

GMPT Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation Forum AI Summary – December 16, 2025

This article was created by AI summarizing key points discussed. AI makes mistakes, so for full details and context, please refer to the video of the full meeting.

Quick recap

Randolph Briley, Deputy Director of Explore Minnesota and Director of the Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership, presented an overview of ORIP's mission to support Minnesota's outdoor recreation economy. He explained the partnership's three strategic pillars: creating resources, building community, and communicating value. Randolph detailed ORIP's work on the annual economic impact report, which provides county-level insights into the outdoor recreation industry's contribution to Minnesota's economy. He highlighted key findings, including the industry's \$13.5 billion GDP and 96,000 jobs. The presentation concluded with a discussion of how the economic impact data is used to attract investment, support small businesses, and demonstrate the importance of outdoor recreation to policymakers.

Summary

Minnesota Outdoor Recreation Partnership

Randolph Briley, Deputy Director of Explore Minnesota and Director of the Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership, introduced himself and outlined ORIP's mission to support Minnesota's outdoor recreation economy by focusing on producers and users. He explained that ORIP's primary focus is on the producer side, as no other state enterprise currently addresses this aspect, and they collaborate with established organizations like the DNR and non-profits to promote outdoor activities.

ORIP's Strategic Focus on Resources

The Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership (ORIP) has three strategic pillars: creating resources, building community, and communicating value. Randolph explained that ORIP, composed of four founding agencies including the DNR, Explore Minnesota, DEED, and IRRR, operates with a limited budget of \$150,000 biannually. The partnership works to develop resources like economic impact reports and toolkits, convenes stakeholders

across industry silos, and promotes the importance of outdoor recreation to Minnesota's economy.

MOU Progress and Economic Initiatives

Randolph explained the structure and progress of the Memorandum of Understanding, highlighting its 9-year duration and the involvement of three agency liaisons working alongside him. He outlined the organization's three main priorities: resources, community building, and economic development initiatives, including the Outdoor Recreation Economic Impact Report, a Business Development Toolkit, and a strategic plan for 2027-2031. Randolph also described upcoming events, such as the annual industry summit scheduled for September 24th in Bloomington, which aims to foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing among industry stakeholders.

Outdoor Retailer Relocation to Minnesota

Randolph discussed the upcoming relocation of the Outdoor Retailer trade show to Minnesota in 2026, which will bring 20,000 industry professionals, including manufacturers, retailers, and media outlets, to the state for a week in August. He highlighted the benefits for Minnesota's outdoor industry and mentioned the state's involvement in the Confluence of States, a bipartisan working group of 21 states sharing best practices for supporting their industries. Randolph also described the development of the Minnesota State Outdoor Business Alliance, which is growing its membership and focusing on regional outreach, podcast production, and earned media to communicate the value of the outdoor industry in Minnesota.

Outdoor Industry's Economic Impact

Randolph explained the importance of focusing on the economic impact of the outdoor industry, emphasizing its role in fueling the state's economy and serving as critical infrastructure. He highlighted how measuring this impact helps communities make informed investments in parks and trails, attracts businesses, and supports Minnesotans who want to spend time outdoors. Randolph described the outdoor recreation industry as having a virtuous cycle, where increased participation leads to more production, jobs, and influence, ultimately driving further investment and infrastructure improvements.

Outdoor Industry Economic Impact Overview

Randolph presented an overview of the Outdoor Industry Economic Impact Report, highlighting its comprehensive nature and reliance on Bureau of Economic Analysis data. He explained the report's improvements, including the addition of gross output data for states and regional breakdowns. The report, considered the "gold standard," shows Minnesota's outdoor recreation industry contributes \$13.5 billion to GDP and supports 96,000 jobs, with every county benefiting. Randolph emphasized the importance of this data for attracting investment, supporting small businesses, and demonstrating the critical role of outdoor recreation to policymakers. The next update is expected in January, pending BEA data.