



Pillsbury State Park



Chapter 1: Trends Impacting Outdoor Recreation



Weeks State Park

NEW HAMPSHIRE – A LOOK AT THE TRENDS

Demographic and Population Trends

Demographics shape our communities, institutions, and social interactions on a daily basis, facilitate an understanding of recreational supply and current and projected needs, and help policy makers implement informed decisions. The 2013-2018 SCORP includes statewide maps, located throughout this document and in **Appendix C**, including GIS Maps, which highlight demographic regional differences around the state. Recognizing these differences and responding to the unique characteristics of each region is critically important to the overall success of long-term outdoor recreation planning.

Socio-Demographic Trends

New Hampshire residents are middle-aged, well educated, and less racially diverse when compared to the nation as a whole, and are most often born someplace else and migrate into the state. A summary of demographic trends is as follows:

- Since the high growth decade from 1970-1980, the state's population growth has fallen steadily.
- In the past decade, 2000-2010, New Hampshire's growth rate declined to 6.5 percent, still the highest rate in the Northeast, but below the national rate.
- The 2010 Census indicates that 37.8 percent of the population lives in rural areas while 62.2 percent lives in urban areas.

Demographic and Housing Trends - 2010 US Census

- In New Hampshire, 94 percent of the population is white, compared to the national average of 74 percent.
- Ten percent of New Hampshire's housing stock is for recreational or seasonal use, compared to 3 percent nationwide.
- Minorities represented 5 percent of New Hampshire's population in 2000, and 50 percent of the State's population increase from 2000-2010.

Minority Populations

The University of New Hampshire Carsey Institute 2012 report, *New Hampshire Demographic Trends in the Twenty-First Century*, describes New Hampshire's minority populations:

“Although minority populations are growing, they remain spatially concentrated in just a few areas. Minorities represent a significant part of the population in the Concord-Manchester-Nashua urban corridor, as well as in the Hanover-Lebanon region and in a few areas of the Seacoast.

“Because the diversity of the child population is increasing much more rapidly than that of the adult population, areas where minority children represent a significant proportion of all children are more numerous. This is particularly evident in the Concord-Manchester-Nashua corridor, where populations of minority children exceeding 40 percent can be found in a number of places. Concentrations of minority children are largest in the City of Manchester, where 30 percent of children belong to a minority. In a state where diversity historically has been unusual, such large concentrations of minority children represent a challenge to school districts, health care providers, and communities that must meet the needs of these diverse groups. It also presents an opportunity for these communities to embrace and celebrate diversity, as well as to use it to foster mutual understanding and acceptance.”

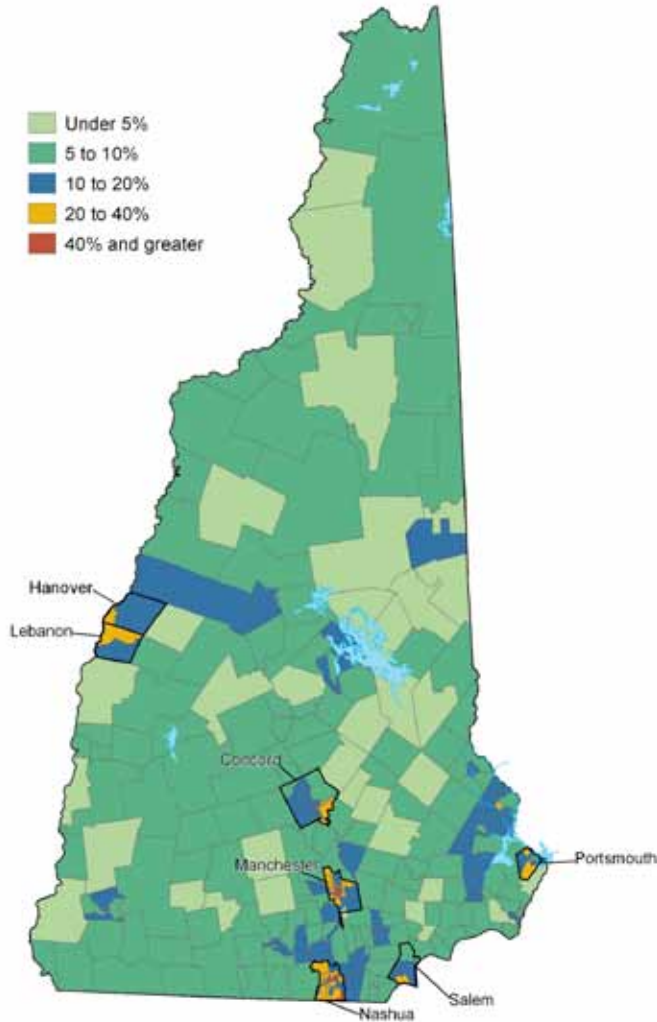


Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion Historic Site

Figure 1 demonstrates the child minority concentrations in New Hampshire.

