse, but accessibility was clearly prioritized as the top regional recreational preferred improvement.

Region 7

LORF Priorities: Create comprehensive community park systems that are well funded, valued by local citizens and policy makers, equipped with facility maintenance standards, and agency coordinated.

Resident priorities: Diverse, indicating a region with multiple recreational needs. More recreational variety that is highly promoted, accessible, and safe were ranked highest among the widespread needs.

Region 8

LORF Priorities: Create comprehensive community park systems that are well funded at all levels, valued by local citizens and policy makers, equipped with long-term educated and trained staff, and integrated with existing facilities.

Resident priorities: Widespread, indicating a region with multiple recreational needs. Health

upgrades ranked as the highest priority with more recreational variety that is promoted and safe as additional major concerns.

Statewide

The 2009-2014 outdoor recreational priorities, developed in collaboration with the SCORP TFAC, utilized the findings from the LORFs, resident survey, and provider survey. After identifying important outdoor recreation activities, the SCORP TFAC state recreational representatives, and SCORP consultants developed priorities and strategies for 2009-2013 recreational planning efforts.

The TOP 10 2008 Important Outdoor Recreational Activities among households are:

1. Fishing/Crabbing	58.9%
2. Running/Jogging	48.2%
3. Campground Camping	43.7%
4. Public Access to State Waters	42.7%
5. Hunting	41.3%
6. Spectator Sports	35.9%
7. Swimming/Spray Parks	34.9%
8. Botanic Gardens	34.0%
9. Walking/Hiking	32.5%
10. Picnicking	30.2%

The 2008 Outdoor Recreational Priorities and Strategies are:

Priority: Economic Tourism

Strategy: Diversification of the state's economy through investment in the tourism industry has been identified as one sector that has demonstrated positive results. Facilities investments in the next five years at state, regional, and local levels should be provided to encourage positive effects.

Priority: Innovation

Strategy: New facilities, improvements, and upgrades should focus upon innovative recreational ideas and activities that inspire people of various ages and ability levels.

Priority: Community Outdoor Recreation

Strategy: Local and parish governments provide most of the state's outdoor recreation facilities with the least amount of land and many municipalities without established recreation departments struggle with providing citizens with adequate facilities that ensure quality of life, promote healthy living, and encourage environmental stewardship.

Priority: Trails

Strategy: All types of trails should be considered and developed – urban corridor trails, multi-use trails, scenic trails, OHV trails, nature trail, dedicated use trails, levee trails, rail-trails, etc.

Priority: Cooperation & Coordination

Strategy: Local, parish, regional, special districts, state, and federal government agencies need to coordinate among agencies to avoid duplication of services, fill gaps, reduce costs to operate, maintain, and develop new recreational activities. Coordination between major Louisiana planning efforts is a vital component to maximizing recreation benefits. Continued development of the Louisiana Outdoor Recreational GIS database initiated for this SCORP is highly recommended as a strategy to support cooperation and coordination. Continued outreach and education to recreational providers is also integral to establishing a statewide comprehensive recreational system.

**Funding was not included as major goal because funding is an underlying broad issue that enables or prevents all 5 major goals.*



2009-2013 Louisiana SCORP

Chapter 2

LOUISIANA



Natural Communities

From the coastal marshes of south Louisiana to the rolling pine hills of north Louisiana, the state is blessed with a diverse group of natural communities. Eight million acres of coastal lands, marshes, lakes, swamps and bays, plus thirteen million acres of forests make up the outdoor recreation lands. What follows is a general list of natural communities and land types that are found in these Louisiana Ecoregions⁶.

Marine



This community is found in the open waters of the Gulf of Mexico. It extends from the continental shelf inward to tidal limits, wetland emergent vegetation, or the outward limits of estuarine environments. Marine environments are often high in salinity and habitats are exposed to wave and current action. Distribution of plant and animal species is determined by wave exposure, substrate composition, tidal amplification, and water temperature.

Subcategories of marine communities include marine deepwater, shallow water, marine intertidal beach/bar, and marine aquatic bed.

Chapter 2 - Louisiana

Estuarine



This community consists of deepwater tidal habitats and adjacent tidal wetlands that are semi-enclosed by land, but have access to the open waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Salinity of water is often in constant change and is influenced by tidal flow, overland freshwater runoff, evaporation, wind, and precipitation. These communities are considered low in wave energy. The boundaries of these communities start at the inland edge of the marine community and extend inland to where gulf-derived salts are less than 0.5 ppt during average annual low flow, to an imaginary line at a river mouth, bay, or sound, and to the seaward limit of wetland vegetation. Included in this community are off-shore areas that are continually diluted by fresh water.

Subcategories of estuarine communities include intertidal emergent vegetation, subtidal aquatic bed, intertidal flat, and subtidal open water.

Louisiana contains more than 6,084 square miles of water surface.⁷

Lacustrine



*41% of the coastal marshlands in the United States are located in Louisiana.*⁸

This community consists of wetlands and deep-water habitats that are located in depressions or dammed river channels. They are greater than 20 acres in size and lacking trees, shrubs, or persistent emergents with greater than 30% areal coverage. Areas less than 20 acres are considered lacustrine if the deepest water is greater than 6.6 ft. at low water. It is bounded by palustrine and upland systems and in some cases can be tidal. Large areas of deepwater are common as is considerable wave action. Lacustrine can contain palustrine islands.

Subcategories of lacustrine communities include limnetic open water and littoral open water.

⁶. The Louisiana Statewide GIS, 22 June 2009. <<http://atlas.lsu.edu/>>

⁷. Facts About Louisiana, 22 June 2009 <<http://gateway.no.com/history/Facts.html>>

⁸. Facts About Louisiana, 22 June 2009 <<http://gateway-no.com/history/Facts.html>>

Palustrine



This community consists of all non-tidal wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, or persistent emergents greater than 30% aerial coverage and all tidal wetlands where salinity is less than 0.5 ppt. It also includes wetlands less than 20 acres where low water depths are less than 6.6 ft. and where salinity is less than 0.5 ppt. Common names for palustrine include marsh, pond, swamp, bog, fen, and prairie. Common locations for palustrine communities are bottomlands, floodplains, river banks, and lake shores.

Subcategories of palustrine communities include aquatic bed, emergent vegetation, scrub/shrub wetland vegetation, and forested wetland.

Riverine



This community consists of all wetlands and deepwater habitats that are within a channel. Two exceptions occur when wetlands are dominated by trees, shrubs, or persistent emergent vegetation and where water containing gulf-derived salts is greater than 0.5 ppt. In most cases water is always moving with a few exceptions. Palustrine wetlands are commonly found on the border or throughout the community and are not considered part of the Riverine community.

Subcategories of riverine communities are tidal mud flat, riverine lower perennial channel, and aquatic bed.

Terrestrial

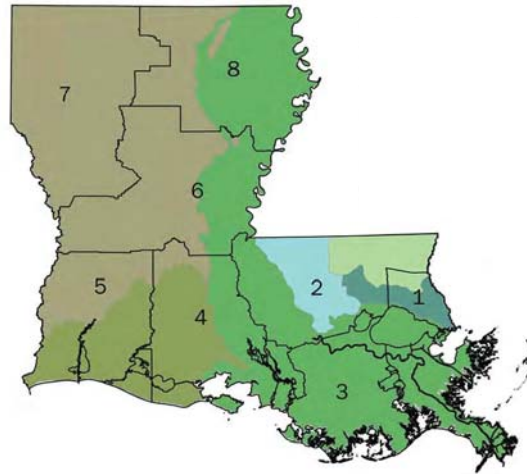


This community consists of all natural habitats that are often termed “uplands.” A community is terrestrial if vegetative cover and soil are never predominately hydrophytic and the surface is not flooded or saturated at any time of the year. Terrestrial areas are bounded by aquatic communities and extend downward to the lower limits of normal soil horizons and surface biological activity, including the maximum depth of plant roots and burrowing surface animals.

Subcategories of terrestrial communities include grassland, shrub thicket, deciduous forests, mixed evergreen/deciduous forests, evergreen forests, woodlands, and glades.

Ecoregions

The natural communities listed below are found within Louisiana⁹



Legend

- Mississippi Alluvial Plain
- Mississippi Valley Loess
- South Central Plains
- Southeastern Plains
- Southern Coastal Plain
- Western Gulf Coastal Plain
- LA Regions

Figure 2: Louisiana Ecoregion Map

Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

Climate

Louisiana has hot, subtropical summers and relatively mild winters. Temperatures in January range from 54 degrees F in southeast Louisiana to 44 degrees F in the northern part of the state. July temperatures average 82 degrees F in the southeastern portion of the state, while the temperatures along the western and northern borders average 85 degrees F. Rainfall amounts vary widely. The southern portion of the state averages more than 60 inches of rain a year while the northern areas of the state average less than 52 inches of rain a year.

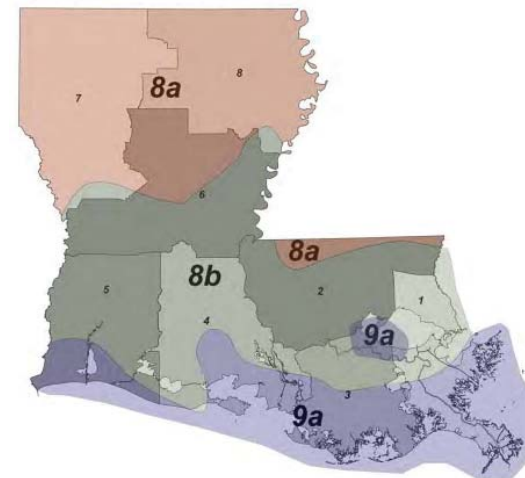


Figure 3: USDA Plant Zones and Louisiana Regions

Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

Louisiana averages 210 days of sunshine a year, allowing outdoor recreation activities to thrive most of the year. Fall, winter, and spring are all popular times for outdoor activities to take place as the temperatures are fairly comfortable. As the summer peaks in late July/early August, outdoor recreation activities are slowed due to high temperatures.¹⁰

⁹. The Louisiana Statewide GIS. 22 June 2009. <<http://atlas.lsu.edu/>>

¹⁰. The Louisiana Statewide GIS. 22 June 2009. <<http://atlas.lsu.edu/>>

Demographics

As of 2007, the state population was estimated to be 4,293,204. In 2000 the total population was 4,468,976, thus indicating a slight net drop in population over a seven year period. Several studies suggest that economic issues are not the primary factors driving residents out of state. Louisiana has experienced four major hurricanes within the most recent 3 of 7 years. Since August 2005, the largest decline in population happened suddenly when 380,000 residents relocated into almost every state and county in the US. Since these major storm events, the state has experienced a steady increase in population. The 2008 demographic projections show the state will continue to grow, after the slight dip in 2005.

The population has 12.2% of the population age 65 and over. This is a 0.7% increase from 2000. By 2030 20% of the population is expected to be 65+. As a result of the aging population more demand will be put on developed facilities. As age has no relation to income, both public and private developed facilities are needed to provide access for all. The aging population will most likely seek various forms of recreation in relatively close proximity to other leisure opportunities and amenities.

Louisiana's population grew between 1990 and 2000 while the number of facilities increased by .01 percent. This was due to the built-in lag time in sales of bonds and capital outlay processes the public bid requirements for construction projects. The supply of recreation facilities did not meet demands that were created as the state economy expanded in the decade of the 1990's through 2005. Major funding goals were recommended in 2003, but have not fully been met. Development of recreation facilities in Louisiana remains heavily influenced by state

and national economic factors and population shifts.

Louisiana has remained economically stable compared to national and global markets, despite local long term impacts to the greater New Orleans area economy and overall temporary drops in state tourism. The median household income for Louisiana is \$ \$40,926 compared to national median household income at \$41,994. Of Louisiana families, 9% live below the poverty line compared to 9.2% nationally. Louisiana's per capita income continues to increase and tracks closely with national averages. Per capita personal income in the state also grew slightly in Louisiana. The unemployment picture in the state has been improving. This is largely due to the Construction Industry and to the Leisure and Hospitality Industry. The unemployment rate declined from 7 percent in 1992 to 5.5 percent in October 2008.¹¹

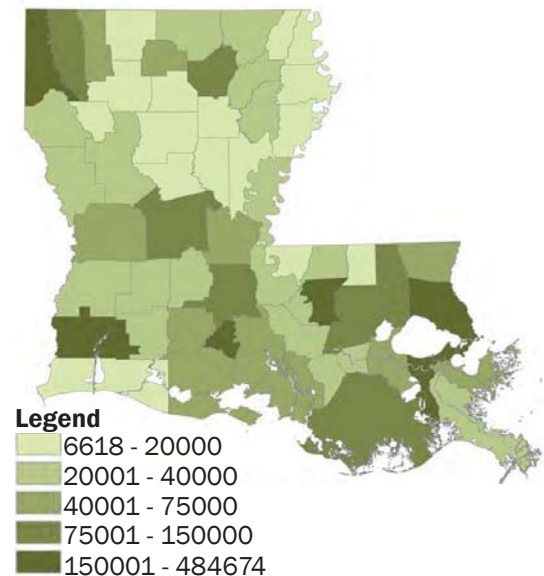


Figure 4: Louisiana Population 2000

Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

In 2006, over 2 million residents- more than 47% of the state's population according to U.S. Census estimates- lived in Louisiana's coastal parishes.¹²

Over 70% percent of the state's population now resides in urban and suburban areas. Density has been increasing to the rate of 110 persons per square mile overall. The state's rural population continues to decrease as most established cities and towns have been growing.

In summary, the state's outdoor recreation demand based on demographics remains nearly the same as reported in the 1999 -2003 SCORP report and close to levels in year 2004, combined with a few regional shifts discussed in detail in Chapter 6 region by region.

Recreation researchers anticipate that the state's residents will continue to recreate more often and closer to home. Along with rising fuel costs, state residents are looking for recreation opportunities that are closer to home and that are more affordable. Trends in travel show that shorter, more frequent weekend trips (1-3

nights) which tend to be less seasonal, are most popular. Dual income families have experienced decreased leisure time, while growing number of elderly households have increased leisure time. Many typical households juggling multiple schedules seek shorter frequent vacation trips and fewer long stay vacations. This increased popularity of shorter vacation trips impacts near-by recreation facilities and sites.

Recreation developers are providing additional quality facilities to growing urban population centers in need. The major aquatic facility along Interstate 10 in the Baton Rouge area, plus recreation complexes in the Florida Parishes area are two examples. Rural areas are being used for short term, close-to-home recreation by larger population centers. Larger municipalities are providing greater recreational facility development in Lake Charles, Baton Rouge, Shreveport and New Orleans.

¹¹. The Louisiana Statewide GIS, 22 June 2009. <<http://atlas.lsu.edu/>>

¹². U.S. Economic Census, 22 June 2009 <<http://www.census.gov/econ/census07/>>

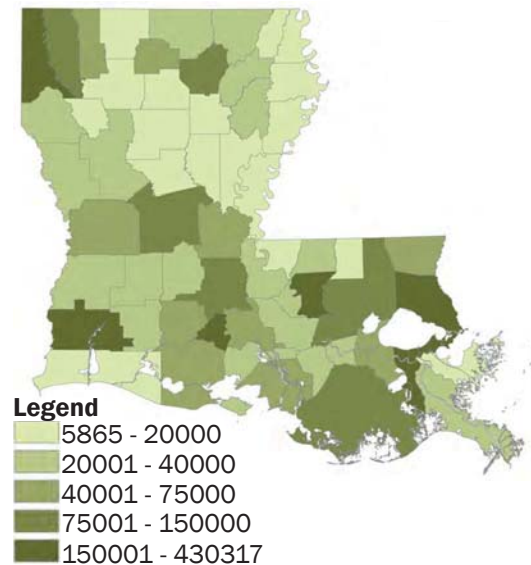


Figure 5: Louisiana Population 2007
Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

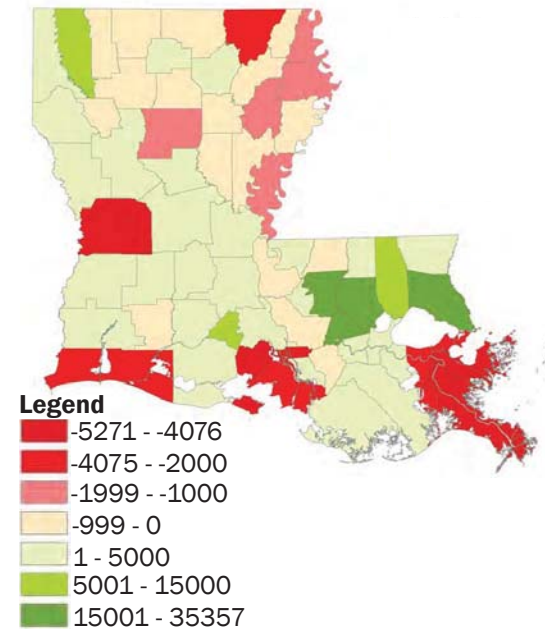


Figure 6: Louisiana Population Flux
Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

Economy

In recent years, Louisiana's economy has fluctuated with the price of oil, and more increasingly, with the price of natural gas. Revenue from oil and gas taxes as well as the spillover effect of the oil/gas industries has allowed Louisiana a steady income. However, these revenues can fluctuate depending on the worldwide price for crude oil and natural gas. Oil prices are less stable than natural gas prices and also have a greater effect on revenues.

