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Elevating Outdoor Recreation Together: Opportunities for Collaboration Between State Offices of Outdoor Recreation and Federal Land Management Agencies

Brooke A. Sausser
Utah State University

ELEVATING OUTDOOR RECREATION TOGETHER: OPPORTUNITIES FOR

COLLABORATION BETWEEN STATE OFFICES OF

OUTDOOR RECREATION AND FEDERAL

LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

by

Brooke A. Sausser

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Approved:

______________________	______________________
Jordan W. Smith, Ph.D.	Chris Monz, Ph.D.
Major Professor	Committee Member
______________________	______________________
Travis Dorsch, Ph.D.	Richard S. Inouye, Ph.D.
Committee Member	Vice Provost for Graduate Studies

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ABSTRACT

Elevating Outdoor Recreation Together: Opportunities for Collaboration

Between State Offices of Outdoor Recreation and

Federal Land Management Agencies

by

Brooke A. Sausser, Master of Science

Utah State University, 2019

Major Professor: Dr. Jordan W. Smith
Department: Environment and Society

Comprising over 2% of national gross domestic product, outdoor recreation is a robust pillar of local, state, and national economies (Highfill & Howells, 2018). Outdoor recreation is also a critical component of residents' quality of life. Recognition of the economic power of the outdoor industry, fused with the growing desire for greater outdoor recreation opportunities, has inspired more than 11 states to establish state offices of outdoor recreation. The organizational structure and mission of each office is tailored to the needs and priorities of each state, varying from temporary task forces, councils, and commissions to more permanent offices or advisory positions. These offices, though embedded within various sectors of state government, often coordinate across or blend the functions of economic development, tourism, and land management, ultimately providing innovative opportunities for collaboration. While the state

offices universally seek to develop the outdoor recreation economy, that economy fundamentally relies on access to natural landscapes, the vast majority of which are managed by the federal land management agencies in the Department of Interior and the Department of Agriculture.

The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the new state offices of outdoor recreation and assess their opportunities for collaboration with FLMAs, outdoor recreation businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and local outdoor recreation providers. Through comprehensive qualitative interviews with each initiative's leadership, secondary research, and close coordination with National Park Service and state office staff, our research provides a baseline understanding of the role of these new offices and situates them within the context of partnerships at the local, state, and federal levels. I discuss challenges each office has faced, best practices, and recommendations for future collaboration. The findings of this research will better inform the National Park Service and other federal land management agencies on opportunities to support shared recreation and conservation goals. Together, the newly created state offices of outdoor recreation and the stewards of their public lands can promote and enhance the economic, social, and environmental benefits of outdoor recreation.

(122 pages)

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Outdoor recreation is a robust pillar of local, state, and national economies as well as a critical component of residents' quality of life. Recognition of the economic power of the outdoor industry, fused with the growing desire for greater outdoor recreation opportunities, has inspired more than 11 states to establish state offices of outdoor recreation. The organizational structure and mission of each office is tailored to each state, varying from temporary task forces, councils, and commissions to more permanent offices or advisory positions. These offices, though embedded within various sectors of state government, often coordinate across or blend the functions of economic development, tourism, and land management, ultimately providing innovative opportunities for collaboration. While the state offices universally seek to develop the outdoor recreation economy, that economy fundamentally relies on access to natural landscapes,

the vast majority of which are managed by the federal land management agencies in the Department of Interior and the Department of Agriculture.

The purpose of this study is to explore how these state offices have evolved and now operate, including their formation, goals and programs, internal organization and resources, and external partnerships. Through comprehensive interviews with each office's leadership, our research provides a baseline understanding of the role of these new offices and addresses their partnerships at the local, state, and federal levels. I discuss challenges each office has faced, best practices, and recommendations for future collaboration. The findings of this research will better inform the National Park Service and other federal land management agencies on opportunities to support shared recreation and conservation goals. Together, the newly created state offices of outdoor recreation and the stewards of their public lands can promote and enhance the economic, social, and environmental benefits of outdoor recreation.

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INTRODUCTION

Nearly half of all Americans participate in some form of outdoor recreation each year, whether it is through close-to-home activities or a destination vacation (Outdoor Foundation, 2017). Even when considering a suite of changing demographic, land use, and climate conditions, both the rate and total number of participants in outdoor recreation is predicted to grow over the next 50 years (Bowker, Askew, Cordell, Betz, Zarnoch, & Seymour, 2012). As more Americans hike, bike, climb, and otherwise engage with the outdoors, they purchase apparel and equipment, travel to new communities, stay in campgrounds and hotels, and frequent restaurants and even laundromats – ultimately infusing capital into local, state, and national economies. With growing evidence of the economic, social, and environmental benefits of the outdoor recreation industry, many individuals and organizations have argued that the industry should receive support and recognition on par with other economic drivers of state and national economies (Sanford, 2018).

As recently as 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis formally defined the outdoor recreation industry by tracking it separately, as it does other economic sectors such as pharmaceuticals and the auto industry; preliminary statistics indicate that the outdoor recreation economy accounts for 2% of national gross domestic product (Highfill & Howells, 2018; see Figure 1.1). Another national study determined that the industry accounts for $887 billion in consumer spending and 7.6 million jobs, with data further parsed to the state and Congressional district levels (Outdoor Industry Association, 2017, 2018). Visits to federal lands alone accounted for nearly $51 billion in spending and 880,000 jobs in 2012 (White, Bowker, Askew, Langner, Arnold, & English, 2016). Spurred by mounting economic data at the national and state

levels, and with the support of industry and other stakeholders, states across the country have created offices or initiatives to advocate for the outdoor recreation industry and the benefits of conservation and outdoor recreation to communities.

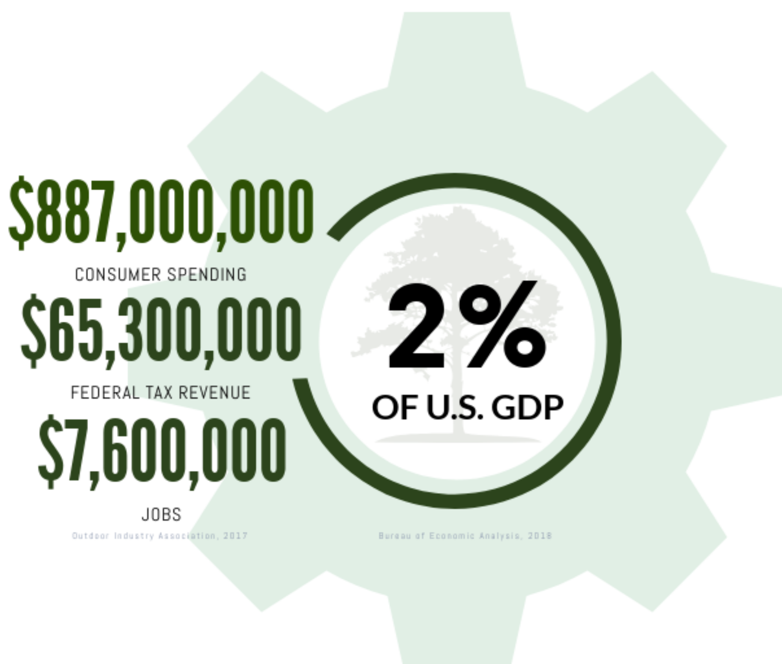

Figure 1.1. The Outdoor Recreation Economy

In 2013, Utah led this charge by creating the first Office of Outdoor Recreation (Outdoor Industry Association, 2016). As of spring 2018, ten states have followed suit, establishing temporary or permanent offices, commissions, collaboratives, or policy positions, with additional

states considering the idea (Figure 1.2; Haroutunian, 2017; Lown-Hecht, 2017; Outdoor Industry Association, 2016; Scott, 2017; Wastradowski, 2017). Although organizational structures vary widely by state, hereafter they will be described as 'offices.' Broadly speaking, each state office seeks to further support outdoor recreation to (a) foster economic growth, (b) improve citizens' quality of life, and (c) enhance the experiences of tourists (Outdoor Industry Association, 2016).

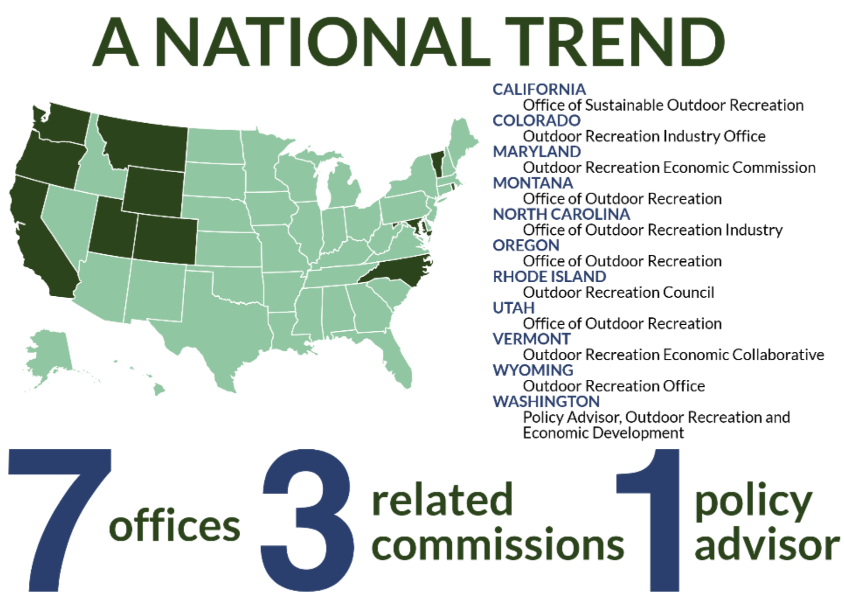

Figure 1.2. Current State Offices

These initiatives, though embedded within various sectors of state government, often coordinate across or blend the functions of economic development, tourism, and agencies that manage natural resources (Lown-Hecht, 2017; Outdoor Industry Association, 2016; Scott, 2017;

Wastradowski, 2017). The formation of these offices requires a greater dedication of limited state resources and coordination of additional stakeholder interests, signifying a shift in how states perceive outdoor recreation and its management. Moreover, as unique organizations with distinctly new priorities, these offices provide new opportunities for collaboration with a wide array of partners at the state level.

Coinciding with the momentum to expand the outdoor recreation economies of individual states, federal land management agencies (FLMAs) have also expanded their focus on outdoor recreation. For example, through a secretarial order, Department of the Interior (DOI) Secretary Ryan Zinke called for the DOI to increase public access to hunting and fishing opportunities, established a senior advisor on recreation, and also called for each state to designate an outdoor recreation-focused liaison to the DOI (Secretary of the Interior Order No. 3356; Secretary of the Interior Order No. 3365; Secretary of the Interior Order No. 3366; J. Snyder, personal communication, July 20, 2018). Additionally, the National Park Service (NPS) is currently in the process of establishing its own office of outdoor recreation to coordinate policy and communication among stakeholders (DOI, 2018; Ratcliffe, Sherwood, & Milnor, 2017). Within the Department of Agriculture (USDA), outdoor recreation has also received significant consideration in the most recent strategic plan of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and is the focus of the new Sustainable Recreation Framework (USFS, 2010, 2015). The heightened focus on outdoor recreation and the creation of state offices provides an unprecedented opportunity for FLMAs to directly partner with states in an effort to achieve more locally relevant and meaningful goals (e.g., improving access to public lands for states with urban populations). Despite this focus, little is known about the functions of the new state offices of outdoor

recreation or their intended collaboration with FLMAs.

STUDY PURPOSE

With outdoor recreation experiencing a parallel renaissance at both the state and federal levels, there is a unique window of opportunity to reshape how FLMAs interact and collaborate with individual states in support of shared goals. While some state offices prioritize the development of a strong outdoor recreation economy, that economy fundamentally relies on access to outdoor recreation settings, the vast majority of which are managed by the FLMAs in the DOI and the USDA. In 2012, federal lands received nearly one billion recreation visits (White et al., 2016) that produced significant economic benefits. The NPS alone stewards more than 84 million acres in 417 units across the nation, ranging from historic sites, national parks, and preserves to national monuments and seashores, all of which provide diverse opportunities for outdoor recreation. The NPS is a primary outdoor recreation provider in many states, attracting visitors, influencing travel patterns, and driving visitor spending (Figure 2.1); this makes it an inseparable part of the outdoor recreation economy that new state offices are trying to grow.

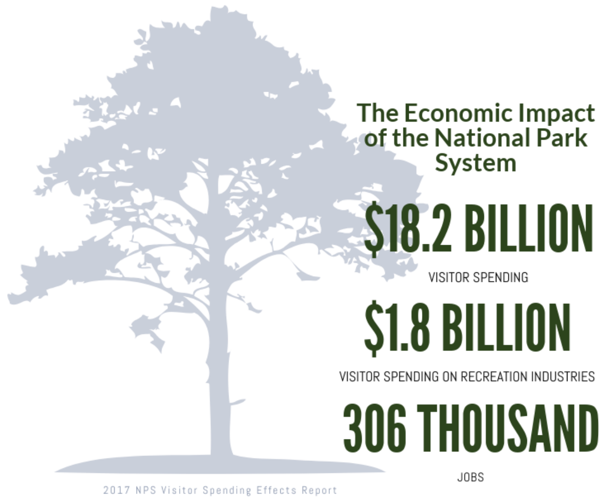

Figure 2.1. Economic Impact of the NPS

While the NPS lacks an explicit economic development mandate, it does promote the benefits of outdoor recreation beyond park boundaries and into states and communities. Through programs within the Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Division in particular, the NPS provides technical assistance to help conserve lands and waters and develop close-to-home recreation opportunities. To varying degrees, many state offices of outdoor recreation seek to extend those same benefits to conservation, community health and wellness, education, and access to outdoor recreation opportunities; therefore, opportunities for federal-state partnerships around outdoor recreation likely exist. Given the recent formation, and largely unexplored role, of the state offices, further investigation was needed to better understand the many opportunities to support shared environmental and social goals.

A logical first step in doing was to develop an understanding of the role and function of each state office. Because the offices are so new, with many still in the conceptualization phase,

academic research has yet to describe their functions, location within the government, organizational structures, missions, programs, modes of communication and operation, or interactions with other partners such as the NPS and other FLMAs. Few offices yet provide a website to learn even basic information, and given the diversity of states that presently have an office, it is difficult to develop even a general understanding of their roles in outdoor recreation. In light of these gaps in understanding, the purpose of this research was to provide a thorough baseline understanding of the 11 current state offices of outdoor recreation as well as to assess their potential for partnership with FLMAs, outdoor recreation businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and local outdoor recreation providers to improve shared economic, social, and environmental outcomes. In achieving this overall purpose, this study was guided by five specific objectives:

1) Determine why state governments across the country have, or are attempting to, establish state-level outdoor recreation offices;
2) Describe the goals and objectives of these state offices;
3) Find out how these offices operate internally;
4) Ascertain how these offices interact and collaborate with FLMAs; and
5) Identify the challenges and opportunities each of these offices has experienced in meeting their goals and objectives.

Ultimately, this research will develop recommendations to the current state offices and the NPS to facilitate collaboration with the idea that state offices and the stewards of their public lands can enhance the economic, social, and environmental benefits of outdoor recreation together.

LITERATURE REVIEW

History of Collaboration in Natural Resource Management

Four federal agencies manage the one-quarter of the U.S. that is in the public domain: the USFS in the USDA; and the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the NPS in the DOI (Congressional Research Service [CRS], 2017). While the missions of every agency are primarily related to conservation, resource development, and recreation, they each have distinct responsibilities that are often complementary but at times conflicting (CRS, 2017). Given the variety of resources under their stewardship, the complexity of managing vast landscapes spread beyond agency boundaries, and the diversity of uses which public lands must be managed for, collaboration between FLMAs is critical to enabling managers to more efficiently sustain, or improve, the benefits generated by public lands.

Traditionally, federal agencies and other public organizations have made decisions at the organizational level; increasingly however, many agencies are becoming dependent upon the actions of other organizations to achieve their goals and objectives (Gray, 1989). This is especially true for FLMAs managing vast landscapes for diverse uses. More and more, federal agencies must make challenging land management decisions in the face of wicked problems, high uncertainty, lack of information, and competing public interests, all while facing increased public scrutiny (Gray, 1989; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). In the realm of natural resource management, this shift has occurred against a backdrop of ever-dwindling resources; beginning in the 1980s, presidential initiatives have downsized the federal budget, leading agencies to

outsource typical tasks to the private sector (Barrow, Seekmap, & Cerveny, 2012). Simultaneously, the public has called for more transparent and more inclusive decision-making (Seekamp, Barrow, & Cerveny, 2012). Managers today must consider issues beyond their borders, deal with broader considerations, and do so with less resources, leaving little recourse: "either less gets done, what gets done is done poorly, agency workers get much more productive, or agencies find alternative ways to access needed capabilities and resources" (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010, p. 36). Under these circumstances, partnerships have become an attractive alternative management strategy (Seekamp et al., 2013; Weddell, Fedorchak, & Wright, 2009).

Historically, partnerships have emerged to address limited funding, the special interest of a stakeholder group, or to provide a venue for specific agency programs (McCreary, Seekamp, Cerveny, & Carver, 2012). Collaboration, beyond combining limited resources, is also needed to provide consistency and cohesion in the management of natural resources; it can help reduce confusion or conflict while also enabling closer coordination of different information, skills, and goals (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010).

Benefits of Collaboration

Collaboration includes coordinating efforts, sharing management responsibility, and mobilizing resources such as money and volunteers (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). Ultimately, it builds understanding, support, and capacity, enabling decisions that are more likely to be implemented than litigated. Collaboration can moderate the top-down bureaucratic organization of federal agencies that often disempower local interests, and it can provide a framework for

ongoing public involvement rather than one-time outreach. Recurring collaboration provides stakeholders ownership of the issue and prepares all entities for future challenges. In many ways, the intangible benefits of partnerships – increased trust, synergy, interdependence, and communication – far outweigh the tangible benefits, such as a management plan (Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Selin, Chavez, & Carr, 1997). Given that personnel turnover is frequently cited as a concern when partnering with agencies, stakeholder involvement can also provide continuity.

Challenges of Collaboration

Despite the necessity for and long-term benefits of collaboration, FLMAs often struggle to invest in the process of collaboration fully. Collaboration contradicts traditional decision-making, shifting the center of information and authority from agencies to partners even as agencies remain responsible for final outcomes. Moreover, it requires a significant investment of time, effort, and resources for uncertain outcomes, especially given the lack of training, administrative support, or rewards for agency employees. Barriers to collaboration are inherently built into the structure of FLMAs and decision-making processes, including both institutional and attitudinal barriers (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010).