FIGURE 1

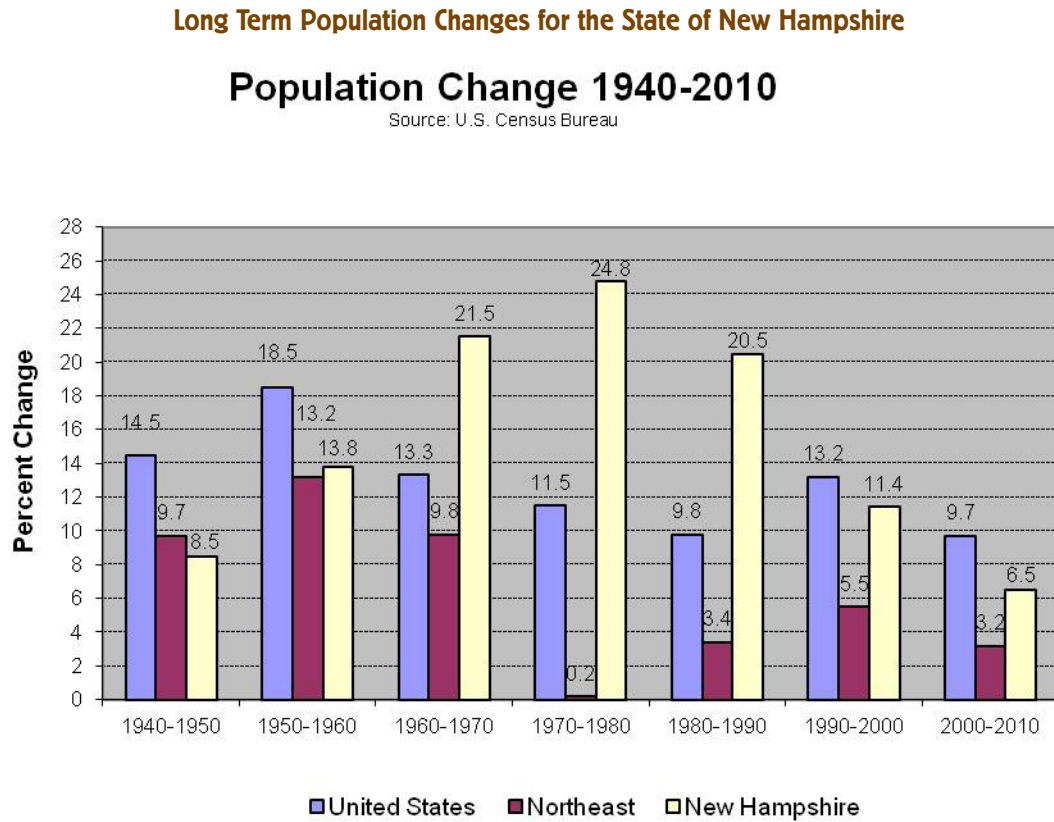
Population of Minorities under 18 by Census Tract 2010



State Population Trends

New Hampshire’s population growth patterns show a steady decline. *Figure 2* shows long-term population comparisons.

FIGURE 2:



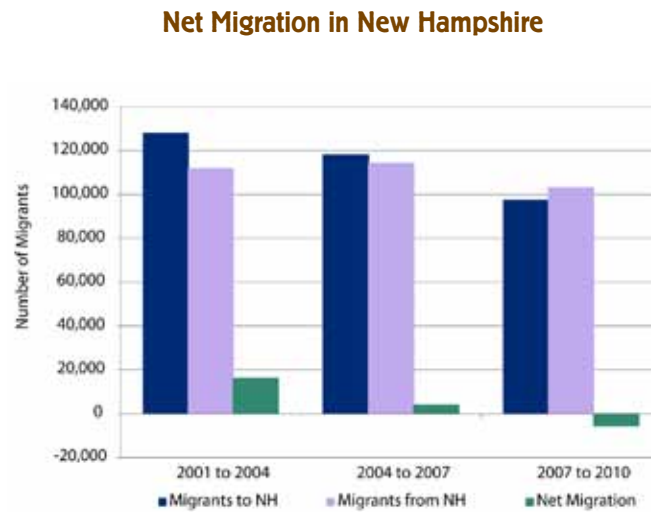
Regional Population Trends from 2000 to 2010

Considering New Hampshire’s regions, growth was concentrated in the southern part of the State. Hillsborough County gained the most residents, close to 20,000, increasing its population by 5.2 percent. Dover, with the largest share of its region’s population, grew at 11.5 percent; Strafford County was the fastest growing of New Hampshire’s 10 counties, increasing 9.7 percent. Grafton and Carroll counties, often referred to as the tourism/amenity counties, grew 9 percent and 9.5 percent respectively. The slowest growing county was Coos at .1 percent, representing an increase of 25 residents. Among the state’s largest cities, Manchester grew 2.4 percent to 109,565 while Nashua experienced a slight loss in population by 0.1 percent.

Migration Trends

Migration into and out of New Hampshire is a key trend to consider when planning future outdoor recreation resources. Despite the negative net migration shown in *Figure 3*, the state’s superior amenities are predicted to attract significant numbers of retirees.

FIGURE 3:



Source: NH Demographic Trends in the 21st Century

In New England, migration patterns have shown a consistent trend of migration out of every New England state. *Table 1* shows the migration patterns for New England.

**Table 1: New England State Migration – IRS Data
New England States Net Migration 2009-2012
(includes State to State and Foreign)**

State	In-Migration	Out-Migration	Net Migration
ME	21,049	24,720	-3,671
NH	29,833	32,162	-2,329
VT	13,422	14,071	-649
RI	19,952	23,722	-3,770
CT	56,130	64,691	-8,561
MA	95,002	104,319	-9,317
Totals	235,388	263,685	-28,297

