# OUTIDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION TOPLINE REPORT 2015 




Nearly half of all Americans - 48.4\% - participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2014. This equates to 141.4 million participants, who went on a collective 11.8 billion outdoor outings.

Overall outdoor participation dropped $.8 \%$ since 2013 and, by a small margin, reached the lowest levels since the report began in 2006. Extreme weather and an unusually cold winter are likely major contributors to the decline. While the typically popular gateway activities of running and biking lost participants in 2014, the indoor versions of these activities - running on the treadmill and using the stationary bike - added participants.*

Paddle sports are a bright spot in outdoor participation. Stand up paddling continued to be the top outdoor activity for growth, increasing participation by $38 \%$ from 2013 to 2014 . Snow sports, such as telemarking, snowshoeing, freestyle skiing and cross-country skiing, also grew by significant margins.

The Outdoor Foundation $®$ has produced the Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report to provide a snapshot of American participation in outdoor activities with a focus on youth and young adults. The report is based on an online survey of nearly 11,000 Americans ages six and older. A more in-depth look at outdoor participation in America is forthcoming.

* Data from participation in indoor activities comes from the overall Physical Activity Council's survey, which measures various types of activity and forms the basis of this report. Since this report focuses on outdoor participation, indoor participation numbers are not included.

Outdoor Participation, 2006 to 2014


# Youth \& Young Adult Participation 

4.4 Billion Outdoor Outings<br>108.4 Average Outings Per Participant

## Most Popular Youth Outdoor Activities

By Participation Rate, Ages 6 to 24

1. Running, Jogging and Trail Running $25.6 \%$ of youth, 20.7 million participants
2. Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX) $21.2 \%$ of youth, 17.2 million participants
3. Camping (Car, Backyard and RV) 18.5\% of youth, 15.0 million participants
4. Fishing (Fresh, Salt and Fly) 18.0\% of youth, 14.6 million participants
5. Hiking
$12.8 \%$ of youth, 10.4 million participants

## Favorite Youth Outdoor Activities

By Frequency of Participation, Ages 6 to 24

1. Running, Jogging and Trail Running
87.2 average outings per runner,
1.8 billion total outings
2. Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX) 67.2 average outings per cyclist,
1.2 billion total outings
3. Skateboarding
52.8 average outings per skateboarder, 245.7 million total outings
4. Surfing
23.4 average outings per surfer, 25.8 million total outings
5. Birdwatching
22.9 average outings per birdwatcher, 61.9 million total outings


## $\underset{\substack{\text { Apose } \\ \text { tore }}}{\substack{\text { Youth }}}$ \& Young Adult Participant Demographics

|  |  | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Gender | Male | 52\% | 50\% | 57\% | 53\% | 53\% | 52\% | 50\% | 50\% |
|  | Female | 48\% | 50\% | 43\% | 47\% | 47\% | 49\% | 50\% | 50\% |
|  |  | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
| Age | 6 to 12 | 33\% | 29\% | 37\% | 36\% | 36\% | 38\% | 38\% | 38\% |
|  | 13 to 17 | 24\% | 25\% | 30\% | 30\% | 30\% | 26\% | 26\% | 27\% |
|  | 18 to 24 | 44\% | 46\% | 34\% | 34\% | 34\% | 36\% | 31\% | 34\% |
| Race/ Ethnicity |  | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|  | African <br> American/Black | 8\% | 8\% | 8\% | 11\% | 7\% | 11\% | 11\% | 10\% |
|  | Asian/Pacific Islander | 4\% | 6\% | 5\% | 6\% | 6\% | 7\% | 7\% | 7\% |
|  | Caucasian/ <br> White, non- <br> Hispanic | 77\% | 75\% | 78\% | 71\% | 76\% | 71\% | 68\% | 70\% |
|  | Hispanic | 7\% | 7\% | 7\% | 9\% | 8\% | 8\% | 10\% | 10\% |
|  | Other | 4\% | 4\% | 3\% | 4\% | 4\% | 4\% | 3\% | 3\% |