Institutional barriers include the lack of opportunities or incentives for FLMAs to partner, such as top-down decision making and adversarial politics; conflicting goals and missions among different agencies; inflexible policies such as employee performance evaluation criteria that do not account for time spent on partnerships; and limited personnel, time, and money to sustain

what are often multi-year, ongoing efforts (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). Many FLMAs have experienced both a loss of resources and an overall loss of capacity, especially when partnership personnel are burdened with other professional duties, when partnership responsibilities are added onto separate jobs, or no training is provided; many are not able to meet the added administrative effort, reporting requirements, and communication necessary for partnership recruitment and management (McCreary et al., 2012; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Weddell et al., 2009). These barriers are likely magnified when government agencies partner with each other; for example, the USFS's most frequent type of partner is another government agency (Seekamp et al., 2013). Moreover, even though leadership of one FLMA emphasized partnerships, actual development of them remained largely driven by individual employee initiative, making attitudinal barriers all the more relevant (Seekamp et al., 2013).

Attitudinal barriers include agency personnel's lack of trust, whether it is in the data or partners due to past interaction; group attitudes such as stereotypes or discipline biases that are often magnified by adversarial processes; organizational norms and culture that stifle creativity and breed fear of loss of control or failure; and importantly, a lack of support for collaboration from upper management especially in periods of fiscal restraint where the agency must first address core activities (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). For example, even though partnerships are overwhelmingly utilized in FLMAs, a survey of USFS personnel indicated that while they were essential to completing critical tasks, they did not view them as the most efficient way to achieve agency goals (Seekamp et al., 2013). In order to engage in partnerships, the relationships between FLMAs and partners require elements of trust, power sharing, and interdependence (Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010). As Wondolleck and Yaffee note, partnerships are built first and

foremost on people, and therefore personnel's perceptions of partnerships have enormous potential to either foster or sabotage relationships or simply do only what is required of them.

Other threats to successful collaboration include a lack of familiarity or expertise with the process, where the time requirements are underestimated and not enough effort is focused on process management (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). Additionally, skills necessary to support collaboration, such as facilitation, communication, and outreach techniques, are often not taught, despite the prevalence of partnerships in FLMAs (Absher, 2009; Seekamp et al., 2013; Selin & Chavez, 1993; Selin et al., 1997; Weddell, Fedorchark, & Wright, 2012). Given the lack of training and reward structures found in FLMAs, some employees may worry about being penalized for a failed collaboration (Selin et al., 1997). Partnerships can also be threatened by interactions outside of the process, such as when stakeholders are in conflict on additional issues or when politics impacts partner relationships (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010).

Partnerships are dynamic relationships and evolving processes that can improve institutional capacity and decision-making (Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010). Despite the challenges for FLMAs to build and maintain partnerships, they remain a common tool and a management strategy in their own right.

Collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service. To ground my investigation into how state offices of outdoor recreation do, or could, partner with FLMAs and other entities, I use findings from previous collaboration research in natural resource management. The vast majority of this research has focused on the USFS and on forest planning in particular. The agency has a long history of partnerships dating back to the Appalachian Mountain Club in the 1880s, and in the

century plus since, partnerships have become a standard practice for recreation managers (Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Selin & Chavez, 1993). Presidential policies reducing the federal bureaucracy since the 1980s and citizens' calls for greater public involvement led the USFS to prioritize partnerships in national strategies (Seekamp et al., 2013; Selin & Chavez, 1993; McCreary et al., 2012). The political culture of doing more with less, combined with resource conflicts, have led the agency to utilize more partnerships in an effort to increase efficiency, facilitate public engagement, and reach cross-boundary solutions (Seekamp et al., 2013).

Several studies have explored the motivations to collaborate between partners and the USFS. Seekamp and Cerveny (2010) explored two aspects of partnerships within the agency: institutional and relational interactions. Institutional interactions describe why the agency partners and its requirements for doing so. Characteristics affecting the agency's ability and choice to develop partnerships included: duty, in that the agency is expected to partner to improve stewardship and public relations; necessity, given declining appropriations and a loss of institutional capacity; commitment, in terms of dedicated resources, leadership, and recognition; and the effort to build and maintain partnerships. Relational interactions describe the needs of both partners and agencies to maintain formal and informal agreements. Key components of relational interactions include synergy (e.g., greater outcomes together), trust, power sharing, linkages, communication, and interdependence (e.g., mutual effort and shared goals).

Another study by McCreary, Seekamp, Cerveny, and Carver (2012) explored the motivations of USFS personnel to partner, finding three categories of motivations: interpersonal, intrapersonal, and institutional. Interpersonal motivations included sentiments such as a desire to be a part of a community and garner support for agency actions, while intrapersonal motivations

included a sense of accomplishment or personal enjoyment in the process. Institutional motivations included necessity, financial support, job responsibility, information sharing, and emphasis by agency leadership. The only motivation common to all categories was necessity, underscoring the agency's reliance on partnerships.

Research on USFS partnerships has also identified barriers to success. A breadth of research has demonstrated the need for more resources, administrative support, training, incentives, rewards, and support structure for agency personnel engaging in partnerships (Absher, 2009; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Seekamp et al., 2013; Selin & Chavez, 1993). Selin, Chavez, and Carr (1997) stated that the biggest barrier to collaborative planning was the agency itself given its policy structures, lack of rewards or funding, and the fact that verbal support often did not translate to more time or resources for partnerships. Partnerships were utilized inconsistently throughout the agency, suggesting that they were established largely at the discretion of line officers at the national forest and district levels (Selin, 1995).

In a more recent survey of USFS personnel, the majority stated that partnerships were expected of them, yet only half had it written in their job description and only a third as a performance metric. Along with a lack of rewards, there was a simple lack of recognition from agency leadership (despite leadership emphasis), from partners, or from the community. Another barrier to partnerships was the lack of time; more than half of respondents in one study felt they did not have enough time to recruit or maintain partnerships. Despite an emphasis on partnerships throughout the agency, they were still driven by individual initiative. Yet while the majority of personnel believed partnerships were essential to accomplishing critical work, they also believed it was not always the most efficient or appropriate method. The agency is

increasingly reliant on partnerships, but personnel do not want to be; this suggests that they are overtaxed or that current budgetary or human resource support cannot sustain current or future levels of partnerships (Barrow et al., 2012; Seekamp et al., 2013).

Previous research has identified multiple strategies for the USFS to better support partnerships (Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Seekamp et al., 2013; McCreary, Seekamp, & Cerveny, 2012; Selin & Chavez, 1993; Wondolleck & Jaffee, 2010). One possible strategy includes the use of partnership coordinators; however, coordinators are often restrained by other job duties, and all employees must possess partnering skills and resources because coordinators are a small piece of what is often a large collaboration (McCreary et al., 2012; Selin & Chavez, 1993). Other stakeholders such as "umbrella" organizations – organizations that help to organize groups of partners and volunteers – can help facilitate projects and provide access to a greater network of resources (McCreary et al., 2012a). Other strategies include developing rewards and recognition programs, highlighting partnership work in accomplishment reports, hiring personnel with partnership management skills, providing more training opportunities, and developing a better support network in the agency (Seekamp, et al., 2013; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2000). Partnerships remain an indispensable management tool for the USFS, though much opportunity exists to refine its collaboration strategies.

The literature on USFS partnerships highlights the reliance of the agency on external partners to accomplish both basic and even critical tasks, and it recognizes its long history of doing so. One study indicates the most frequent type of partner as other government agencies, and given the goals of the state offices of outdoor recreation, future collaboration is likely. The literature emphasizes common partnerships challenges for the USFS such as limited time,

resources, and support, which state offices could work to minimize. Although the current research focuses specifically on the USFS, it may also help provide insights into future partnerships with the state offices as well as other FLMAs.

Collaboration with the National Park Service. Very little academic research describes NPS partnerships; a literature review conducted during the summer of 2018 returned only seven peer-reviewed articles. More research focused specifically on the agency is warranted given the differences between the mission, structure, and culture of the NPS and other FLMAs. Like the USFS, the NPS has a long-standing history of partnerships, beginning with the railroads and hotels providing food, lodging, and transportation for park visitors that the newly-formed agency lacked the skills to provide (Weddell et al., 2012). The NPS manages relatively little land compared to other FLMAs and it does so under a stricter policy of preservation that has tended to discourage partnerships (Barton, 2016; McPadden & Margerum, 2014). However, like the USFS, the vast majority of agency personnel (87%) are engaged in partnerships, and many see this trend only increasing (Weddell et al., 2012).

Many partnership trends in the NPS mirror those in the USFS, including agency personnel's motivations to partner. In a study of NPS personnel's perspectives on partnerships, most personnel reported they were motivated to partner because collaboration: (a) helps partners understand the NPS mission or the park; (b) promotes better stakeholder relationships; (c) saves time and money; (d) allows the agency to concentrate on the most critical resources; and (e) leads to better management decisions, among others (Weddell et al., 2009). Compared to the USFS, NPS employees seem to generally have a more positive disposition toward partnerships in

that even the lowest-rated motivations outweighed the highest-rated constraints (Weddell et al., 2009). Yet, despite these motivations to partner, and the prevalence of partnerships in the agency, NPS employees have identified their greatest training gap as working with philanthropic or similar entities to leverage external funds (Weddell et al., 2009). They lacked an understanding of how to formally create partnership agreements, how to establish the most appropriate and accountable partnership structures, and how to work with the DOI's Office of the Solicitor throughout those agreements; employees were mainly hindered by constraints that were simply built-in to the agency, such as navigating complex, rigid, and bureaucratic NPS policies (Weddell et al., 2009) – not unlike those reported by the USFS. Other challenges inherent to the agency include chronic underfunding and a culture of park hierarchy, where some units such as national trails are perceived as less important than more prominent designations such as national parks (McPadden & Margerum, 2014). Constraints also included a lack of rewards and recognition structure, increased and complex reporting requirements, and differing budget processes and regulations of partners (Weddell et al., 2009).

McPadden and Margerum (2014) identified the necessity of mission alignment between NPS and nonprofits given: nonprofits goals' and capacities vary; problems with sustaining momentum, in which bureaucratic NPS policies can delay progress and lead to attrition; and leadership dilemmas in working with nonprofits, in which traits such as passion and strong will empower nonprofit leaders but make them less suitable partners. Additionally, McPadden and Margerum recommended that the NPS should follow an "assess and build" framework (p. 1327) in which the NPS assesses the goals and intended roles for partners and then addresses capacity and development needs; this is in contrast to adopting a one-size-fits-all approach and accepting

any willing partner out of necessity. Similarly, the NPS Philanthropic and Partnerships Committee identified the need to develop new training tools, review employee performance reviews to account for partnerships, and empower employees to pursue local partnerships (2014). Improving employees' abilities to engage in partnerships will better align with recent trends in which the NPS has adopted a greater facilitative approach (Barton, 2016). For example, national heritage areas, of which there are 49 in the national park system, reflect a new mode of management in which the NPS collaborates with local communities as facilitator rather than owner to develop heritage conservation, tourism, and sustainable community development (Barton, 2016; Williams, 2006).

Although there is limited research on NPS partnerships, the agency has a long tradition of collaboration with the private and not-for-profit sectors, and employees frequently engage in partnerships because they help achieve the agency's mission while improving stakeholder relationships. Personnel motivation to partner is higher than any bureaucratic constraints, but institutional barriers such as formalizing partnership agreements and working with philanthropic agencies exist. Yet given the agency's experience partnering with other agencies, and the state offices' local relevance to the NPS mission, future collaboration is likely. And while a less common designation, NHAs demonstrates the NPS's recent flexibility in developing new partnership skills and expanding beyond their traditional purview to include community needs such as tourism development. NHAs perhaps foreshadow the NPS's ability to respond to stagnant appropriations, changing community needs, greater public involvement, and new state priorities that the state offices likely support. If the new attitudes, skills, and structures encouraged by NHAs were to be combined with an "assess and build" framework (McPadden &

Margerum, 2010, p. 1327), the NPS could reduce institutional barriers by better investing the appropriate resources in suitable structures with the state offices as well as other FLMAs.

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

State offices of outdoor recreation are relatively new institutions, the oldest of which has only existed since 2013. Many of these offices are still in the process of defining and operationalizing their goals. The state offices each have different missions, resources, structures, cultures, partnerships, and political climates. Understanding the differences between each of the state offices would provide the NPS and other FLMAs with a better idea of whether and how they can partner and collaborate with the newly formed entities. I gathered this information through secondary data as well as through a series of semi-structured interviews with leadership within each of the 11 state offices.

I utilized two traditional approaches within qualitative research: a collective case study approach in conjunction with the narrative approach to qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2012). State offices comprise cases with well-defined boundaries (the office, task force, commission, etc.) that appear to be comparable across states given their similar purposes, structures, dates of creation, and interactions with each other. A collective case study approach allowed me to create a detailed description of each case and enabled comparisons across the cases to identify and compare salient themes. Given the likely variation between states, a collective case study approach was best to explore offices individually, provide a detailed description, and make comparisons among the offices. Case study research typically relies on an extensive amount of information from multiple, varied sources, which is almost entirely absent for state offices. Therefore, I also relied on a narrative approach given that participants' experiences were the

primary data source. In seeking to better understand how and why state offices were created, I utilized narrative techniques to tell the story of how the offices have emerged as well as the experiences or challenges they have faced. Narrative research is well-suited to explore turning points in social movements and also places an emphasis on context, which is imperative. State offices are part of a nationwide movement but operate at the local and state level, and narrative techniques allowed us to explore both contexts. The collective case study and narrative approaches complimented each other, with the first providing a foundation of understanding and the second utilizing participant experiences to explore best practices and opportunities for collaboration. Therefore, an eclectic approach combining the strengths of a collective case study and a narrative study were best to understand and tell the story of the creation of state offices of outdoor recreation across the country.

Phase I. Secondary data collection involved synthesizing as much publicly-accessible information as possible on each state office from newspaper and online sources and consolidating it in a master chart for greater ease of comparison between states. Topics of interest to be included in the chart were guided by the study's objectives and include: date and method of establishment; physical and organizational location; mission; program areas; organizational structure; amount and source of the budget; and types and modes of interaction with partners. Other relevant information was collected on the significance of outdoor recreation to the state (e.g., type and amount of public land, levels of resident and non-resident participation in outdoor recreation, and its economic impact). The comparative chart was used to develop interview questions, and interview participants were asked to verify all of the secondary data collected before the chart was published.

Phase II. (Participants). The leadership within the state offices includes directors, policy advisors, and program managers and specialists. Those individuals were interviewed given their role in directing the course of the new organization. If a director had not yet been hired, those closest to the office – such as an office advocate or the senior official in the hiring department – were asked to participate. A director or representative from each of the 11 state offices was contacted, and as more state offices were established throughout the period of data collection, their leadership was contacted as well. Additional participants were selected if their relationship with the office added further insight (e.g., when a director was not involved in the creation process) but no more than two representatives from an office were selected. Data collection ceased when at least one member of the leadership within each state office had been interviewed.

The semi-structured interviews were organized around five key concepts: 1) the office's background; 2) the office's goals and programs; 3) the office's internal organization and resources; 4) the office's external partnerships; and 5) best practices in overcoming challenges. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed me to tailor my questions to the unique level of development of each office and the differences inherent in each state effort. Interviews were conducted over the phone due to the wide geographic dispersion of the participants. Appendix B provides the list of interviewees. I recorded interviews and later transcribed them verbatim.

Data Analysis

The collection and analysis of interview data were integrated as described in Creswell's iterative "data analysis spiral" (2013, pg. 183). The spiral denotes an iterative and flexible approach to qualitative analysis, in which the researcher repeatedly touches on: *data managing*; *reading and memoing*; *describing, classifying, and interpreting*; and *representing and visualizing* the data. Integrating analysis with collection enabled constant refinement of the research instrument and improved probes, ensuring higher quality data. Moreover, the iterative process improved my level of familiarity with the data and provided intellectual connectivity from one interview to the next, enabling greater integration and insight.

Data managing involved converting recordings into transcripts (Creswell, 2012). Immediate transcription helped me remain close to the data and get a sense of the whole database, and as recommended by Bryman (2012), I read each transcript at least once without coding or making interpretations (Creswell, 2012). *Reading and memoing* the transcriptions helped me note topics of further inquiry, allowing me to reflect on the emerging themes, refine categories, constantly compare new data to previous data, and revise interview questions (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2012). A data accounting sheet, created at the beginning of analysis, helped ensure that when individual codes were generated, they were recorded as they appeared with each case, illuminating individual responses and variations in a concise, comprehensive format while avoiding generalizations (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The master chart, originally used to help design interview questions, continued to provide context for state offices and organize relevant variables in a single sheet.

Next, I began *describing, classifying, and interpreting data* into codes and themes and exploring the relationships between codes and categories to build themes (Creswell, 2012). I kept

codes in their context by consistently using the transcripts to stay fully immersed in the data (Creswell, 2012) and periodically re-read and re-examined codes as they become more salient (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Coding was open while also considering *a priori* codes from collaboration in natural resources research, as listed in Table 1. I began with line-by-line coding and to guide inductive coding developed a general accounting scheme around key domains such as processes, barriers, challenges, and strategies (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Open coding allowed me to conceptualize, examine, and compare similarities or differences between the state offices as well as their perceptions on conservation and any potential for collaboration with external partners such as FLMAs (Bryman, 2012). After utilizing first-level coding to summarize data, I moved to pattern-level coding that relates codes to each other in a more inferential fashion, such as by "mapping" codes in a network diagram (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 70). Cognitive mapping (Miles & Huberman, 1994), using participants' words, aided constant comparison in which I continually challenged and refined my codes, exploring their internal meaning and their relationships to each other (Bryman, 2012).

Lastly, I explored methods of *representing and visualizing the data*, requiring further interrogation and refinement of the themes (Creswell, 2012), both within and across cases (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Tools for generating and refining themes included flow charts or a variety of data matrices (e.g., context charts and thematic conceptual matrices) described by Miles and Huberman (1994) to explore within cases. To explicitly explore across cases, additional techniques included pattern clarification, stacking comparable cases, exploring extreme or negative cases, meta-matrices, and case-ordered descriptive matrices (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The use of several matrices helped me to not only explore and visually represent the data but also

to continue to generate and verify within- and cross-case themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) that built a detailed description of the state offices of outdoor recreation.