Aging Population and Income Trends

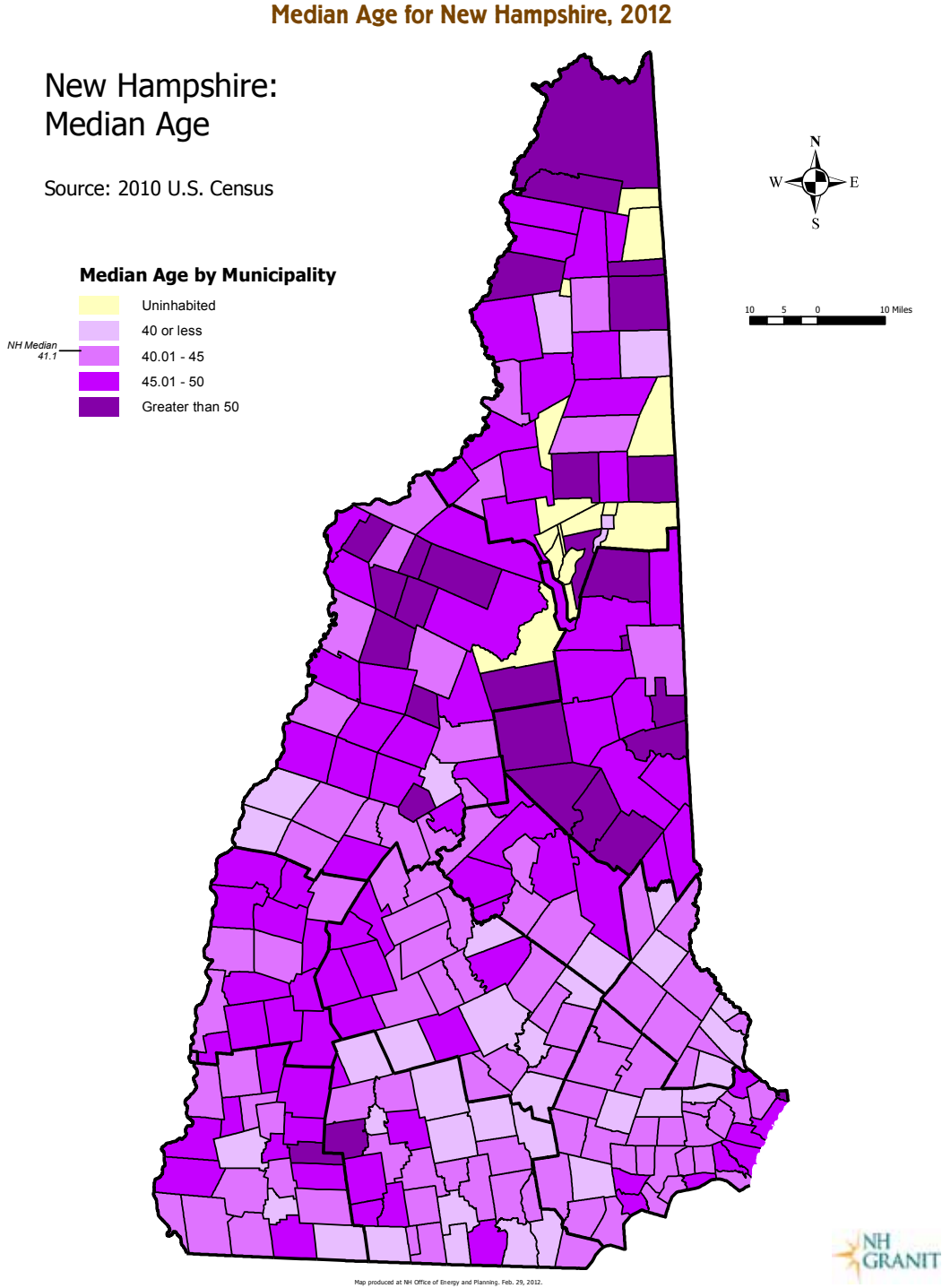
The statewide median age was 41.1 years in 2010, an increase from 37.1 in 2000. Many demographers have concluded that the declining number of young adults is not due to migration out of the State, but rather the result of fewer children being born 20-30 years ago. Retirees are attracted to the amenity communities, such as those in the Lakes Region and the North Country, which will result in an increasingly older population.

- NH's population is more dense the further south one travels. Population density ranges from fewer than 20 people per square mile in the Great North Woods to over 750 people per square mile in the Greater Nashua area.
- Not all of New Hampshire's communities and regions are aging at the same rate. *Figure 4* shows New Hampshire's median age for 2010, as well as the different age group distributions throughout the State.
- The impact of an older population on outdoor recreation includes the issue of community connectivity, particularly as middle-aged populations may choose to "age in place," and opportunities for recreation close to home become more important.

Population Migration - "...recreational and scenic amenities will attract additional older migrants, and this stream will likely swell as the large baby boom cohorts now in their late 40s to early 60s begin to retire. The combined effect of residents aging in place and senior migration is a likely doubling of the population aged 65 to 74 in the next twenty years."

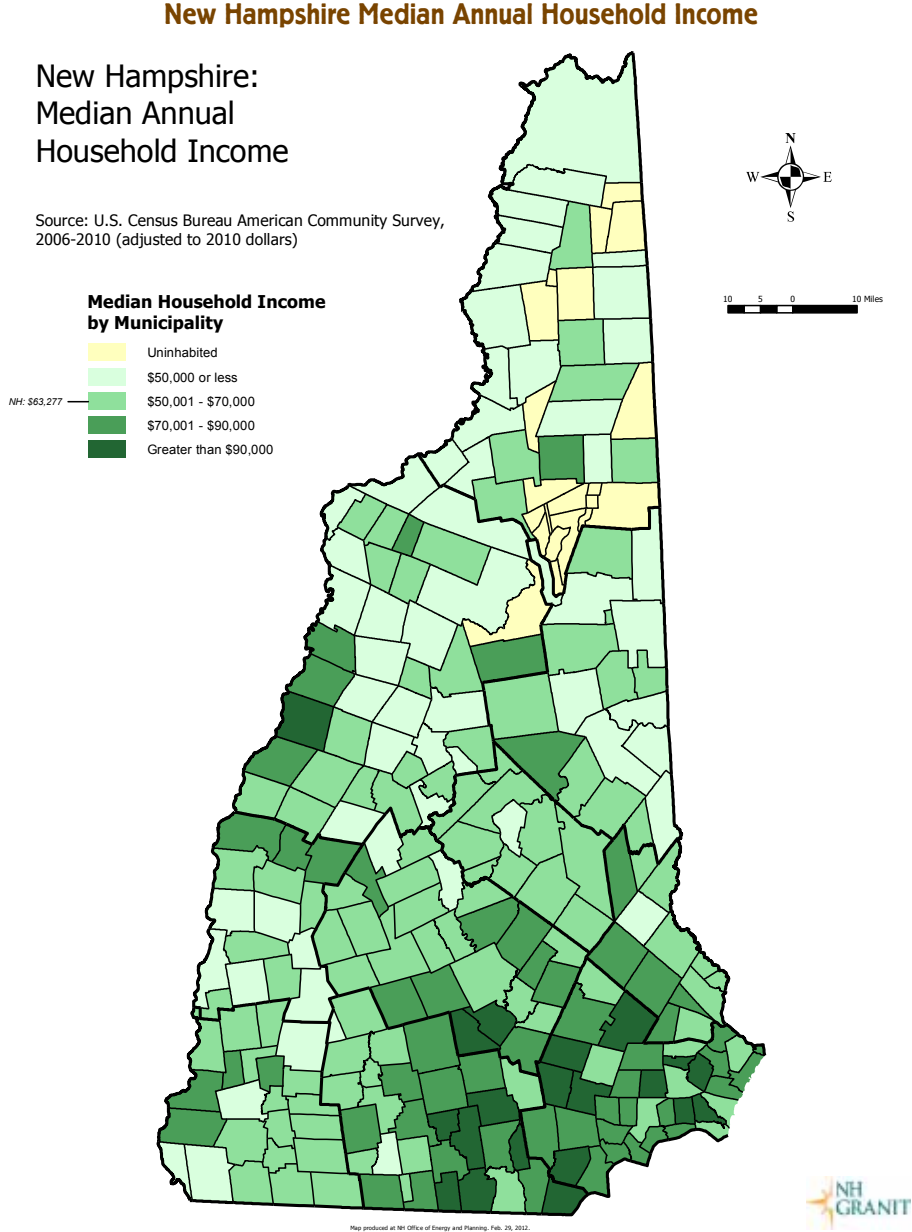
- *New Hampshire Demographic Trends in the Twenty-First Century, 2012*
UNH Carsey Institute