Both the northern and southern areas of the state are growing rapidly, but for different reasons. North Louisiana is seeing rapid growth from the discovery of large natural gas deposits located in deep shale pockets. Natural gas industries are moving in and quickly replacing the timber industry as the dominate economic driver. Recovering from devastating hurricanes, the southern portion of the state is experiencing both rebuilding and growth at the same time. Numerous public and private activities are spurring growth and bringing former and new residents to the area.

Eco-tourism wetland related activities such as hiking, birdwatching, photography, and camping contribute millions annually to the Louisiana economy. There has been good ongoing discussion and action toward carrying capacity analysis of many of the state's public recreation and natural areas allowing public access while protecting the environment.¹³

Cultural History

Louisiana is fortunate to possess over 390 years of continuous history of urban development providing a very rich cultural heritage. The central and northern sections of Louisiana are primarily Anglo-Saxon and Protestant, while the southern half is generally French, German, Irish,

and Italian and Catholic, the people of the two regions have an extremely diverse background and heritage. Statewide, the French have exerted a dominant influence from those who migrated directly from France (ancestors of the Creoles), as well as the French-speaking Acadians who migrated from Nova Scotia, Canada (the "Cajuns").

However, the French are not the only strong influence molding the state's cultural climate. The influence of French, Spanish, African American, and Native American communities influence place names for towns, rivers, parishes, streets and bayous, such as Lafayette, New Iberia, Bogue Chitto, Gonzales, and Pushpatata Creek. The state's musical and performing arts industry also reflects a mixed heritage. Louisiana is world famous for its diverse music including: South Louisiana Creole Zydeco and Cajun music, north Louisiana gospel, and soul-inspiring New Orleans jazz and blues music with African-American roots.

Native American communities arrived approximately 12,000 years ago as Louisiana's first settlers. Some of the larger communities included the Tensas, Avoyelle, Houma, Tunican, and Atakapans. The culture is carried on today by the Koasati, Chitimacha, Tunica-Biloxi and Houmas nations and communities.¹⁴



Louisiana is America's second largest producer of natural gas. It supplies 1/3 of the total U.S. production.¹⁵

¹³. The Louisiana Statewide GIS. 22 June 2009. <<http://atlas.lsu.edu/>>

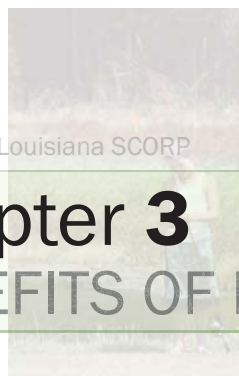
¹⁴. Louisiana Department Culture, Recreation and Tourism. The 2007 Louisiana Tourism Satellite Account and Update. 2007. <[http://www.crt.state.la.us/TOURISM/RESEARCH/Documents/2007-08/2007TSA\(Final\).pdf](http://www.crt.state.la.us/TOURISM/RESEARCH/Documents/2007-08/2007TSA(Final).pdf)>

¹⁵ Facts About Louisiana. 22 June 2009 <<http://gateway-no.com/history/Facts.html>>

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Chapter 3

BENEFITS OF RECREATION



Health/Fitness

As child obesity rates in our country elevate many are realizing our current living habits are contributing to this epidemic including; unhealthy eating, lack of outdoor activity, and overexposure to television and video games. This realization emphasizes the importance of exposure to the outdoors for exercise. Decreasing rates of outdoor recreation participation in youth ages 8-12, enhances the necessity for reconnecting children to nature¹⁶. Fitness continues to be one of the prime reasons for recreation in Louisiana and as obesity rates and health concerns rise, it is becoming an essential component to healthy living. Louisiana is ranked 4th highest in the nation for adult obesity and 9th highest for youth ages 10-17¹⁷. These high obesity rates translate to a higher burden on the state's resources, influencing medical expenditure. Various national and state initiatives, programs, and councils have been established to combat these increasing obesity rates. There is a consistent recommendation throughout all these entities to provide access to adequate recreational facilities. For example, the Louisiana's Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth 2006 states, "There is a relationship between the existence of parks and recreation facilities

and levels of physical activity. Further, aspects of the built environment such as the walk-ability of neighborhoods and the amount of green space have also been associated with levels of physical activity and obesity."¹⁸

Nationally, as part of the President's Health and Fitness Initiative, June 2002, the U.S Department of the Interior launched a "Get Fit US" campaign to raise the awareness of America's outdoor recreation opportunities¹⁹. The initiative involves bringing together the leaders of federal agencies, state and local governments, recreation partners, medical and public health leaders, and corporate leaders

Specific goals are to promote

1. Exercise and physical fitness through recreation in our great outdoors
2. Informing the public as to where recreational opportunities exist
3. Creation of a link to state and local government sites and initiatives
4. Provision of nexus for partnerships
5. Creation and provision of a network for communication
6. Increased utilization of outdoor recreation areas

*People who cannot find time for recreation are obliged sooner or later to find time for illness."*²⁰



16. The Outdoor Foundation. Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report. 2009.

17. Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Office of Public Health-Nutrition Service. Louisiana Council on Obesity Prevention & Management Report. 2008. <<http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/reports.asp?ID=270>>

18. Pennington Biomedical Research Center. Put Active Play in Every Child's Day: Louisiana's report Card on Physical Activity & Health for Children and Youth. <<http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/reports.asp?ID=270>>

19. The Outdoor Industry Foundation. Get Fit With US. July 2005. <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/pdf/GFWUS_Guide_Jul05.pdf>

20. John Wanamaker

21. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Healthy People 2010: Leading Health Indicators. 22 June 2009 <<http://www.healthypeople.gov/LHI/Priorities.htm>>

22. Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. Healthy Louisiana 2010. 22 June 2009. < <http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/?ID=279>>

23. McCormic, Joel. National Recreation and Park Association. Design Against Crime. 22 June 2009. < <http://www.nrpa.org/content/default.aspx?documentId=4205>>

7. Enhancing stewardship of public lands
8. Creation of a positive public image for governmental agency recreation providers

The National Healthy People 2010 Initiative sets objectives to increase quality years of life for American citizens. To achieve these goals, ten Leading Health Indicators were established in order to track healthy progresses.²¹ In order to successfully strive to meet these national objectives, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals' established The Healthy Louisiana 2010 program. This is a program focused on creating partnerships with the state's parishes to identify their individual needs. The Healthy Louisiana 2010 program developed ten leading health indicators including: physical activity, overweight and obesity, tobacco use, environmental quality, responsible sexual behavior, mental health, substance abuse, injury and violence, immunization, and access to health care²². The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals also established the Louisiana Council on Obesity Prevention and Management to develop standards, facilitate awareness, and track progresses and developments.

As obesity rates increase, recreational providers are tasked with the challenge to provide additional facilities and maintain current facilities to aid the state in the initiative to decrease obesity rates. There is an obvious correlation to obesity and recreation, thus, Louisiana's high rankings in obesity demands recreation consideration.

For additional information about national and state healthy campaigns and initiatives, visit the following websites:

<http://www.healthypeople.gov/>,
<http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/>

For additional information about the 2009 Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report visit:

<http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/research.participation.2009.topline.html>

Community

Recreation facilities provide community citizens with social opportunities, physical activities, and community pride. Access to recreational facilities is a crucial component to community health as it is known to reduce crime and increase community pride. However, proper maintenance of community recreational facilities is important to discourage questionable activity and crime. According to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), "proper design and effective use of the built environment that can lead to a reduction in the fear and the incidence of crime, and an improvement in the quality of life." The principles of CPTED include; Natural Surveillance, Natural Access Control, Territoriality, and, Maintenance. Maintenance is a major concern to recreational providers as funding limitations make it difficult to ensure proper updates and repairs are made.²³

For additional information about Designing Against Crime, visit the National Recreation and Parks Association website:

www.nrpa.org/

Environment and Sustainability



It is important to Louisiana residents to provide future generations natural resources within the state that are minimally impacted and recreationally enjoyable. Natural areas facilitate multiple uses including outdoor recreation, storm surge protection, tourism, and fish and wildlife habitat. To support the obvious benefits and interest in natural areas, the Outdoor Recreation Participation 2009 Report cites increasing participation rates in nature-based activities.²⁴ Unfortunately, over the past five years the visible effects of environmental degradation caused by extreme weather conditions and balancing use with preservation has been seen and experienced throughout the state. Thus, the conservation and preservation of Louisiana's natural resources has become a priority to many residents and recreational providers.

Concern about pollution remains high importance among residents. The survey shows residents favor recreation sites with low levels of development and high levels of

environmental integrity. Such preferences are consistent with the findings of other studies in which coastal state tourists were found to have high preferences for environmental amenities. Poor water quality restricts our water oriented recreation activities. Coliform bacteria, agricultural runoff, and industrial wastes are among the issues that continue to be addressed with the implementation of best management practices.

Environmental neglect has affected outdoor recreation, coastal wetland loss, socioeconomic activities, and the integrity of forested wetlands. Coastal erosion is a paramount issue of concern in the southern portion of the state as Louisiana is experiencing alarming declining rates of coastal wetlands that aid in storm surge protection. In August, 2005 Hurricane Katrina caused extensive urban flooding, massive property damage, and loss of lives. Immediately following Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Rita slammed the western part of the state causing more damage and devastation. Northern regions of the state are grappling with environmental policy decision making and resource management due to the discovery of a natural gas deposit known as the Haynesville Shale.

Instilling values in children regarding environmental stewardship is becoming more important as environmental issues are heating up political debates, causing extreme weather conditions, and influencing alternative building and development practices. Fundamental to the development of these values is exposure to the outdoors, setting examples of sustainable development practices, and encouraging children's interaction and exploration of various environmental elements. Louisiana's outdoor recreation facilities, natural sites, and historical sites provide the state's children with various opportunities to experience the importance of natural resources and historical legacies.

“We are prone to think of the resources of this country as inexhaustible; this is not so.”²⁵

²⁴. The Outdoor Foundation. Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report. 2009.

²⁵. Theodore Roosevelt

²⁶. Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. CRT Secretary: Mission & Goals. 22 June 2009. <<http://www.crt.state.la.us/secretary/mission.aspx>>

Various recreational agencies, primarily federal and state, focus upon the conservation and management of Louisiana’s resources in order to provide future generations the enjoyment of their use by conserving precious ecological communities.



Louisiana residents are becoming more environmentally conscious and many leaders within the state are promoting environmentally sustainable building and development methods to ensure the preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage. Natural areas designated for outdoor recreation are aiding the conservation efforts of Louisiana’s natural resources. The increasing trend of environmental stewardship among Louisiana residents is influencing the state’s image as it rebuilds and redefines itself following the weather related hardships over the past few years.

Wetland Resources, Plans, and Policies

The following resources provide direct and indirect benefits toward the conservation and stewardship of Louisiana’s wetlands:

- Emergency Wetland Resource Act of 1986 Section 303
- Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (FSRIA)
- 1996 Farm Bill: conservation spending authorized

- 1990 Coastal Wetland Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA)
- Landowner Incentive Program under House Resolution 20: Protects private lands for fish and wildlife
- Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Office of State Parks Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan (LWPCP)
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)
- Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

Quality of Life / Return on Perception Factors

Health and fitness, education and sustainability, and community are all components of recreation that contribute to the quality of life for the state’s citizens. Quality of life is considered an important asset to enhance in Louisiana and this is reflected in the Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism’s mission statement.

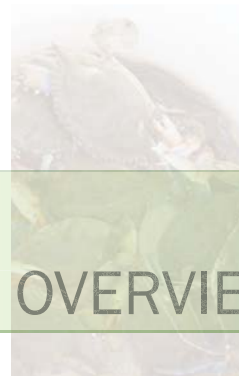
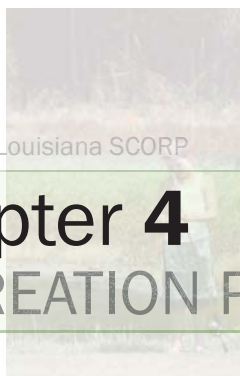
“The Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism will provide the highest quality of service and programs through the preservation, promotion, and development of Louisiana’s historical, cultural, educational, natural and recreational resources, thereby enhancing the quality of life for Louisiana’s citizens and encouraging economic growth while re-imaging Louisiana as a great place to live, work, and play.”²⁶

Quality of life can also be an economic driver to the area because it attracts businesses and industries. People want to live in areas reflecting factors that contribute to quality of life and recreation is a primary component. It provides opportunities for various age groups and abilities to engage in physical activity and social interaction.

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Chapter 4

RECREATION PROVIDERS OVERVIEW



General

Recreation in Louisiana is supplied by a wide variety of public agencies and private organizations. Federal, state, parish, and local governments provide recreation facilities as well as private organizations. The following is a short description of the services that each of the agencies supply, categorized within the governmental jurisdiction.

Federal

Most of the federally owned recreation areas in Louisiana are in the National Forests and Wildlife Refuges. Federal areas are normally multi-functional and were established to conserve natural resources and supply recreation. Hunting and camping are the primary recreation activities which occur on federally owned and operated lands, with the exception of military

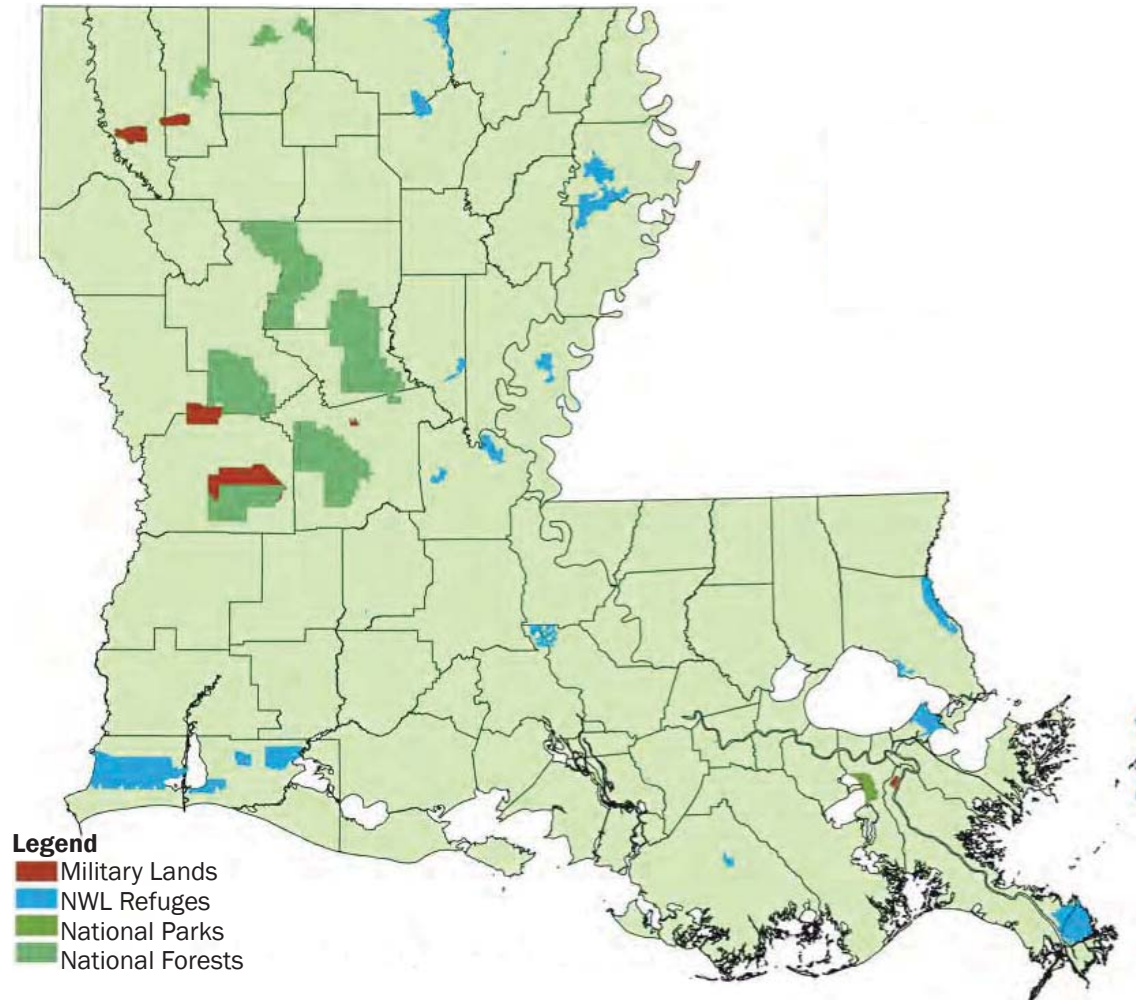


Figure 7: Louisiana Federal Protected Lands

Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

There are 13.3 million acres of National Forest System lands in the South.²⁷

bases, which offer a multitude of recreation activities for the base employees, their families and veterans.