Table 1

A Priori Codes from Partnership Literature

Motivations to partner	Benefits of partnerships	Challenges of partnerships	Reference
Limited resources; employee motivations varied with individuals	Enhanced capacity	Not enough administrative support or time; limited recognition; not part of employee job description	Barrow et al. (2013)
Necessity due to high demand for public involvement; interdependence; expanding mission	Improved stakeholder relations; increased agency capacity; increased agency legitimacy	Evolving structures and missions over lifetime of partnership; NPS's new role as facilitator rather than landowner	Barton (2016)
Interpersonal, intrapersonal, and institutional			McCreary et al. (2012)
Necessity; dependent on individual employee's motivation; varied institutional support		Lack of organized support; personnel burdened by other duties; high public demand to partner	McCreary et al. (2010)
		Mission alignment; trouble sustaining momentum; lack of resources; bureaucratic NPS policies; partners' limited capacity	McPadden & Margerum (2010)
Funding backlog; shifting demographic landscape; changing societal expectations of philanthropy	Greater private support; improved services	Institutional barriers in creating and maintaining formal partnerships; centralized authority at higher organizational levels; lack of recognition or consideration in performance reviews	Philanthropic and Partnerships Committee of the NPS Advisory Board (2014)
		Extra time and energy; lack of institutional support; job compression	Seekamp & Cerveny (2010)
	Long-term, ongoing assistance; synergistic outcomes	Not enough time or resources for partnerships; lack of organizational support; not accounted for in performance; inability to share decision-making; lack of internal recognition	Seekamp et al. (2013)
	Matching funds	Partnerships inconsistently used throughout agency	Selin (1995)
Mandated by laws such as NEPA	Resolve conflicts; shared vision; "intangible" benefits such as greater trust and information sharing;	Lack of training, support, or incentives; concern over violating laws; concerns about	Selin et al. (1997)

	reduced litigation	politics; institutional barriers; sharing control	
Improved stakeholder relations; better support for the park or NPS mission; better coordination; better decision-making		Difficulty planning for partnership commitments; difficulty establishing structures; lack of training or reward structure; bureaucracy; rigid policies	Weddell et al. (2009)
	Greater innovation, effectiveness, and efficiency; better decision-making; greater capacity; improved communication and coordination	Lack of training; complex or rigid agency reporting policies	Weddell et al. (2012)
Necessity; loss of capacity; duty; interdependence; shared vision	Better decision-making; greater effectiveness; improved stakeholder relations; improved communication; improved coordination; increased capacity; greater efficiency; greater stakeholder buy-in	Loss of control; mistrust; uncertainty; fear; additional time, resources, and effort required; lack of incentives, rewards, training, or support structure; bureaucracy; complex requirements; job compression	Wondolleck & Yaffee (2010)

RESULTS

Interviews described the offices' backgrounds, goals and programs, internal organization and resources, and external partnerships. Results describing the background of the state offices are summarized in the *Paths to Creation* section below, while their goals and programs, internal organization and resources, and external partnerships are described in the *Goals and Programs* section. These data are also presented in a technical report titled "Elevating Outdoor Recreation Together" prepared for the National Park Service by Sausser and Smith (2018).

Paths to Creation

The 11 state offices of outdoor recreation were established within various departments, including economic development departments, governors' offices, natural resource agencies, or as standalone institutions. All of the offices were created as a result of broad stakeholder support and engagement from several common types of advocates, including governors, local and national outdoor industry representatives, recreation user groups, and various nonprofits groups. The Outdoor Industry Association (OIA), a national advocacy group, helped create each state office to varying extents, from providing letters of support to hiring legislative advocates. While similar actors mobilized to form individual offices, each office is customized to the needs and priorities of its state, beginning with the creation process and through the formation of goals and programs.

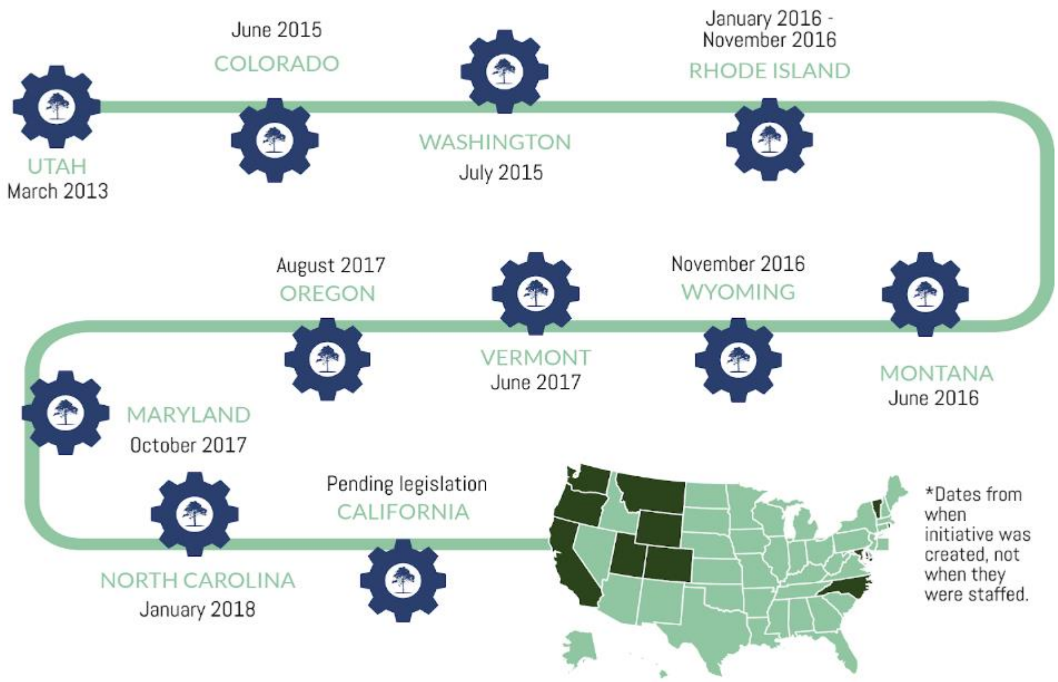

Figure 5.1.1. Timeline of Office Creation

A Customized Process

While the creation of state offices of outdoor recreation has become a national trend (Figure 5.1.1), states are not following a standard template, or the examples of others, but are critically analyzing the operations of established offices and adapting their structure and purpose to address their own unique needs. States are customizing their approach, including the process of scoping efforts before creating an office. For example, Vermont's leaders "didn't find other [states' processes] sufficient" for what "needed to happen here in Vermont, and so we did way more – even though we only have the population that's like the size of some of the cities in these other states." In Wyoming, the standalone structures of other states provided a counterexample,

leading the state to create an office embedded within its state parks program. Following a task force on parks and outdoor recreation, Washington created a Policy Advisor on Outdoor Recreation and Economic Development in the Governor's Office designed to influence legislation and interact with other industry sector leads. Overall, four states adopted a similar approach in creating temporary scoping task forces before establishing formal offices. Considering the variety of paths to creation and office structures, one office advocate noted, "I think the concept of an office is variable, depending upon what the community is...the idea of an office is a concept that…[is] a little more of a label than a specific model" (OR). The variation in office structures mirrors the breadth of state motivations for creating an office.

Political, Social, Cultural, and Economic Factors Supporting State Offices

While many national pressures existed, no single factor can explain the rapid establishment of state offices of outdoor recreation across the country. Rather, the emergence of state offices is the result of a complex interaction of economic, social, political, and environmental factors within the state (Figure 5.2). At the same time, there have been nationwide influences, such as the concentrated efforts of the OIA in providing economic impact data or advocacy support. Specific contexts varied widely from state to state, with new economic data bearing significant weight in some dialogues and less in others.

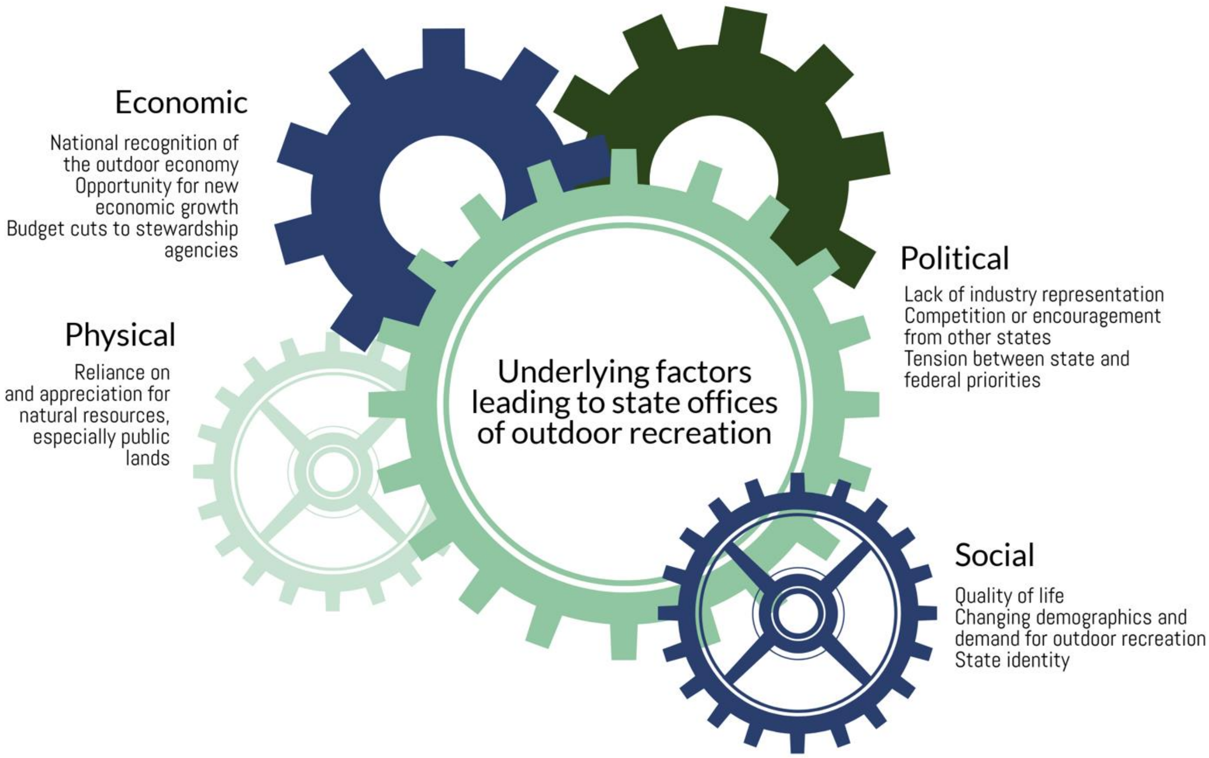

Figure 5.2. Factors Leading to Creation of State Offices

For many states, the economic benefits of outdoor recreation defined the size of the industry and justified the need for a state office to further enhance it. Beginning more than a decade ago, the OIA provided data on the outdoor economy, with its latest report showcasing its footprint at the national, state, and Congressional district level. More recently, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis began to measure the outdoor economy as its own market segment, providing governmental credibility and support. The economic studies enabled states to make direct comparisons to other sectors such as the auto industry that were previously impossible, given "there hadn't been any effort to really understand the broader outdoor recreation economy like the Outdoor Industry Association did" (MT). It was the first comprehensive study to analyze the complexity of the economy; while other sectors are "really easy to put your arms around," the outdoor economy, while "just as big or comparable" to other industries, is often "difficult to

quantify" because "it depends on public land, and because it's *so* varied - everything from birdwatching...to dunebuggies" (WA). As a member of Colorado's office summarized, their office was created due to "just a lot of external momentum about the size and shape of our economy, more than anything else." In other states, the economic report released by the Outdoor Industry Association helped the outdoor economy be "seen as a valid sector" (WA) that was "equivalent to other sector leads" (WA) in the state, ultimately opening up a "language" (MT) in terms of "dollars and cents and jobs" that "everybody can talk about" (MT). In some states, the impetus for creating an office sprang from the already massive size and reputation of the economy in the state, while for others it was an untapped source of income. For yet other states, the varied benefits of the economy justified greater investments in the public agencies that provided outdoor recreation, especially when those agencies were suffering from extreme budget cuts. Moreover, in many states, the economic contributions of outdoor recreation enabled states to consider other arguments demonstrating the need for an office.

For example, although they "didn't have...any numbers behind it at that point" (MT), state leaders recognized the greater social contributions of outdoor recreation beyond its economic benefits. For many states, the establishment of an office resonated with the states' collective identity or long-held traditions. In Utah – the first state to create an office – skiing had "always been…something that for the longest time we have hung our hat on." Similarly, in Montana, the office was "one more way that this state, [which] has...a *long* history of proactive thinking, of protecting access, of protecting resources" to continue to do so. States also sought to support outdoor recreation because it creates a quality of life that attracts and retains tourists, businesses, and residents. Elevating the outdoor recreation economy through a state office of outdoor recreation was seen as a way to help address changing demographic conditions, whether

it was satisfying the demand for outdoor recreation opportunities or human capital for outdoor businesses. As one advocate summarized, "The outdoors and outdoor recreation and scenic beauty is the number one reason why people come to Oregon as visitors...And it's also sort of the top thing that people think about who live here…It's the reason why people move here; it's the reason why people live here; it's kind of a core aspect and core ethos of the state." Recognition of the broader social and economic benefits inspired a desire to more formally invest in the outdoor recreation economy through political means.

State offices are new political institutions that arose due to political action within the states, between the states, and with the federal government. Within states, outdoor industry advocates mobilized to attain the recognition and support that other leading economic sectors enjoyed, as well as to have a greater say in the policy environment that affects their operations. In Utah, the transition from a sector lead (established previously) to a full-fledged office arose because stakeholders felt that "that position ought to be a little more important, and weigh in on policy" and that "it's not just enough to pay attention to the outdoor industry businesses...but we need to have a say in the world that affects those businesses." The creation of offices in some states triggered a "friendly arms race" between some neighboring states and in part inspired North Carolina to become the first state on the East Coast to create an office. (Refer to Sausser and Smith (2018) for further exploration of how the creation of offices in some states impacted other states). Additionally, for states with newer offices, conflict with federal priorities played a role. For example, when discussing proposed fee increases at national parks within his state, one advocate noted, "I think it really comes down to showing the feds that this is a unified voice of the *entire* industry and all the people that like to recreate in these places. That's coming to the table and saying, we don't want changes that negatively impact our access." Creating state

offices presented a new opportunity for the industry to interact at the policy level, especially as it relates to the management of lands that people recreate on.

State offices, and the industry they support, are only possible given the quantity and quality of natural resources within the states, though few states recognized them explicitly as reason for creating an office. Several state offices emerged alongside an ongoing recognition of the value of public lands, where the creation of an office was a “manifestation” of a long-standing tradition of interacting with their outdoors, “[proving] that this is such a vital, important part of our state because our state has so much to offer in this realm” (MT). Utah has always espoused the opportunities to ski, while in Colorado “fourteeners are really the brand or icon.” In North Carolina, a state that may not as easily come to mind for its natural resources when compared to Western states, an advocate described it as,

> While in, you know the Rocky Mountain states for sure and a lot of the Western states...you know, you have this sort of um esprit de corps around outdoors and the outdoor industry and outdoor recreation. You know, North Carolina probably doesn’t have that tradition...[but] we should have that tradition because of what this state has to offer in terms of its uh natural resources.

The natural resources within the states “[lend themselves] to the thriving success of those types of businesses” (MT), but states also recognize and appreciate them for far more; Washington’s office stated, “When it comes to public lands, I always tell folks, public land has ecosystem services…everything from water filtration to habitat protection to to carbon sequestration um that go along as just kind of a fringe benefit.”

Ultimately, states established offices of outdoor recreation as a result of interactions between economic, social, and political factors (Table 2), with significant variation in their respective influence from state to state. Regardless of state differences, a representative from the OIA noted that states were providing leadership that did not previously exist:

> People are understanding that outdoor recreation is critical and that states have a lot more that they can do, and so you're seeing states step up and actually do it right now because of some of those bigger picture social and economic and political forces...You go from maybe a time when outdoor recreation is seen as a lifestyle to something that's seen as a need-to-have.

State offices were created to address a variety of needs and have since adopted as wide a range in goals and programs.

Table 2

Factors Leading to State Offices of Outdoor Recreation

Factor	Dimensions	Examples
Economic	Recognition of the outdoor economy	"…There's a national movement that…has been recognizing the value of the outdoor recreation economy in the different states as well as nationally. But starting with the OIA putting out their numbers and…beating that drum, that this is a big industry…That got people's attention…five years ago in D.C." (CA) "Having Secretary Jewell…earmark $2 million to do an account within Commerce to put us in the GDP in our own segment - that obviously had a lot of buzz with the governors. So I think it was just a lot of external momentum about the size and shape of our economy, more than anything else." (CO)
	Opportunity for economic growth	"The North Carolina businesses and companies have realized that they are bigger, and more important, than maybe even they've realized…The realization of what the potential is for North Carolina, what the benefit is for North Carolina in creating such an office, and focusing on such a large and diverse industry as well as the potential for this industry to grow with a little more focus on it." (NC) "Wyoming is known to be a boom-and-bust, so we've…been living through that the last couple of years…[The office] was a way to say hey, we know this is already a strong component of…our economy. Is there any way that we can boost it even higher?...This is a prime time to look at that economic diversification with one thing that we feel we have some pretty major assets in." (WY)
	Budget cuts to land management agencies	"…The outdoor recreation community in our state was really aghast at the cuts that happened in the recession…particularly [to] state parks…[It was one] of the biggest cuts in the history of Washington state for a state agency over one budget period…Everyone saw all these cuts, disproportionately hitting outdoor recreation; meanwhile, there was this growing awareness of how much revenue outdoor recreation is generating for the state, as far as…economic impact and employment. And they felt like there was a big disconnect there that needed to be addressed." (WA) "We were really…struggling and still are struggling with staffing and resources in the [state] parks system. And we're…getting to the point where…we've weathered budget cut after budget cut over the years. And, you know, we're down to the point of no return…" (RI)

