THE GOOD LIFE IN MINNESOTA

Minnesotans love outdoor recreation: 70% of Minnesotans participated in outdoor recreation last year, Minnesotans cumulatively ride 181 million miles by bike every year, and Minnesota State Parks receive over 10 million annual visitors.¹ Even our Internet activity reflects our love of the outdoors: Minnesota ranks 1st in online searches for “bike trail” and 3rd in online searches for “state park.”²

Minnesota’s parks and trails define our high quality of life, which is consistently ranked in the top 10 nationally. In the Twin Cities, residents say parks and trails are the best thing about the area, and real estate agents know parks and trails are key selling points.³ The importance of parks and trails isn’t just an urban phenomenon: USDA researchers found that rural counties with recreation-dependent economies enjoy higher population growth, more jobs, lower poverty, and better educational and health outcomes.⁴

Outdoor recreation supports and contributes to Minnesota’s local communities. Investing in parks and trails attracts employers and active workforces, ensuring our communities thrive economically and socially.

“Since [the trails opened in] 2011, job growth in the towns of Crosby and Ironton has been double that of the surrounding region, and in the past year Crosby has welcomed a new brewery, a bicycle cafe and a farm-to-table restaurant.”

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³ Minnesota DNR. “Number of visitors at state parks and recreation areas.” 2016.

* Graphics created by Freepik