Federal agencies provide far fewer, but larger recreation areas in general than their private or parish counterparts. This is seen by comparing the percentage of facilities provided by the federal government with the amount of recreation acreage that they supply. The federal government has only 153 recreation areas (4 percent) in the state, but provides over one million acres (33 percent) of the state's recreation.

U. S. Forest Service

The U. S. Forest Service is a bureau within the US Department of Agriculture and leads the nation's natural resource management. In Louisiana, the Forest Service has the second largest amount of recreation acreage. The Kisatchie National Forest consists of six ranger districts, and contains over 601,000 acres of land located in seven north and central Louisiana Parishes: Claiborne, Grant, Natchitoches, Rapides, Vernon, Webster, and Winn. Approximately 561,000 acres of Forest Service lands are open to the public for dispersed recreation use. Dispersed recreation includes, but is not limited to, hunting, camping, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, off-road vehicle (ORV) riding, canoeing, nature studies, and driving for pleasure.

The Kisatchie National Forest also maintains the most extensive trail system in the state with over 342 miles of trails. These trails are managed for single or multiple uses, which include hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, ORV riding, and canoeing. Several streams in the forest are becoming more widely used by river recreationists as a result of organized activities, including a 13-mile water trail along Saline Bayou and seven state designated

natural and scenic streams through the National Forest. The Forest Service continues to lead all other recreation suppliers in the state with its innovative approach providing suitable off-road vehicle riding trails while minimizing environmental damages and reducing user conflicts.

Kisatchie National Forest managers do not expect significant budget changes, but hope to be able to construct some new facilities in response to a growing demand in many locations. There is growing pressure being placed on National Forest lands for recreation opportunities as more private lands are closed to public use or leased to private clubs. This increased pressure is expected to create future management challenges resulting in problems with overcrowding and adverse resource impacts. Another management concern faced by the land managers is dealing with conflicts between different types of recreation users competing for use of the same areas.

Additional data relating to the US Forest Service can be found in the appendix to this document. For more information about the US Forest Service visit their website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The U. S. Forest Service is a bureau within the Department of the Interior designated to conserve natural resources and habitats for enjoyment of America's citizens. In Louisiana, there are 20 national wildlife refuges totaling approximately 450,000 acres. The service administers the 97-acre Natchitoches National Fish Hatchery in Natchitoches, Louisiana, for production of Gulf Coast striped bass, largemouth bass, and bluegills. By policy, recreational uses on refuge lands must be wildlife/wild land-oriented and compatible with purposes of the refuge. Public use programs

²⁷ [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuge System](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/). 22 June 2009 <<http://www.fws.gov/refuges/>>

provide various opportunities for visitors to enjoy fish and wildlife, wild lands ecology, and wildlife management. Activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife observation, bird watching, canoeing, and wildlife photography occur in most areas.

Additional data relating to the US Fish and Wildlife Service can be found in the appendix to this document. For more information about the US Fish and Wildlife Service visit their website: <http://www.fws.gov/>

National Wildlife Refuges

The National Wildlife Refuge System is an agency associated with the U.S. Forest Service and manages national networks of land and water. Along with focusing upon the conservation and management of their natural resources, conservation biology and ecosystem management are new disciplines practiced in the management of these systems. In Louisiana, there are 23 national wildlife refuges. The recreational uses in the system allow for hunting, fishing, birding, photography, environment education, and interpretation.

Additional data relating to the National Wildlife Refuges can be found in the appendix to this document. For more information about the National Wildlife Refuges visit their website: <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/>

National Park Service

The National Park Service is a bureau within the Department of the Interior designated to preserve and protect national legacies for Americans to enjoy. The NPS also helps communities preserve significant heritage and recreational areas by offering various beneficial grants. Grants are available for historic places, community parks and local recreation facilities,

the conservation of rivers and streams, and the development of trails and greenways.

Additional data relating to the National Park Service can be found in the appendix to this document. For more information about the National Park Service visit their website: <http://www.nps.gov>

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for investigating, developing, and maintaining the water and related environmental resources for our nation. They provides engineering services by dredging waterways, providing recreation opportunities, cleaning contaminated sites, and devising infrastructure to minimize storm damage. Three USACE districts oversee the State of Louisiana, the New Orleans District with jurisdiction over coastal Louisiana, Vicksburg District with jurisdiction over the majority of rest of the state, and the Galveston, Texas District with jurisdiction over a part of southwest Louisiana.

The New Orleans District manages a 24-acre local park in St. Charles Parish within the Bonnet Carre Spillway. This area has been officially designated for recreation and is operated by the Corps of Engineers for camping, picnicking, crabbing, fishing, horseback riding, and off-road vehicle riding. Also, the Corps has completed a bicycle transportation path on the crown of the Mississippi River levee from Audubon Park in New Orleans to the St. Charles Parish line. The paved path extends 30 miles. The U.S. Army Engineer District in New Orleans will continue evaluating recreation development needs and potentials to provide outdoor recreation amenities as one of its responsibilities in planning and developing the nation's water resources.

Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge in New Orleans is the largest urban National Wildlife Refuge in the United States.²⁸

The Vicksburg District of the Corps owns approximately 35,905 acres of recreation lands in Louisiana. These sites were developed as a part of larger water development or flood control projects.

Additional data relating to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can be found in the appendix to this document. For more information about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers visit the Vicksburg District website:

<http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/>

or the New Orleans website:

<http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/>

U.S. Military Reservations

There are three U. S. military reservations providing significant recreation opportunities in Louisiana: Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, Barksdale Air Force Base, and Fort Polk. These three military reservations offer recreational opportunities to approximately 94,000 base-related people. This figure includes active military people and their dependents, civilian employees, and military retirees in the immediate area of the three bases. It does not include active reservists, National Guardsman, or any other group, which could temporarily use the recreation facilities. The figure also does not consider the public use of areas with joint use arrangements of other public agencies. An example of joint use is the U.S. Army's agreement with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to allow hunting on specified areas on the Fort Polk Military Reservation.

Additional data relating to the U.S. Military Reservations in Louisiana can be found in the appendix to this document.

²⁸. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuge System. 22 June 2009 <<http://www.fws.gov/refuges/>>

State

Like federal agencies, state agencies provide far fewer, but larger recreation areas in general than their private or parish counterparts (Table 9). Although the state government supplies roughly 7 percent of the recreation areas, these areas comprise over 37 percent of the known recreation acreage available to the public.

State recreation areas are multi-functional and supply over 1,510,298 acres of recreation facilities, which includes State Parks, Historic Sites and Preservation Areas within the

Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism; also Wildlife Management and Refuge Areas within the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. The Louisiana Office of Forestry and the Sabine River Authority operate some recreation areas. However, the large majority of this acreage is owned and operated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries for the preservation of wildlife. The primary activity which occurs on Wildlife Management Areas is hunting and fishing, and to a lesser degree, primitive camping. The recreation on State Parks and Historic Sites is more varied with tent and trailer camping, swimming, fishing, hiking and cabins.

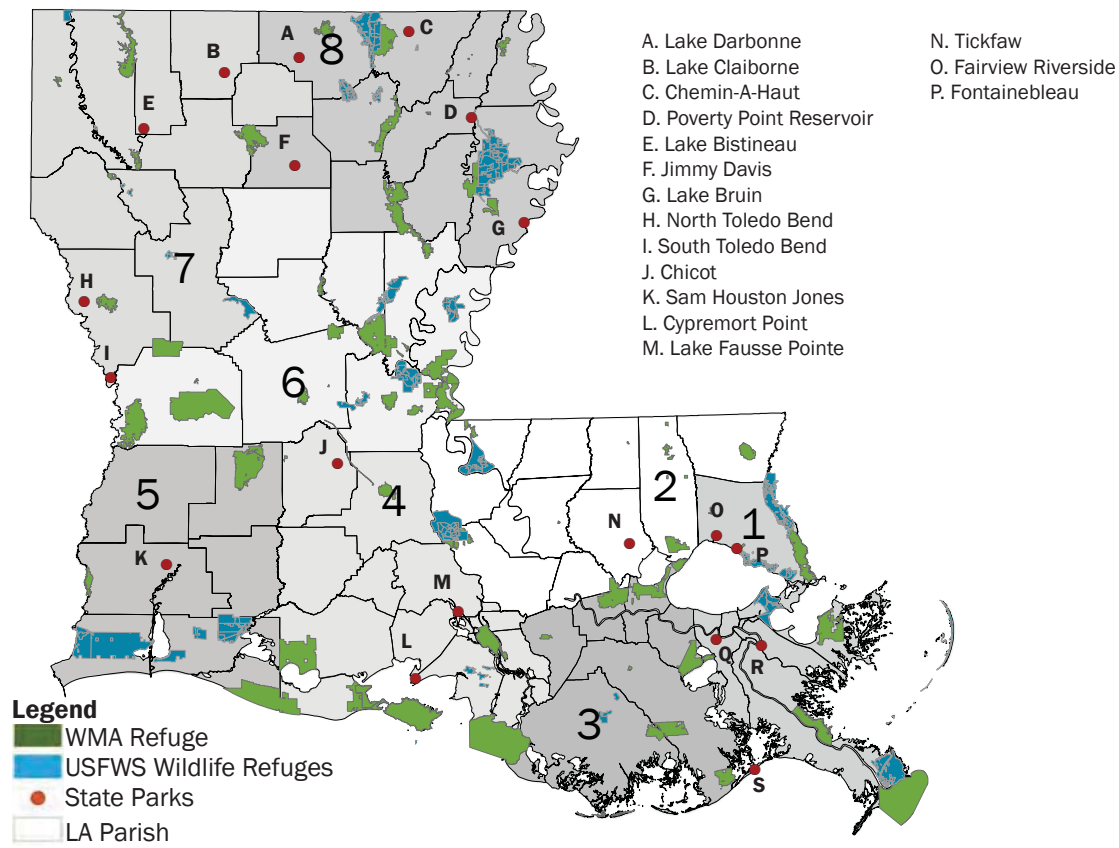


Figure 8: Louisiana State Protected Lands

Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

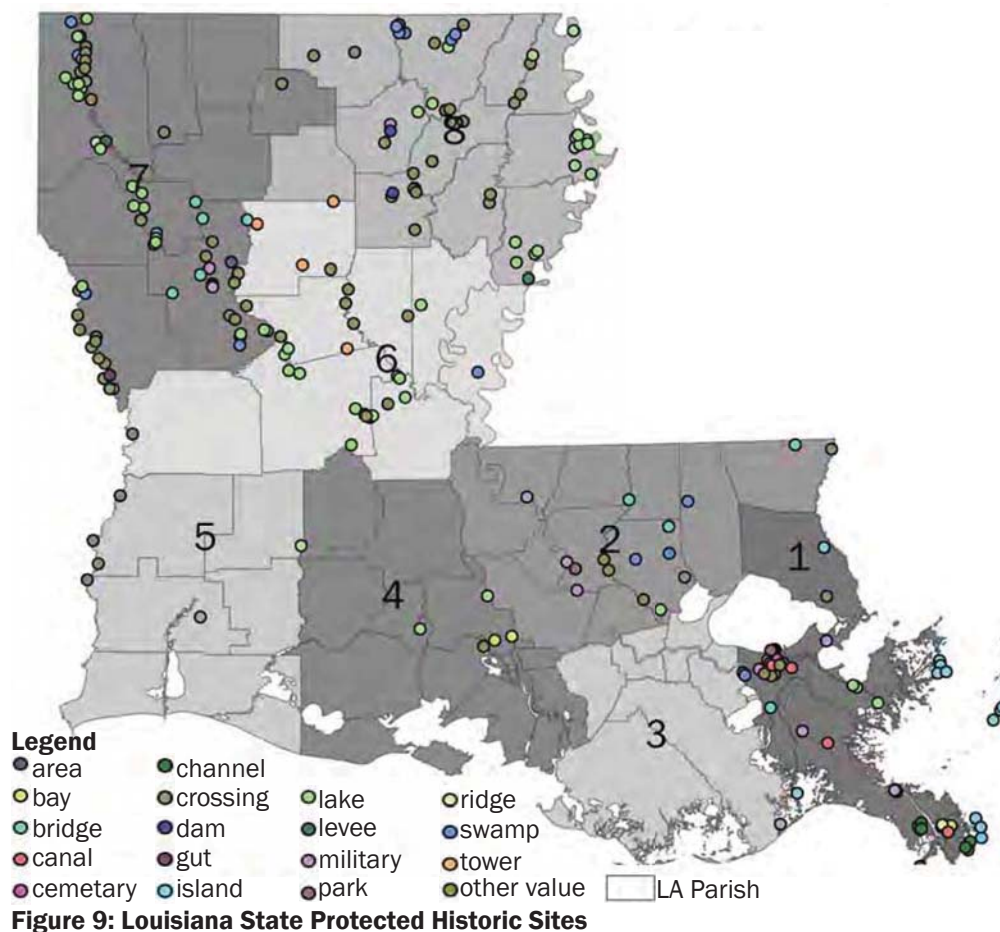
The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) has the largest amount of recreation land of any state agency with over 1,471,327 acres of wildlife management areas (WMAs) and refuges (WRs). It currently manages 56 WMAs totaling 1,295,026 acres. Six WRs account for the remaining acres.

LDWF's has taken a multi-use approach to managing its WMAs for recreational purposes. Hunting has always been the most visible

recreational use of these areas. WMAs are managed for a variety of wildlife species including deer, migratory game birds, turkey, as well as other game resources and non-game species. The majority of the 1,295,026 acres of WMAs is open to the public for outdoor recreational activities including hunting. Refuge areas in the state were established to provide sanctuary for migratory waterfowl as well as resident game species, hunting is not allowed on these areas, but fishing and non-consumptive recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts are available. Freshwater, saltwater, crawfishing, commercial fishing,

Visitor spending at Louisiana State Parks returns \$3.23 in state taxes for every dollar spent on operating and maintaining all our beautiful parks.²⁹

²⁹. [The Impact of the Louisiana department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism on Louisiana's Economy and Quality of Life for Louisiana's Citizens](http://www.crt.state.la.us/). June 2006 < <http://www.crt.state.la.us/> >



frogging and other fishing activities are also an important aspect. Non-consumptive uses on both its wildlife management areas and refuges are encouraged. These uses include but are not limited to picnicking, horseback riding, hiking, berry picking, birding, canoeing, pleasure boating and photography. Camping and shooting ranges are also allowed in some locations.

The department's policy is to continue acquiring, developing and conserving wildlife habitat in the state through acquisition, donations and leasing of land as lands become available. The department intends to maintain and expand its present public use areas and increase wildlife habitat when funds and lands become available. Plans for the next five years include keeping with the Vision 2020 Plan of acquiring and developing 5,000 acres per year.

The major issues confronting the agency over the next five years include: inadequate funding to maintain current programs, which are already under-funded at the current level, an expanding user base with accompanying user demands for programs and facilities; increased costs of land acquisition and limited acquisition funds to expand the wildlife acreage base.

Additional data relating to Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries can be found in the appendix to this document and visit their website:

<http://www.wlf.state.la.us/>

Louisiana Office of State Parks

Louisiana State Parks System plays a unique role in the state's strategy for supplying both recreation and preserving cultural and environmental resources. The Louisiana State Parks System is presently comprised of 4 preservation areas, a State Arboretum (one of the preservation areas), 20 State Parks, and 17 State Historic Sites. The 35 operational parks, historic sites and State Arboretum are open to the public. As a recreation supplier, the Office of State Parks operates that middle ground between local recreation departments, which supply organized recreation such as baseball and football and other close to home experiences, and the Wildlife and Fisheries Department, which mainly offers dispersed recreation such as hunting and fishing. Louisiana's State Parks offer recreation opportunities that range from swimming in pools

Louisiana's State Parks System began in 1934 with the passage of legislation creating the State Parks Commission of Louisiana.³⁰



7 of the Louisiana State Parks sites are on the National Listing of Historic Landmarks.³¹

and beaches to camping, hiking, biking, and riding trails, and much more. Overnight facilities include: primitive, improved and premium camping; cabins; lodges, large dormitories, and group camp facilities.

State Preservation Areas are sites of exceptional scenic value of statewide significance and/or significant ecological or biological value to the state. The functions of State Preservations Areas are twofold. First, the sites are preserved in their natural state in order to ensure that their ecological integrity and significance are protected, and second, the sites serve an educational function as interpretive areas of the natural environment. This wide range of recreation facilities and its role in preservation makes the State Park System an integral part of the continuing advancement of quality of life for Louisiana residents.

