



Outdoor Access for the Military Community

Summer 2024 Recommendations Report



Report prepared by:



Community and Economic
Development Initiative of Kentucky



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CLUB**

Acknowledgments

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Cover Photo detail: *On June 28, 2016, six veterans and two guides—one of whom is a military family member—set out to explore America's last truly wild frontier, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Over the course of two weeks, the group canoed the Canning River for 100+ river miles to the Beaufort Sea.*

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Preface

Sierra Club is the oldest and largest grassroots conservation organization in the country and has a rich history of supporting our nation's military and veteran communities. One notable example of this support is seen in the actions

of the club's first full-time executive director, David Brower (at right, photo credit: Colby Memorial Library), and other club leaders during World War II. Recognizing the need for an alpine fighting force, Brower and his colleagues utilized the mountaineering and skiing skills



they had honed through their involvement with the Sierra Club to establish and train the 10th Mountain Division. This unit played a crucial role in the war, particularly in the Italian Campaign, where they distinguished themselves in alpine combat. Brower himself fought alongside the 10th Mountain Division during the war, earning a Bronze Star for his actions. Following the war, he stayed in the Army Reserve, reaching the rank of Major. His leadership extended beyond the battlefield, as he spearheaded efforts to establish national parks and seashores, as well as partnering with the Wilderness Society to win passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act.



Members of the 10th Mountain Division train in Mount Rainier National Park at Paradise during WWII. Photo credit: National Park Service.

More recently, the Sierra Club launched the Military Outdoors program in 2006 with the aim of providing opportunities for veterans, service members, and their families to engage with the natural world. This program focuses on encouraging participants to enjoy the benefits of outdoor activities while fostering a deeper connection with the land they have served to protect. Through the Military Outdoors program, over 70,000 veterans and their families have been able to partake in outdoor adventures. The initiative works to break down barriers that may prevent military members and veterans from

accessing the outdoors by advocating for policies to mitigate those barriers at a national level and collaborating with Sierra Club chapters and veteran-serving organizations nationwide on a grassroots level. As of 2024, there are chapters and initiatives located in Alaska, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, and New York, supported by dedicated volunteers and staff. Military Outdoors' advocacy has included support for the Accelerating Veterans Recovery Outdoors Act, funding university research which has been cited by numerous institutions including the Department of Veteran Affairs, and supporting the incubation of the Outdoor RX Coalition, a collective of public & private organizations working together to improve outdoor access for more than a million New York-based service members, veterans, and their families.

The Sierra Club Military Outdoors (SCMO) is proud to present this report championing a range of recommendations aimed at improving access to outdoor recreation for veterans and the military community. These recommendations address crucial issues that have a direct impact on the quality of life, mental well-being, and public health of our population of over 16 million veterans and 2.86 million active-duty members. Time spent outdoors has many known positive outcomes, including a decrease in loneliness and increases in belonging and overall health and well-being (Duvall & Kaplan, 2014; Ewert, 2014; Forsyth et al., 2020; Scheinfeld et al., 2017; Vella et al., 2013). However, while there are many programs offered via state and federal government as well as non-profit organizations, less than 1% of veterans have access to these structured programs. Furthermore, 7.5% of veterans live with an income below the poverty line, and 30.6% live with a disability (US Census Bureau). Veterans span a range of ages, racial and ethnic groups, and socio-economic, education, geographic, and disability statuses. Additional breakdown of veterans by different demographic characteristics can be found in the Appendix.

Income and disability levels are just two of the issues faced by the veteran community when accessing structured outdoor programs and the outdoors in general. We ask that the veteran, military community, policymakers, legislators, and partners join us in this mission which will undoubtedly contribute to the betterment of the lives of veterans and the military community.

Outdoor Access for the Military Community

Summer 2024 Recommendations

Access

- Establish a new VA Grant Program connecting veterans to public lands by funding established and emerging outdoor access programs with a focus on reaching underserved veteran populations. Underserved populations include post 9-11, rural, women, and minority veterans.
- Expand and permanently fund the Military Families Outdoors Program (MFOP), a recently established funding opportunity available to governmental entities (state, local, and tribal), educational institutions, and nonprofits. MFOP is managed by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Department of Defense-Defense Health Agency (DOD-DHA) and the program aims to improve the public health of active-duty military community and their families offering a wide range of outdoor recreation activities on public land and waters, ultimately empowering families to enjoy nature independently.
- Improve equitable access at state and federally managed public lands, waters, and recreation facilities by creating a more inclusive system of adaptive equipment and assistive technologies.
- Improve and expand transit solutions to public lands and waters for the veteran and military community. This could include federal agency collaboration to conduct a transit access study aimed at closing public transportation gaps to public lands and waters from military bases, off-base military communities, and veteran centers.
- Create a national standard for the integration of green spaces, healing nature areas, and trails in VA community-based outpatient facilities, hospitals, centers, and clinics.
- Update the Military Housing Privatization Initiative Tenant Bill of Rights by adding an additional provision that guarantees the right for active-duty military members and their families who live in privatized military housing to live in communities that offer ample access to lush green spaces, well maintained parks, and scenic trails. This could involve developing a centralized online platform and/or an app where veterans can find comprehensive and up-to-date information on accessible outdoor facilities and trails.