Social	Quality of life	"…The reason that everyone lives in Montana is so that they can have access to great recreation. You can go somewhere else and make more money, but this is the place to be if you value an active, healthy lifestyle." (MT) "[Outdoor recreation] created a really high quality of life that people…I think, for a long time, took for granted: that you can land in an international airport and be skiing in 30 minutes…it seems like, oh, that's just how life is, but then you leave Utah, and that's *not* how it is, you know?" (UT) "…No one wants to open up a company where there's nothing to see or do. And with the way that we've become untethered…from our desks, and flex schedules…employees are kind of demanding that they have the ability to and this access to doing fun, interesting things. And outdoor recreation certainly provides that." (MD)
	Changing demographics & demand for outdoor recreation	"We are the 9th largest state in terms of population. I think we'll be the 7th largest by either 2020 or 2025. So the demographics in North Carolina are really positive, and they're…changing rapidly...it's a young state with a growing, diverse workforce…These are all the things that businesses want...why aren't we using this to recruit in our state? And to pitch in our state?" (NC) "Population growth, and the *demand* for outdoor recreation, is far surpassing the actual amount of funding that's being provided to outdoor recreation…And that is creating kind of this sense of urgency…we want this to be a place where great recreation is… there are a lot of people who come here, looking for an outdoor experience; they specifically move here for that, or they take a job for that, and you know, therefore, what can we do about it?" (WA) "…Vermont, truly, is at a crisis point…in terms of…losing people. We have an aging population. We need workers. We have this gap we can't fill for jobs. And we…[have] some challenges with attracting people to live here. And outdoor recreation is a powerful way to overcome some of those challenges." (VT)
	State identity	"I think [outdoor recreation] is the reputation of Vermont. We're already really good at this. We're world-renowned for our outdoor recreation assets…We don't have to spend a lot of time convincing

		people that Vermont is a great place to come outside and play….It's already kind of baked into who we are." (VT) "This office is just a different manifestation, or a different way of communicating what is so vitally important to the fabric of Montana's being…outdoor recreation and the use of our national resources for recreational enjoyment is, has always been, and is part of the fabric of what this state is." (MT)
Political	Lack of industry representation	"The energy industry has a voice in Sacramento. The hunting industry has a voice in Sacramento. The film industry has a voice in Sacramento. I'm sure the Pig Farmers Association has a voice in Sacramento. But our industry does not. We do not have any way to help shape policy in the state as an industry. It's every organization for themselves…" (CA) "[OIA] members…wanted to have representation within state government. They wanted there to be more resources and support….A designated problem solver. They wanted to see their companies be accepted as part of the state's economic future." (OR)
	Competition or encouragement from other states	"So I immediately thought if Colorado...can convince politicians that there's a big economy around…our mountains and streams, and you know, wild places…I wonder if that same thing couldn't happen for North Carolina. We've got beautiful mountains, great rivers, a huge outdoor rec economy." (NC)
	Striking a balance between state and federal priorities (e.g. fee increases at national parks)	"…the proposed fee increase at some national parks…We really think that that could dramatically impact the ability of the average Montanan to go enjoy a place like Yellowstone. And the belief that anyone should be able to go and enjoy a place like Yellowstone is really fundamental to what the Office of Outdoor Rec was created to fight for." (MT) "There's certainly been…[a] movement in other states…to sell off public lands or transition public lands from federal to state. And Montanans have essentially uniformly opposed *all* attempts…to deregulate public lands or change the ownership of those. And…I think [it] comes from an understanding that the lands we have are designated appropriately at this point, and people absolutely love to recreate on them." (MT) "…the feeling that there's headwinds coming out of DC, the idea that we're going to allow offshore

		drilling for the first time in 45 or 50 years…what's being asked of us, or told to us, creates a very strong desire to push back…that has created an urgency and a sense of desire to invest in…outdoor recreation." (CA)
Physical	Reliance on natural resources	"…This desire to support public land and its environmental benefits got a boost on this growing recognition that public land supports all these jobs in outdoor recreation as well…It's not just there for ecosystem services and aesthetic services; it's also like a jobs engine." (WA)
		"Our state has so much to offer in this realm…our state just lends itself to the thriving success of those types of [outdoor] businesses." (MT)
	Appreciation of natural resources	"…The Rocky Mountain states…and a lot of the Western states…have a sort of esprit de corps around outdoors and the outdoor industry and outdoor recreation…[but] we *should* have that tradition because of what this state has to offer in terms of its natural resources, its outdoor opportunities." (NC)

Goals and Programs of the State Offices

Regardless of their name, organizational structure, or location within government, each state office seeks to further develop, promote, or enhance the outdoor economy – whether it is defined as improving opportunities for outdoor recreation, increasing consumer spending, or expanding employment opportunities. In Colorado, its "biggest role is to really galvanize the industry." Each office is then further nuanced to the needs and priorities of its state, with some offices restricting their focus to economic development and others broadening their scope to include conservation, health, education, and more. Several offices desire to improve data on the outdoor economy as well as secure steady funding for related programs such as state parks. Many offices work on an ongoing one-on-one, project-level basis while also "[providing] that consistent statewide policy leadership for outdoor recreation" (OR). Some mandates were outlined in legislation or an executive order, while others were developed or expanded through stakeholder input. The chart in Appendix A provides each office's specific programs and goals.

While several offices plan to organize statewide outdoor recreation conferences and plan to be involved in some manner with their states' Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans (plans to quantify outdoor recreation amenities and opportunities within a state), relatively few offices have established formal, ongoing programs or immediate objectives. Some exceptions include Vermont's economic collaborative running a gear loan program for first-time campers, the Colorado office funding the Blueprint Initiative to provide economic planning assistance for rural communities, and the Utah office organizing "breakfast and business" discussions for state industry members. While many offices plan to leverage existing state and federal resources, only two state offices help oversee grants programs; Utah manages an in-house program for state entities to develop outdoor recreation "infrastructure" (e.g., boat ramps, trails,

etc.) while Colorado's office helps partners leverage funds from a statewide grant program furnished by lottery proceeds. Given their relatively short existence, the majority of offices are still refining their focus from broad, vague mandates to more actionable goals and programs, especially given that there is "no plug-and-play manual" (MT) and few precedents to look to. Rather than operating their own programs, many offices have chosen to focus their limited resources on developing partnerships with other local, state, and federal entities (described in more detail under the *External Partnerships* heading).

Given their need to partner with local, state, and federal entities, as well as their role in supporting outdoor businesses, and the way outdoor recreation naturally intersects with other sectors under management of state governments (e.g., transportation, health, land management), state offices have described themselves as "quarterback[s]" (WY), "conduit[s]" (OR), "coalition builder[s]" (CO), and many other similar terms for the industry and related stakeholders. They operate on a variety of governmental levels, representing the industry's "voice" (MT) while also being a resource for other stakeholders such as local governments. Several office directors travel extensively throughout the state to engage with more local interests while balancing a policy perspective. Washington's policy advisor described the challenge, saying,

> I yoyo back and forth between 30,000 foot-level and street-level all the time. So at one point I may be looking at a 10-year capital plan for the entire state having to do with outdoor recreation, and another time I may be talking to a small town mayor who is just trying to get a utility easement over a state park trail.

As a representative for diverse stakeholders and a "go-between," Washington's policy advisor further described his role in connecting constituents to other state resources:

> None of these programs end up being something that I administer, but when I see a need, I try to find what's the best way to fulfill that need, either with an existing state agency or with external partners.

Many offices coordinate across and intentionally blur the boundaries between existing

state programs, “triangulating” (CA) between states’ economic development entities, tourism offices, parks and recreation departments, and other land or natural resource management agencies. Their work intentionally spans several different departments:

> We do a lot of things right...and there are amazing things happening in every different segment of our state government working toward this effort...Let’s connect these things. Can we amplify them that much more? (MT)

As strategic coordinators with the goal to provide statewide leadership, state offices follow a more collaborative framework that differs from traditional models in which different state agencies separately manage the resources and programs under their individual purview. The goals, programs, and partners each state office develops in the sphere of conservation, economic development, and outdoor recreation influences their potential to partner with FLMAs.

State Offices and Outdoor Recreation, Conservation, and Economic Development

Each office was formed through the support of multiple interest groups, underwent a political process to be placed in state government, hired leadership, defined or further expanded their goals, developed programs, and built partnerships – all of which had transformative effects for each office in defining their niche within outdoor recreation management. Many states recognize outdoor recreation as a principal reason why people come to live, work, or relocate businesses to their states, and many states perceive a disconnect between the economic impact of outdoor recreation and the investments to support it. Without exception, each state office is tied to economic development, and each office also explicitly recognizes the inherent benefits of outdoor recreation to other public sectors such as conservation, tourism, community planning,

transportation, and health. Given the inherently intersectional nature of outdoor recreation, and each office's role as a coordinator, offices balance representing the industry's needs while improving outdoor recreation outcomes throughout other sectors. Offices are nuanced not only in how they perceive those connections, but also their role in providing those benefits. The offices' names, locations, or even their mandates fail to fully capture any diversity or subtle gradations. However, our data suggest the states do differ in how they perceive outdoor recreation – either as a means to economic development or as an end in and of itself. More discretely, each office can be categorized as *Industry First, Industry And*, or *Industry After* (as described in Table 3).

Table 3
Comparing the State Offices

Framework Category	Description	Archetypal Quote	State Offices, Location within Government
Industry First	Outdoor recreation is perceived as a means to economic development, where conservation is primarily seen as a necessary component of infrastructure maintenance, and benefits beyond economic development are desired but not targeted. Offices often act as an extension of the state's economic development arm (even when not directly situated within it), and their mission and origins are rooted in the economic benefits of outdoor recreation.	"This office is here to support, promote, and expand...the outdoor recreation employment opportunities in the state. And... this office is here to support and promote those things that make North Carolina unique that allows the outdoor recreation industry to thrive here and that also attracts new outdoor recreational businesses."	Maryland Outdoor Recreation Economic Commission, chaired by the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Division of Tourism, Film, and the Arts North Carolina Office of Outdoor Industry Recruitment, Dept. of Commerce Wyoming Outdoor Recreation Office, Division of State Parks
Industry And	The perception of outdoor recreation is transitioning from a means to economic development to an end in and of itself. Offices support not just the outdoor economy but also conservation, education, or other benefits of outdoor recreation such as improved health or greater quality of life. Most are housed in the state's economic development arm and justify non-economic goals for the benefits they bring to the economy. Many of their origins lie in economics, but they have since	"...Our mission is to really inspire industries and communities to come to life through Colorado's great outdoors...We see ourselves supporting the outdoor industry...[but] at the same time...it has to be an effort that goes hand-in-hand with...environmental stewardship, education and workforce training, and health and wellness...[because] the outdoor industry is not going to thrive without [their]	California Office of Sustainable Outdoor Recreation, Natural Resources Agency (legislation proposed, which has since been vetoed) Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office, Governor's Office of Economic Development and Tourism Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation, Office of Economic Development Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation, Governor's Office of Economic Development

	expanded their scope of work.	support."	
Industry After	Outdoor recreation is perceived as an end in and of itself. Offices or initiatives adopt more expansive goals related to conservation, health, and communities, where economic development is a natural outcome more than its own priority. Their origins trace back to more than just economics, and they are housed in other departments rather than the state's economic development arm.	"In our view, outdoor recreation is an amplifier of all those other social goals. It can take education and make it better; it can take community well-being and health and make it better; it can take um the economy and make it better. Those are all outcomes that when viewed through the lens of outdoor rec, become more intense...it's not a matter of one or the other; it's let us help show you how outdoor rec can achieve these greater social aims."	Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Recreation Dept. Rhode Island Outdoor Recreation Council, chaired by the First Gentleman, Dept. of Environmental Management, and the Dept. of Health Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative, chaired by the Dept. of Forests, Parks, and Recreation and the Dept. of Tourism and Marketing Washington's Policy Advisor on Outdoor Recreation and Economic Development

States Recognize the "center-stage" Role of Outdoor Recreation in the Economy While Also Emphasizing its Other Public Benefits

Industry First. *Industry First* offices prioritize economic development before conservation efforts, where conservation is necessary to maintain "infrastructure" but remains outside their direct scope. Many offices were created directly based on economic needs. For example, "Wyoming is known to be a boom-and-bust" and had been "hurting pretty hard," and the outdoor industry, which had always been considered a "secondary" component, was an opportunity for economic diversification. In Maryland and North Carolina, the outdoor industry was a largely overlooked sector and a "new concept" to many decision-makers within the state. Even the outdoor industry members themselves had "realized that they are bigger, and more important, than maybe even they've realized" (NC). Advocating for representation for the outdoor industry in North Carolina was an "awareness campaign" because economic development professionals inside state government had not "spent their careers thinking about, well, how do hiking and biking and hunting and fishing, how does all of that…combine together to create revenue for the state?" In Maryland, it was difficult for the outdoor industry to gain access to capital, because "the bankers didn't understand that there was actually the opportunity…to make money." State offices served as a formal recognition of the outdoor industry's role within the state, changing the conversation about outdoor recreation and marking greater state investment.

Yet despite the economic-intensive focus of *Industry First* offices, they still recognize the reliance of the outdoor industry upon natural landscapes and the conservation and stewardship efforts that sustain them. While conservation is not a distinct focus of North Carolina's office, the conservation community was instrumental in building support for the office. As the office was being formalized, one advocate asked,

> How are the conservation or how are the nonprofit communities going to view this?...I think the reaction was, if you're going to provide *me* with data and case studies to show how the river I'm helping to protect, or the land that I've created some access to...if that creates jobs, and you're going to give me a way to talk about jobs while I'm talking about conservation, I'm going to get all behind you. So the conservation people loved the economic impact message that it might add to what they were doing.

Yet, despite the role that the conservation community played in formalizing the office, a different leader in North Carolina acknowledged,

> There's very much sort of a strong um focus on the economic development aspect of what this office should be doing, while you know, when you look at other states, sometimes it tends...it seems to be they're as focused on sort of conservation and you know natural resource issues. And while that's important, and it's important to this industry in North Carolina, I think the biggest thing for the folks that made it happen in the legislature specifically and the Department of Commerce is that this office is really going to focus on developing this industry that's currently here, in terms of expansion as well as recruiting outside businesses into the state.

Similarly, even though Wyoming's office is tied to the state parks system, enabling it to "leverage" its "assets and resources," leadership explained that "ultimately, it has to be *more* than that" and "at the end of the day…we were there to you know, support, enhance, assist and develop the outdoor recreation economy of the state of Wyoming." While *Industry First* offices such as Wyoming recognize that "our outdoor assets are amazing" and they "can't kill the golden goose," they have to "[think] about infrastructure from an outdoor recreation standpoint" and on improving access to those

resources with the goal to improve the economy. For example, in Maryland, the office will likely look into funding for natural resource agencies, but it was also keeping in mind that "sometimes money isn't want what you need" and that "sometimes you need different types of money, like access" to best support the economy. *Industry First* offices recognize the role of conservation in supporting the economy, but their overarching priority is to develop the outdoor economy through outdoor recreation.

Industry And. For states classified as *Industry And*, the impact of the outdoor industry was already widely recognized; rather than focusing attention on a small or fledgling industry, offices served to maintain the industry's status and provide support equivalent to that which other economic sectors enjoyed. In Utah, "there'd been task forces for a number of years pushing for something like this." In Montana, the director has,

> found that the *idea* for this office or for the stated need for something *like* this office, has…been documented…[and] identified [that] there needs to be one congealing point for the outdoor recreation industry and economy. And so it has been identified in not so many words. It wasn't identified as "Office of Outdoor Recreation" and this is where it lives, this is what it does...but definitely the need for it has been demonstrated over the years.

An advocate for California's office found a similar need to support what data had already proven to be a vital sector of the state economy,

> The realization that is slowly coming is, the outdoor economy uh is so robust…[in] California, at $92 billion plus, and we need to take full advantage and try to prop up and enhance that economy in ways maybe we haven't done in the past.

When defining the formal program areas of Colorado's office, the director started with the existing industry, traveling to "regions that already had a footprint in the outdoor

industry" and to those towns who were "invested in the conversation as opposed to interested." The well-established and well-known outdoor industries in these states justified the need for an office, allowing outdoor recreation to have more "center-stage importance" (VT) and to also take on more meaning beyond improving economic outcomes.

While the motivations of the *Industry And* offices overlap significantly with those of the *Industry First* offices in terms of maintaining "infrastructure" and supporting access, they expand beyond merely improving access to support the economy to improving access to support the outdoor lifestyle. Although Utah's office promotes access for outdoor businesses to test new gear, they also promote access to activities such as an "afternoon bike ride" or a "noon run" that would allow employees to "still have that after-work lifestyle that makes it nice living here." For example, the leadership in Utah's office explained,

> It's our belief that if you, as a resident, are truly happy with the recreational outlets you have, that are in your backyard, you're not only going to want to stay and live here, it's going to create a wonderful, happy active lifestyle for you and your family…you're going to tell your friends, you're going to tell people that are going to come visit, you're going to tell people that are maybe going to move here or businesses that might do the same. So it all starts with making sure we have this amazing place…where residents can kind of be our biggest advocates.

Industry And states also support a much broader range of issues, explicitly defining additional program areas beyond economic development. In addition to supporting "those folks that are, you know, making the gear, making the goods, making the experience" (MT), offices such as Colorado also formally support conservation and stewardship, education and workforce training, and public health and wellness. Mission statements are phrased broader, such as "[championing] communities, organizations, and

people to come to life through Colorado's great outdoors." Yet broader areas often had to be included later in legislation and justified in terms of how they support the economy:

> And my argument there was, you know, without the conservation and stewardship, the economic engine turns off cause the economic engine relies on those natural resources [thriving]. The education and training workforce question was, well, where does our talent come from? And what does our talent pipeline look like? The public health and wellness piece was, well it's always been this ancillary conversation around...the outdoors have already been attached to health and wellness, but we've just never codified it, so can we actually do that? (CO)

Another leader in Colorado's office noted,

> Our overhead agency is really thinking about job creation…but then for us to really contribute to a successful outdoor recreation economy, we also need to support conservation and health and education…we have to make the economic case to say that what we do in all our activities…translate[s] into…job growth.

In addition to including other focus areas for the benefit they provide the economy, some *Industry And* offices support efforts that are less immediately tied to economic benefit, such as improving access for multi-ability groups, youth, and families, as well as urban and minority populations. An advocate for California's pending office emphasized,

> I'm pretty familiar with all the other state's platforms, and this is the only state that that's going to be a pillar in…social justice, equal access…The ability to provide natural experiences for urban populations is something that we are coming from behind. The way that cities were designed here, particularly L.A., [are] among the park-poorest cities in the country…That's seen here as an injustice. That's seen here as…as something wrong that needs to be righted.

Industry And offices see and promote the connections between the outdoor industry and other sectors, though not entirely to the extent as those state offices described as *Industry After*.

Industry After. For some *Industry After* states, the outdoor economy is well-

established, and state offices seek to capitalize on the overall outdoor culture and also achieve improved economic outcomes as an extension of that culture. Both economic need and the desire to improve other social outcomes played a significant role in creating state offices. For these states, economic outcomes are seen as a byproduct to the larger suite of social benefits that come from outdoor recreation. For example, legislation defines the role of Washington's policy advisor as achieving "job growth" and "economic development" but also explicitly includes increasing "opportunities" for and "participation" in outdoor recreation. In Rhode Island, the office was part of a broader gubernatorial initiative that highlighted the economic benefits of outdoor recreation but in reality, catered more to the needs of the state parks system and the opportunities for improved physical health outcomes. Another director noted the connection between a vibrant outdoor culture and the opportunity for the industry to address larger social needs,

> Because people in Vermont…most people aren't a one-season, one-activity person. They're, you know, year-round, multiple sports. They hunt, they mountain bike, they ski…they do all kinds of things. It's just kind of what the lifestyle is like here…My job is to help get people outside and make it a pleasant and enjoyable experience…But I also see that there is…a landscape now. We need people. We need people my age. We need families. We need young people to stay here, to live here, to move here…There is sort of a renaissance of um outdoor recreation related businesses…We already rely on very heavily on our tourism trade here in Vermont…it's time to take that to the next level.