Although Louisiana State Parks System has suffered from inconsistent funding, its accomplishments over the past five years as the liaison administering LWCF funds are notable. OSP's Division of Outdoor Recreation has developed the Recreation Area Manager (RAM) Web-based administration program for LWCF. RAM leverages technology to improve accessibility of application for funding, conducting on-site inspections, and managing projects. Since the publication of the most recent SCORP, 32 new LWCF projects totaling \$4,228,587.61 of federal funding have been approved and initiated in Louisiana. These projects are located across every section of the state and range from water spray parks and basketball courts to nature trails and amphitheaters. Historically educational programs, affordable and memorable camping opportunities, and preservation activities are all reflections of the OSP's commitment to preserving and enhancing Louisiana's cultural heritage. Over the next five years, the Office

of State Parks System's goals are to continue development and growth and keep the State Parks and Historic Sites maintained.

Additional data relating to Louisiana State Parks can be found in the appendix to this document. For more information about Louisiana State Parks visit their website:
<http://www.crt.state.la.us>

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry protects and enhances the state's agriculture, forestry, soil, and water resources. Departmental offices within LDAF include; Office of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Office of Agro-Consumer Services, Office of Animal health services, Office of Forestry, Office of Marketing and Agro-Economic Development, and Office of Soil and Water.

The agency's only recreation facility is Indian Creek Recreation Area with 250 acres of developed recreational facilities and 100 acres of primitive camping. Indian Creek Lake provides 2,250 acres of fishing, boating, water skiing, sailing and other water recreation and 30 acres of developed camping sites with water and electrical hookups on 101 camping sites. In addition to the conventional campsites, there are 100 acres of primitive camping with 75 designated campsites. There are approximately 40 acres of picnic area with 50 picnic units. Within the remaining 130 acres of "common" area is a boat ramp, parking lots, three swimming beaches, three miles of nature trails, and support facilities. Current plans are to complete outstanding construction that make the area more handicapped compliant and address safety related issues. In addition to completing routine maintenance and replacing various support structures, the Department

³⁰. CRT Office of State Parks: The History of Louisiana's State Parks. 22 June 2009 <<http://www.crt.state.la.us/parks/OSPHistory.aspx>>

³¹. Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation. National Register of Historic Places. 22 June 2009 <<http://www.crt.state.la.us/hp/nhl/default.htm>>

has plans to implement a reservation system, renovate the playground area and introduce a new policy and fee schedule.

Additional data relating to the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry can be found in the appendix to this document. For more information about Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry visit their website: <http://www.ldaf.state.la.us/portal/>

Sabine River Authority

The Sabine River Authority facilitates the recreational promotion, tourism, and retirement within the Sabine River Basin of Louisiana. The Sabine River Basin is located in the western part of the state, is bounded by Texas and the Calcasieu River Basin. Its mission is to preserve the Sabine River waters while allowing economic utilization for Louisiana citizens. The Sabine River Authority's primary mandate is the production of electricity under a licensing agreement with the Federal Power Commission (FPC).

The SRA will continue to operate existing recreational areas, with moderate improvements being made, as funds become available. Funds are generated from hydroelectric facility fees and entrance fees.

Local & Parish

Municipalities and Parish Governments

The largest number of recreational facilities is provided by local and parish governments. Parish governments provide nearly 27 percent of the existing recreation facilities and city and municipal governments provide an additional 24 percent with less than one percent of land. Local and parish recreation departments provide the bulk of organized recreation for all segments of the population and facilitate active group recreation such as baseball, football and athletic fields, running tracks, basketball and tennis courts, and playgrounds. Recently, local and parish providers are expressing the need for connected trail systems.

Local recreation departments are dealing with insufficient funding and the cost of providing recreation is escalating. Recreation facilities, built in better economic times, have become run down and require more expensive maintenance or renovation. Additional information about local recreational needs is explored further in the Louisiana Outdoor Recreation chapter of this document.

Situated next to a natural resource such as a lake or hiking area, each park site typically remains 75-80% undeveloped to provide visitors with an authentic wilderness experience. ³²



*The Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge, BREC, maintains 184 neighborhood parks that feature a wide variety of quality facilities with family-oriented leisure activities for all ages and population groups.*³³

³². Investing in Louisiana Cultural Economy: Grants Programs of the Office of LT. Governor Mitchell J. Landrieu and the Department of Culture, Recreation, & Tourism 24 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.crt.state.la.us/document-archive/grants/CRTgrantsbrochure.pdf>>

³³. The Recreation & Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge. 22 June 2009 <<http://www.brec.org>>

Public Schools

School recreation facilities also play an important role in recreation at the local and parish level. The most up to date (circa 1980) survey estimated that public schools had 8,500 acres of outdoor recreation land. School facilities are not included in the SCORP inventory. By 1990, 92% (58 of 63) school boards had some sort of agreement or understanding with public agencies or organizations regarding the sharing of facilities. Cooperative agreements to share resources (park facilities with students and school facilities with community) with the school board are typically used. In some instances the park or recreation agency maintains and operates the school owned facilities after school hours, extending the site for public use of an existing facility. The community benefits by the provision of after school programs and activities. The schools benefit by the reduction in their maintenance responsibilities and the additional access to park facilities for their students.

As of 2008 there are 1,574 public schools in Louisiana serving approximately 727,594 students. However, a few new schools are built without full recreation facilities. Also, health and physical education programs reduced and or eliminated. Both factors burden public outdoor recreation facilities and create negative impacts

on health and welfare of students. The Division of Outdoor Recreation staff and Louisiana Department of Education, have discussed the need for a detailed inventory that has not yet been performed. An inventory of 1,574 existing facilities will be a considerable effort for detailed facility condition assessment. The New Orleans School District will be rebuilt almost entirely over next several years as part of a \$550 million program (Jacobs, 2009). This information will be extremely useful to the Louisiana Cardiovascular Health Task Force. An evaluation of the recreation facilities available in Louisiana schools is necessary to target programs for young overweight school age children vulnerable to Type 2 Diabetes problems. The state remains ranked last among all states for overall health of residents, including school age children.

Private: Commercial and Non-Profit

Commercial and non-profit organizations provide close to 21 and 17 percent of the total number of recreation facilities available to the public, respectively. Private recreation facilities, like their government counterparts, provide a wide variety of recreation activities that are profitable. For instance, commercial suppliers supply more tent and trailer camping facilities than all the other categories combined, but supply less than



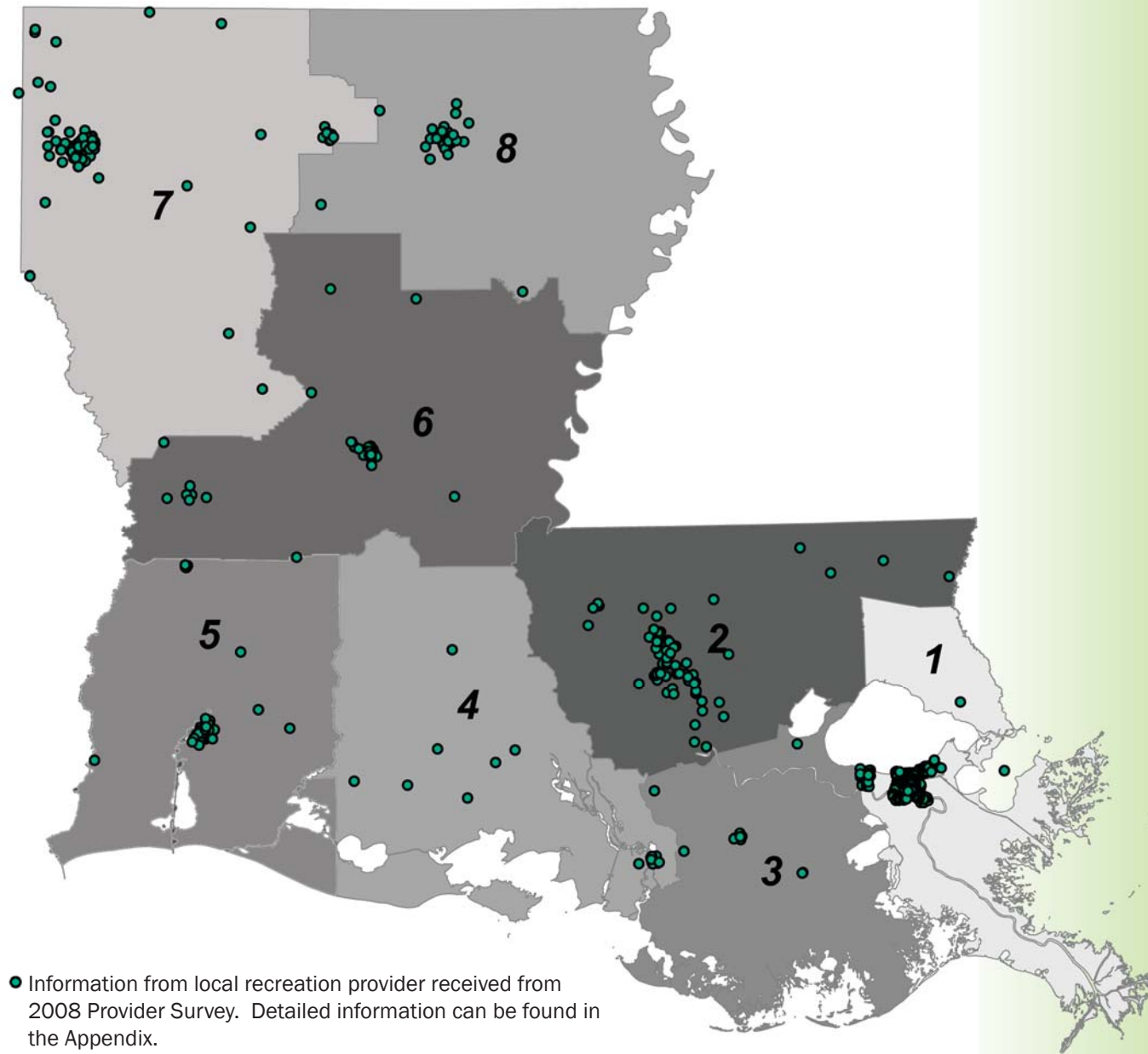


Figure 10: Louisiana Local Recreation

Source: *Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.*

Chapter 4 - Recreation Providers Overview

Louisiana has acquired more than \$65 million for approved projects since the L&WCF Act was signed in 1965.³⁴

³⁴. Investing in Louisiana Cultural Economy: Grants Programs of the Office of LT, Governor Mitchell J. Landrieu and the Department of Culture, Recreation, & Tourism 24 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.crt.state.la.us/document-archive/grants/CRTgrantsbrochure.pdf>>

2 percent of baseball fields in the state. Non-profit recreational suppliers vary from YMCA's and church camps to private hunting clubs and deliver the full spectrum of recreation activities from playgrounds to wildlife refuges. Nonprofit recreation sites account for close to a quarter of all the recreation acreage in the state. It is difficult to determine the exact recreation acreage that is supplied by the private sector. Little information exists on the amount of land being leased by timber companies for hunting. Approximately half of the 28 million acres of land in Louisiana is considered commercial forest and much of this land is being leased to private hunting clubs.

Year	LWCF Apportionment
1977	N/A
1978	\$5,174,398
1979	\$6,301,006
1980	\$5,136,733
1981	\$3,210,083
1982	\$0
1983	\$1,275,889
1984	\$722,689
1985	\$1,318,412
1986	\$1,377,172
1987	\$859,965
1988	\$611,450
1989	\$310,075
1990	\$324,219
1991	\$295,652
1992	\$533,355
1993	\$345,829
1994	\$433,718
1995	\$7,825,495
1996	\$0
1997	\$0
1998	\$0
1999	\$0
2000	\$654,474
2001	\$1,523,032
2002	\$2,384,484
2003	\$1,614,914
2004	\$1,537,600
2005	\$1,510,213
2006	\$469,166
2007	\$469,166
2008	\$387,192

Table 1: Land and Water Conservation Funds Available

Source: Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

Conclusion

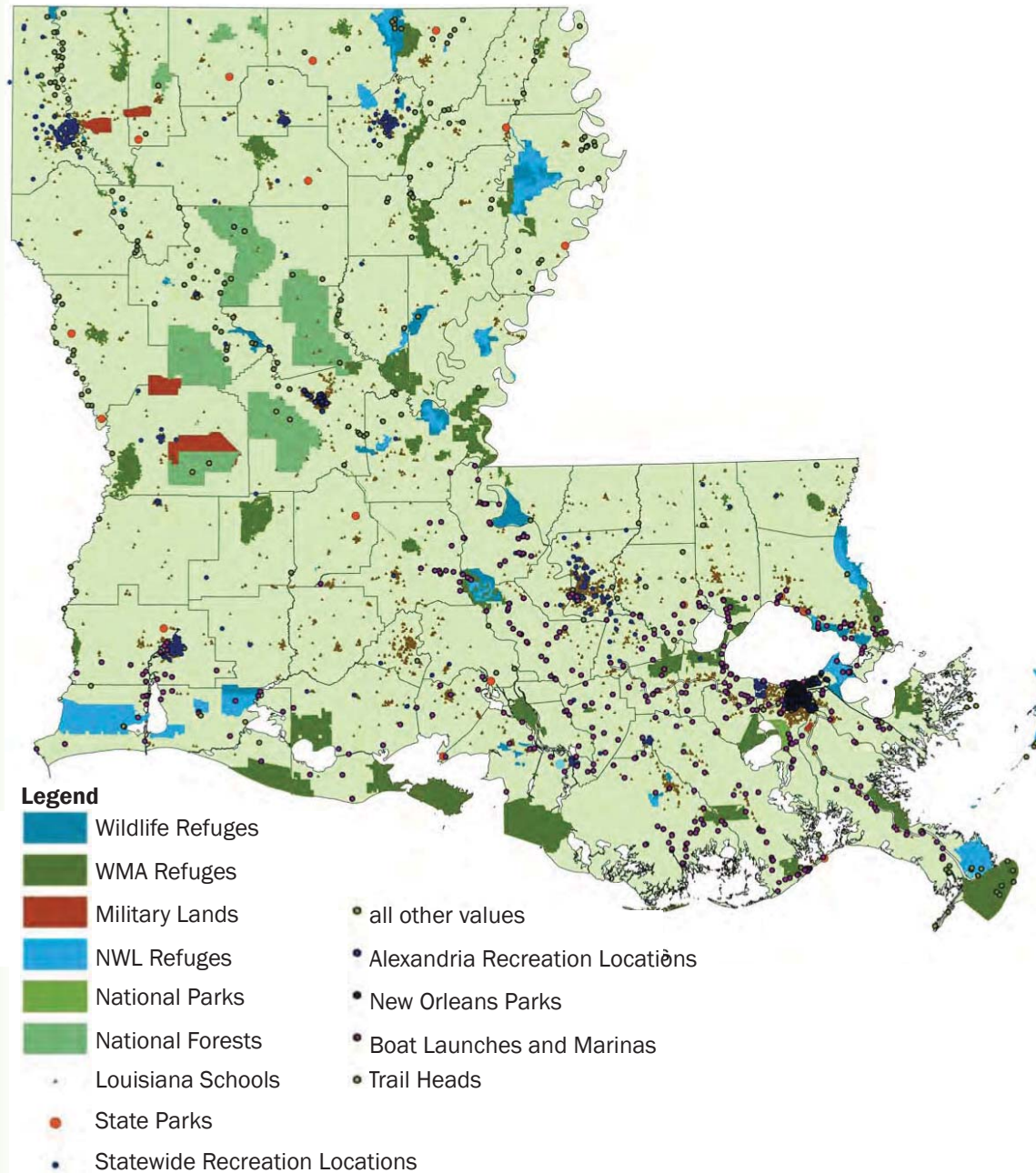
In summary, the information provided in this section is an overview of the broad spectrum of recreation suppliers in the state. There are nine federal and state agencies that supply recreation in Louisiana, numerous parish and local recreation departments, and private recreation suppliers. Over the years, some recreation specialization has occurred naturally with the U.S. Forest Service and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries providing the majority of dispersed recreation such as hunting and fishing. Parish and local recreation departments provide more organized forms of recreation like baseball and football. State agencies, such as the Louisiana Office of State Parks, Sabine River Authority, and the Office of Forestry, provide for many of the forms of outdoor activities that fall between the two, such as rental cabins, modern camping facilities, wilderness hiking, and personal water sports.

The prognosis for federal, state, and local agencies is that the next several years will present serious challenges. All agencies will continue to be plagued by decreasing budgets, increasingly deteriorated facilities, fewer personnel, the demand to accomplish more with less, an increased demand for more and better quality recreational facilities, demand for statewide trail systems, and acquisition of more and larger land areas. Other management challenges will be produced by increased pressure on large land areas brought about by continued private land closures, overcrowding, user conflicts, and adverse resource impacts.