FIGURE 4:



Median income, illustrated in *Figure 5* is also an indicator of regional differences. NH residents, as a whole, are wealthy compared to national averages; however, there are areas within the state where median income is much lower than the state average.

FIGURE 5:



HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRENDS

Overweight and obesity rates among children and adults continue to receive attention nationally and in New Hampshire. Obesity and overweight increase the risk of developing chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure, and cancer.

National Trends

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports that 63 percent of adults were overweight or obese as measured in the 2010 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Nationally, childhood overweight and obesity rates have tripled since 1980. Obesity now affects 17 percent of all children and adolescents in the United States.

State Trends

According to the *New Hampshire Obesity Data Book 2010*, “Contributing factors to obesity include a social environment that supports physical inactivity.” Data collected in 2010 from various sources, including the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) reported:

- Low-income children 2 to 5 years old have a 15.5 percent obesity rate.
- Third grade public school students have an obesity rate of 18 percent.
- High school students have an obesity rate of 11.7 percent.
- New Hampshire adults have an obesity rate of 24.9 percent.
- The New Hampshire obesity rate is as high as the national rate – 63 percent, and has climbed steadily since 2001.
- Inadequate physical activity is one of three Obesity Risk Factors, according to the DHHS’ *NH Obesity Data Book 2010*.

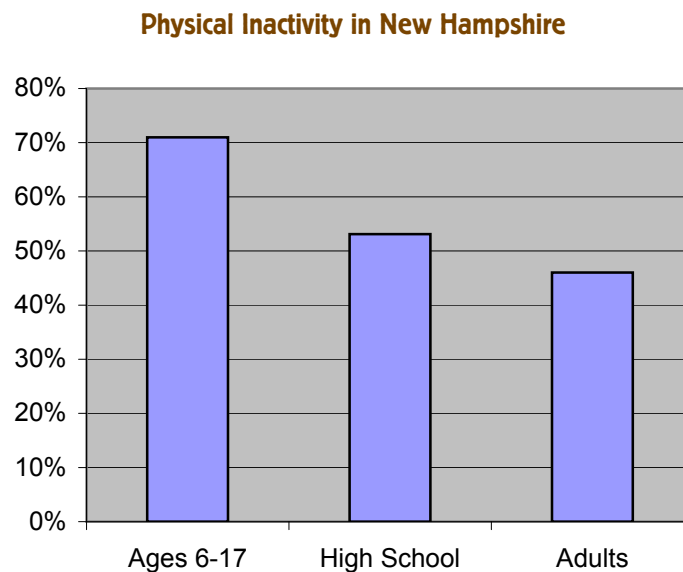
According to the New Hampshire Obesity Data Book, physical activity recommendations for adults include 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity five or more days a week or vigorous physical activity for 20 or more minutes three or more days a week.

Among New Hampshire adults, overweight and obesity increase with age, and obesity rates are higher among adults with lower incomes and less education. Overweight is more prevalent among adults with higher incomes. Younger adults with higher incomes are more likely to meet recommended physical activity levels.

Recent guidelines developed by the US Department of Health and Human Services recommend that children and adolescents be active for at least 60 minutes a day.

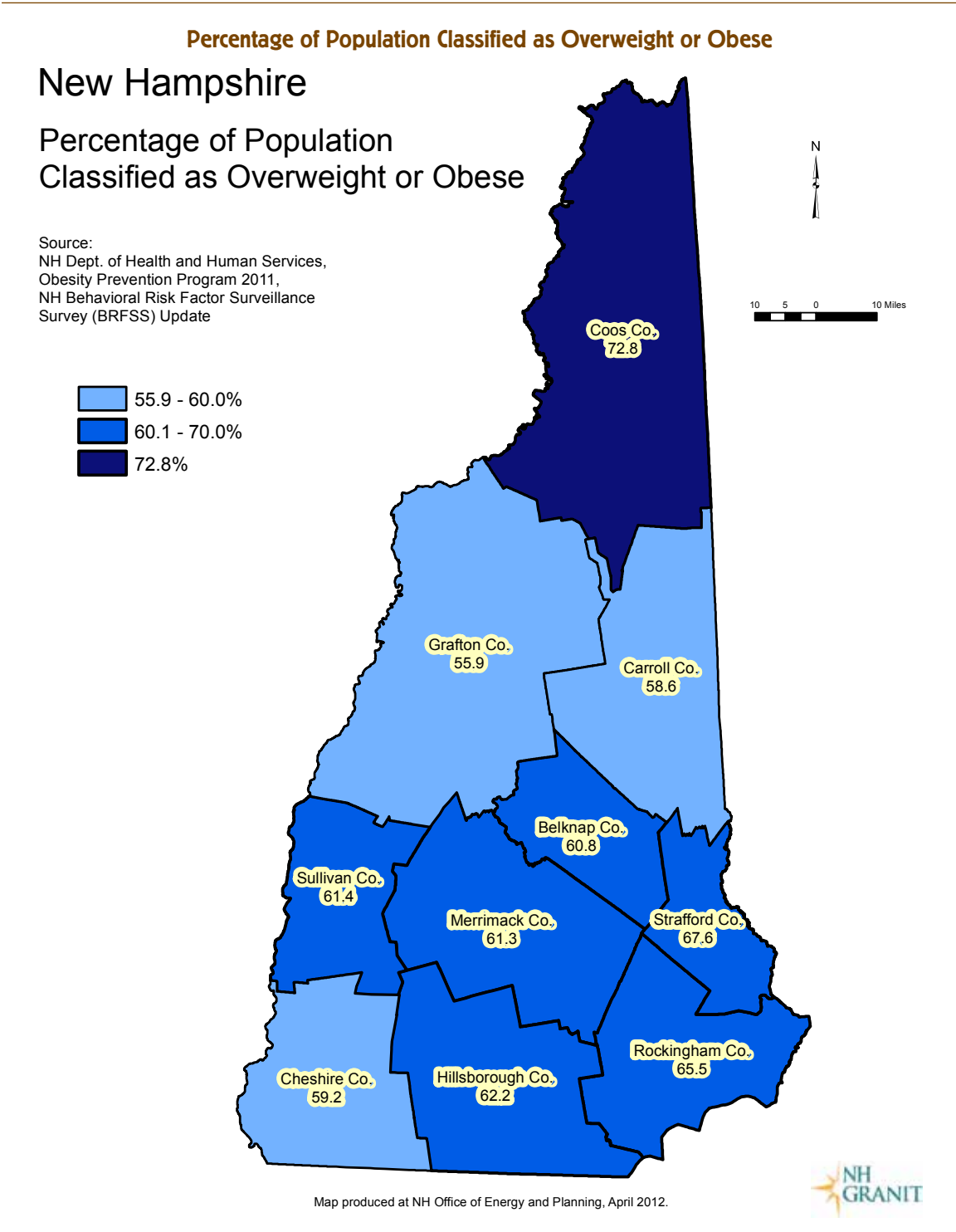
Figure 6 shows the levels of inactivity in New Hampshire.