One leader in Oregon noted that "the economics should be a natural outcome of well-run outdoor recreation in the state," but that it was not "the only goal." Instead, outdoor recreation could be a tool to "achieve broader social aims" (OR) or to solve "problems that we have as a society" (WA). As a leader from Oregon further explained of outdoor recreation,

> It's the one thing that everybody agrees either improves your life, or it

> improves the economy, or it improves community health; take your pick, you're going to find somebody who agrees there's at least one benefit that they're willing to get behind.

The same director went on to highlight the difficulty in gaining the appropriate support at the state level:

> There's always going to be some critical human need - education, healthcare, employment, corrections - that's going to supersede outdoor rec. Because outdoor rec is leisure, and when you look at it that way, well, it's just what you do for fun. It's what you do *after* you have affordable housing, and healthcare for everybody, and a well-educated population…So when we get all of those other things, maybe there will be time to talk about outdoor rec…[But] when it comes time to provide budget and resources and thinking and power and governor support and legislative support, it's like, yeah, yeah, yeah, we'll get to it. And um we view the establishment of an office like this as one way to provide some continuity and power behind outdoor rec planning independent of the rest of the political process…working in good times and bad to make sure that we're constantly making progress for outdoor rec.

Leadership close to Washington's office echoed,

> Things like, public safety...education...those are big overarching priorities that are always going to trump um something like outdoor recreation. So the huge challenge is, how do you continue to get adequate funding in a policy environment like that? I think part of the solution is showing how well outdoor recreation is a low-cost tool to generate economic activity and um health and quality of life outcomes for relatively little in expenditures...I think you can show with public land, everything from parks to national monuments, that the money we're investing in public land and by extension outdoor recreation, um we get some really great outcomes…

Leadership close to Oregon's office simplified the need for a state office:

> You need some sort of stable group whose mission it is, day-in, day-out, year-in, year-out, administration to administration, to advance the cause and elevate outdoor recreation, not just for the economic benefits, but because of the way it improves people's lives.

The detailed rationale and the comprehensive benefits that advocates were able to incorporate enabled the *Industry After* offices to include larger mandates "independent of

economic development goals and what the governor wants to do in that moment or not." While still recognizing and promoting the contributions of outdoor recreation to the economy, *Industry After* offices best capture the connections of outdoor recreation with conservation, health, and other sectors. Given the role of all state offices as coordinators, the goals and programs pursued by *Industry First, Industry And*, and *Industry After* offices will influence the partnerships each office develops.

Partnerships of State Offices

Rather than operating their own programs, many offices have chosen to focus their limited resources on developing partnerships with other local, state, and federal entities (e.g., businesses, organizations, agencies, etc.) within the "ecosystem" of outdoor recreation. Offices participate in partnerships for many reasons, including limited resources, the intersectional nature of outdoor recreation, its bipartisan nature, high demand from stakeholders, and to maximize their impact by working with other entities that share similar goals. Like many new state programs, offices operate with limited, if any, resources; Appendix C describes the budgets and specific funding sources for each state. Funding sources include states' general funds, state economic development entities, or state parks. The three council-like offices in Maryland, Rhode Island, and Vermont, have received no funding. Offices are similarly limited in terms of human resources; more than a third have only one dedicated employee without administrative support, and some offices have asked for but failed to receive additional staffing support. Some larger

offices are augmented by university interns or external grants, while council-like structures generally have 15 or more people involved. In the case of Vermont, they welcomed outside stakeholders, noting that if "you want to be in VOREC, you're in VOREC" and that "we will help you find a task to take on, because, well, we need it." Utah's office summarizes their staffing constraints by noting:

> We're a $12 billion industry, and we have the largest office of outdoor recreation in the nation, and we have three people. *Three* people. When it comes to partnership, we have to work with pretty much everybody.

In addition to constrained resources and capacity, offices often develop partnerships out of a need to be connected to the whole spectrum of actors involved in outdoor recreation. The "outdoor recreation business[es], and just in that, businesses are pretty far-reaching" (WY) in the economy - from manufacturers and retailers to service providers - are as diverse as outdoor recreation itself. Even when looking at the "geographic diversity, the activity diversity – it is too broad" (CA). A leader from Maryland's commission noted that a "lot of folks look at outdoor [recreation] and forget…that outdoor recreation can happen anywhere, including an urban environment," indicating the greater scope of potential partners beyond traditional allies. Many offices have taken a broader view of the economy and termed it an "ecosystem" (CO) that expands "beyond the buyers and sellers" (CA) to include other economic sectors as well as those who manage the land or provide access to it. For example, an advocate for California's potential office described the breadth of the industry, stating, "There's no such thing as the outdoor industry. The outdoor industry is a collective of many smaller industries that all play in the same sandbox." The outdoor economy is naturally interlaced with other sectors such as land management, transportation, health, energy development,

and more; outdoor recreation management "doesn't exist in a vacuum" and necessitates coordination of diverse stakeholders and agencies. Offices therefore must assume a broader role and flexible approach: "if the word recreation can come into a sentence, we could be incorporated" (UT). The scope of work for Washington state's policy advisor further demonstrates this:

> I may be tracking....100 bills at any time, and only like 10% of them are specifically outdoor recreation, and a bunch of them may be things like transportation or health bills that have the ability to impact outdoor recreation...that's one of the hardest things about outdoor recreation industry, is that it's *so* varied.

Consistent with the breadth and diversity of the "ecosystem," state offices were created due to actors across multiple domains mobilizing and demanding greater support for outdoor recreation. For example, groups such as the Big Tent in Washington and the California Outdoor Recreation Partners organized to advocate for offices, often providing services "for free" (CA) and in their "spare time" (NC); for offices that follow a commission-like structure, "everybody and their mom" (VT) wanted to be included and office leaders' "phone[s] and email[s] were swamped with people" who wanted to join (MD). Oregon's office even invited stakeholders into the hiring process. One Washington advocate summarized the degree of stakeholder engagement as "not typical" and attributed it as due to "people's passion around recreation." A leader from Vermont's office noted, "I've been in this field my entire career, and people…this is close to their hearts, you know. And they care." Outdoor recreation is a "nonpartisan" (NC) or "bipartisan" (CA) area of agreement, for the public, professionals in the field, and other decision-makers. In North Carolina, an office was "not a hard pitch," and an advocate spent "as much" time talking about hiking and biking as hunting and fishing, because

"most hunters go bike and hike" and "lots of hikers go hunt and fish." Leadership from Vermont's office echoed that "everybody in Vermont likes to play outside," and that those groups "don't separate themselves," so "Why should we?" – because all recreation groups need to have access to recreation opportunities. Even for office employees, their passion for improving outdoor recreation outcomes was clear; Utah's director explained that "we end up throwing away a lot of hours because we love our job." For the groups that offices partner with, the passion holds; Vermont praised partners, saying, "we're just so lucky that we have…people who are just really into what they're doing."

Given the high demand to partner, offices have intentionally taken steps to ensure that they were being inclusive, especially of entities outside state government. Several states wanted to keep the process from being "solely on the shoulders of the state" (MD) because "you never really want government driving the bus" (WY). A leader from Oregon's office explained that "you have to dedicate yourself to constantly questioning where you are, who's included, [and] are you forming the right networks?" Ultimately, offices wanted to make sure that "everyone who wants to have a say has the ability to have a say" (MD), and being diverse and inclusive is a "given" (WY). Partnerships have strengthened even after state offices have been formalized, with several advocates transitioning into advisory groups or continuing to organize separately, even as the scope of many offices' work expanded. As the Director of Utah's Office of Outdoor Recreation explained, "as more people find out who you are and what you do, the more people around the state need help, and so that's why we truly try to partner."

Lastly, given their resource constraints, their overlap with other public sectors, and the demand for stakeholder engagement, some offices also seek to partner in order to

broaden their impact. For example, they noted relying on partners to deepen their knowledge in areas outside their immediate domain, such as looking to the economic development agency to help the new office learn which outdoor businesses were present in the state. Partners can also help to "wave the flag" and communicate the value of outdoor recreation to new and broader audiences, ultimately becoming "additional boots on the ground to tell our story for us" (UT). Those "boots on the ground" vary given the different benefits of outdoor recreation each office seeks to amplify.

Partnerships vary across Industry First, Industry And, and Industry After. Each office invests significantly in partnerships, though specific partnerships vary from state to state. Partnerships vary given contextual factors, such as the proportion and composition of public and private land, the overall size of the state, the structure of other local, state, or federal agencies, the prevalence of external organizations, or existing or past relationships in the state. Partnerships assume both formal and informal arrangements, making them difficult to capture or quantify, though partners are often included as part of an advisory body, through other agencies' working groups, or case-by-case collaborations. Each office interacts with partners of various backgrounds and multiple governance levels, including: federal land management agencies; state land management agencies; county governments and municipalities; the outdoor industry; other industries; nonprofits and professional associations; and others such as elected officials and tribes. Which partnerships offices build vary given their perspective on outdoor

recreation, and whether it is a means to economic development or an end in and of itself.

Industry First. *Industry First* states engage with a wide variety of partners, primarily through existing relationships and structures they are already a part of as a state-level agency, while also incorporating new groups through their advisory boards. North Carolina's office plans to look at "human diversity, geographic diversity, [and] industry diversity," while guidelines for the broad membership of Maryland's commission were defined in the executive order. Wyoming's office is the only *Industry First* office planning to develop two advisory structures, one for stakeholders and one composed of executive branch agencies to accomplish the stakeholders' vision. Given the variety in the amount of public land in *Industry First* offices, offices interact with FLMAs differently, from "periodic checking-in" (NC) to "briefings" (MD) to more regular working relationships in Wyoming. North Carolina and Maryland foresee a "more interactive" (NC) relationship with state land managers, especially given that "stand land management agencies will be staff to the commission" (MD).

Industry First offices tend to see the most opportunity to partner at a more local level with other economic development entities, land managers, and local communities, because "what is going to be good for the state is going to be good…because it's good for those local governments as well" (MD). For example, Wyoming's office plans to work as a "catalyst" with community "economic development folks, with the mayors, with the city council folks, with the county commissioners" to develop a plan, until "little by little" the community evolves from a "business-ready community" to an "outdoor-

recreation-business-ready community." Similarly, North Carolina's office plans to partner with conservation organizations, to develop case studies demonstrating the economic impact of their stewardship efforts. While offices exist to "represent the industry" (NC) and to be their "voice" (NC), they "don't treat our nonprofits any different than we would our for-profit businesses" (WY). Interestingly, North Carolina's office does not foresee a significant role in any advocacy work and wants to avoid any issues that are "controversial in a political nature"; the director "[hopes] there will be some groups that sort of self-form and become hubs of communication and networking" and that they will be the "leader" on those issues.

Industry And. *Industry And* offices have developed the most formal set of partnerships across the "whole spectrum" (CO) of the outdoor industry, and they also have the most established, ongoing programs. Most offices participated in a statewide "listening tour" (NC) when defining their role to determine the "different modalities of recreation" (CO) in the state, and the offices in Utah and Colorado host regular conferences to encourage stakeholders throughout the industry to come together and collaborate, though Colorado's office organizes regional summits as "report-outs" of the main conference. Many partners are integrated into the offices' work through specific collaborative projects, sitting on the same boards, attending the same conferences, networking informally, and most frequently, as members of the offices' advisory boards. Offices' advisory boards are large, with the goal to "have a diverse range of folks that have a say in outdoor recreation" (UT) including "the business face" (CA) as well as land managers and conservation groups. Utah's office described the process of determining

who should be on the board as identifying which actors were part of the "economic driver" category and which were "helping to create a healthy, happy, active lifestyle in the state."

State offices in Utah and Colorado both have responded to the need for additional organization and structure, creating two advisory boards and rules for membership. Utah's office has an informal advisory board that serves in a more general capacity, with an "official" board for their grant program, while Colorado's office has a system of regional coalitions and a temporary board for a health collaborative. Many *Industry And* offices seem to prefer unofficial advisory groups, saying "it's not going to be one of those official crazy boards" (MT), and expressing gratitude that they do not have to "[run] Robert's Rules" (UT). Unsurprisingly, Utah's office, as the oldest, has the most extensive interactions with partners, especially at the federal level; the office collaborates with NPS on their grant program, supports Zion National Park in solving transportation issues, and crafts public comments for leases on BLM land. Utah's office has also successfully partnered with unlikely industry members, "slowly [making] inroads" and "infiltrating" the "boardrooms" of oil and gas to develop local trails. All the *Industry And* offices have extensive federal land, and as an advocate for California's office stated, "Well, because 48% of California is federally owned public land, there'd be quite a bit of interface with federal land managers." In Colorado, FLMAs are seen as "peer partner[s]" and "advisor[s]." Whether *Industry And* offices engage in informal information sharing, establish formal partnerships, or collaborate on a case-by-case basis, they partner with everyone who is "part of the conversation" (CO).

Industry After. *Industry After* offices have also developed extensive partnerships, though not codified in formal arrangements, and often less with industry members. For example, while *Industry And* offices still engage with representatives across the entire field of outdoor recreation, Oregon's office will be the only one to establish a comprehensive, formal advisory board. Other states, such as Washington, have developed an "ad hoc" group as a "sounding board," while membership categories on Rhode Island's council and Vermont's commission are specified in their enabling executive orders. Many offices emphasize partnerships with nonprofits; in Washington, the only external body that the policy advisory sits on is that of the statewide outdoor recreation coalition; in Vermont, collaboration with nonprofits is "constant" and "they are covered"; and in Rhode Island, nonprofits were more engaged on the council than any industry partners. Again, the type and amount of public lands in the *Industry After* states are not consistent, leading to varying levels of collaboration between state offices and FLMAs. Both Washington's and Oregon's offices interact with FLMAs on a higher level, collaborating on policy, funding, and spending strategies. The smaller, eastern states of Vermont and Rhode Island share information with FLMAs, but the interaction is minimal, largely because they "don't have that presence in the state" (RI). The previous council in Rhode Island and the ongoing collaborative in Vermont have tended to have a more state and local focus; the makeup of the council in Rhode Island was "basically us" given that the Department of Environmental Management acted as chair, and so the "largest land managers" were automatically incorporated. Washington's policy advisor especially "overlap[s]" with other sectors, because they "[bleed] into" each other and "they're embedded with a lot of the process that I work with here." While *Industry After*

offices engage with outdoor industry members, it is on a much smaller scale and more focused on participation in outdoor recreation rather than economic development, and many *Industry After* offices partner extensively with local nonprofits.

Challenges for state offices when partnering. Given the broad scope of partners, overlap with other sectors, and inherent difficulties associated with collaboration, state offices have predictably encountered challenges specific to working with other organizations. While state offices are struggling with startup difficulties, communicating their role relative to other state priorities, organizational questions, pressure from outside or overhead agencies, and longevity (refer to Sausser and Smith (2018) for more detail), they face three main challenges: mission alignment; limited resources; and bandwidth.

Mission alignment. Partnerships among separate organizations emerge out of not only necessity (McPadden & Margerum, 2010) but also to support a shared goal or vision (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). Each office has the goal to support the outdoor economy, and many have additional goals to improve the benefits of outdoor recreation to conservation, health, and quality of life. Yet, in partnering with other agencies, especially at the state level, offices struggle with contradictory missions, inter-organizational conflict, and limits as a public agency.

Contradictory missions. Even when working with likeminded land management

or conservation organizations, state offices sometimes struggle with aligning their missions. For example, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, which provides recreation for millions on their large water projects, is in the "business" of outdoor recreation, "but it's not their mission" (WA). And while FLMAs actively support outdoor recreation, sometimes land is "managed in a way that doesn't prioritize access or recreation" (CA). In Vermont, the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, which is one of the chairs for the office, notes that there is somewhat of a "philosophical" or "legal" difference in missions with the state fish and game agency, making the comparison, "You can climb anywhere unless it's restricted…[but] on Fish and Wildlife lands it's the opposite; you can't climb unless you have permission to do so."

Yet even when missions are more aligned, state offices still sometimes fight the perception that they are not. For example, Utah's office had to overcome traditional thinking that cast "oil and gas" as the "bad guys." For states with rural areas, the idea that a state-level organization would "come in, or by extension a federal organization...[would] come in, and tell them what to do with the land that's nearby" could have the "potential to rub" (CA). Similarly, one director noted that "you've got to be careful, especially, at least in the state of Wyoming, saying I'm from the government, I'm here to help – that type of thing…you start to lose a lot of supporters that you might have gained." Defining shared goals or aligning missions is a crucial first step in developing partnerships, and without it, inter-organizational conflict is more likely to occur.

Inter-organizational conflict. The placement of state offices within government

can sometimes present a challenge for collaboration with atypical partners. For example, Colorado's office attempts to "hit all four buckets," of economic development, conservation, education, and health. However, because their state office is located in an agency (the Office of Economic Development and International Trade) that is "really thinking about job creation," this can "limit immediate investment" in conservation and health, and "it's always going to be something that requires a lot more effort than solely going from the traditional economic development angle." Even for standalone offices, many directors either directly report to or represent the governor, and when you "work for the governor…your opinion is the governor's opinion," (UT) even if the outcome is not optimal for outdoor recreation. In the state of Utah, conflict between the outdoor industry and the governor's stance on public lands pushed the office into "political corners." Lastly, even for those offices that do not answer to a governor, the pressure remains: "the reality is that right now we have a Republican governor" (VT) which in turn impacts state funding priorities.

Working with fellow state agencies also presents a unique challenge and balancing act. As coordinators, offices work between domains traditionally owned by other agencies and "take care of some of those other pieces that nobody else really focuses on," leading to a question of "who's going to be the lead agency" (CO). Leadership of Colorado's office explained, "It's very easy for us to be in the lead role in the planning phase. Because…it's thought leadership, it's convening, already things we do. But when you talk about implementation…given where we're sitting…structurally, it might limit us." Again, the location of the office within state government can affect potential partnerships and create unnatural competition, in that "that [office] is kind of

saddled with the expectation that they are performing at the behest of one agency, whereas here we have four agencies" related to outdoor recreation management (WA). From a financial perspective, "most of the agencies that we deal with at the state level are all competing for the same very small pool" of funds and advocating for resource allocation can "hurt the relationship[s]" (OR). In addition to competition between state agencies, state offices also struggle to develop collaborative strategies given their constraints as public agencies.