On a positive note, the potential still exists for the acquisition of large acreage of easements and land in the Atchafalaya by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, further acquisition of lands adjacent to existing national wildlife refuges and

wildlife management areas by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and additional acreage for state refuges and wildlife management areas by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

In 2005, a total of 19,300 new acres were made available through acquisition and donation for recreation use and enjoyment.³⁵



³⁵ The LWCF Annual Report for 2005. 22 June 2009
<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/pub.htm>

Figure 11: Composite Map of Louisiana Recreational Opportunities

Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

* For parish specific recreation, refer to GIS Maps of Louisiana Recreation by Parish in the Appendix.

2009-2013 Louisiana SCORP

Chapter 5

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)



General Description

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are used to accurately map, in a geo-referenced coordinate system, geographic features, such as parishes, cities, census tracts, roads, parks, schools, and city halls. The real power of GIS is the ability to assign attribute data to any geographic feature and then analyze the data.

Implementation

For the Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, a comprehensive inventory of public recreational lands and facilities in Louisiana was compiled, in what is termed the Louisiana Recreational Opportunities (LRO) database. It includes specific data about each recreation location, whether neighborhood parks, state parks, federal wildlife refuges, natural resources, or other entity that serves as a source for recreation. The LRO is compatible and linked with the Louisiana RAM database and is designed to be user-friendly, highly functional, graphic, and communicative for State recreation planning needs.

Utilizing the LRO, analysis was conducted of where and what types of recreation needs are being met and are not being met throughout the state. The analysis results, along with resident and provider survey results, formed the basis for identifying and prioritizing recreation facilities needed across the state, ranging from small local athletic fields to large, natural conservation areas. The analysis and graphic representation of census data along with existing recreation facilities can clearly reveal the location and type federal, state, and local recreation investments should be made.

Strategy

The LRO will be a valuable tool for the long-term. It can be readily updated for both ongoing and periodic in-depth evaluation of SCORP goals and objectives being attained. The LRO will also enable the Office of State Parks to provide assistance to local parishes and municipalities, particularly those in rural areas or those under development pressure, in planning to meet future recreation needs.

To fully utilize the potential established by the LRO during the SCORP process, it is highly recommended that during the next five years the LRO is continued to be enhanced and developed. Immediate accessibility to a comprehensive list of attributes for state parks, trails, and recreational facilities would aid appropriate distribution of LWCF funding, expedite the selection process, and ensure state resident accessibility to adequate recreational opportunities.

2009-2013 Louisiana SCORP

Chapter 6

LOUISIANA RECREATION USE



Use of Louisiana's outdoor recreation resources has increased considerably from 2003 to 2005, declined in 2005, but continued to increase through 2008. State residents have increased their number of visits to facilities and natural areas. Over the last two decades residents have also sought new, non-traditional activities in addition to more traditional recreation activities.

Many trends are creating the increased use of outdoor recreation facilities and services: increasing awareness of health and fitness, recreation technologies, aging population, dual-income households and single-parent families, and special needs groups.

Several factors will influence recreation in Louisiana

- Large proportions of Louisiana residents are getting older as the Baby Boomers of post World War II era are now entering retirement age. The older average age of residents is affecting the types and kinds of recreation facilities demanded over the next five years.
- Recreation activities such as hunting, fishing, camping and hiking will continue to be in high demand. However, access to natural resource lands and waters supporting nature based recreation activities faces the challenge of declining land areas available for public use.
- Close-to-home, inexpensive recreation facilities will continue to be important based on residents concerns for the world economy and homeland security. A greater emphasis on meeting residents' recreation demands within the state is a priority, particularly relating to golf, active sports, camping, and trails.
- Non-traditional recreation activities are

escalating, demanding the re-evaluation of traditional public recreation facilities for possible new uses. Skateboarding, sand volleyball, water spray parks (replacing pools in some communities), and climbing walls are examples of non-traditional sports gaining popularity in Louisiana. Many of these activities require specialized facilities, training programs, and new liability and facility management considerations.

- Louisiana has a travel and tourism employment base of 143,000 in 2007. Visitor spending represents \$9 billion annually in 2007, nearly matching year 2004, after the dip in 2005.³⁶



SCORP Process Overview

The 2009-2014 SCORP is the culmination of a planning and review process that involved research and public participation. The 2009-2014 Louisiana SCORP report identifies the state's outdoor recreational needs, goals, and strategies in order to efficiently coordinate the efforts of devoted individuals, groups, organizations, agencies, municipalities and parishes involved in recreation.

Domestic travel expenditures directly generated nearly 100.8 thousand jobs within Louisiana in 2007.³⁷

This document also describes the setting for the state's outdoor recreation activities, with emphasis on recent trends and a revised outlook for the next five to ten years. It also describes in considerable detail, the fast-tracked planning and review process used to involve hundreds of Louisiana residents in the identification of outdoor recreational needs. These identified issues and needs aided the development of statewide recommendations and strategies to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities. The methodologies used to identify Louisiana outdoor recreation issues, perceptions, priorities, needs, and opportunities include:

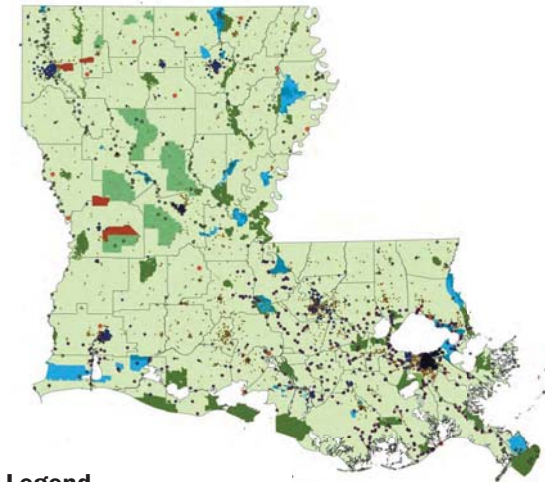
1. Task Force Committee Input and Review
2. Provider Surveys
3. Louisiana Outdoor Recreation Forums (LORF)
4. Resident Surveys
5. Development of GIS Outdoor Recreation Database

2008 Provider Survey Process

In 2008, a system-wide facilities survey was conducted in Louisiana. Questionnaires were mailed to 460 municipal and parish officials involved in recreation and to members of the Louisiana Recreation and Park Association, 54 recreational providers responded. The high response rate, compared to the number of cities and parishes, is indicative of the survey's ability to adequately reveal Louisiana's critical issues.

The primary purpose of the survey was to obtain information regarding what activities the providers viewed as important to the community, what type of activities were provided to the community, the limitations and priorities, and annual funding and budgets. They survey also asked providers to attach a list of facilities and amenities, a corresponding map marking the listed facilities, and any other beneficial

information about the facilities. This information was compiled into a GIS database for the state to use as a recreational resource. Facility locations compiled from the survey are indicated in the following map, additional information received about these facilities is included in the appendix.



Legend

- Wildlife Refuges
- WMA Refuges
- Military Lands
- NWL Refuges
- National Parks
- National Forests
- Louisiana Schools
- State Parks
- Statewide Recreation Locations
- all other values
- Alexandria Recreation Locations
- New Orleans Parks
- Boat Launches and Marinas
- Trail Heads

Figure 11: Figure 11: Composite Map of Louisiana Recreational Opportunities

Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

* For a larger view of this map, please refer to page 35.

³⁶ Louisiana Department Culture, Recreation and Tourism. The 2007 Louisiana Tourism Satellite Account an Update. 2007. <[http://www.crt.state.la.us/TOURISM/RESEARCH/Documents/2007-08/2007TSA\(Final\).pdf](http://www.crt.state.la.us/TOURISM/RESEARCH/Documents/2007-08/2007TSA(Final).pdf)>

³⁷ The Economic Impact of Travel on Louisiana Parishes. Aug 2008. <<http://crt.state.la.us/tourism/research/documents/2007-08/economicimpactoftravelonlouisianaparishes2007.pdf>>

2008 Provider Survey Results

Recreation Activities

The questionnaire asked many questions regarding recreation activities provided by providers (Table 2), popular places for visitor and resident use (Table 3), and important community activities viewed by the provider (Table 4). These questions help determine what providers view as the outdoor recreational activities that are important and popular to their area residents.

Activity Provided	Percentage
Hiking	59.3%
Fishing	38.9%
Swimming	33.3%
Passive Recreation	31.5%
Bicycling	24.1%
Aquatic Sports	22.2%
Camping	20.4%
Paddling	14.8%

Table 2: Recreation Activities Provided by Providers

Source: 2008 Providers Survey

Location	Percentage
Local Sites / Parks	68.5%
Cultural / Historical Sites	29.6%
Trails	29.6%
Waterfronts	27.8%
Golf Courses	20.4%
Natural Areas	16.7%
Commercial / Private Sites	9.3%
Other	5.6%

Table 3: Popular Places for Visitor and Resident Use

Source: 2008 Providers Survey

Activity	Percentage
Field Sports (Softball, Basketball)	68.5%
Court Sports	66.7%
Walking/Hiking	66.7%
Field Sports (Football, Soccer)	55.6%
Running/Jogging	53.7%
Hunting	42.6%
Spectator	42.6%
Fishing	40.7%
Bicycling	37.0%
Swimming/Spray Parks	33.3%
Golf	29.6%
Public Access to State Waters	25.9%
Visit Natural Places	22.2%
Campground Camping	22.2%
Skateboarding	18.5%
Horseback Riding	14.8%
Off-Road Vehicle Driving	11.1%

Table 4: Important Community Activities

Source: 2008 Providers Survey

Limitations and Priorities

The questionnaire asked respondents to list the reasons preventing greater levels of resident and visitor participation, as well as the agency's top three priorities to improve outdoor recreation. The data compiled from these questions helps determine the agency's limitations and priorities. In general, the ranking of the agency's perception of their limitations and their established priorities are directly related (Table 5).

One of the first baseball teams in Louisiana was the New Orleans Pelicans. Founded in 1887, the Pelicans were an active team for the next 72 years.³⁸

Limits to Participation	Percentage	Priority Needs	Percentage
Cost to Participate	0.0%	Funding	66.7%
Lack of Facilities	40.7%	More Facilities, Wider Activity Variety	38.9%
Lack of Land	38.9%	More Public Lands	31.5%
Lack of Improvements	37.0%	New Improvements	31.5%
Safety	22.2%	Safety Upgrades	24.1%
Distance from Household	20.4%	Closer Facilities	16.7%
Lack of Information	16.7%	Promotion	13.0%
Lack of Access	0.0%	Access Upgrades	7.4%
Maintenance Concerns	11.1%	Facility Maintenance	7.4%
Maintenance Concerns	11.1%	Facility Maintenance	7.4%
Other	7.4%	Other	3.7%
Health Needs	13.0%	Health Upgrades	1.9%

Table 5: Provider Limitations and Priorities

Source: 2008 Providers Survey

Funding and Budget

Recreational providers continue to prioritize funding as a primary concern (Table 5). Local agencies operating recreational facilities under a general funding entity have more of a problem with funding acquisition than larger municipalities with established parks and recreation departments with a staff and budget. Most agencies that had no established departments were from rural areas and reported a high use of their facilities by the local population. Budget reductions at the federal and state levels have forced local and parish governments to rely more on local funding sources, intensifying the recreational funding burden upon rural municipalities because they have to choose whether to invest in recreation or other basic services. Limited local funds are being used to maintain existing facilities, and predictably, there is little or no money available for acquisition and new construction to meet either present or future needs.

Regional Louisiana Outdoor Recreation Forums (LORF)

The BROWN + DANOS, landdesign, inc. team and consultant representatives of Jacobs Engineering Group, inc. and Fernandez Plans LLC organized and facilitated eight Louisiana Outdoor Recreational Forums (LORFs) at different locations to gain an accurate representation of the eight regions of the state. The workshops had two primary objectives: to identify issues, challenges, needs, or opportunities and to discuss trends affecting the region's outdoor recreation picture. The LORFs were conducted November 17 to 20, 2008 and focused on the participation of local and state recreational providers. The public was also welcomed.

LORF Regional Locations

Region 1: New Orleans
Region 2: Baton Rouge
Region 3: Houma
Region 4: St. Martinville
Region 5: Lake Charles
Region 6: Alexandria
Region 7: Shreveport
Region 8: Monroe

³⁸. Home Run Scout: The History of Baseball in Louisiana. 22 June 2009. <<http://www.homerunscout.com/Louisiana-baseball-history.php>>

Local municipal, parish and regional park and recreation departments and local elected officials represented 40 percent of LORF event attendance. State and other agencies (Office of State Parks, Wildlife and Fisheries, USFS) represented 20 percent. The remaining 20 percent of attendees are members of the general public and recreation advocacy groups (trails, sand volleyball, conservation groups, OHV). Participants and attendees at the LORF workshops are listed in the Appendix.

The meetings began with a SCORP presentation and an overview of the 2008 needs and goals defined by the collaboration of the SCORP Task Force, consultants, and Office of State Parks staff. Following the presentation, comments by the attendees regarding the established needs and goals were welcomed. The group was then engaged in a discussion of the planning/development and maintenance/operations issues related to their region. These lists of issues then were prioritized to reveal each region's top concerns. The final LORF activity was a break out design session where small groups were engaged in designing their "ideal park." The teams were given an initial budget to cover land acquisition and construction costs and then the associated maintenance costs were revealed, often times causing the teams to rethink their design choices. After the design exercise, the attendees were asked to fill out comment sheets and the SCORP consultants were available for further discussion.

The presentation began with a brief definition and description of SCORP. The benefits of using Geographic Information System (GIS) related to Louisiana outdoor recreation was highlighted and explained by showing examples of mapping capabilities. A parish map book, comprised of the 64 parishes in Louisiana and showing the existing recreational data, was passed around to the group for them to review and mark additional



Figure 12: Louisiana Regions

Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

recreational data that was missing from the maps.

The content of the provider and resident surveys was discussed and the percentage of currently received resident surveys compared to population densities was shown utilizing a GIS generated map. Overall, other than region one, with residents coping with various storm related incidences, each region was well represented. An overview of the established 2009-2014 needs and goals defined by the SCORP Task Force, consultants, and Office of State Parks was discussed with the LORF participants and are listed below.

Outdoor recreation needs and goals

- Changes in hunter and angler activity rates
- Important for state residents
- Highest for State Agencies
- Capital improvements and programming for new, returning and continuing participants

Emerging Green Issues

- Energy savings, recycling, pollution reduction
- Leadership in conservation/stewardship
- Reduce long term maintenance costs
- Wetland education, water quality

Goals for 2009-2014

- Economic Tourism
- Trails
- Innovation
- Community outdoor recreation
- Cooperation & coordination

Issues: Planning/Development and Maintenance/Operations

Following the discussion of the state's goals for the 2009-2014 SCORP, the group was engaged in a discussion of the issues and concerns relating to their region's outdoor recreation. Two categories were identified to begin the discussion: planning/development and maintenance/operations. Within these categories typical, reoccurring issues related to planning and maintenance were subcategorized to encourage participants to think beyond these typical issues in order to reveal the elements contributing to the overall issues.

Planning and Development

Needs and Analysis
Acquisition
Funding
Design
Construction

Maintenance and Operations

Programming
Promotion
Funding
Accessibility
Maintenance

Using flipcharts, the SCORP consultants

recorded the issues the participants discussed. These lists of issues were posted on the walls of the facility and each participant was given four colored stickers, each given a rank, and asked to choose their top priorities. The points were then totaled to reveal the region's top issues of concern and are listed by region.

Design Break-Out Session

The break out design session engaged small groups of the LORF participants in the design of their "ideal park." Beginning the exercise, the teams were given a 3.5 million dollar budget, three park choices, and a list of park amenities and associated costs. The allocated 3.5 million dollar budget includes the property acquisition and the park amenities chosen from the pattern book. After choosing a park type and designing it to meet their ideal standards, the chosen park amenities were given a \$350,000 associating yearly maintenance cost to which the participants were forced to stay within. The intent of this exercise was to determine the participants' desires and reveal the maintenance requirements and considerations related to their choices so that they may better understand the inherent balance of design desires and continuing maintenance costs.