FIGURE 6:



In a 2011 BRFSS update report, Coos County had a significantly higher proportion of obese adults in comparison with the state average, while Grafton County had a significantly lower adult obesity rate in comparison with the New Hampshire average. The map in *Figure 7* demonstrates New Hampshire's obesity rates by County.

FIGURE 7:



THE BENEFITS OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

In a report published by the Trust for Public Land, *“The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space,”* the following observations about the health, economic, environmental, and social benefits of parks and open space emerged:

- Physical activity makes people healthier.
- Physical activity increases with access to parks.
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and psychological health.
- Residential and commercial property values increase.
- Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
- Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and act as natural air conditioners.
- Trees assist with storm water control and erosion.
- Crime and juvenile delinquency are reduced.
- Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.
- Stable neighborhoods and strong communities are created.



Bear Brook State Park

OUTDOOR RECREATION TRENDS

National Trends

In 2012, The Outdoor Foundation (OF) released its *Outdoor Recreation Participation Report*. The report highlights growth in nature-based outdoor activities and a continued decline in youth outdoor participation. Industry trends show the beginning of adjustments in American lifestyles brought about by a challenging economy and shifting demographics. Their research brought the following key findings:

- **Return to Nature:** Nearly 50 percent of Americans ages six and older participated in outdoor recreation in 2011, a slight increase from 2010, equating to a total of 141.1 million Americans.
- **First Time Participants:** Activities with the highest percentage of first time participants in 2011 included stand up paddling, triathlons, freshwater fishing, and adventure racing.
- **The Economy:** Forty-two percent (42%) of outdoor participants said the economy impacted how often they participated in outdoor activities in 2009.
- **Fitness and Health Benefits:** Outdoor participants rate their fitness level at 6.4 on a 10-point scale. In terms of health, outdoor participants rate their health level at 7.6 on a 10-point scale.
- **Youth:** Among youth ages 6 to17, bicycling is the most popular outdoor activity.
- **Preservation of Land:** The majority of Americans agree that preserving undeveloped land for outdoor recreation is important. **A large percentage of outdoor participants also believe that developing local parks and hiking and walking trails is important and that there should be more outdoor education and activities during the school day.**

NH Fish & Game Department's Wildlife Action Plan - During the public engagement process for developing the Wildlife Action Plan, participants were asked to identify the top issues for wildlife conservation in New Hampshire. Respondents identified the following:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Prevent habitat loss | 86% |
| • Educate citizens about wildlife management | 52% |
| • Improve land use planning | 40% |
| • Encourage stewardship | 36% |

THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

The Outdoor Industry Association reports the following economic impact of the outdoor recreation economy:

- Contributes \$646 billion annually to the U.S. economy
- Supports nearly 6.1 million jobs across the U.S.
- Generates \$80 billion in annual federal, state and local tax revenue
- The outdoor recreation economy grew approximately 5 percent annually between 2005 and 2011, during an economic recession when many sectors contracted.
- Adds \$524.8 billion in active outdoor recreation trip and travel expenditures

New Hampshire Outdoors - National Rankings List

Littleton:

"American Dream Town," Outside Magazine, 2005

Lebanon:

"#10 Best Place to Raise an Outdoor Kid," Backpacker Magazine, 2009

New Hampshire:

"Most Livable State" CQ Press, 2011

"3rd Healthiest State," United Health Foundation, 2011

"3rd Lowest Crime Rate in U.S." Morgan Quitno, 2011

"America's Best States to Live In" CNBC, 2012



Mount Sunapee State Park

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NEW HAMPSHIRE'S OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES

In New Hampshire, the active outdoor recreation economy contributes the following to the state's economic resilience, as reported by the Outdoor Foundation:

- Supports 53,000 jobs
- Generates \$261 million in annual state tax revenue
- Produces nearly \$4 billion annually in retail sales and services

The highlights below demonstrate the economic impacts of various state and local agencies providing outdoor recreation, areas of expressed demand identified in the public engagement process, and natural resource features.

Outdoor Recreation Activities Economic Contributions

New Hampshire's natural beauty and abundance of lakes and rivers, trails, and forested lands not only attract tourists who participate in a variety of active outdoor recreation pursuits, but also provide opportunities for close-to-home participation by residents. According to the Outdoor Foundation, 42 percent of New Hampshire residents participate in wildlife viewing, followed by trail use at 35 percent. Hunting, fishing, bicycling, camping, snow sports, and paddling also contribute to the New Hampshire economy with additional revenues from lodging, restaurant, retail, and equipment sales.