Limits as a public agency. For state offices that are not housed within the state's economic development entity (largely those described as *Industry After*), they have to balance the industry's private interests against the public interest of other stakeholders they serve. Some of the tension is practical, while other sources of tension are more philosophical. In Oregon, when advocates organized a "lobby day," a representative from Travel Oregon (whose initiative recommended the creation of an office" was not going to attend: "partially, as a state agency, that's not something that I was going to." Later, during the legislative process, an employee within the office's proposed department commented, that they had to express their support without "[taking] a position on the bill." Even as an *Industry First* office, Wyoming's office (located within the state parks system) director noted that "I'm still a state entity – there's certain things I can't do for private business." Yet other limits are more a function of unfamiliarity in supporting the industry and even in "being able to understand what that means" (CA). Staff to Vermont's office noted that,

> And we're like, but how do we help with that? Like how do we do that? You know, like how can a state agency that provides outdoor recreation,

> help do that?...And some of it, some of it [are] not things that our department can do...we can't change the tax code or worker's comp or, you know, health insurance. Those are not things that our department specifically has control over.

Vermont's office also drew the connection between practical limitations and more philosophical constraints, explaining, "I work for the Department of Forest, Parks, and Recreation, and our mission is not...though it has economic implications, and we do think about that, our job is to take care of state lands." An advocate for California's office forecasted the likely difficulty in coming from an "industry-centric viewpoint" if the proposed office were to be involved with the statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, asking, "Where does the industry interest stop, and where does the public interest start? Where are those benefits relative to just the industry benefits?" Leadership close to Oregon's office described their mindset, saying,

> We don't want to give up our sense of public service just to cater to the industry's interests, but they're Oregonians too; they're citizens too. They have a role along with everybody else we serve in helping shape policy.

Various facets of mission alignment – contradictory missions, inter-organizational conflict, and limits as a public agency – present challenges for state offices when developing partnerships, especially given their limited resources.

Limited resources. While limited resources provide an incentive for state offices to partner, their staffing and funding constraints directly impede their ability to collaborate.

Staffing. Many state offices are restricted to only one employee, essentially creating a "one-man show" (WA) and a situation where "having one more person full-time" would automatically "[double] the size" of the office (NC). Even for offices with multiple staff, the extra support is not "necessarily permanent" (CO), and even though Utah has the largest office, the director explained, "I hate to say staffing again, but um that's the greatest barrier" when working with local communities. Limited staffing in turn reduces the offices' time to spend on non-administrative work. For North Carolina, the lack of administrative help takes "time away from the substance of what I need to be doing." Colorado's office further echoed, "Because these are state-level offices, to be able to be out and about across the state and still do the paperwork that a state entity requires to actually function as a state entity - you need operational support." Offices' limited staff support is further compounded by a similar lack of adequate funding.

Funding. As with many new organizations, state offices receive limited funding and have even been described as a "two-year funding experiment." Washington's policy advisor has only been granted a "modest travel budget," and the financial support is similar in Montana, who has no funds to "facilitate anything." In Vermont, the collaborative struggles with an imbalance of goals and resources, with members simply "pulling up their bootstraps and making it happen." When Rhode Island's council realized that, due to the state's financial policies, any money they raised would likely never get reallocated back to their programs, the council lost a lot of "confidence." Colorado's office, even though it is older and well-known, acknowledges the uncertainty of funding, explaining it "will always be a challenge" because the offices' budget is "carved out of other divisions' budgets" and "there's always the possibility that those

other budgets could say, we need that money back." Wyoming's office clarified the connection between limited resources and the ability of the office to achieve all the outcomes it wanted, summarizing,

> Again, I think at the end of the day, it's both sides of the house...rough for those financial resources and people resources...we can have five jobs and you run ten committees, and you have just one more committee added to you - I mean, you can only do so much in the space of a day…how do we balance our day jobs and everything else?

Bandwidth. Limited resources directly inhibit state offices' ability to pursue multiple objectives, especially given the difficulty of incorporating goals outside their traditional domains and the added time and effort of maintaining partnerships. Even though staff "wear many hats" (UT) and make the work of the office "a huge priority" (for those offices housed in other departments), "the reality is…there are other things that are also priorities beyond VOREC" (VT). Staff have "[kept] trucking along making it happen…but can we keep this up?" (VT). The administrator of Wyoming's office splits his time with the state parks system, but without having "funding or staff dedicated just to outdoor recreation in the office…it makes for an interesting day that I was technically only supposed to work four hours of [on the outdoor recreation office]." Balancing other priorities is especially a challenge for a new agency, with the question being, "can we pick the right few things to stay focused on?" (NC). Offices look to expand their scope further "as bandwidth allows" (CO), but "like all offices, when you do all those things, you're spread pretty thin, so you're kind of forced to focus on certain initiatives" with "the greatest impact" (UT). North Carolina described that when partnering with the outdoor industry, "bandwidth is the only challenge that I foresee in the future" because "it's a big state" and "a big industry." The scope of state offices is constrained by

minimal staffing and funding, which then contributed to a narrow bandwidth; when partnering with agencies, who have their own challenges, effective collaboration can be difficult.

Challenges presented by FLMAs when partnering. Each office engages with FLMAs, given they are the primary land managers and providers of recreation in many of the states. The extent of partnerships vary from state to state, with some of the older offices acquiring more experience collaborating with FLMAs while others are already familiar with partnership constraints due to previous interactions. FLMAs presented challenges both new and old when collaborating with state offices, including limited resources, bureaucracy, and politics.

Limited resources. FLMAs operate under similar staffing and financial constraints as state offices. State offices identified that many agency partners were subject to cycles in which positions were eliminated, left unfilled, or postponed due to a hiring freeze. Repeated staff turnover required continuous effort to maintain connections and often delayed already lengthy processes when new personnel would have to be filled in. Leadership close to Washington's office explained his hindrance,

> …functionally, they're just, they have either eliminated positions or they have positions that have just not filled. In EPA, in Forest Service, in all these different state agencies that impact what we do with outdoor recreation...especially things like fishing, or salmon recovery, are hugely negatively impacted because of that kind of um administrative neglect that's going on right now...It's almost like there's a willful attempt to prove that these agencies are somehow broken by not hiring key positions.

Oregon's office described the challenge of "getting the right people to the table," noting that while the office might build a good relationship with local staff and make headway, suddenly there would "be a retirement or a reassignment" that would at times force the office "to start over again." Wyoming's office also noted that "staff turnover" ultimately "made it hard to get approvals" because "by the time you get an approval" and "everyone's fine with the language" then a "new person would come in." Staffing challenges within FLMAs were at times both a cause of and contributor to bureaucratic difficulties.

Bureaucracy. The complicated structures, size, and policies of FLMAs made it difficult for state offices to discern who to build relationships with and also lengthened the time commitment of collaborative processes. Montana's office director described each agency as a "sea of resources and knowledge," but that beneficial characteristic could also be a daunting hurdle for offices to try to "maneuver." When discussing challenges with staff turnover, Wyoming's office leadership said, "I'm not even sure who controls that," implying that while problems can be recognized, it is difficult to find the right personnel or path for correcting them. Additionally, given the decentralized structure of many of the FLMAs, formal agreements have to "go through a pretty long process just to get approval…basically [you have to get] every Forest Service attorney and everyone else in D.C. blessing this." The bureaucratic structures and policies of many FLMAs contributed to the political challenges many state offices noted in maintaining partnerships.

Political ties. Forming partnerships at the state level were difficult when lower administrative units lacked control over decisions – “so it may be something that that local person really wants to do, but then we have to sit there and go through a pretty long process just to get approval” (WY). Local staff “may be tied, they may be bound, by things going on over in Washington that have nothing to do with what’s happening on the ground here,” in terms of policy direction and funding. Other political crises at the national level further complicated partnerships with state offices, especially with *Industry And* offices and those *Industry After* offices that coordinate with FLMAs at the policy level. Washington’s office described the impact of national policy decisions within the state, describing longer and more intense wildfire seasons, and noting that “any time that happens, the Forest Service sweeps their recreation budgets and puts it towards firefighting…until that gets solved in Congress, and they end fire borrowing, that’s a big impediment to what we do here.” Washington’s office also described the “gridlock in Washington” as well as the recent proposals to “almost triple national park entrance fees while at the same time slashing the national park budget” as creating tension between states and FLMAs. In the state of Utah, with its “Mighty Five” national parks, the government shutdown in 2013 “[hurt] the tourism industry,” leading the state to “[pay] the national government to open them up,” with the money yet to be repaid. Oregon’s office described political challenges on a broader level, saying,

> There are, the things that they have flexibility on, they’re terrific to work with. But you eventually run into that wall, where it’s like, our federal partners locally can’t engage in something without getting crosswise with federal policy. And it’s an unfair position to put them into, and we don’t expect them to suddenly go rogue, you know, and start bucking federal policy on things. But when we reach that point, we just have to be understanding and look for different ways of getting our work done.

Strategies suggested by state offices to improve partnerships with FLMAs. In recognizing the challenges presenting by partnerships with FLMAs, state offices also commended them for working "within the constraints that they have" and "making it happen. Despite the challenges in partnering with FLMAs, all state offices look to partner to some extent in the future, ranging from maintaining an "open dialogue" and participating in "round-table" discussions" to having a "presence in their planning processes" and developing formal agreements. Leadership within Utah's office summarized, "We want to support them. We know they're having challenges; they have challenges with not enough money, [and] they have challenges with not enough capacity." While several state offices are new to directly collaborating with FLMAs, they highlighted several opportunities to improve their partnerships, including maintaining open communication, utilizing agency staff as liaisons or gatekeepers, and encouraging polices that afford more authority to local personnel. Ultimately, state offices recognized the opportunity to develop a more collaborative mindset, noting that,

> Part of the problem with some of the federal agencies is…their mission has been very clear, very clearly given to them to not look outside the specific borders of their land…And that can be a big problem. Some people are really sticklers about not looking across the border of their land ownership boundaries, and other people in federal agencies are really really open to working hard, to understand how their piece of land management interacts with the surrounding community and the entire state. And we need a little bit more of an entire state or even a regional approach to a lot of these issues. (OR)

Utah's office leadership further explained the need for a more collaborative approach, stating that "you have to trust that everyone's done due diligence." For example, there was an opportunity to "teach everybody truly what the art of collaboration is – it's not

just sharing data, but really trying to find a solution together."

DISCUSSION

The overarching goal of this study was to develop a better understanding of the newly-established state offices of outdoor recreation and to assess their potential for partnerships with FLMAs, outdoor recreation businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and local recreation providers. The investigation was guided by five objectives:

1) Determine why state governments across the country have, or are attempting to, establish state offices of outdoor recreation;
2) Describe the goals and objectives of these state offices;
3) Find out how these offices operate internally;
4) Ascertain how these state offices interact and collaborate with FLMAs; and
5) Identify the challenges and opportunities each of these offices has experienced in meeting their goals and objectives.

Interviews with leadership of state offices reveal several overarching themes. First, state offices of outdoor recreation promote the outdoor industry while also advocating for other environmental and social benefits of outdoor recreation. To do this, state offices work across state parks, tourism, and economic development agencies. Second, state offices of outdoor recreation assume a variety of forms – such as offices, councils, policy advisors, etc. – and are located in various parts of state government, including governors' offices, economic development agencies, natural resource agencies, or even as standalone entities outside of government. Third, most offices are small and operate with limited resources. Finally, state offices act as coordinators and actively

partner, but their structure, location, and method of creation have important implications for achieving their programs and developing partnerships.

Finding a Niche for State Offices

As new institutions at the state level, state offices have had to create a niche and define their role relative to much older agencies with clearly defined goals and programs. Rather than creating their own initiatives or unilaterally pursuing projects, many state offices develop, improve, or streamline the efforts of other agencies to improve the state's management of outdoor recreation "across the board" (MD). The location of many offices depends not only on their goals but also the existing programs and structures within the states. According to Sausser and Smith (2018), best practices for building an office include evaluating the role of existing structures in the outdoor economy and using that information to create a niche for the office that reduces competition or duplication and allows other organizations to be successful in their current "arenas" (WY).

For example, Washington is the only state in which an office assumes the form of a policy advisor, but it was appropriate given that the state already "had developed systems and values and expenditures on this area" in the form of four natural resource agencies and a strong grants program, making the idea of a standalone office another "layer of bureaucracy." Instead, Washington opted to create a policy advisor, choosing a structure equivalent to other public sector leads in the state (e.g., separate policy advisors for climate and energy, education, and health). The policy advisor was placed within the governor's office, granting it the desired flexibility and authority to collaborate with the

governor and other advisors and groups on budget and policy development. Careful consideration of the structure and location within government improves the abilities of offices to define their niches, and it also frames what goals state offices pursue after creation.

In order to best serve the outdoor industry and the overall outdoor "ecosystem," state offices should identify the end-users of their services and consider these end-users' needs as they develop goals and programs. States vary with respect to their most frequent partners and invited stakeholders, whether they are industry, recreation user groups, or land managers. For example, in its enabling legislation, Utah's office was tasked with creating a ten-year vision for outdoor recreation in the state (though it has yet to be completed), and Colorado's office has the most formal programs developed for its industry partners compared to other groups. These larger, more developed offices also host statewide conferences that allow them to engage and network with end-users, providing a less formal way of eliciting their needs and priorities. Conversely, state offices that were created by a governor and conform to a commission-like structure are the most targeted of efforts and directly respond to the needs of the end-user in the development of specific recommendations; Vermont's collaborative specifically addresses recreation on private lands, while Rhode Island's council addressed childhood obesity, and a director of Maryland's commission is exploring urban recreation opportunities. State offices will be able to better serve the industry when they develop policies and tools that directly benefit their end-users, regardless of where they are located within state government.

Effect of Location within State Government

The creation and placement of a state office is a one-time political process that can have lasting impacts on the office's ability to remain operational and succeed in the future. States must consider the desired outcomes and whether the office would be most effective or appropriate within the governor's office, the economic development arm of state government, state parks, tourism, or some other entity. The location of the newly-formed office within the state government provides context for their missions while also determining their funding and access to other resources, status relative to other agencies, and in most cases, the standards they will be measured against (Sausser & Smith, 2018).

Offices can leverage the resources provided by their position within the state government, whether it is business development grants, funding, staff support, expertise, networks, data, reputation, or political support. However, state offices also operate under the same constraints or lingering consequences of previous policies, organizational infrastructure, and any perceived or actual partiality that accompany their position within the state government. For example, several offices report directly to or are located within the governor's office and therefore have to represent the governor's opinion. Offices described some benefits of their placement as "the power of the governor's office to convene" or the "ability to get the ear of the governor on issues" (WA) while also not being "pigeonholed" (MT) into any particular role. However, while state offices benefit from the prestige of proximity to the governor, that prestige also comes with its disadvantages – primarily that "everything is kind of elevated" (WA) automatically, and as previously discussed, offices have to conform to the governor's opinion publically.

Similarly, any programs pursued by an office of outdoor recreation will be viewed

in the greater context of the larger department, division, or office's policies, leading to questions about the appropriateness of specific programs pursued by that office or messaging challenges. Internally, offices, just like other state entities, have to report their success and justify their efforts for performance evaluations or resource expenditures. Externally, any message or program of an office would be weighed against or evaluated with respect to separate messages that have been received from the department, division, or office that it is housed within. For standalone offices, messages or programs have to be interpreted without any support or knowledge of the larger department, division, or office's goals. Therefore, offices can be sheltered or exposed in terms of their location within the state government, with both negative and positive effects. Also, being embedded within a larger department, division, or office can shelter a state office of outdoor recreation from undesired attention, but it can also diffuse or mask its individual successes. Where offices sit structurally within state government can empower or limit them, but their method of creation has the most significant impacts on its durability.

Longevity

State offices are new institutions created in spite of concerns about new offices being another layer of bureaucracy. Given the lack of a "road map" (MD) and few precedents, many state offices struggle with defining their missions explicitly while avoiding (perceived or actual) duplication or competition with other state agencies. Offices are an expense or investment that could be reallocated to other agencies and are

vulnerable to legislative and political decision-making processes at the time of their creation and every budget cycle thereafter. For example, governors have been crucial in establishing state offices, and in six out of the 11 offices in this study, governors acted unilaterally to create offices either by announcing them or passing an executive order. State offices have not yet weathered a change in governor, which is problematic because state offices that are created directly by one administration can just as easily be removed the next. Or, at the very least, the spending priorities of a new governor could dramatically reduce an office's ability to execute programs. Conversely, establishing state offices through legislation, or in the rare case of North Carolina, through the legislative appropriation process, provides more security but is more difficult to accomplish. Similarly, establishing temporary task forces that then culminate in offices can help demonstrate the need for and utility of an office while also building external support, making an office much harder to remove or defund.

State offices are also likely to be more durable if they can withstand political pressure. While the OIA was involved in the creation of almost every state office, its stance on public lands contradicted that of Utah's governor, leading to conflict between the office and its stakeholders. Given the inability of some state offices to take a political stance, several have called for partners to advocate on their behalf. The public lands debate in Utah drew divides between the OIA on a national level and industry members in Utah, leading office leadership to call for a state-specific organization outside of the "mothership" of the OIA. Support outside of the state government can provide "non-government cred" (OR), and without it, offices can fail. Rhode Island's Outdoor Recreation Council is the only office to have disbanded, largely due to staff turnover,

lack of funding, and lack of an "advocacy infrastructure" – "there was no community-based organization that took on the recommendations and [served] as the champion." External support for state offices was crucial in getting them established, but they remain just as relevant in political advocacy moving forward.

The mission and structure of state offices will also likely affect their durability due to its effects on political support. Offices with well-defined missions and therefore boundaries can better convey their value to stakeholders, building a broad base of support. Offices whose locations are carefully considered and studied, rather than imposed in a spur-of-the-moment governor's initiative, will likely lead to less tension and competition. Governors can establish task forces on outdoor recreation that may or may not lead to the creation of an office but will in the meantime operate with as much clout while providing baseline data, convening external stakeholders, building internal support, and establishing a mission. Sometimes the recommendations produced by a task force are the most desired outcome for a state, where a diverse group of stakeholders convene to provide thought leadership and recommendations; the permanency of these structures is largely determined by the governor in his/her executive order. Rhode Island's council was to cease its work after a specified date, while the commissions in Maryland and Vermont are only given deadlines for recommendations, albeit without any funding. These efforts, while granted significant weight and attention as direct governor initiatives, are likely harder to sustain over the long term given the lack of dedicated funding and the number of entities involved. Offices that are permanent until defunded or removed convey more durability. Furthermore, standalone offices, or those that are located within the governor's office, have the most clout, while those that are just one

piece of a larger department, division, or office are less visible and more likely to be subject to departmental politics, including budget and staffing support battles.