|  |  | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | New England | 5\% | 5\% | 5\% | 5\% | 4\% | 5\% | 5\% | 4\% |
|  | Middle Atlantic | 15\% | 14\% | 12\% | 13\% | 13\% | 13\% | 13\% | 13\% |
|  | East North Central | 17\% | 17\% | 17\% | 17\% | 17\% | 16\% | 17\% | 17\% |
| Census Region | West North Central | 7\% | 7\% | 8\% | 7\% | 7\% | 8\% | 7\% | 7\% |
|  | South Atlantic | 18\% | 19\% | 18\% | 17\% | 18\% | 18\% | 18\% | 19\% |
|  | East South Central | 5\% | 6\% | 7\% | 6\% | 6\% | 6\% | 6\% | 6\% |
|  | West South Central | 9\% | 9\% | 10\% | 10\% | 11\% | 10\% | 11\% | 11\% |
|  | Mountain | 8\% | 8\% | 8\% | 9\% | 9\% | 8\% | 8\% | 9\% |

## Adult Participation

### 7.4 Billion Outdoor Outings <br> 73.3 Average Outings Per Participant

## Most Popular Adult Outdoor Activities

By Participation Rate, Ages 25+

1. Running, Jogging and Trail Running
$15.8 \%$ of adults, 33.0 million participants
2. Fishing (Fresh, Salt and Fly)
$15.0 \%$ of adults, 31.4 million participants
3. Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX)
$12.8 \%$ of adults, 26.8 million participants
4. Hiking
12.4\% of adults, 25.9 million participants
5. Camping (Car, Backyard, Backpacking and RV)
$12.2 \%$ of adults, 25.5 million participants

## Favorite Adult Outdoor Activities

By Frequency of Participation, Ages 25+

1. Running, Jogging and Trail Running 79.5 average outings per runner, 2.6 billion total outings
2. Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX) 54.3 average outings per cyclist, 1.5 billion total outings
3. Birdwatching
39.1 average outings per birdwatcher, 409.7 million total outings
4. Wildlife Viewing
28.0 average outings per wildlife viewer, 450.1 million total outings
5. Hunting
23.3 average outings per hunter,
245.6 million total outings


## 2014 Positive Outdoor Trends

Participation in racing, such as adventure racing and triathlons, has increased significantly over the past three years. Water sports, like stand up paddling and kayak fishing, have also seen an increase in participation during the past several years.

## Top Outdoor Activities for Growth



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** All participation numbers in this table are in the thousands (000).