State Parks Economic Contributions

In 2009, New Hampshire State Parks conducted a survey to determine park usage and found that 92 percent of respondents had visited a state park within the last three years. Current estimates indicate state parks receive six million visitors each year, contributing more than \$500 million annually to New Hampshire's economy through spending and tax revenues in restaurants, accommodations, retail trade, services, and transportation. New Hampshire owns two ski areas, Cannon Mountain and Mt. Sunapee, which actively support the outdoor recreation economy, with Cannon contributing \$1.3 million in net revenues in Fiscal Year 2011.

State Parks Benefit Tourism - “In a recent survey the Division of Travel and Tourism learned that the main activities associated with New Hampshire were outdoor activities with 90% of them being recreational activities that take part in New Hampshire State Parks. Of those surveyed, 70% agreed that New Hampshire has great state and national parks, just reaffirming that these natural resources are an important aspect for promoting New Hampshire. The natural landscapes and varied experiences provide exceptional opportunities for both residents and visitors travelling from all corners of the globe to enjoy what New Hampshire has to offer whether they are seeking active outdoor recreation, relaxation, or just the natural beauty of our quintessential New England landscape.”

-Lori Harnois, Director, NH Division of Travel and Tourism Development

Fishing and Hunting Economic Contributions

The US Fish and Wildlife Service 2006 *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* by Southwick and Associates, American Sportfishing Association, and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies identified tax revenues, employment, participation, and spending associated with outdoor recreation in New Hampshire, specifically fishing and hunting. The survey reports 4,000 jobs, 159,000 resident anglers and hunters, and in 2006, 131,000 non-resident anglers and hunters. Annual spending in New Hampshire totaled \$255 million.

Equestrian Community Economic Contributions

Equestrian activities in New Hampshire generate a considerable amount of economic impact through jobs in the industry, competitions and events, retail sales, and tourism activities. There are approximately 21 equine related user groups in the state.

In a 2003 survey of 506 equine owners sponsored by the New Hampshire Horse Council, Inc. and New Hampshire Farm Bureau Federation, the sum of all the expenditures in the previous twelve months reported by the respondents was about \$61 million. Of this amount, \$32.8 million was for operating expenditures and \$28.2 million was for capital expenditures such as purchases of equine-related services, real estate, and equipment.

Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV) Economic Contributions

Wheeled off-highway vehicle registrations, both in-state and out-of-state, are increasing. Total registrations have more than doubled in the last ten years. Out-of-state registrations have more than tripled. Total OHRV registrations for the 2010-2011 season exceeded 80,200.

A steady increase in OHRV use can impact soil, water, wildlife habitat, and other recreational visitors. To properly manage the effects of OHRVs, NHDRED created a park dedicated to OHRVs in the North Country region of the state using vehicle registration revenues, which are significant. During the 2011 season, revenues from OHRV registrations totaled \$5.2 million, with \$3.8 million in net revenues dedicated to New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development. In New Hampshire, the definition of OHRV under RSA 215-A:1 does not include snowmobiles.

ATV/Trail Bike Spending - As reported in a 2003 report by the Institute for New Hampshire Studies at Plymouth State University, *The Impact Of Spending By ATV/Trail Bike Travel Parties On New Hampshire's Economy During July 2002 To June 2003*, all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and trail biking travel parties had direct spending within New Hampshire of about \$124 million, and direct and indirect spending of approximately \$176 million.

Snowmobile Activity Economic Contributions

Resident and non-resident snowmobile registrations showed a decline from 2008-2010, but this trend reversed beginning in 2011, with more than 56,550 registrations for the 2011 season, totaling \$3.1 million in net revenues.

Travel and Tourism Economic Contributions

The Institute for New Hampshire Studies at Plymouth State University studied tourism-related dollars generated both from in-state visitors as well as out-of-state visitors and their impact on the New Hampshire economy. The total estimated direct spending by tourists and travelers of \$4.3 billion for FY 2011 is about 7.0 percent of the estimated Gross Domestic Product of \$61.7 billion for New Hampshire for this same period. This is an increase from 6.7 percent during FY 2010 and shows that tourism spending is growing slightly faster than the overall economy between these two years.

Return on Investment (ROI) For New Hampshire Travel and Tourism - The Institute for New Hampshire Studies at Plymouth State University calculated the ROI for every Division of Travel and Tourism Development (DTTD) dollar spent. The result: For every dollar spent, the ROI was \$9.23.

Travel and Tourism Impacts:

- 61,820 jobs
- \$4.3 billion in direct spending

Local Parks and Recreation Economic Contributions

While the economic impact of local parks, trails, and recreation activities has not been formally studied at the community level in New Hampshire, studies nationwide show that quality parks and recreation are cited as one of the top three factors businesses consider when making relocation decisions, and that real estate values are 10 to 30 percent higher on average for properties located near parks, trails, and recreational amenities.



Franconia Notch State Park

OTHER TRENDS

Active Seniors and Youth Engagement

Outdoor recreation planners and providers will need to be responsive to a more active, older population that seeks adventure in its outdoor experiences, and focus on encouraging greater participation in the outdoors by children and youth. Key trends for advancing this public health related agenda include:

- Active transportation programs, policy, and funding are getting recognition in communities across the country.
- Exercise walking, camping, and swimming are among the top ten athletic activities ranked by total participation.
- Trails, parks, and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home.
- The majority of Americans agree that preserving undeveloped land for outdoor recreation is important, and that there should be more outdoor education activities during the school day.
- Adventure racing, slack lines in parks, mountain bicycling, rock and ice climbing, trail running, and kayaking are growing in popularity nationwide.
- Geocaching, letterboxing, Segways for access to recreation, and tree top zip lines are recognized outdoor recreation activities.

Local Parks and Recreation Visitors - The New Hampshire Recreation and Park Association surveyed 23 communities in New Hampshire with the following results:

- The population served by local agencies increases by 59 percent in the summer.
- Between June and August 273,356 people visited local parks and recreation facilities and programs.
- Local agencies hired approximately 635 seasonal employees in one summer.