Lastly, those offices that appeal to a broad base of stakeholders will have the most political support and likely receive more funding. The oldest and largest offices – who set the precedent for the boom in state offices over the following years – are categorized as *Industry And* (UT, CO) and *Industry After* (WA). Although Colorado's office was largely created due to economic incentives and only expanded its mission more recently, the first three offices pursue much broader goals that speak to many audiences beyond industry members. While speaking in the "dollars and cents" (MT) of the outdoor industry is enough for some audiences, appealing to multiple types of groups will amount to greater political support and likely more resources.

The persistence of state offices of outdoor recreation beyond this initial wave of momentum remains to be seen, though the proliferation of more offices, the increased variety in structures and missions, and type and amount of external support would indicate that state offices are more than just a passing trend. The first office in Utah was followed by two years of silence, and with the example set by the following two offices created in Colorado and Washington, it would appear that the opportunity for the national movement to stall has already lapsed. State offices are easily tailored to the needs, priorities, and context of every state, making them a versatile tool that can be adapted from existing templates. While governors can singlehandedly erect or dismantle offices, and political turnover has yet to occur, the outdoor industry as a whole has become more vocal and organized at the state and national levels. Advocacy groups are emerging before, alongside, and after state offices and provide external support and credibility for

their existence. The OIA has continued to provide the data justifying the existence of state offices, and it has a stated desire to be an entity around which state offices can organize in the future. State offices have already convened to create a national platform, and by identifying and adopting priorities that are widely supported and able to be fine-tuned to individual states, they have established their relevance in a larger arena. Like many organizations, while their budgets, staffing, and political clout might fluctuate, state offices are likely to persist, and if current trends continue the offices are likely to proliferate.

Partnerships and Opportunities for Collaboration with FLMAs

Likelihood of future collaboration. Multiple opportunities to partner between state offices and FLMAs exist due to their shared goals of supporting outdoor recreation and conservation. While collaboration is not mandated, state offices – especially those in western states with large amounts of public land – will likely need to coordinate with the FLMAs to even be effective in their own sphere. The type and level of partnership will vary to suit state priorities since offices are meant to work at the state level. Moreover, partnerships with FLMAs are one of many ways for state offices to accomplish their goals and are subject to the same resource and bandwidth constraints. However, many factors increase the likelihood of future collaboration, including: shared missions; interdependence; interpersonal, intrapersonal, and institutional motivations; and current partnership status.

Most, if not all, FLMAs support outdoor recreation and conservation even without specific or primary mandates to manage for them. For example, even though the Army Corps of Engineers inherited recreation unexpectedly after building dams for flood control, and they lease their recreation facilities to other organizations, it still provides for millions of outdoor recreation experiences through large multi-purpose reservoir projects (Hansen, 1998). Similarly, all state offices support outdoor recreation, and even those state offices categorized as *Industry First* support conservation to the extent that it serves as infrastructure for the outdoor economy. In addition to pursuing complementary missions, state offices and FLMAs are to varying degrees interdependent; many states depend on access to public land for outdoor recreation, and state offices are designed to coordinate rather than manage their own lands.

FLMAs would likely benefit from collaborating and partnering with state offices because these state offices hold a substantial amount of political clout with state land management agencies whose management actions can directly and indirectly affect federal lands management. Because FLMAs and state offices of outdoor recreation have the same constituents – outdoor recreationists and the broader public – collaboration and partnerships between the two types of organizations could lead to mutually-beneficial outcomes. FLMAs such as the NPS provide funds, technical assistance, and incentives to outdoor recreation projects that are not on federal lands (Barton, 2016). For example, the NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program provides funds to improve outdoor recreation infrastructure. These types of programs are ripe to serve as initial collaborations and partnerships between FLMAs and state offices.

As described by McCreary et al. (2012), state offices have interpersonal,

intrapersonal, and institutional motivations to partner with FLMAs. Interpersonal motivations – such as a partner's passion, desire for civic engagement, to be part of the community, or to build support for agency actions – are present within FLMAs and state offices; FLMAs frequently partner to build support for agency programs, and many state offices expressed a desire to partner more often or more consistently. State offices also have intrapersonal motivations to partner – those described as a sense of accomplishment or enjoyment, etc. – as reflected in interviewee comments about working overtime, their passion for their jobs, or wanting to "tell the story" (UT) of their partners, or even as indicated by the years of experience in the greater field of outdoor recreation. State offices also overwhelmingly have institutional motivations to partner, as noted in our findings (see the "State offices coordinate across different sectors of government and look to partner with other nonprofit, private sector, and federal agencies to maximize their impact" section in the Results). These interpersonal, intrapersonal, and institutional motivations to partner have likely contributed to those relationships already established between state offices and FLMAs.

Some state offices already have extensive connections with FLMAs, such as Utah's grant workshop being hosted with the assistance of NPS. Even for those with consultative relationships, all state offices favorably reviewed their existing relationships with FLMAs, and many expressed a desire for continued or intensified interactions. Continued involvement is likely, especially given that FLMAs have a long history of partnering and public involvement and state offices were created to implement outreach and coordinate efforts. Future collaboration with FLMAs will be made easier by the creation of networks spanning multiple state offices. Common actors were involved in

the creation of multiple states (such as Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI) and the OIA), and state offices are already organizing to support a national platform following a "Confluence Summit." Additionally, a representative from the OIA described the organization as willing to be a "hub" and a "central convener…not just in creating these positions but also in interacting with them."

Existing collaboration will likely intensify in the future; McCreary et al. (2012) state that internal commitment fosters employee motivation to partner, while external factors influence the type and amount of partners, both of which are increasing. First, leadership of the Department of Interior (J. Snyder, personal communication) has already expressed a desire for more state offices to be created, and the NPS is considering its own office of outdoor recreation (Ratcliffe, Sherwood, & Milnor, 2017). Leadership emphasis could lead to organizational support, which would be positive for partnerships considering that previous studies have recognized a lack of organization support or reward structure as a barrier to effective collaboration (Barrow et al., 2012; Seekamp et al., 2013; Selin et al., 1997; McCreary et al., 2012a; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). Second, state offices are a new type of partner, with plenty of variations, and more and more are being created, providing a new demand for partnerships. However, in order for partnerships to be productive, state offices and FLMAs must overcome several challenges.

Internal Challenges for State Offices when Partnering. State offices identified three internal challenges when partnering, including mission alignment, limited resources, and bandwidth, many of which have also been identified in the academic

literature as barriers for FLMAs. These shared barriers have important implications for future collaboration between state offices and FLMAs, and internal barriers must first be overcome.

Mission alignment. Many state offices described concerns about mission alignment, including organizational conflict with the governor, balancing multiple goals, avoiding competition with other state agencies, and constraints as a public agency. Organizational conflict can be minimized through careful consideration of the office's placement within government and funding source as well as early dialogue with other state agencies. Once in place, offices can acknowledge and build off the success of other agencies, and tailor their messaging to recognize or delineate any overlap, and find shared goals – reducing concerns about contradictory missions. "Leadership training" can also "encourage leaders to work with each other rather than against each other" and help state offices avoid competition while also coming together to resolve resource challenges (OR). While mission alignment is a concern, state offices should consider the strategy that McPadden and Margerum (2010) propose for the NPS, in which partners' goals and capacity are assessed, and then the appropriate relationship is built, rather than accepting each and every available partner. State offices will have many potential partners to choose from and will have to consider how to structure or communicate within those alliances to maximize mission alignment.

Also, while many state offices struggle with balancing private versus public interests, this is not a new conflict for public agencies; for example, tourism offices promote certain kinds of businesses and amenities that draw outside revenue and benefit

specific stakeholders, but those actions can also lead to disproportionate costs or undesirable change for other stakeholders when change such as gentrification occurs. State offices will have to navigate promoting the private outdoor industry's interests without compromising their mission of public service, and one strategy to achieve this includes cultivating champions outside of state government that can represent broader stakeholder groups and ensure more equitable outcomes. Many state offices look for their partners or members of their advisory board to organize separately so as to be able to take on any controversial or political stances that would help state offices balance public and private needs. Through collaboration with partners, state offices both promote multiple benefits of outdoor recreation and stretch limited resources.

Limited resources. State offices identified insufficient staffing and funding constraints that plague many FLMAs; for example, many state offices experience the job compression that is normally a barrier to partnerships with FLMAs (McCreary et al., 2012a; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010), in which personnel are burdened with other responsibilities or when new partnership positions are created without a corresponding increase in resources or administrative support. To justify their existence, several state offices described their first steps as the development of case studies or data that demonstrate the value of the industry. Increased data supporting state offices would hopefully then translate into increased human and financial resources. However, funding is a long-term challenge, and state offices will likely have to learn to creatively work within their constraints, whether it is leveraging the resources of their home departments or connecting partners to other resources.

Some states have been highly successful in capturing more resources and can serve as examples; Utah's office worked with legislators to secure a transient-room-tax that would provide $5 million to its in-house grant program, while Colorado's office utilized $64.5 million from an external agencies' grant and also secured a grant for extra staff. Operating at the state level, offices have access to different pools of funding and should take advantage of the industry's intersectional nature to find non-traditional or underutilized sources. Increased resources will then in turn help state office address their bandwidth challenges.

Bandwidth. State offices recognize many internal challenges for partnerships that the literature specific to FLMAs highlights; these include limited staff, time, and financial resources (Barrow et al., 2016; McCreary et al., 2012a; McPadden & Margerum, 2010; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2013; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010) which are worsened by an increased demand to partner (McCreary et al., 2012a). These challenges confine the scope of the work state offices seek to do, especially as startup agencies that must operationalize their missions and develop priority areas. Yet while bandwidth is a pressing constraint currently, it is likely one that will fade with time; as offices define bounded programs and adopt a set direction under the guidance of stakeholder groups, they will become more versed in their networks and better able to determine the 'how' and 'with who' to achieve their goals. Moreover, the more effective they become and the larger impact they have, state offices will likely receive more support and resources, further reducing any bandwidth limitations.

Challenges State Offices Recognized in FLMAs. The type and degree of engagement between state offices and FLMAs varied widely. For many offices, interactions were limited beyond information sharing given their newness. Offices that were more engaged with FLMAs tended to be older and in western states with extensive amounts of federal land. State office leadership, whether based on their current role or previous experience in other positions, emphasized many challenges for collaborating with FLMAs previously identified in the literature.

Staffing. State offices recognized staffing as a barrier to working with FLMAs, which has already received extensive attention in the limited literature, including concerns about turnover and vacancies (Wondolleck & Yaffee). While states did not explicitly mention more fine-grained staffing challenges noted in the literature – such as job compression (Barrow et al., 2012; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010) and lack of training (Weddell et al., 2009, 2012; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010) or support (Barrow et al., 2012; McCreary et al., 2012a; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Seekamp et al., 2013; Selin et al., 1997; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010) or time (Barrow et al., 2012; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Seekamp et al., 2013; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010) – this is not surprising given that interactions have been somewhat limited so far. Yet the current delays and frustration caused by turnover and vacancies alone could still lead to burnout in partners, and the anticipation of known additional staffing problems could preclude development of deeper partnerships. Adequate staffing is important given that partnerships require extra time, effort, and internal support (Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010), and partnerships struggle when developing them is not part

of personnel's job descriptions or when they cause job compression (Barrow et al., 2012; McCreary et al., 2012a; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010), ultimately leading to them being inconsistently used throughout the agency (Selin, 1995). Leadership in Utah's office recognized the potential for staffing challenges on both sides, saying, "people transition so fast out of state, local, and federal government that it's hard to stay on everyone's radar."

Yet partnerships are fundamentally between people, not institutions (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010) and their utilization can largely depend on individual employee's motivations to partner (Barrow et al., 2012; McCreary et al., 2012a, 2012; Selin, 1995). If partnerships are to remain an effective tool of agencies to increase capacity or achieve goals, then agencies must first invest in staff, providing adequate positions, time, training, recognition, and support. Their staffing difficulties are not unknown to them (e.g., Philanthropic and Partnerships Committee of the Advisory Board, 2014), but having other partners, and especially other government agencies, publically recognize these challenges can help justify additional investments in FLMA staff. However, staffing is a function of resources allocated to agencies, which is inherently a political outcome.

Politics. State offices recognize the lack of control of lower administrative units in decision-making processes as well as rigid policies that disempower local interests (Philanthropic and Partnerships Committee of the NPS Advisory Board, 2014; Seekamp et al., 2013; Selin et al., 1997; Weddell et al., 2009, 2012). These barriers are inherent to the hierarchical structure of most FLMAs, and political challenges are to be expected given their hierarchical structures and the frequency of changes in administration at regional and national levels. Reduction of barriers would require systemic change to

traditional agency policies and structures, but efforts to improve stakeholder input processes, streamline agreement and partnership construction, and provide more local control would improve partnerships with state offices while also reducing bureaucracy.

Bureaucracy. Similar to political challenges, state offices recognized another widely acknowledged barrier to collaborating with FLMAs: bureaucracy (McPadden & Margerum, 2010; Philanthropic and Partnerships Committee of the NPS Advisory Board, 2014; Selin et al., 1997; Weddell et al., 2009, 2012; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). Bureaucracy is to be expected given the large, decentralized nature of most FLMAs, and in terms of partnerships, the complexity of navigating laws and agency policies, personnel, and resources can slow group momentum (McPadden & Margerum, 2010). State offices have limited resources and bandwidth to devote to the complex, time-intensive process of establishing formal partnership arrangements, reducing the likelihood that they will partner with FLMAs to their desired level if conditions worsen.

Costs and benefits of collaboration between state offices and FLMAs. When developing partnerships, state offices must overcome several internal challenges –mission alignment, limited resources, and bandwidth – and the FLMAs must do the same with their own challenges of staffing, politics, and bureaucracy. Both sets of challenges bear marked similarities; state offices struggle with small staffs, no or limited funding, and while state offices only recognized staffing issues in FLMAs, it is likely a result of those agencies' chronic underfunding (similar to state offices' limited resources). State offices cope with mission alignment and tension in representing the governor as well as

competition with fellow state agencies. Similarly, FLMAs are politically tied to decisions made in regional or national offices and, given multiple mandates, theoretically face the same struggle in balancing private interests and the public good. The state offices struggle with bandwidth given limited resources and a high demand to partner, while FLMAs are similarly active in partnerships with hundreds of organizations, but burdened by bureaucratic structures and policies that then limit their ability to provide support. Moreover, the staffing, political, and bureaucratic challenges state offices identified are largely beyond the control of any agency to change at the unit or regional level at which most partnerships would likely occur.

Therefore, given these similar and complex challenges, partnerships could theoretically magnify and compound the parallel challenges faced by state offices and FLMAs – or, given that FLMAs have a long history of collaboration despite similar challenges, state offices could adopt strategies to succeed despite them. And while state offices could theoretically be perceived as a burden to FLMAs, in that they are yet another partner to be added to an already extensive list of partners, partnerships with state offices could be worth the additional investment of time, resources, and energy, because they could: incorporate different networks and possess different skills; support overtaxed and underappreciated agency personnel; and provide an ongoing collaborative framework to increase capacity in the long-term.

State offices incorporate different networks and possess different skills. State offices, as the coordinators of outdoor recreation within each state, have partnership expertise and are thoroughly integrated into the “ecosystem” of outdoor recreation,

including a wide array of partners. Several states are already incorporating non-traditional partners and adopting inclusive stances, partnering with multi-ability, minority, and tribal groups that FLMAs may not. As representatives of the outdoor industry, state offices explicitly cultivate connections with the private, and especially small business, sector – a connection that the NPS in particular has historically lacked, given their outsourcing of services in parks to large concessionaires rather than local businesses. Many offices also represent not just industry members but also recreation user groups. While FLMAs already partner with many of these groups, state offices out of necessity and proximity are much more connected to their local and regional organizations, providing an opportunity for state offices to act as an "umbrella" organization.

McCreary et al. (2010) describe umbrella organizations as "external entities that help organize individuals and groups of volunteers and plan projects with the insight and assistance of [agency] personnel" (McCreary et al., 2012a, p. 162). Rather than coordinating with tens of local or regional groups, umbrella organizations help minimize the burden of partnerships on FLMAs by locating the majority of coordination efforts outside the agency. State offices, as the "congealing point…to address any topics" (MT) related to the outdoor recreation ecosystem, are fundamentally designed and positioned to partner, preparing them to be umbrella organizations. As umbrella organizations, state offices could act as the local "taproot" that provides the grassroots support in successful partnerships (Tuxill, Mitchell, & Brown, 2004), reducing the burden or skills needed to maintain them. Studies on FLMAs overwhelmingly indicate that personnel feel that they lack the skills to partner (Selin et al., 1997; Weddell et al., 2009, 2012; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010), and allowing state offices to spearhead in their chosen domain would be

more efficient and likely lead to more successful partnerships.

Support overtaxed and underappreciated personnel. Partnerships are an additional investment of time, energy, and resources, and for many FLMA personnel, the effort expended often goes without support or reward (Barrow et al., 2012; McCreary et al., 2012a; Philanthropic and Partnerships Committee of the NPS Advisory Board, 2014; Seekamp & Cerveny, 2010; Seekamp et al., 2013; Selin et al. 1997; Weddell et al. 2009; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). Partnerships efforts are often not included in job descriptions (Barrow et al., 2012), and neither do performance reviews account for time spent on partnerships or reward employees who cultivate them (Seekamp et al., 2013; Weddell et al., 2009; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010). Where employee needs are not being met internally, state offices can provide additional incentives, administrative support, and recognition. Given that many partnerships arise out of individual employee motivations (Barrow et al., 2012; McCreary et al., 2012a, 2012; Selin, 1995), and that partnerships are relationships cultivated between people and not institutions (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010), state offices could provide consistent, one-on-one support that is likely more impactful than one-time recognition from individual nonprofits scattered throughout the state. Regular interactions, feedback, and support would likely improve stakeholder relations and the quality of partnerships, enhancing capacity in the long-term.

Provide an ongoing collaborative framework. In order to achieve broad mandates across extensive landscapes, FLMAs have tended to assume large, decentralized, or hierarchical structures governed by rigid or bureaucratic policies. The

complex and limiting organizational environment can limit unit personnel's decision-making authority and creativity, and when combined with a lack of training, support, or rewards for collaboration, can make it difficult for outside entities to develop partnerships. State offices, with their partnership mindset and widespread local networks, can act as umbrella organizations and provide an ongoing framework for collaboration rather than one-time projects. Partnerships can improve capacity and stakeholder relations (Barrow et al., 2012; Barton, 2016; Weddel et al., 2012; Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2010), and repeated interactions between state offices and FLMAs can reinforce a partnership culture in the agencies, especially if states can provide the support, recognition, and even training that agencies fail to internally provide. A strong partnership culture could in turn lead to improved training, support, and reward structures. As state offices become more effective in their roles and tailored to the needs and priorities of their states, and as collaboration with FLMAs increases as more offices operationalize, partnerships will likely become easier and more impactful.