Outdoor Access for the Military Community

Summer 2024 Recommendations, continued

Awareness

- Increase access to health benefits of national parks and public lands among military and veteran communities by enhancing marketing efforts, representation, and community engagement efforts. Develop a centralized online platform and/or an app where veterans can find comprehensive and up-to-date information on accessible outdoor facilities and trails.

Collaboration & Implementation

- Continue the important work of the VA Taskforce on Outdoor Recreation by improving long-term coordination between federal agencies and veteran serving organizations.
 - Establish an Office of Outdoor Recreation to facilitate cooperation among relevant organizations and committees.
 - Permanently authorize the Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation (FICOR) and include the Department of Defense and Department of Veteran Affairs as member agencies.

Skills Training & Education

- Improve and expand initiatives that support transitioning service members, veterans, and family members to pursue conservation and outdoor careers. This can involve the utilization and expansion of existing programs like DOD SkillBridge, the Transition Assistance Program (TAPS), and the Military Spouse Employment Partnership to provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to translate their military expertise and unique backgrounds into lucrative positions within the conservation, outdoor, and growing green infrastructure sectors.
- Organize virtual and in-person job fairs and workshops to highlight the various opportunities available with federal and state land management agencies, as well as with both for-profit and non-profit organizations. These events would serve as platforms to explore potential career paths, network with industry professionals, and gain valuable insights.





Introduction

In 2020, Congress passed the Accelerating Veterans Recovery Outdoors Act (AVRO), legislation which the Sierra Club championed for years. AVRO required the creation of the Task Force on Outdoor Recreation for Veterans to better understand how to utilize public lands for the rehabilitation and wellness of veterans. The Task Force is mandated to deliver a report to Congress by September 2024 identifying existing barriers that prevent veterans from more broadly utilizing outdoor recreation for medical treatment through a public comment period and leveraging research. In advance of that report, SCMO is releasing its own report for the task force's consideration. To inform the report, the team disseminated a nationwide online survey and embarked on a listening tour to gauge veterans' and the military community's participation, preferences and barriers in accessing outdoors activities.

The team also conducted an analysis of the public commentary from the VA's Notice of Request for Information Regarding Veterans Outdoor Recreation. Four main themes were identified from that analysis:

- 1. Access:** What prevents veterans from spending beneficial time outdoors includes financial costs to enter public outdoor spaces, limited transportation to safe green spaces, and poor physical accessibility of those spaces.
- 2. Awareness:** While providers, resources, and opportunities exist to help veterans spend

time outside recreationally, for healing, or professionally, there is an identifiable gap in outreach, preventing veterans from being informed of these resources and opportunities.

- 3. Collaboration & Implementation:** With shared goals and resources, there are opportunities to advocate for and encourage inter-agency collaboration on key initiatives while fostering a space for veteran-focused organizations from a range of intersecting disciplines.
- 4. Skills Training & Education:** Supporting pathways to employment in the outdoor industry will create broader opportunities for access, awareness, and collaboration through facilitating conversations and developing and uplifting resources and opportunities for a career transition.

Sierra Club contracted with the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) at the University of Kentucky for the survey and listening sessions data analysis. CEDIK is a community engagement and economic research unit with extensive experience in quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis, and reporting for a variety of regional, state, and national audiences.

The next sections of the report include the data collection methodology, provide a detailed analysis of the survey and listening sessions data and concludes with policy recommendations and summary of findings.