Three Park Choices

Neighborhood Park System = \$650,000
Special Use Park = \$250,000
Community Park = \$100,000

Pattern Book Park Amenity Themes

Passive Recreation
Aquatic Activities
Hiking/Bicycling
Camping Activities
Outdoor Active Recreation
Extreme Sports
Traditional Park Components
Specialty Park Activities

Regional Results

Region 1 (New Orleans)

2007 Estimated Population: 930,635

Parishes

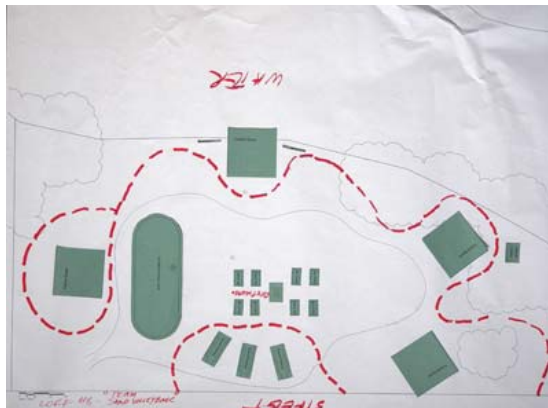
Jefferson
Orleans
Plaquemines
St. Bernard
St. Tammany

Priorities

1. Engaging effective public participation in the "Design Process".
2. Documenting local recreation needs / demands.
3. Designing with emerging "GREEN" concepts.
4. Delivering programs and operations.
5. Utilizing "GREEN" concepts for sustainable park maintenance and operations.
6. Expanding successful outdoor education examples such as LA Outdoors Outreach Program (LOOP). More information on the LOOP can be found at

<http://www.crt.state.la.us/parks/iloop.aspx>

Design Break-Out Session



Region 1 Example: Community Integration
Sympathetic to neighborhood recreational needs, providing nature in the city, islands of refuge, and connectivity.

Region 2 (Baton Rouge)

2007 Estimated Population: 930,355

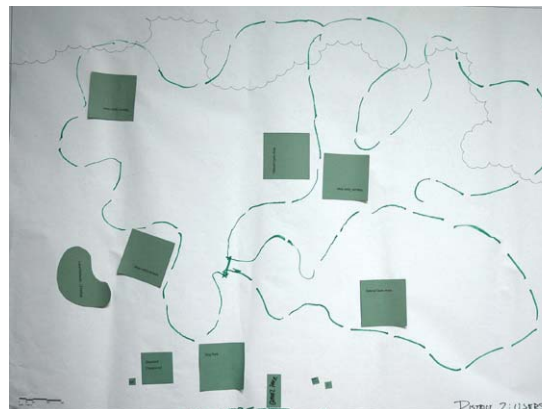
Parishes

Ascension	St. Helena
E. Baton Rouge	Tangipahoa
E. Feliciana	W. Baton Rouge
Iberville	W. Feliciana
Livingston	Washington
Pointe Coupee	

Priorities

1. Providing public access and recreation opportunities in areas that showcase Louisiana's diverse natural resources.
2. Implementing a state-wide and parish-wide trail system.
3. Performing a realistic community needs assessment.
4. Educating to discourage "not in my backyard" mentality.
5. Training park maintenance personnel properly.

Design Break-Out Session



Region 2 Example: Connectivity
Emphasis of obtaining valuable land to create community wide connectivity with trails connecting multi-jurisdictional open space and recreational opportunities.

Incorporated in 1813 under the Lawrason Act, St. Francisville is the second oldest town in Louisiana.³⁹

St. Martin Parish is home to the world's largest freshwater river basin, the Atchafalaya Basin.⁴⁰

³⁹. 50 states: Louisiana Facts and Trivia. 22 June 2009. <<http://www.50states.com/facts/louis.htm>>

⁴⁰. 50 states: Louisiana Facts and Trivia. 22 June 2009. <<http://www.50states.com/facts/louis.htm>>

Region 3 (Houma – Thibodaux) 2007 Estimated Population: 345,434

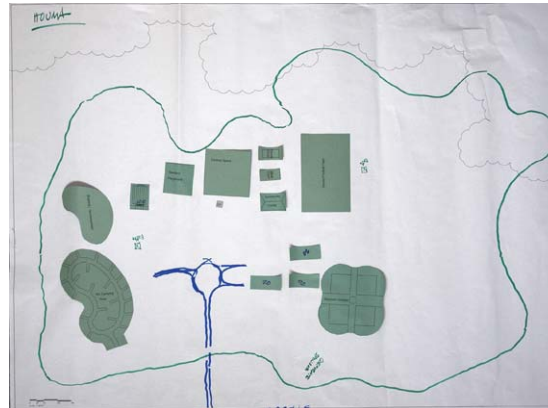
Parishes

Assumption
Lafourche
St. Charles
St. James
St. John
Terrebonne

Priorities

1. Coordinating recreation opportunities across multiple jurisdictions.
2. Positioning a multi-purpose facility as a regional economic generator.
3. Advocating recreational programs as a tangible “Quality of Life” attractor.
4. Developing support facilities for existing recreation facilities.
5. Determining community needs.
6. Marketing existing recreational opportunities.

Design Break-Out Session



Region 3 Example: Sustainable Regional Attractor- Sustainably constructed provisions for tournament and regional recreational facilities with a focus on baseball, soccer, RV campground, and a community center.

Region 4 (Lafayette – St. Martinville) 2007 Estimated Population: 583,222

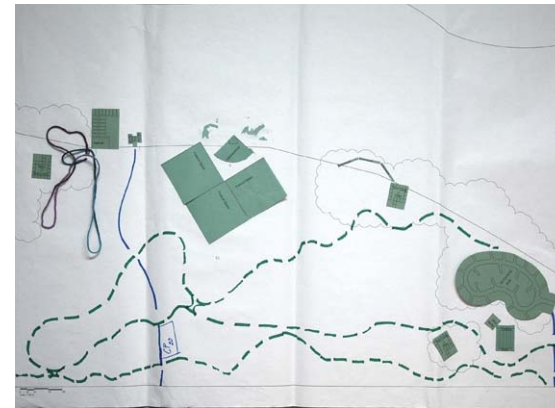
Parishes

Acadia	St. Martin
Evangeline	St. Mary
Iberia	Vermilion
Lafayette	
St. Landry	

Priorities

1. Funding: competition with other “essential services” and the state allocation process.
2. Dedicating a funding source for maintenance and operations.
3. Providing recreational opportunities that reflect the unique needs of rural and urban residents.
4. Providing safe access to community parks and schools.
5. Developing a grass-roots recreation vision that continues beyond current political/ administrative directions.

Design Break-Out Session



Region 4 Example: Cultural and Natural Resources Respect for natural parks that provide recreational opportunities which reflect the area's cultural heritage.

Region 5 (Lake Charles)

2007 Estimated Population: 283,403

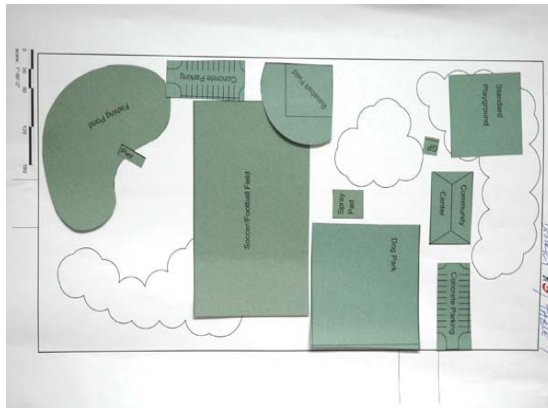
Parishes

Allen
Beauregard
Calcasieu
Cameron
Jefferson Davis

Priorities

1. Funding: state and local government levels.
2. Acquiring property dedicated to recreation.
3. Providing services to residents outside the city limits.
4. Providing professional and technical support/resources to local jurisdictions.
5. Funding: competition with other “essential services”.

Design Break-Out Session



Region 5 Example: Community Integration
Emphasis of establishing park and recreation spaces in each neighborhood with connectivity. Bringing nature into the community.

Region 6 (Alexandria)

2007 Estimated Population: 298,458

Parishes

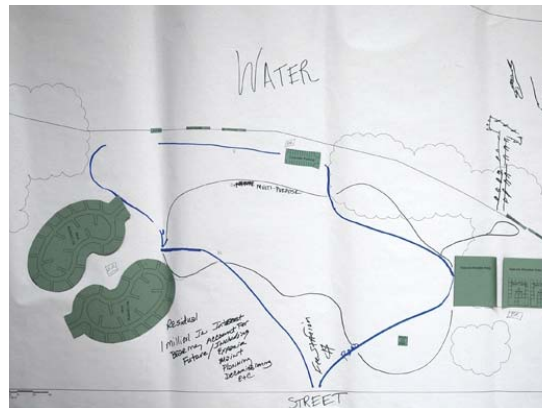
Avoyelles
Catahoula
Concordia
Grant
LaSalle

Rapides
Vernon
Winn

Priorities

1. Engaging a Comprehensive Parks System master plan for determination of necessary services.
2. Funding for maintenance and operations of recreation facilities.
3. Coordinating with other agencies to prevent unnecessary duplication of services.
4. Balancing funds for “new” facilities and “old” facilities facing abandonment.
5. Implementing usage fees to fund maintenance and operations.

Design Break-Out Session



Region 6 Example: Sustainability
Development of a community park that helps create a destination while “banking” some of the money for long-term sustainable operations and maintenance.

Jennings is called the “Garden Spot of Louisiana” for its rich and productive farmland.⁴¹

Completed in 1860, the Homer courthouse is one of only four pre-civil war courthouses still in use in Louisiana today.⁴²

⁴¹ 50 states: Louisiana Facts and Trivia. 22 June 2009. <<http://www.50states.com/facts/louis.htm>>

⁴² Claiborne One: history of Claiborne Parish. 6 July 2009. <<http://www.claiborneone.org/cppj/history.html>>

Region 7 (Shreveport)

2007 Estimated Population: 574,622

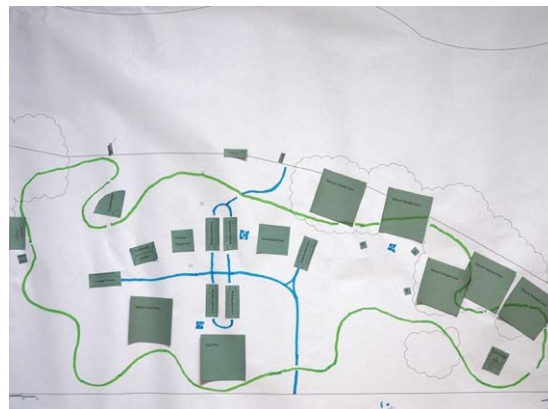
Parishes

Bienville	Lincoln
Bossier	Natchitoches
Caddo	Red River
Claiborne	Sabine
De Soto	Webster

Priorities

1. Funding to meet the demands and needs of citizens at the community level.
2. Appreciating the “value of recreation” beginning in early childhood.
3. Implementing a state-wide GIS database with public access.
4. Changing perceptions on the “Value” of recreation through participation, resource investment, and return on investment.
5. Cooperating between agencies for access and use of public lands for recreation.
6. Developing facility maintenance standards to help local jurisdictions.

Design Break-Out Session



Region 7 Example: Showcase Development of a feature park facility that not only draws visitor and residents alike, but is the focus of recreation in the community.

Region 8 (Monroe)

2007 Estimated Population: 304,611

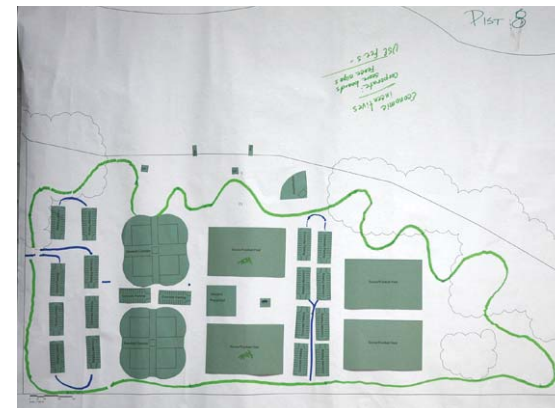
Parishes

Caldwell	Ouachita
E. Carroll	Richland
Franklin	Tensas
Jackson	Union
Madison	W. Carroll
Morehouse	

Priorities

1. Funding to implement completed master development plan.
2. Defining community “Quality of Life” and the relationship to recreation.
3. Establishing and educating about the economic benefits of recreation.
4. Funding for maintenance and operations.
5. Caring for existing facilities.
6. Retaining qualified and trained staff.
7. Focusing on the accountability at the administrative levels government.

Design Break-Out Session



Region 8 Example: Regional Attractor Provisions for tournament and parish-wide recreational needs focused upon athletic fields.

2008 Residents Survey Process

Over 2,460 households in Louisiana were sampled to determine recreation participation throughout the state. The questionnaire measured participation rates in 50 recreation activities. The 2008 survey was a stratified mailing list with confirmed household addresses randomly drawn to be representative of all eight planning regions, income levels in relation to the population distribution. The responses were a very close fit to the regional segmentation (% survey responses to % of residents in each of 8 regions) in the majority of the regions. All regions had at least a 10% response rate based on their relative population. However, a few of these regions have an overall low population and thus, the total number of received surveys for those regions can be perceived as low. To strengthen the validity of the resident survey and to allow a regional analysis, the survey data was weighted. Full un-weighted and weighted data results can be found in the appendix of this document.

The 2008 survey includes the same types of questions as prior surveys (1968, 1974, 1980, 1985 and 2002). The 2008 data results provide current outdoor recreational demands and the projected needs looking to the year 2030 as the long range planning horizon.

The High Quarter Sunday data method used in prior years was not used in 2008 to assess the demand for recreation. Instead, standard population based ratios developed in 2008 are used to also account for funding, maintenance and operations, peak and regular use, and visitation rates. The facility population ration standards are included in the Appendix. The mail-out, mail-in survey questionnaires were completed by mail and via internet reply from August 22 thru November 30, 2008, with 348 adult Louisiana residents. The overall margin of

error obtained is plus or minus 5 percent at the 95 percent level of confidence, 19 of 20 times.

2008 Residents Survey State Results

The 2008 survey of residents included data collected and compiled in several different ways. The average number of activities by participants; 2008 participation rates in specific activities; the estimated number of participants statewide in the previous twelve months based on the sample; a consolidation of statewide recreation activities in major categories; a comparison of year-round activity participation rates within eight planning regions; and demographic profiles of participants in these activities. Additionally, other research of trends in the state and across the US was assembled from national studies to compare to 2008 residents survey findings and look at historical trends. The full survey results can be found in the Appendix of this document.

The perception of relative importance of outdoor recreation activities was determined to reveal the recreational activities that are important to Louisiana residents. The importance percentage was determined by dividing the number of times each activity was marked as important by the total number of respondents.

The TOP 10 2008 Important Outdoor Recreational Activities among households are

1. Fishing/Crabbing	58.9%
2. Running/Jogging	48.2%
3. Campground Camping	43.7%
4. Public Access to State Waters	42.7%
5. Hunting	41.3%
6. Spectator Sports	35.9%
7. Swimming/Spray Parks	34.9%
8. Botanic Gardens	34.0%
9. Walking/Hiking	32.5%
10. Picnicking	30.2%

Established in 1961, the Louisiana State Arboretum was the first such area in the South and the first state-supported arboretum in the United States.⁴³

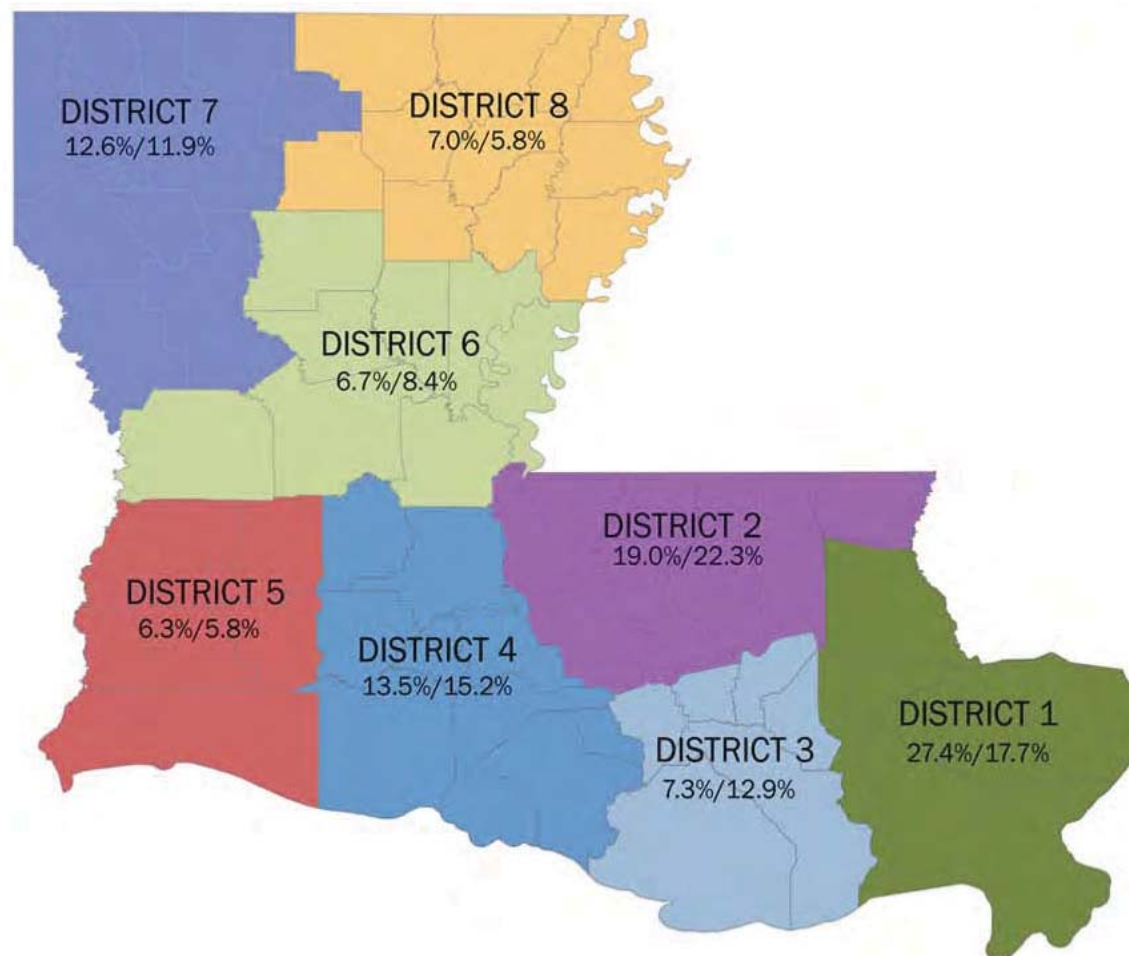


Figure 13: Louisiana Resident Survey Regional Response Percentage

Source: Brown + Danos landdesign, inc.