Impact of potential partnerships. Since partnerships first and foremost depend on a shared vision, the type and focus of partnerships will likely vary with offices' perceptions on whether outdoor recreation is a means to economic development (*Industry First*), an ends in and of itself (*Industry After*), or somewhere in between (*Industry And*). There are likely more opportunities to partner with those offices described as *Industry And* and *Industry After*, though opportunities exist with all offices given their baseline support of conservation and outdoor recreation.

First, state offices should identify intersections of the outdoor industry and

recreation programs with the FLMAs. Most FLMAs are large, managing sites and programs across the U.S., resulting in a network of extensive partnerships bridging multiple departments and objectives. Each intersection with the outdoor industry is an opportunity to improve environmental, social, and economic outcomes together. Potential intersections with the FLMAs that state offices could explore range from grant programs to concessionaire contracts. Second, state offices should engage with the units, regional offices, and national programs and offices of the FLMAs. Agency units are vital local opportunities to realize outdoor recreation, conservation, and other goals, with opportunities available to tailor collaboration to even local community needs. Regional offices, national offices, and national programs often have resources such as data and technical assistance services that can help bridge interests of local communities and nearby public land. For example, the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program of the NPS explicitly operates to extend the benefits of the parks and recreation beyond park unit boundaries and into communities. Beyond these initial recommendations (adapted from Sausser & Smith, 2018), potential collaboration between FLMAs and state offices could have much broader impacts on the future development of both organizations.

State offices as advocates for FLMAs. State offices can inspire more support for the public lands managed by FLMAs and the services they provide by recognizing their economic, environmental, and social benefits. States are investing in the economies and benefits provided largely by public lands, devoting resources to creating new offices; investments by multiple states could perhaps trigger future corresponding investments at

a national level. Already, state offices are riding a groundswell of support from industry and other advocates, with their back-to-back creation being described as both a "movement" (CA) and a "watershed moment" (Sanford, 2018). The momentum around state offices has drawn attention to the resources that contribute to outdoor recreation, providing a potential spotlight on those groups that could do more if given more. Moreover, the power of state offices to call for more funding is multiplied given their connections to advocates that FLMAs may not already have. For example, state offices are directly tied to businesses, which often have "very loud voice[s] in the legislative process" (WA) compared to the typical nonprofit advocates for FLMAs.

Even if no additional resources were devoted, state offices could still highlight the valuable role FLMAs play in the outdoor industry and its benefits, potentially leading to greater recognition, improved agency reputations, and more attention devoted to strategies to improve them outside of additional funding. In some instances, state offices have already prompted agency action, such as Secretary of the Interior's Order No. 3366 calling for each agency to develop a comprehensive plan for outdoor recreation. State offices have also already sparked action outside of FLMAs; the Bureau of Economic Analysis released statistics on the outdoor economy in early 2018, and with urging from some state offices, may seek funding to provide data parsed down to the state level (Bob Ratcliffe, personal communication). State offices can also call attention to shared challenges in partnerships, and as state offices, their concerns might have more weight than nonprofits or even internal agency members.

Bridging state and federal priorities through partnership. State offices and

FLMAs both pursue goals based on commonalities around conservation and outdoor recreation, and while their objectives should remain distinct, collaboration with each other will likely lead to finding and building on shared priorities. Partnering with FLMAs can help them be more responsive to state and local needs, given that their top-down decision-making and bureaucratic structures tend to overlook or disempower them. For example, FLMAs can tailor their individual efforts to meet priorities that better align with those of states, such as developing programs to get urban minorities outside in California or helping elderly populations stay active outside in Vermont. State offices can be a bridge for FLMAs to engage more actively beyond their boundaries and into communities with sectors such as tourism, sustainable development, health, and others, allowing them to maximize those benefits without pursuing them alone. Conversely, greater engagement with FLMAs can help influence conservation priorities in state offices just by coming to the table; state offices have limited bandwidth, and like most organizations, are more likely to develop partnerships with those most interested and willing to invest. State offices, as disseminators of information, can help FLMAs resolve challenges outside their boundaries. For example, state offices can help to encourage outdoor recreation ethics to reduce resource impacts or alleviate pressure on popular sites by promoting nearby attractions. Ultimately, state offices and FLMAs can find areas of agreement – without compromising or neglecting their individual missions – to better promote the economic, social, and environmental outcomes of outdoor recreation together.

Study limitations and future research. This study analyzed the creation, goals

and programs, internal organization and resources, and external partnerships of the 11 state offices of outdoor recreation that were operational as of spring 2018. Offices ranged widely in their levels of development, with some having years of experience and others having been active for only a few months, while even other offices (OR, MD, CA) had not hired a director or additional staff. The variability in the offices provides an opportunity to analyze them in multiple stages of maturity, but the newness of some offices made it hard to evaluate more permanent or formal characteristics, such as their goals and programs, when many of those are still being fully developed and subject to change.

The offices are constantly changing in response to stakeholder input, governmental priorities, and demands for their services. This makes it difficult to guarantee that what the offices were focused on during the study would be the same in the future. Additionally, while the semi-structured nature of the interview protocol provided flexibility, several questions were better suited to formal offices (those with an office structure as opposed to a commission-like structure) with established programs and those that already had partnership experience. For example, analysis of partnerships with FLMAs inherently relied more on older state offices, which were also the ones with larger amounts of public land; richer data could have been gleaned if a greater proportion of the offices had been more established and/or had more significant interactions with FLMAs. Lastly, this research is just a snapshot of the movement to create state offices of outdoor recreation. Since the original technical report by Sausser and Smith (2018) was released, California's governor vetoed its proposed state office (Aversen, 2018) while additional state offices were created in Michigan and Maine (Aversen, 2018b; McFall-

Hohnsen, 2018). The creation of more state offices of outdoor recreation provides additional opportunities for future research.

Future work on this topic should adopt and expand upon the framework I present for classifying offices as *Industry First*, *Industry And*, and *Industry After*. Future research should also analyze how the original offices have evolved over time and responded to changes in leadership (both within the office and with a new governor) and to each other; eight of the 11 state offices in this study have drafted and ratified a national platform that provides an additional opportunity to analyze themes across states, especially as revisions to the platform are made and additional state offices sign on to it. Future research could analyze how successful state offices have been, factors predicting their success, and which type of organizational structure is most effective. Given the concerns about state offices only amounting to another layer of bureaucracy, or being duplicates of existing state institutions, research could compare state tourism offices – which exist in every state – to better assess the need for state offices of outdoor recreation. As collaboration is likely to increase between state offices and FLMAs, future research could continue to uncover challenges unique to state-federal collaboration as well as include the perspectives of FLMA staff in partnering with state offices.

Future research could utilize more quantitative techniques to evaluate state offices of outdoor recreation. For example, social network analysis could help determine how instrumental state offices are in the industry's network or whether state offices act as "umbrella" organizations because of their partnerships (McCreary et al., 2012a). Social network analysis could provide insight into the overall connectivity of the outdoor recreation "ecosystem" within a state, including which stakeholders state offices are

connected to and if state offices act as a bridge or were central to relationships between other stakeholders and FLMAs. Ultimately, social network analysis and other quantitative social science methods could help evaluate state offices and provide feedback to enable them to better achieve their goals.

CONCLUSION

Over the last five years, more than 11 states have established state offices of outdoor recreation across the coutry, encompassing states both large and small, West and East, liberal and conservative, and rural and urban. These offices – in the form of offices, task forces, policy advisors, councils, etc. – were created due to several broad economic, political, social, and physical dynamics in each state, with the goal of advancing the outdoor recreation economy and its inherent benefits to quality of life, health, and conservation, and more. State offices blend the functions of state parks, tourism, and economic development agencies, developing partnerships with other stakeholders to elevate outdoor recreation across other sectors. The mission, organizational structure, and position within state governments customizes each office to the needs and priorities of its state, influencing its available resources, constraints, contexts, and longevity and ultimately what partnerships it pursues and for what purpose.

Future collaboration between state offices and FLMAs is likely given their shared support of conservation and outdoor recreation. State offices are closely tied to state land

management agencies whose actions directly and indirectly impact the lands managed by FLMAs; state offices also share many of the same constituents. Recent trends in public lands management have encouraged FLMAs to look beyond their boundaries and engage with stakeholders to improve decision-making and outcomes, and state offices can help FLMAs better accomplish these goals through partnerships. Because partnerships are relationships requiring additional investments of time, energy, and resources, and the development of specific skills, they can present similar challenges for both state offices and FLMAs. State offices, despite their need to partner, struggle with mission alignment, limited resources, and bandwidth. FLMAs were not designed with collaboration as a priority, and lack the infrastructure or expertise to support them, leading to struggles related to staffing, politics, and bureaucracy. However, collaboration between state offices and FLMAs is well worth the investment; state offices can incorporate new networks and utilize partnership skills FLMAs lack, support overtaxed and underappreciated FLMA personnel, and advocate on behalf of FLMAs. Most importantly, state offices can provide a centralized conduit through which state-federal collaboration on public lands management can be organized.

State offices of outdoor recreation are a formal recognition of the immense role outdoor recreation has to play in providing robust economies and an exceptional quality of life. State offices are looking through the “lens of outdoor recreation” to “step up and do right by the environment” and to “grow the economy in a way that represents their values,” even as support for FLMAs and conservation is declining. The varied connotations of outdoor recreation, whether as a means for economic development or an end in and of itself, clearly resonate with states across the country – and the message is

not likely to fade. Leadership from Oregon's office of outdoor recreation explains the significance of state offices and what they mean for the future of outdoor recreation:

> It is rare for any state to support outdoor recreation over the long-term. We just, we don't compete well enough in state priorities and budgets…There's always going to be some critical human need - education, healthcare, employment, corrections - that's going to supersede outdoor rec. Because outdoor rec is leisure, and when you look at it that way, well it's just what you do for fun. It's what you do after you have affordable housing, and healthcare for everybody, and a well-educated population…So when it comes time to provide budget and resources and thinking and power and governor support and legislative support, it's like, yeah, yeah, yeah, we'll get to it…You need some sort of stable group uh whose mission it is, day-in, day-out, year-in, year-out, administration to administration, to advance the cause and elevate outdoor recreation, not just for the economic benefits, but because of the way it improves people's lives…But that's why we think just the establishment of an office like this is important, independent of economic development goals and what the governor wants to do in that moment or not. It's important to have, to start setting something in place that will provide a legacy.

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APPENDIX

A Nationwide Comparison of State Outdoor Recreation Initiatives

A NATIONWIDE COMPARISON OF STATE OUTDOOR RECREATION INITIATIVES

Office Overview	California	Colorado	Maryland	Montana	North Carolina	Oregon	Rhode Island	Utah	Vermont	Washington	Wyoming
Name	Office of Sustainable Outdoor Recreation	Outdoor Recreation Industry Office	Maryland Outdoor Recreation Economic Commission (MORE Commission)	Office of Outdoor Recreation	Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry	Office of Outdoor Recreation	Outdoor Recreation Council	Office of Outdoor Recreation	Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC)	Senior Policy Advisor to the Governor, Outdoor Recreation & Economic Development	Outdoor Recreation Office
Date established	Pending passage of AB 1918	June 2015	October 2017	June 2016	January 2018	August 2017	January 2016 - November 2016	March 2013	June 2017	July 2015	November 2017
Established by	Legislation, if passes	Governor	Governor Executive Order	Governor	Approved as a budget line item	Legislation, after recommended by Travel Oregon's Outdoor Recreation Initiative	Governor Executive Order	Legislation, after recommended by the Governor's Council on Balanced Resources	Governor Executive Order	Legislation, after recommended by the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation	Governor, after recommended by the Outdoor Recreation Task Force
Focus areas	• Economic development • Access to outdoor recreation opportunities • Outdoor recreation opportunities for underserved or urban communities	• Economic development • Conservation and stewardship • Education and workforce training • Health and wellness	• Economic development • Marketing and promotion of outdoor resources • Recreation and heritage opportunities • Conservation and stewardship	• Supporting producers and service providers in the outdoor recreation industry • Maintaining outdoor recreation infastructure of land, water, and wildlife • Stewardship and conservation • Education and technical workforce assistance • Health and wellness	• Economic development • Supporting assets that contribute to outdoor recreation economy	• Economic development • Coordinating outdoor recreation policy • Access to outdoor recreation opportunities • Community health • Outdoor recreation participation • Developing stewardship standards • Ensuring continuity in funding	• Health and wellness • Access to outdoor recreation opportunities • Outdoor recreation participation • Maintaining stewardship of state park system	• Economic development • Coordinating outdoor recreation policy • Improving recreation infrastructure and access to outdoor recreation opportunities • Stewardship and conservation	• Promoting business opportunities • Increasing outdoor recreation participation opportunities • Strengthening the quality and extent of recreational resources • Strengthening the stewardship of recreational resources	• Economic development • Outdoor recreation participation • Access to outdoor recreation • Implementing recommendations from preceding task force • Developing state budgets and legislation in support of outdoor recreation • Coordinating studies and plans related to outdoor recreation • Advocating to businesses, users groups, and other government agencies	• Economic development • Access to outdoor recreation opportunities • Conservation • Implementing recommendations of preceding task force
Status of Recreation in the State - based on Outdoor Industry Association data											
Jobs supported	691,000	229,000	109,000	71,000	260,000	172,000	37,000	110,000	51,000	201,000	50,000
Value, wages and salary	$30.4 billion	$9.7 billion	$4.4 billion	$2.2 billion	$8.3 billion	$5.1 billion	$1.2 billion	$3.9 billion	$1.5 billion	$7.6 billion	$1.6 billion
Value, consumer spending	$92 billion	$28 billion	$14 billion	$7,1 billion	$28 billion	$16,4 billion	$4 billion	$12,3 billion	$5.5 billion	$26,2 billion	$5,6 billion
Value, state and local tax revenue	$6,2 billion	$2 billion	$951 million	$286 million	$1,3 billion	$749 million	$293 million	$737 million	$505 million	$2,3 billion	$514 million
Rate of resident participation per year	56%	90%	51%	81%	56%	69%	55%	72%	72%	72%	73%
Organizational Structure											
Organizational structure	Office	Office	Commission	Office	Office	Office	Council	Office	Steering committee	Policy advisor	Office
Department	Natural Resources Agency	Office of Economic Development and International Trade	Chaired by the Department of Natural Resources and Department of Commerce	Office of Economic Development	Department of Commerce	Parks and Recreation Department	Chaired by the Department of Environmental Management and the Department of Health	Office of Economic Development	Chaired by the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development	Office of the Governor	Division of Wyoming State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Office
Total personnel - Number and type	• Pending appropriations committee decision; currently 1,5 positions proposed	• Director • Deputy Director • Operations Manager - provided through a grant from an external entity	• Two co-chairs • 17 commission members; composition determined by executive order	• Director	• Director	• Associate Director • Three staff from Parks and Recreation Department: policy analyst, grants specialist, and SCORP researcher	• Chair • Two vice chairs • 22 council members; composition determined by executive order	• Director • Program Manager - supported through grant program • Program Specialist • Grant Program Intern - supported through grant program	• Chair • Vice chair • 15 committee members; composition determined by executive order	• Policy advisor	• Administrator • Three staff requested but denied: program manager, events and collaboration coordinator, and access specialist
Events, Programs, or Activities	• Events likely to be those that bring together business, land management agencies, conservation community, advocacy groups"	• Colorado Outdoor Industry Leadership Summit (COILS) • COILSx • Blueprint Initiative • Outdoor Rx Collaborative	• Public meetings	• Business of Outdoor Recreation Summits • Emphasis on partnerships rather than programs	• Potential statewide conference or a grants program	• First initiative likely be a report on the economic impact of outdoor recreation in the state • Events to bring policy makers together	• Public meetings	• Outdoor Recreation Grant • Outdoor Recreation Summit • Outdoor Recreation Summit Speaker Series • Utah Search and Rescue Assistance Card	• Future conferences on outdoor recreation • Outdoor Recreation Friendly Community Program • Camping gear loan program • Outdoor recreation asset mapping	• Rather than programs or events, activities include coordinating efforts or finding budgetary support for initiatives	• Emphasis on partnerships rather than programs
State Recreational Resources											
Federal land, acres	46 million	30 million	193,000	27 million	2.4 million	33 million	4,000	54 million	465,000	12 million	30 million
Federal land, %	46%	45%	3%	29%	8%	53%	0,70%	70%	8%	29%	48%
State land, acres	2 million	3.2 million	486,863	5,7 million	750,000	1,8 million	60,000	4,7 million	355,000	6,8 million	4 million
State land, %	2%	5%	8%	6%	0,02%	3%	9%	9%	6%	14%	6%
Ownership by federal agency, acres	• FS: 21 million • BLM: 15 million • FWS: 294,000 • NPS: 7.6 million	• FS: 14 million • BLM: 8 million • FWS: 175,000 • NPS: 661,000	• FS: N/A • BLM: 548 • FWS: 49,000 • NPS: 41,432	• FS: 17 million • BLM: 8 million • FWS: 61,000 • NPS: 1 million	• FS: 1 million • BLM: N/A • FWS: 420,000 • NPS: 364,000	• FS: 16 million • BLM: 16 million • FWS: 575,000 • NPS: 196,000	• FS: N/A • BLM: N/A • FWS: 2,000 • NPS: 5	• FS: 8 million • BLM: 23 million • FWS: 110,000 • NPS: 2 million	• FS: 410,000 • BLM: N/A • FWS: 34,000 • NPS: 10,000	• FS: 9 million • BLM: 429,000 • FWS: 165,000 • NPS: 2 million	• FS: 9 million • BLM: 19 million • FWS: 71,000 • NPS: 2 million
Monetary Resources of Initiative											
Budget - including operations, travel,and personnel	$200,000 (annual)	$370,000 (annual)	No designated budget	$200,000 (annual)	$250,000 (annual)	$280,000 (biennial)	No designated budget	$250,000 (annual)	No designated budget	$175,000 (annual)	$200,000 (biennial)
Source of budget	General funds or special fund	Colorado Tourism Office and Global Business Development division, both within OEDIT		Deptartment of Commerce - Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund	General funds	Parks and Recreation Department		• General funds • Grant program supported by a transient room tax; maximum of $5 million per year until 2023		General funds	General funds