|  | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 3-Year Change |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Adventure Racing | 725 | 698 | 920 | 1,089 | 1,339 | 1,065 | 2,170 | 2,213 | 2,368 | 37.6\% |
| Backpacking Overnight - More Than 1/4 Mile From Vehicle/ Home | 7,067 | 6,637 | 7,867 | 7,647 | 8,349 | 7,095 | 8,771 | 9,069 | 10,101 | 12.8\% |
| Bicycling (BMX) | 1,655 | 1,887 | 1,904 | 1,811 | 2,369 | 1,547 | 2,175 | 2,168 | 2,350 | 16.2\% |
| Bicycling (Mountain/NonPaved Surface) | 6,751 | 6,892 | 7,592 | 7,142 | 7,161 | 6,816 | 7,714 | 8,542 | 8,044 | 6.0\% |
| Bicycling (Road/Paved Surface) | 38,457 | 38,940 | 38,114 | 40,140 | 39,320 | 40,349 | 39,232 | 40,888 | 39,725 | -0.5\% |
| Birdwatching More Than 1/4 Mile From Home/Vehicle | 11,070 | 13,476 | 14,399 | 13,294 | 13,339 | 12,794 | 14,275 | 14,152 | 13,179 | 1.3\% |
| Boardsailing/Windsurfing | 938 | 1,118 | 1,307 | 1,128 | 1,617 | 1,151 | 1,593 | 1,324 | 1,562 | 13.2\% |
| Camping (RV) | 16,946 | 16,168 | 16,517 | 17,436 | 15,865 | 16,698 | 15,108 | 14,556 | 14,633 | -4.2\% |
| Camping (Within 1/4 Mile of Vehicle/Home) | 35,618 | 31,375 | 33,686 | 34,338 | 30,996 | 32,925 | 29,982 | 29,269 | 28,660 | -4.5\% |
| Canoeing | 9,154 | 9,797 | 9,935 | 10,058 | 10,553 | 9,787 | 9,839 | 10,153 | 10,044 | 0.9\% |
| Climbing (Sport/Indoor/ Boulder) | 4,728 | 4,514 | 4,769 | 4,313 | 4,770 | 4,119 | 4,592 | 4,745 | 4,536 | 3.5\% |
| Climbing (Traditional/Ice/ Mountaineering) | 1,586 | 2,062 | 2,288 | 1,835 | 2,198 | 1,609 | 2,189 | 2,319 | 2,457 | 16.0\% |
| Fishing (Fly) | 6,071 | 5,756 | 5,941 | 5,568 | 5,478 | 5,683 | 6,012 | 5,878 | 5,842 | 1.0\% |
| Fishing (Freshwater/Other) | 43,100 | 43,859 | 40,331 | 40,961 | 38,860 | 38,868 | 39,135 | 37,796 | 37,821 | -0.9\% |
| Fishing (Saltwater) | 12,466 | 14,437 | 13,804 | 12,303 | 11,809 | 11,983 | 12,017 | 11,790 | 11,817 | -0.5\% |
| Hiking (Day) | 29,863 | 29,965 | 32,511 | 32,572 | 32,496 | 34,491 | 34,545 | 34,378 | 36,222 | 1.7\% |
| Hunting (Bow) | 3,875 | 3,818 | 3,722 | 4,226 | 3,908 | 4,633 | 4,075 | 4,079 | 4,411 | -1.3\% |
| Hunting (Handgun) | 2,525 | 2,595 | 2,873 | 2,276 | 2,709 | 2,671 | 3,553 | 3,198 | 3,091 | 6.6\% |
| Hunting (Rifle) | 11,242 | 10,635 | 10,344 | 11,114 | 10,150 | 10,807 | 10,164 | 9,792 | 10,081 | -2.2\% |
| Hunting (Shotgun) | 8,987 | 8,545 | 8,731 | 8,490 | 8,062 | 8,678 | 8,174 | 7,894 | 8,220 | -1.7\% |
| Kayak Fishing | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,044 | 1,201 | 1,409 | 1,798 | 2,074 | 20.1\% |
| Kayaking (Recreational) | 4,134 | 5,070 | 6,240 | 6,212 | 6,465 | 8,229 | 8,144 | 8,716 | 8,855 | 2.5\% |
| Kayaking (Sea/Touring) | 1,136 | 1,485 | 1,780 | 1,771 | 2,144 | 2,029 | 2,446 | 2,694 | 2,912 | 12.9\% |
| Kayaking (White Water) | 828 | 1,207 | 1,242 | 1,369 | 1,842 | 1,546 | 1,878 | 2,146 | 2,351 | 15.1\% |
| Rafting | 3,609 | 4,340 | 4,651 | 4,318 | 4,460 | 3,821 | 3,690 | 3,836 | 3,781 | -0.3\% |
| Running/Jogging | 38,559 | 41,064 | 41,130 | 43,892 | 49,408 | 50,713 | 52,187 | 54,188 | 51,127 | 0.4\% |
| Sailing | 3,390 | 3,786 | 4,226 | 4,342 | 3,869 | 3,725 | 3,958 | 3,915 | 3,924 | 1.8\% |
| Scuba Diving | 2,965 | 2,965 | 3,216 | 2,723 | 3,153 | 2,579 | 2,982 | 3,174 | 3,145 | 7.0\% |
| Skateboarding | 10,130 | 8,429 | 7,807 | 7,352 | 6,808 | 5,827 | 6,627 | 6,350 | 6,582 | 4.4\% |
| Skiing (Alpine/Downhill) | n/a | 10,362 | 10,346 | 10,919 | 11,504 | 10,201 | 8,243 | 8,044 | 8,649 | -4.7\% |
| Skiing (Cross-Country) | n/a | 3,530 | 3,848 | 4,157 | 4,530 | 3,641 | 3,307 | 3,377 | 3,820 | 2.0\% |
| Skiing (Freestyle) | $n / a$ | 2,817 | 2,711 | 2,950 | 3,647 | 4,318 | 5,357 | 4,007 | 4,564 | 4.3\% |
| Snorkeling | 8,395 | 9,294 | 10,296 | 9,358 | 9,305 | 9,318 | 8,011 | 8,700 | 8,752 | -1.6\% |
| Snowboarding | n/a | 6,841 | 7,159 | 7,421 | 8,196 | 7,579 | 7,351 | 6,418 | 6,785 | -3.3\% |