Statewide Land Use

Communities toward the northern part of the state tend to be dominated by large tracts of publicly owned lands, such as the White Mountain National Forest, and large tracts of un-fragmented privately held lands.

Tourism promotion, the impacts of recreational use, and the management decisions made on these lands are all of great importance to local communities. Comparatively, there is much less publicly held conservation land in the southeastern part of the state, and the number of large un-fragmented parcels is dwindling. Communities in the southeast must increasingly deal with issues surrounding growth, including loss of open space, loss of community character, and increased development pressure.

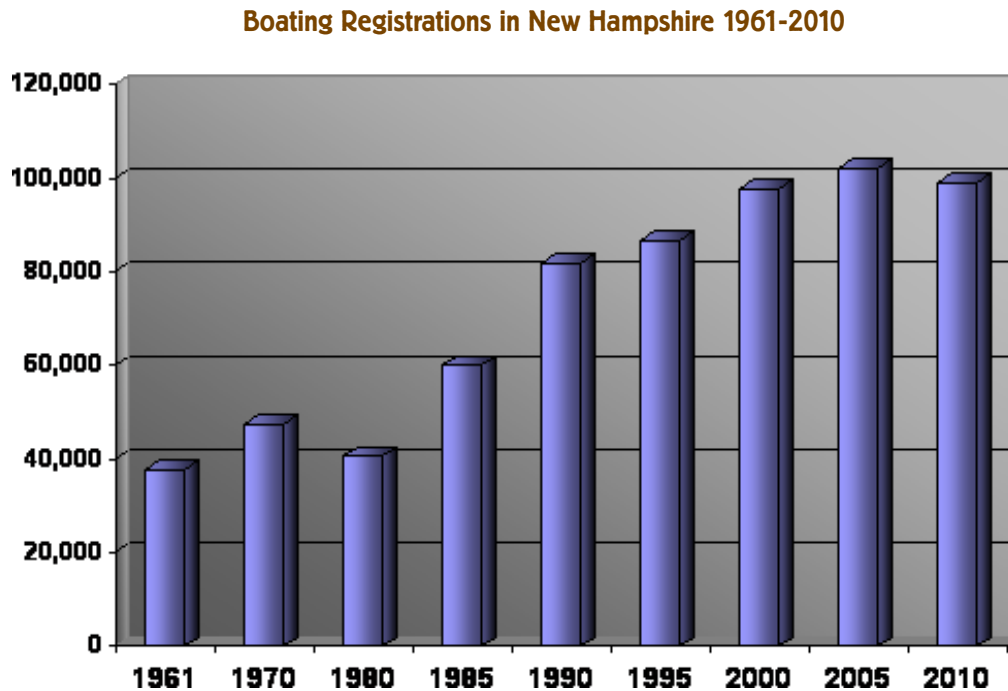
Boating Registrations

Figure 8 demonstrates that while boating registration numbers remained somewhat steady between 1960 and 1980, registrations increased sharply between 1985 and 2000. New Hampshire reported approximately 39,000 boat registrations in 1980, and this figure rose to almost 98,000 in 2000 and to 102,234 in 2005. Registrations doubled between 1980 and 1990 alone, and increased over 19 percent between 1990 and 2000. However, the number of registrations decreased between 2005 and 2010. These years coincide with a slowdown of the economy but the overall consistently high number of boating licenses continues to highlight the need for access-site maintenance, enforcement, and improved boater information and education.



Greenfield State Park

FIGURE 8:



Statewide Motorized Access

In 2001, the State of New Hampshire recognized that off highway recreational vehicle use (OHRV), a recognized recreational activity, was on the rise in the State. With registrations increasing 150 percent over the prior 10 years, finding a way to address the issues brought about by the legitimate use, and potential abuse, of these machines was paramount. One initiative was to increase registration fees, with a portion of those fees dedicated to buying land to develop OHRV trails.

While a relatively small proportion of people participate in wheeled OHRV activities as compared to non-motorized activities, its increasing popularity and its relatively large impact on other users and interests demands increased attention from land managers. Compounding this increase in resident interest is the growing trend towards restricting wheeled OHRV use in Massachusetts and Vermont.

A wide variety of opinions about wheeled OHRV management exist in New Hampshire. One view holds that existing trail and wheeled OHRV area access is insufficient given the growing demand and substantial registration fees paid by OHRV users, and that more state resources and wheeled OHRV fees should be directed to expanding and improving access for wheeled motorized vehicles.

Another view relates to a growing statewide concern with the impact of OHRV use on the environment (wetlands, wildlife, air pollution) and trail conditions, as well as other trail users and abutters (trespass, litter, safety, enforcement).

DRED has begun to address this demand with the purchase of land and the development of Jericho Mountain State Park in Berlin as a destination park for ATV use. The Bureau of Trails, in collaboration with more than 20 ATV clubs across the state and the New Hampshire Off Highway Vehicle Association, have created an education program that informs ATV riders of state laws, rider ethics, and responsible trail usage.



Jericho Mountain State Park

POTENTIAL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Department of Environmental Services (DES), in collaboration with the New Hampshire Energy and Climate Change Collaborative, acknowledges that New Hampshire's social and economic health is predicated in large part upon the health of its lakes and rivers, oceans and beaches, mountains, scenic towns, and natural areas, and that global climate change will affect the climate of New Hampshire. Impacts to New Hampshire's outdoor recreation resources may include the following:

Impacts on New Hampshire Forests

- Ecological collapse for several tree species, including beech, maple, and hemlock (an important species for deer during the winter).
- Widespread tree mortality, including spruce and others; decreases in vegetation density of 25 to 75 percent; extensive wildfires; large increases in pest and pathogen outbreaks; and a lag in the establishment of new forests for several decades.

Impacts on New Hampshire Coasts

- Sea level rise of 12 to 20 inches, causing large scale alteration of Great Bay, reduction of coastal estuaries and flooding of rivers, as well as potentially large revenue losses from coastal tourism, a \$484 million generator for New Hampshire.

Impacts on New Hampshire Foliage

- Dulling and browning of foliage season due to tree die-offs, species substitution, and "climate stressed" unhealthy trees. New Hampshire foliage travelers on average spend a total of \$292 million annually.