⁴³. Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism: Office of State Parks. 22 June 2009. <<http://crt.state.la.us/parks/iarbor.aspx>>

The participation rate is the frequency (estimated average number of times) that a particular activity was participated in during a given period for resident in the state. Generally, the participation rates tracked well with the important recreational activities (See table 3). The participation rates and important recreational activities help recreation agencies determine changes in trends among activities relative to prior years for facility planning.

Here are a few other interesting findings from the resident survey

- Most state residents receive recreation information by word of mouth (78.4%) – a 2:1 favorite over the next 3 preferred communication methods (TV and radio, Internet or newspaper).
- 93.4% of residents perceive existing recreation sites as safe.
- 60.5% of residents enjoy driving for pleasure or scenic drives and most drive to natural sites within the state.
- 56.1% of residents visit public recreation places to create memories and 41.1% have unique experiences. This indicates that Louisiana residents view public recreation places as key components to “quality of life.”
- Lack of Information about facilities 31.0%, facility distance 26.3%, and general lack of facilities 24.5% limits resident participation in outdoor recreation.
- Preferred improvements of outdoor recreation include; additional facilities for a wider variety of activities 37.4%, Promotion more information 34.6%, more public land 35.6%, and closer facilities 32.2%
- The most active participants in outdoor recreational activities are children. The survey sample included households typical of the state population – 34% with kids, 30% with seniors, and 12% with some type of disability.



The seven principle freshwater sportfish of Louisiana are the largemouth bass, spotted bass, crappie, bream, white bass, catfish and striped bass.⁴⁴

Activity	Importance to 2008 Residents	2008 Trends	Participation by 2008 Residents
Visit Natural Places	60.90%	1	N/A
Fishing, Crabbing, Crawfishing (non-commercial)	58.90%	1	62%
Walking or Hiking	48.20%	2	38%
Campground Camping	43.70%		49.60%
Public Access to State Waters for Water Craft	42.70%		39%
Hunting	41.30%	3	46%
Spectator Sports and Activities	35.90%	4	39%
Swimming, Water spray grounds	34.90%		48.50%
Botanical gardens, Arboretum	34%		38%
Bicycling	33%		32%
Picknicking	30.20%		39%
Play fields (softball, baseball)	26.70%		28%
Off Road/Off Highway Trail Driving	25.10%		28%
Play field Sports (football, soccer)	24.70%		28%
Running or Jogging	25%		N/A
Golf	23.70%	4	26%
Bird Watching, Nature Viewing	22.80%		N/A
Padding canoe or kayak	N/A		18%
Play Court Sport or Game	20.80%		N/A
Horseback Riding	18.30%		N/A
Extreme and Non-traditional Sports	12.60%	5	N/A
Skateboarding	5.50%	2	N/A
Other	7.50%		N/A

Notes

1. Down 20% in past 5 years
2. Similar to US Rates
3. Declining in past 10 years
4. Higher than US rates
5. Growing Demand

Table 6: Resident Participation and Important Activities

Source: 2008 Residents Survey and 2006 USFWS Survey

⁴⁴. Gateway New Orleans: History. 22 June 2009. <<http://www.gatewayno.com/history/history.html>>

As has been shown in previous state and national surveys, there is a direct relationship between household income, education levels, and household size with the average number of activities. Households with an income of over \$100,000 reported the highest average number of activities. There is also a correlation between education levels of the respondents and average outdoor activities: the higher a person's education level, the average number of activities was shown to be higher. College graduates or some college households reported the highest recreation participation. Four-person households averaged the highest number of recreation activities.

2008 Residents Survey Regional Results

The development of the SCORP focused upon a regional analysis. The top three activities rated by the residents as being the most important are listed by region in Table 7. Also listed are the regional participation rates. All regions had a least a 10% response rate based on their relative population. However, a few of these regions have an overall low population and thus, the total number of received surveys for those regions can be perceived as low. These regions include: Region 5 with 21 total responses representative of 12.6% of the total population, Region 6 with 27 total responses representative of 15.4% of the total population, and Region 8 with 19 total responses representative of 10.6% of the total population. To strengthen the validity of the resident survey and to allow a regional analysis, the survey data was weighted.

	Important Activities	Percentage	Highest Participation Rates	Percentage
Region 1	Visiting Natural Places	65.1%	Driving for Pleasure	50.8%
	Fishing	61.9%	Fishing	44.4%
	Botanic Gardens	52.4%	Camping	41.3%
Region 2	Fishing	67.1%	Fishing	64.6%
	Visiting Natural Places	65.1%	Driving for Pleasure	55.7%
	Walking/Hiking	58.2%	Swimming	50.6%
Region 3	Fishing	82.9%	Driving for Pleasure	80.5%
	Visiting Natural Places	58.5%	Fishing	80.5%
	Public Access to State Waters	53.7%	Swimming	61.0%
			Camping	61.0%
Region 4	Visiting Natural Places	63.5%	Fishing	67.3%
	Fishing	61.5%	Driving for Pleasure	65.4%
	Campground Camping	51.9%	Camping	57.7%
Region 5	Visiting Natural Places	34.1%	Swimming	66.7%
	Walking/Hiking	34.1%	Driving for Pleasure	61.9%
	Fishing	34.1%	Fishing	61.9%
			Hiking	61.9%
Region 6	Visiting Natural Places	63.0%	Driving for Pleasure	59.3%
	Hunting	63.0%	Fishing	55.6%
	Fishing	59.3%	Camping	44.4%
Region 7	Visiting Natural Places	61.0%	Driving for Pleasure	61.0%
	Walking/Hiking	46.3%	Fishing	53.7%
	Fishing	43.9%	Swimming	46.3%
Region 8	Visiting Natural Places	68.4%	Driving for Pleasure	68.4%
	Walking/Hiking	63.2%	Fishing	42.1%
	Hunting	47.4%	Camping	31.6%
			Hiking	31.6%

Table 7: Resident Top 3 Important Activities and Participation by Region

Source: 2008 Residents Survey

Preferred Improvements	Region1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4
Promotion	36.5%	40.5%	29.3%	26.9%
Closer Facilities	23.8%	34.2%	43.9%	30.8%
More Facilities, Wider Variety	41.3%	41.8%	36.6%	38.5%
Safety Upgrades	27.0%	21.5%	19.5%	13.5%
More Public Lands	38.1%	35.4%	63.4%	30.8%
Health Upgrades	25.4%	22.8%	31.7%	23.1%
Financial Assistance	7.9%	6.3%	4.9%	13.5%
Access Upgrades	4.8%	2.5%	2.4%	11.5%
Facility Maintenance	4.8%	6.3%	12.2%	7.7%
New Improvements	7.9%	5.1%	12.2%	11.5%
Other	6.3%	3.8%	4.9%	9.6%
Preferred Improvements	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8
Promotion	29.3%	40.7%	41.5%	26.3%
Closer Facilities	17.1%	51.9%	26.8%	36.8%
More Facilities, Wider Variety	17.1%	40.7%	34.1%	36.8%
Safety Upgrades	12.2%	22.2%	24.4%	21.1%
More Public Lands	12.2%	44.4%	24.4%	26.3%
Health Upgrades	14.6%	37.0%	29.3%	42.1%
Financial Assistance	7.3%	11.1%	4.9%	21.1%
Access Upgrades	0.0%	7.4%	4.9%	0.0%
Facility Maintenance	2.4%	11.1%	17.1%	5.3%
New Improvements	4.9%	18.5%	14.6%	5.3%
Other	4.9%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%

Table 8: Residents Preferred Improvement by Region

Source: 2008 Residents Survey

2009-2013 Louisiana SCORP

Chapter 7

LOUISIANA OUTDOOR RECREATION



Regional Recreational Analysis:

Statewide population fluctuation and regional differences demanded a regional approach and analysis throughout the development of the SCORP. The priorities and designs generated from the eight LORFs (Louisiana Outdoor Recreation Forums) and the residents' ranking of important activities and priorities in Louisiana served as the foundation for the 2009-2014 analysis of regional needs. LORF designs engaged participants in the creation of their ideal park with budget restraints to reveal recreation priorities. Detailed tables from the LORFs and surveys are in the Louisiana Recreation Use section of this document and additional information can be found in the appendix.

The development of the SCORP focused upon a regional analysis. All regions had a least a 10% response rate based on their relative population. However, a few of these regions have an overall low population and thus, the total number of surveys received for those regions may be perceived as low. These regions include: Region 5 with 21 total responses representative of 12.6% of the total population, Region 6 with 27 total responses representative of 15.4% of the total population, and Region 8 with 19 total responses representative of 10.6% of the total population. To strengthen the validity of the resident survey and to allow a regional analysis, the survey data was weighted.

Region 1

Region 1 is the largest region and experienced the most change in the past five years as two-thirds of New Orleans residents have relocated since August 2005, many of which are returning. Three fourths of those residents relocated to communities located within 200 miles of New Orleans. Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes

were devastated in 2005 and remain below their population sizes of 15 to 20 years ago.

Priorities generated from the LORF were primarily focused upon effectively identifying and meeting community recreational needs and utilizing innovative and sustainable design methods. This reflects impact of the recent hurricanes devastating the regions, pushing residents to appreciate sustainable building practices and participate in community planning efforts. Designs generated from the LORF ranged from meeting community recreational needs, utilizing athletics as a regional attractor, and connectivity of trails and open spaces. The variety of recreation strategies is indicative of a region with multiple needs and goals.

The resident priorities from the survey indicate a need for more recreational land and variety that is accessible, safe, and promoted. The top three activities viewed as important by Region 1 residents were primarily related to passive recreation including: visiting natural places, fishing, and botanic gardens. Highest participation rates include: driving for pleasure, fishing, and camping.

Region 2

The second largest region experienced significant growth when many residents displaced from the greater New Orleans area moved after August 2005. Those relocating moved to the greater Baton Rouge area and the higher ground of the Florida Parishes including Tangipahoa, St. Tammany, Washington, and Livingston Parishes.

Priorities generated from the LORF were focused on accessing and utilizing Louisiana's natural resources for recreation, connecting state and parish recreation, identifying realistic community needs, educating community, and training

“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.”⁴⁵

maintenance personnel. Designs generated from the LORF focused on connectivity of multi-jurisdictional open space and recreational opportunities. The priorities and design focus is indicative of a region experiencing population and development increases, wanting to properly plan for that growth.

The resident priorities from the survey indicate a need for more recreational land and variety that is accessible, safe, and promoted. The top three activities viewed as important by region 2 residents were active and passive recreational activities including: fishing, visiting natural places, and walking/hiking. Highest participation rates include: fishing, driving for pleasure, and swimming.

Region 3

Among the smaller regions of the state, Region 3 experienced some changes in population patterns during the past five years. Displaced residents from the greater New Orleans area have reestablished into traditionally settled communities along the bayous, river, and major road corridors. The communities associated with the Mississippi River area grew quickly with oil, natural gas and petrochemical industry expansion during the 1990's, then faced rebuilding needs due to significant damage in 2005.

Priorities generated from the LORF were focused on identifying and coordinating community recreation opportunities amongst multiple jurisdictions (support facilities for existing recreation facilities), utilizing recreation facilities as an economic generator and quality of life attractor, and marketing existing recreational opportunities. The design generated from the LORF focused on creating a sustainable regional attractor. The LORF priorities and design are indicative of a primarily rural region that utilizes

and protects its environmental resources, strives to provide recreation for all regional citizens, and wants to utilize recreation to promote tourism and quality of life.

The resident priorities from the survey indicate a need for more recreational land and variety that is accessible, safe, maintained, and promoted. The top three activities viewed as important by region 3 residents include: fishing, visiting natural places, and access to public waters. Highest participation rates include: driving for pleasure, fishing, swimming, and camping.

Region 4

Region 4 experienced some change in population patterns over the past five years from hurricane displaced residents who reestablished into traditionally settled communities along the bayous, river and major road corridors. The communities associated with the greater Lafayette area grew quickly with support services for offshore oil, natural gas industry expansion during the 1990's, then faced rebuilding needs from damage in 2005.

Priorities generated from the LORF were focused on funding for maintenance and operations, creating a culturally appropriate and long term recreation vision, and providing safe access to recreation. The designs generated from the LORF focused on utilizing cultural and natural resources for recreation. The priorities and designs indicate a strong respect for the region's cultural and environmental resources.

The resident priorities from the survey were widespread indicating a region with multiple recreational needs. The top three activities viewed as important by Region 4 residents are primarily passive recreation and include: visiting natural places, fishing, and campground camping. Highest participation rates include:

⁴⁵ Albert Einstein

fishing, driving for pleasure, and camping.

Region 5

Region 5 experienced some change in population patterns over the past five years from displaced hurricane residents who reestablished into the greater Lake Charles area for industrial, service industry employment, and gaming. The Lake Charles area benefits economically from chemical, oil, and natural gas industry expansion during the 1990's. Also influencing its economy is the Texas spillover commercial expansion along Interstate 10 corridor serving the Houston area. Rebuilding facilities and infrastructure damage from 2005 and again in 2008, created local economic activity. The City of Lake Charles and Calcasieu Parish are developing an emerging metropolitan municipal parks system, in concert with state facilities. In Cameron Parish, accessibility to waterfowl hunting and fishing venues is a focus. In Region 5, the variety of circumstances and trends challenges leaders and policy makers.

Priorities generated from the LORF were focused on funding, property acquisition, servicing rural residents, and providing professional and technical support to local jurisdictions. The designs generated from the LORF focused on land acquisition and community integration. Various funding strategies for the design were discussed amongst the group members. The priorities, devised funding strategies for the design, and the final designs are indicative of a region experiencing economic growth working to develop a recreation system. Property acquisition, funding at all levels, and technical/professional services are concerns for developing a comprehensive recreation system.

The resident priorities from the survey indicate a need for more recreational land and variety that is accessible, safe, and highly promoted. The top

three activities viewed as important by region 5 residents include: visiting natural places, walking/hiking, and fishing. High participation rates include: swimming, driving for pleasure, fishing, and hiking.

Region 6

Region 6 experienced a steady increase in population during the past five years as New Orleans residents relocated in August, 2005. The central state parishes are benefiting economically from horticulture, agriculture, forestry, oil, and gas employment. Alexandria is the largest city within this central region.

Priorities generated from the LORF were focused on creating a comprehensive park system master plan to determine necessary services and eliminate duplication of services, and funding for maintenance and operations. The designs generated from the LORF focused on connecting community recreation with natural resources and developing a community destination that was economically sustainable. The priorities and designs are indicative of a region seeking to develop a comprehensive recreation system master plan that is sustainably funded, connected, and integrated into the region's existing resources.

The resident priorities from the survey were widespread, but accessibility was clearly prioritized as the top regional recreational preferred improvement. The top three activities viewed as important by region 6 residents are primarily passive recreation and include: visiting natural places, hunting, and fishing. High participation rates include: driving for pleasure, fishing, and camping.

Region 7

The largest region in the northern part of the

“Actions deferred are all too often opportunities lost, particularly in safeguarding our natural resources.”⁴⁶

state also experienced changes over the past five years. The Bossier-Caddo Parish area is particularly notable as residents moved into the region for gaming, education, military, and oil and gas employment opportunity. The Haynesville Shale, a natural gas reservoir recently discovered along Interstate 20 corridor, has brought commercial activity and elevated market prices for natural resources.

