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Outdoor Economy Contributed \$2.4B to 2019 NM GDP

Bureau of Economic Analysis data shows NM outdoor recreation economy growth outpaced national average

SANTA FE, N.M. – Today, the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released data on the size and scope of the outdoor recreation industry in the U.S. and in New Mexico.

In New Mexico, the updated data show that the outdoor economy contributed \$2.4 billion to the state's GDP in 2019 (2.2% of GDP). According to the report, 35,065 people were employed in this sector, with \$1.2 billion in total income.

At the national level, the data shows that the outdoor recreation economy accounted for 2.1 percent (\$459.8 billion) of U.S. GDP in 2019.

Here are a few highlights from the report:

- New Mexico's outdoor recreation economy is growing faster than the country's outdoor recreation economy at 5.9% since 2018 (compared to a 3.7% growth for the U.S.).
- Employment in this sector is also expanding much faster in New Mexico than in the country as a whole. Since 2018, the number of outdoor recreation jobs in New Mexico has grown by 5.3%, compared with an increase of 0.4% for the U.S.
- Since 2018, outdoor recreation income has grown 7.6% in New Mexico, compared with an increase of 3.9% for the U.S.

For the first time, the data highlights specific activities' contributions to the state GDP. In 2019, RVing, equestrian, and snowsports were the top three contributors to the New Mexican outdoor economy, followed closely by boating and fishing.

"We know the outdoor economy is a powerhouse in New Mexico, employing over 35,000 people annually," Outdoor Recreation Division Director Axie Navas said. "But there is much more work to be done. The COVID-19 health crisis has hurt many of our businesses in this space – a fact not captured in this new tranche of data. It's our job to aid in the recovery of the outdoor industry, so it continues to be a vibrant economic engine in the state."

"We aim to continue growing wages in outdoor recreation jobs and we want to see New Mexico at the top of the pack when it comes to the size and scope of its outdoor economy. We live in the most beautiful state in the country – the BEA numbers should reflect that,"

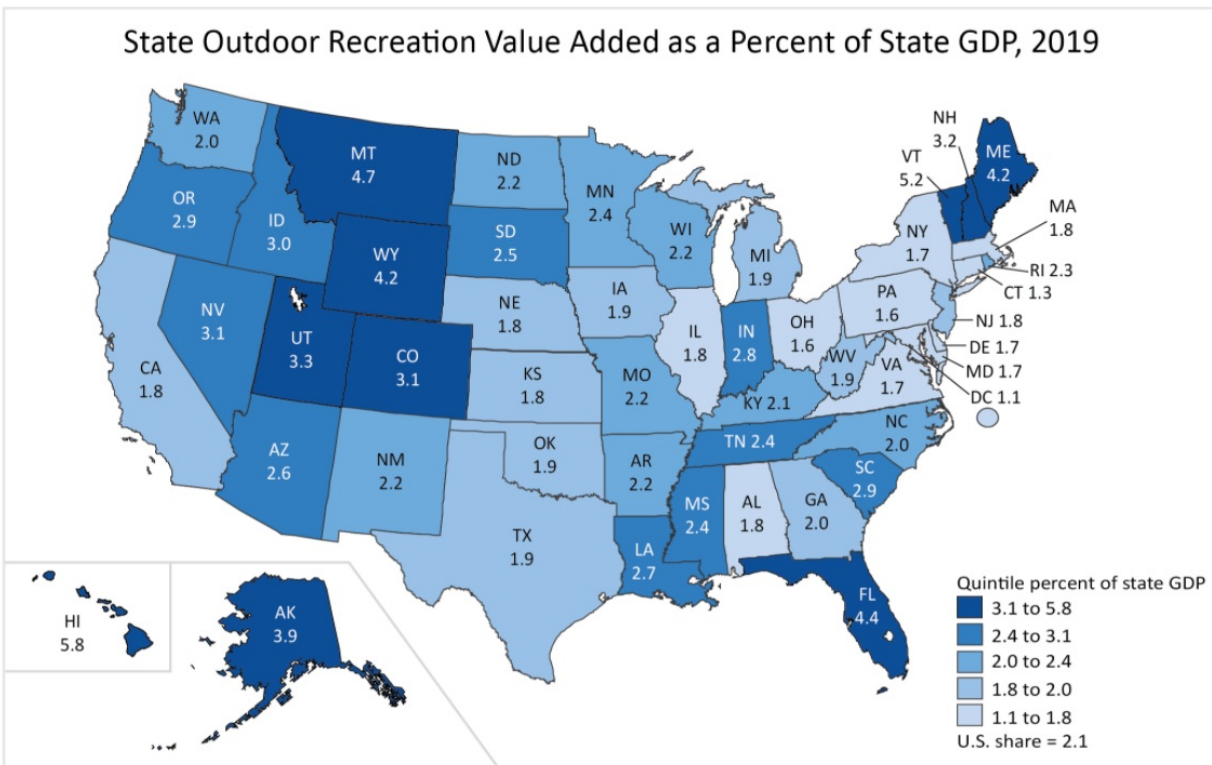
Navas said.

Earlier this year, [ORD issued a survey to 128 outdoor recreation businesses in New Mexico](#). Over 90% of respondents stated they had lost revenue and/or hadn't been able to cover basic expenses due to the pandemic-induced economic crisis. Almost 78% of respondents are small, local companies with fewer than 15 employees.

For more information on the BEA data, find the full tables here:

- BEA OREC: <https://www.bea.gov/news/2020/outdoor-recreation-satellite-account-us-and-states-2019>
- NM: <https://apps.bea.gov/data/special-topics/orsa/summary-sheets/ORSA%20-%20New%20Mexico.pdf>
- ORD Survey: <https://www.nmoutside.com/covid19-response>

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U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

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