Impacts on New Hampshire Fishing

- Loss of cold water fishing: 50 to 100 percent eradication of rainbow, brook, and brown trout fishing, a \$150 million New Hampshire industry.

Impacts on New Hampshire's Ski Industry

- Loss of 10 to 20 percent of ski season days, representing a loss of \$42 million to \$84 million in direct and indirect spending in New Hampshire.

Impacts on New Hampshire's Recreation Trails

- Loss of use from downed trees, flooding, erosion caused by storm events, and resulting increased maintenance costs.

In August of 2011, three to ten inches of rain fell across the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) from Tropical Storm Irene in a matter of hours and washed away roads, bridges, trails and recreation sites. According to a White Mountain National Forest news release dated September 13, 2012 “work to restore the damage from Tropical Storm Irene began last fall as the Forest, the State, partners, and volunteers worked to get the front country open for leaf season, areas stabilized for winter, and snowmobile trails ready for snow. About \$10 million dollars of damage was sustained to the Forest’s infrastructure from the storm. Trail crews have been out all summer, addressing blow downs, gullied tread ways, erosion, and damaged bridges. The Forest estimates that \$2-\$3 million of trail damage still remains to be addressed.”

The State of New Hampshire, Bureau of Trails is working through a cooperative cost-share with the WMNF to repair snowmobile trails damaged by hurricane Irene. It is estimated that the cost to repair snowmobile trails within the Forest is about \$130,000, and approximately \$400,000 in damage occurred to snowmobile trails outside of the Forest throughout New Hampshire. Severe single-event storms are causing major trail damage on New Hampshire’s trail systems.

Local Open Space and Trails Planning

Many communities already identify, inventory, and plan for recreation needs such as ball fields, playgrounds, bicycle paths, open space, and trails through their master planning process.

Open Space/Trails Plans - An open space/trails plan consists of an inventory and maps of a town’s existing conservation easements, public lands, rights-of-way, and privately conserved lands, with an inventory and maps of existing formal trails and informal trails. These plans can provide recommendations for changes to a municipality’s site plan review regulations or subdivision regulations to align community interests in trails with development. The Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC, www.cnhrpc.org) has developed a manual to provide guidance in writing open space/trails plans.

What These Trends Mean

Changing demographics, the economic impacts of outdoor recreation and participation trends are important to be aware of in planning long-term outdoor recreation improvements. A number of indicators apply to the SCORP planning process:

- **Changing Preferences** – Shifts in ethnicity and age will result in changes in outdoor recreation preferences relative to types of activities, frequency, style, and location. Understanding the barriers or constraints to recreation participation, such as perception of safety, income/age/ethnicity discrimination, and language barriers, is vital as New Hampshire’s demographics continue to shift.
- **Accommodating Active Seniors** – Outdoor recreation opportunities must also accommodate a growing active senior population, who will become more interested in individual health and wellness, easy and safe access to recreation opportunities, and an increase in social and family activity experiences. Connectivity using trails and green spaces is a low cost solution to address the need for access to active recreation opportunities. The cost of building and maintaining trails equals about \$98 annually for each new person who uses them at least three times per week. (Wang G, 2004).
- **Collaborating With Multi-Sector Providers** – The NH Department of Health and Human Services participates in HEAL (Healthy Eating, Active Living), a consortium of organizations supporting obesity prevention efforts. Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents to the 2011 New Hampshire Recreation and Conservation Leaders Survey rank partnerships with organizations to foster connections between outdoor recreation and improved health and wellness as a medium to high priority.
- **Aligning With State and National Efforts** – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services Obesity Prevention Program (OPP) receives funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The program focuses on six target areas for obesity prevention, including:
 1. Creating safe communities that support physical activity
 2. Improving access to outdoor recreational facilities
 3. Enhancing infrastructure that supports bicycling and walking
 4. Enhancing personal safety and traffic safety in areas where people are or could be physically active
 5. Encouraging communities to organize for change
 6. Forming coalitions and partnerships that promote active living

Community Leaders as Public Health Advocates

- An impressively high percentage of recreation and conservation leaders in New Hampshire, eighty-one percent (81%), ranked development of and access to outdoor recreation opportunities that connect people to where they live and work as a medium or high priority.
- Responding to a 2007 International City and County Management Association survey, eighty-nine percent (89%) of city and county Administrators believe park and recreation departments should take the lead in developing communities conducive to active living.

The Healthy New Hampshire Foundation, whose mission is promoting healthy lifestyles, supported a statewide assessment to determine readiness in NH for pursuing obesity prevention efforts. The February 2012 report found a need for increased opportunities for physical activity, including promoting zoning changes and land use policies on the municipal level that support living, working, learning, and playing in the same area and promoting the use of parks, as well as walking and other outdoor activity. The report also found that partnerships are key to a successful and comprehensive obesity prevention program.



Monadnock State Park



Odiorne Point State Park

America's Great Outdoors 2010 Homegrown Listening Sessions were held across the country, including two in New England, and were reported back to the Obama Administration's America's Great Outdoors Initiative. The following relevant recommendations were made:

a. Connecting Americans to the Great Outdoors

1. Provide quality jobs, career pathways, and service opportunities
2. Enhance recreational access and opportunities
3. Raise awareness of the value and benefits of America's Great Outdoors
4. Engage young people in conservation and the great outdoors

b. Conserving and Restoring America's Great Outdoors

5. Strengthen the Land and Water Conservation Fund
6. Establish great urban parks and community green spaces
7. Conserve rural working farms, ranches, and forests through partnerships and incentives
8. Conserve our national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, and other federal lands and waters
9. Protect and renew rivers and other waters

c. Working Together for America's Great Outdoors

10. Make the federal government a more effective conservation partner

TRENDS SUMMARY

Outdoor recreation is a vital component of local, state, and national efforts to promote individual health and wellness, environmental sustainability, and economic vitality. Participation in outdoor recreation activities connects people to our parks, trails, facilities, and water resources, and contributes to healthy lifestyles and the State's economy. The research is clear – changes in the built environment that support safe, active transportation and connectivity, and policy changes requiring inclusive transportation and recreation planning can help reverse the alarming trend toward increased rates of obesity and chronic disease while contributing to economic vitality.