|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Snowshoeing | $n / a$ | 2,400 | 2,922 | 3,431 | 3,823 | 4,111 | 4,029 | 3,012 | 3,501 | $-3.7 \%$ |
| Stand Up Paddling | $n / a$ | $n / a$ | $n / a$ | $n / a$ | 1,050 | 1,242 | 1,542 | 1,993 | 2,751 | $30.5 \%$ |
| Surfing | 2,170 | 2,206 | 2,607 | 2,403 | 2,767 | 2,195 | 2,895 | 2,658 | 2,721 | $8.7 \%$ |
| Telemarking (Downhill) | $n / a$ | 1,173 | 1,435 | 1,482 | 1,821 | 2,099 | 2,766 | 1,732 | 2,188 | $6.9 \%$ |
| Trail Running | 4,558 | 4,216 | 4,857 | 4,833 | 5,136 | 5,610 | 6,003 | 6,792 | 7,531 | $10.3 \%$ |
| Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off- |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Road) | 281 | 483 | 602 | 666 | 929 | 709 | 1,442 | 1,390 | 1,411 | $33.8 \%$ |
| Triathlon (Traditional/Road) | 640 | 798 | 1,087 | 1,208 | 1,978 | 1,393 | 2,184 | 2,262 | 2,203 | $19.3 \%$ |
| Wakeboarding | 3,046 | 3,521 | 3,544 | 3,577 | 3,645 | 3,389 | 3,348 | 3,316 | 3,125 | $-2.6 \%$ |
| Wildlife Viewing More Than |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1/4 Mile From Home/Vehicle | 20,294 | 22,974 | 24,113 | 21,291 | 21,025 | 21,964 | 22,999 | 21,359 | 21,110 | $-1.2 \%$ |

## Method

During January and February of 2014 a total of 10,778 online interviews were carried out with a nationwide sample of individuals and households from the US Online Panel of over one million people operated by Synovate/IPSOS. A total of 5,067 individual and 5,711 household surveys were completed. The total panel is maintained to be representative of the US population for people ages six and older. Over sampling of ethnic groups took place to boost response from typically under responding groups.

The 2015 participation survey sample size of 10,778 completed interviews provides a high degree of statistical accuracy. All surveys are subject to some level of standard error - that is, the degree to which the results might differ from those obtained by a complete census of every person in the US. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.21 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

A weighting technique was used to balance the data to reflect the total US population ages six and above. The following variables were used: gender, age, income, household size, region, population density and panel join date. The total population figure used was 292,064,000 people ages six and older.

## About the Physical Activity Council (PAC)

The survey that forms the basis of the Topline Report is produced by the Physical Activity Council (PAC), which is a partnership of leading organizations in the US sports, fitness and leisure industries. While the overall aim of the survey is to establish levels of activity and identify key trends in sports, fitness and recreation participation, each partner produces detailed reports on their specific areas of interest. Partners include: the Outdoor Foundation (OF); National Golf Foundation (NGF); Snowsports Industries America (SIA); Tennis Industry Association (TIA); United States Tennis Association (USTA), International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA); and Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA).

## About The Outdoor Foundation

Founded in 2000, the Outdoor Foundation is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to inspiring and growing future generations of outdoor leaders and enthusiasts. Through youth engagement, community grantmaking and groundbreaking research, the Foundation works with young leaders and partners to mobilize a major cultural shift that leads all Americans to the great outdoors. Visit us at outdoorfoundation.org.
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