Priorities generated from the LORF were focused on creating comprehensive community park systems that are well funded, valued by local citizens and policy makers, guided by facility maintenance standards, and agency coordinated. Participants also expressed a desire for a state-wide, publicly accessible GIS recreation database. The designs generated from the LORF focused on land acquisition and creating a community recreational venue that attracts visitors and residents. The priorities and designs are indicative of a region seeking to acquire land to develop coordinated community comprehensive recreation systems that reflect and inspire environmental and recreational values and are funded, coordinated, maintained, and integrated into the region's existing resources.

The resident priorities from the survey were widespread, indicating a region with multiple recreational needs. More recreational variety that is highly promoted, accessible, and safe were ranked highest among the widespread needs. The top three activities viewed as important by region 7 residents are visiting natural places, walking/hiking, and fishing. High participation rates include: driving for pleasure, fishing, camping, and hiking.

Region 8

This northern region experienced substantial population change during the past five years

as displaced residents moved into the region since August, 2005. The region has the largest number of parishes (11) made up of primarily average sized parishes for population, except for the 2 parishes in the Monroe area. Ouachita Parish is the largest urban parish among the rural communities and its rural communities need access to recreational opportunities.

Priorities generated from the LORF were focused on creating comprehensive community park systems that are well funded at all levels, valued by local citizens and policy makers, equipped with long-term educated and trained staff, and integrated with existing facilities. The designs generated from the LORF focused on creating a regionally attractive athletic complex and a recreational showcase that attracts visitors and residents. Both designs primary goal was to attract visitor and residential use to stimulate economic growth and promote quality of life. The priorities and design are indicative of a region seeking to promote regional quality of life by creating comprehensive community park systems that utilizing recreation as an economic stimulator and attractor.

The resident priorities from the survey were widespread, indicating a region with multiple recreational needs. Health upgrades, bathroom facilities, insect control, etc., ranked as the highest priority with more recreational variety that is promoted and safe as additional major concerns. The top three activities viewed as important by region 8 residents include: visiting natural places, walking/hiking, and hunting. High participation rates include: driving for pleasure, fishing, camping, and hiking.

State Recreational Analysis

Major identified outdoor recreation needs related to state economic and demographic growth of the 1990's were not fully met. The various

⁴⁶ President John F. Kennedy

weather related disturbances experienced since that time have complicated the process and focus on recreation. In August 2005, the population levels suddenly decreased, but have continued to increase. However, current populations by the close of 2008 have not yet returned to populations prior to 2005. Overall, state population has continued to fluctuate as state residents return home or relocate within the state.

Provider/Resident/National Recreation Comparison

Table 9 compares the SCORP resident and provider survey results regarding recreation importance and participation. Also included in the table are results from the 2006 USFWS survey to add a national comparison.

Activities	Importance to 2008 Residents	Participation by 2008 Residents
Visit Natural Places	60.90%	N/A
Fishing, Crabbing, Crawfishing (non-commercial)	58.90%	62%
Walking or Hiking	48.20%	38%
Campground Camping	43.70%	49.60%
Public Access to State Waters for Water Craft,	42.70%	39%
Hunting	41.30%	46%
Spectator Sports and Activites	35.90%	39%
Swimming, Water spray grounds	34.90%	48.50%
Botanical gardens, Arboretum	34%	38%
Bicycling	33%	32%
Picknicking	30.20%	39%
Play fields (softball, baseball)	26.70%	28%
Off Road / Off Highway Trail Driving	25.10%	28%
Play field Sports (football, soccer)	24.70%	28%
Running or Jogging	25%	N/A
Golf	23.70%	26%
Bird Watching, Nature Viewing	22.80%	N/A
Padding canoe or kayak	N/A	18%
Play Court Sport or Game	20.80%	N/A
Horseback Riding	18.30%	N/A
Extreme and Non-traditional Sports	12.60%	N/A
Skateboarding	5.50%	N/A
Other	7.50%	N/A

Table 9: Comparative Table of 2006 & 2008 Recreation Activity Importance & Participation

Source: 2008 Residents Survey & 2006 USFWS Survey

Facilities by 2008 Providers	Importance to 2008 Providers	Participation in 2006 (USFWS)	Trends
36%	25%	22.30%	1
45%	48%	21.27%	1
65%	75%	N/A	2
22%	27%	N/A	
40%	31%	N/A	
N/A	52%	7.30%	3
N/A	48%	N/A	
N/A	37%	N/A	
N/A	8%	N/A	
N/A	41%	N/A	
N/A	46%	N/A	
N/A	79%	N/A	
N/A	12%	N/A	
N/A	64%	N/A	
65%	60%	N/A	
	35%	N/A	4
	31%	20.30%	
22%	N/A		
N/A	75%	N/A	
N/A	18%	N/A	
N/A	8%	N/A	5
N/A	23%	N/A	2
N/A	8%	N/A	

Table 9: Comparative Table (Cont.)

Notes

A. Percentage of residents is calculated based on % in 2008 survey responding to these questions: Hunting, Spectators, Gardens & Zoos, Picnicking, Off-Road Vehicles, Active Sports, Golf

B. Percentage of adult state residents based on % responding in 2006 USFWS Survey for fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching.

C. Total number of non-residents responding in 2006 USFS Survey for fishing in 2006 was 112,000.

N/A. Survey did not address the activity or facility, or data was not directly comparable.

Trends

1. Down 20% in past 5 years
2. Similar to US Rates
3. Declining in past 10 years
4. Higher than US Rates
5. Growing demand

The 2006 USFWS survey was co-sponsored by multiple federal agencies as well as wildlife protection organizations. The 2006 survey included questions concerning activity rates, spending, wildlife and wilderness uses, environmental values, and attitudes regarding public and management issues. The surveys between 1991 and 2006 establish a 15 year trend of decreasing participation rates in hunting and fishing activities slightly offset by an increasing rate of wildlife observation. Fishing remains the single most popular wildlife related sport among adults at 16% and wildlife observation enjoys a rate of 34% participation among adults. Approximately 34 million Americans are considered sports persons, compared to 40 million in 1991.

http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/NationalSurvey/nat_survey2006_final.pdf

Table 10 compares the priorities needed to improve Louisiana outdoor recreation marked by state residents and providers. Of top priority amongst both groups are more facilities with wider activity variety, more public lands for outdoor recreation. Residents also prioritized

promotion, closer facilities, and health upgrades while Providers prioritized funding, new improvements, and safety upgrades.

State and National Trends Comparison

Outdoor recreation accommodates diverse active and passive recreation interests: extreme sports, trails, camping, cultural and natural interpretive programs, water sports, hunting, and nature observation. Categories increasing nationally in popularity according to the 2007 Outdoor Industry Foundation survey, listed by increases in participation as well as relatively high rates of participation for the population at large, includes: bicycling, running, walking, fishing, wildlife viewing, and skateboarding. Here are few recreation activities with facility factors considered important in Louisiana as well as nationwide:

Anglers: Eight million acres of coastal lands, marshes, lakes, swamps, and bays support sport fishing. Fresh water lakes and streams are filled with catfish, gar, buffalo fish, bass, and carp. Saltwater sources are abundant with snapper, redfish, flounder, mackerel, bluefish, grouper,

Over 90,000 people in Louisiana walk, bike or take transit to work.⁴⁷

Provider Priorities		Resident Priorities	
Funding	66.7%	More Facilities, Wider Variety	37.4%
More Facilities, Wider Activity Variety	38.9%	More Public Lands	35.6%
More Public Lands	31.5%	Promotion	34.6%
New Improvements	31.5%	Closer Facilities	32.2%
Safety Upgrades	24.1%	Health Upgrades	26.5%
Closer Facilities	16.7%	Safety Upgrades	20.6%
Promotion	13.0%	New Improvements	9.5%
Access Upgrades	7.4%	Financial Assistance to Participation	8.5%
Facility Maintenance	7.4%	Facility Maintenance	8.2%
Other	3.7%	Other	4.9%
Health Upgrades	1.9%	Access Upgrades	4.6%

Table 10: Provider and Resident Priorities

Source: 2008 Resident and Provider Survey

and trout. Crabbing and crawfishing are also popular Louisiana water sports.^{48,49}



Walking, hiking and biking trails: Identified as a top priority need in the state, particularly in our national forests, state parks, and local recreation areas. The increase in demand for walking reflects continuing interest in healthy outdoor activity.⁵⁰ The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development is developing a Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan 2009. Updates of the master plan can be found at: http://www.dotd.la.gov/planning/highway_safety/bike_ped/masterplan.asp

Cabin Camping: Traditional, naturally scenic state park and private recreation settings.

Jet ski / waverunner and kayaking: Requires launch facilities and designated water areas for watercrafts that do not conflict with swimmers, boaters, and/or fishing.⁵¹

Hunting: Remains a very popular outdoor activity, but state participation rates have been

decreasing. The pine and hardwood forests in the northeastern and southeastern parts of the state offer first-rate white-tailed deer and small game hunting. The Red River and Mississippi River delta lands supply excellent opportunities for waterfowl, quail, and small game hunting. The Atchafalaya Swamp is a 40-mile wide by 80-mile long flood plain that provides excellent scenic and hunting opportunities.⁴⁹

4-wheel off-highway vehicles (OHV): The central region supplies a statewide need for trails exclusively designated for OHVs. Currently, the Kisatchie Forest is considered the main OHV recreation area offering public use of trails for all OHV users. OHV damage to natural resources as well as hazardous conflict with the other trail users is a continuing issue. Dirt bike use has gained popularity statewide, trails supported by recreational suppliers and private motocross facilities.

Bird Hunting and Bird Watching: Numerous water bodies, wetlands, open marshes, and meadows attract vast numbers of migratory birds. Native birds such as heron, ibis, bittern, and several endangered species, such as the bald eagle, brown pelican, hawks, and whooping crane can be found in these areas.^{48, 49}

Bicycling: Facilities to promote a wide range of participation in bicycling require a mix of trail facilities – multi-use trails, trails in natural areas and dirt trails with scenic views and varying topography.⁵¹



47. [Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development: 2009 Louisiana Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan](http://www.dotd.la.gov/planning/highway_safety/bike_ped/masterplan.asp). 22 June 2009. <http://www.dotd.la.gov/planning/highway_safety/bike_ped/masterplan.asp>

48. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. [National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation: Louisiana](http://www.census.gov/prod/2008pubs/fhw06-la.pdf). 2006 <<http://www.census.gov/prod/2008pubs/fhw06-la.pdf>>

49. Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. [Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](http://www.louisianarecreation.com). 2003-2008.

50. Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. [Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](http://www.louisianarecreation.com). 2003-2008.

51. [The Outdoor Industry Foundation Survey](http://www.outdoorindustry.org/). 2007 <<http://www.outdoorindustry.org/>>

Skateboarding: Requires local practice and learning facilities accessible to youth as well as regional competition venues with more challenging features.^{52,53}

2009-2014 Statewide Priorities and Strategies

The 2009-2014 outdoor recreational priorities, developed in collaboration with the SCORP Task Force Committee, utilized the findings from the LORFs, resident survey, and provider survey. In general, the priorities support concurrent statewide planning efforts (state trails policy plan, Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan: <http://www.louisianaspeaks.org/>, and other state plans). After identifying the outdoor recreation priorities, the SCORP Task Force Committee, state recreational representatives, and SCORP consultants developed the following strategies for 2009-2013 recreational planning efforts.

- Economic Tourism
- Innovation
- Community Outdoor Recreation
- Trails
- Cooperation & Coordination

Economic Tourism

Priority Basis: Since the completion of the 2003 SCORP, diversification of the state's economy has become a primary goal of state government and growth in the tourism industry and has been identified as one revitalizing sector. Efforts to tighten the linkages between the state's outdoor recreation resources and the state's ability to attract visitors have been successful.

Strategy: Facilities investments in the next five years at state, regional and local level should be provided to encourage positive effects. Louisiana's environmental resources provide a natural foundation for recreationally based tourism and should be utilized for recreation

activities. Outdoor recreation not only attracts tourists, but also enhances the state's ability to meet the basic needs of residents. Fundamental to resident and tourist recreation use, is awareness and promotion. For more information about eco-tourism visit:

www.ecotourism.com

Trails

Priority Basis: Since 2003, trails have rapidly become one of the top issues heard in all eight regions as a universal need within the state. Trails have various benefits that would address many of the state's current recreational issues and priorities. They provide safe methods of alternative transportation, connections to community recreation, opportunities for passive recreation, and universal access to recreation. Trail initiatives are supported by Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan and Louisiana Recovery Authority (citing alternative transportation as a high priority) and many municipalities and recreation providers are actively supporting trail development including: Shreveport, Lake Charles (Riverfront and Lake Front), New Orleans Lafitte Greenway (connecting Jeff Davis parkway, Bayou St. John, and City Park), and BREC (The Recreation & Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge). Rails-to-Trails is an organization focused on utilizing former railroad trails for bicycle and pedestrian use. New rails-to-trails facilities have been remarkably well received and used. For information about Rails-to-Trails visit: <http://www.railstotrails.org/index.html>. Various trail types are continuing to be in demand throughout the state.

Strategy: All types of trails should be considered and developed: urban corridor trails, multi-use trails, scenic trails, OHV trails, nature trails, dedicated use trails, levee trails, and rail-trails.

Since its inception in 1986, Rails-to-Trails has assisted hundreds of communities in building nearly 13,935 miles of rail-trails.⁵⁴

Innovation

Priority Basis: The impact of the unique land, climate, diverse population, and cultural characteristics of Louisiana greatly influences recreational demands and building methods. The culturally diverse Louisiana population demands various recreational activities and appreciates those that reflect the area's culture and recreational interests. Recent storm impacts have led residents to question traditional building methods and appreciate sustainable building methods. Innovation is intended to go beyond traditional ideas and plans to encourage recreational excellence and promotion.

Strategy: New facilities, improvements, and upgrades should focus upon innovative and/or environmentally sensitive recreational ideas and activities that inspire people of various ages and ability levels. Innovative examples include, but are not limited to: providing for activity variety, utilizing green building principles and techniques, educating users in an inspiring way about the environment, developing inspirational activities for disabled users.

Community Outdoor Recreation

Priority Basis: Local and parish governments provide most of the outdoor recreation facilities in the state with the least amount of land. Outdoor recreation opportunity in Louisiana is largely delivered by local communities with limited funding. These governments have observed an increasing demand for traditional, as well as nontraditional recreation activities. Concurrently, funds to operate, maintain, and develop these recreational activities have dwindled and are affecting the condition of many facilities and the quality of services.

Strategy: Funding for more community recreation facilities is important to ensure quality of life to Louisiana's citizens, promote healthy living,

and encourage environmental stewardship. Local and parish governments provide most of the state's outdoor recreation facilities with the least amount of land, thus land acquisition in communities for outdoor recreation is a strategy to promote community outdoor recreation.



Cooperation & Coordination

Priority Basis: Local, parish, regional, special districts, state, and federal government agencies need to coordinate among agencies to meet statewide outdoor recreation facility needs with available public land. These government agencies have all observed an increasing demand for traditional, as well as nontraditional recreation activities. Coordination is needed to avoid duplication of services, fill gaps, reduce costs to operate, maintain, and develop new recreational activities.

Strategy: Outdoor recreational priorities in general correspond with recreation findings from concurrent statewide planning efforts (state trails policy plan, Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan: <http://www.louisianaspeaks.org/>, and other state plans). Coordination with these major planning efforts and their established state information, goals, and priorities is integral to maximizing recreation benefits.

⁵². The Outdoor Industry Foundation Survey, 2007 <<http://www.outdoorindustry.org/>>

⁵³. Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. Louisiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan: Residnet Survey, 2009-2013.

⁵⁴. Rails-To-Trails Conservancy: About, 22 June 2009. <<http://www.railstotrails.org/aboutus/index.html>>

Continued development of the Louisiana Recreation GIS database initiated for this SCORP is highly recommended as a strategy to support cooperation and coordination. Continued outreach and education to recreational providers is also important in establishing a statewide comprehensive recreational system.

Funding

The report does not include funding as major goal because funding is an underlying broad issue that enables or prevents all 5 major goals from being achieved. Inadequate funding has been identified by the providers as largest challenge facing recreation systems in 2008. The lack of funding:

- Affects maintenance and replacement of existing sites and facilities.
- Creates shortcomings in park operations
- places infrastructure limitations on public access.
- Affects enforcement of fish and wildlife laws, boating and hunter safety regulations.
- Limits local agency ability to undertake recreation land acquisition and development for use.

Division of Outdoor Recreation Role in Meeting Major SCORP Goals

The Division's staff will continue to serve as the planning facilitator in the next five years. In this capacity, the staff will help with the needed planning to help implement the 5 goals proposed for the 2009-2014 period.