Methodology

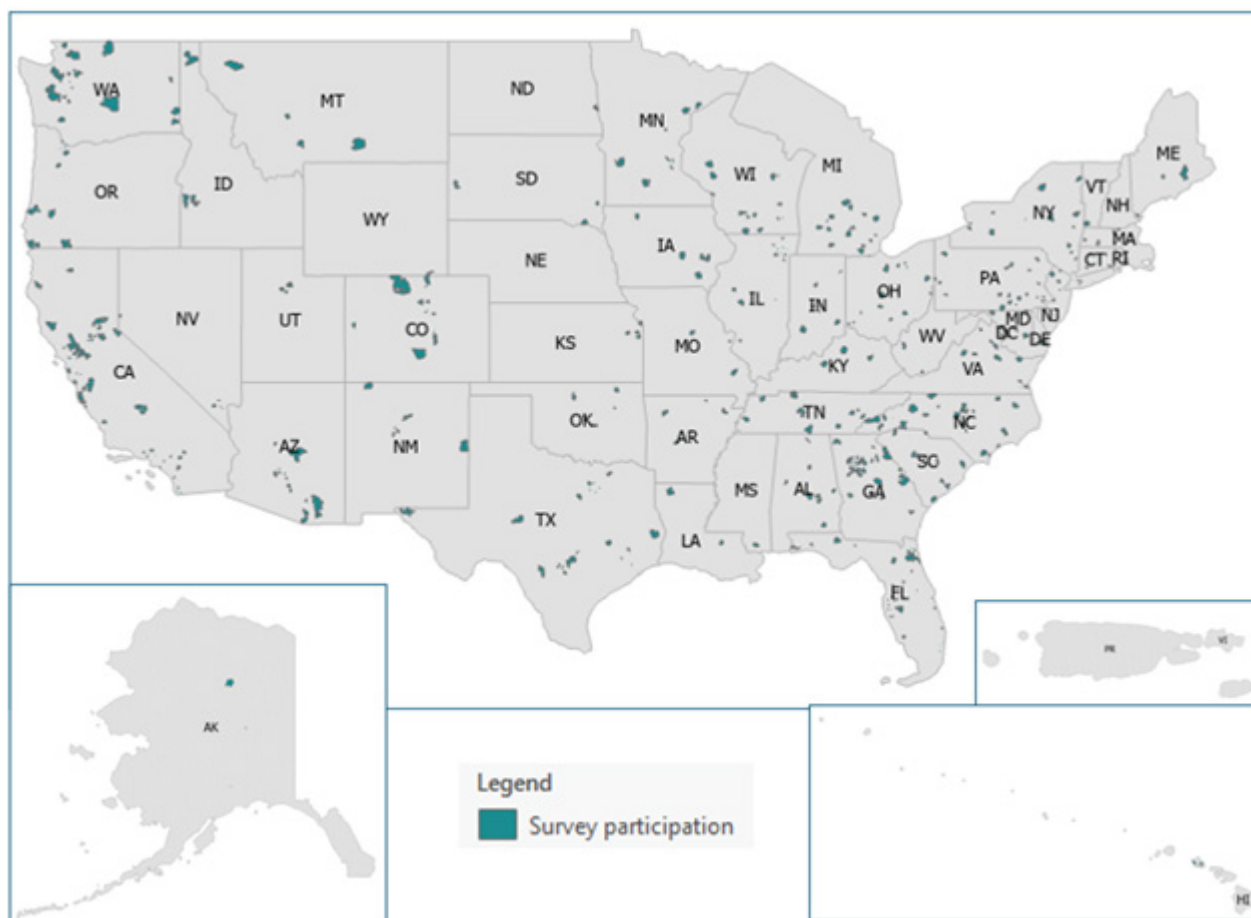
To formulate recommendations, a wide range of data sources and analytical methods were utilized. The approach taken involved a comprehensive evaluation of both quantitative and qualitative factors with our research partner University of Kentucky's Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK). CEDIK analyzed the survey instrument, conducted a thematic analysis of the listening session tour, team discussions, in addition to reviewing relevant research papers. The quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed through a combination of different software and methodology allowing for a holistic understanding of veterans' and military community's participation and barriers for outdoor activities and for the formulation of comprehensive and informed recommendations.

Survey Instrument

The online survey instrument, consisting of 21 questions, along with demographic questions was developed by the SCMO team. The survey

was launched in November 2023 and was initially delivered to the SCMO listserv. To reach a wider audience, the survey was also promoted through Facebook ads on both the Sierra Club Facebook and Instagram accounts. The Facebook ad campaign ran from March 1 to March 31, with four different targeting ad sets: active/veteran service members; women service members; ages 18 to 44 service members; and Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) service members. As targeting by race is not possible, the BIPOC ads were strategically placed in selected cities in California, Georgia, Oklahoma, and Texas. These states were chosen due to their high population of the target communities, including Asian/American, African/American, Indigenous, and non-white Hispanic/Latino individuals, respectively. Ultimately 716 surveys were collected from across the U.S. Respondents from 48 states participated in the online survey. The distributions of respondents across U.S. is depicted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Distribution of respondents by zip code*



* Almost all state were represented; some zip codes had more than one respondent. Source: ESRI/Business Analyst 2023.

Action Planning

Participants worked collaboratively to complete an action planning table. There was no action planning table per SCMO themes. Taking the priorities voted in the previous activity, the first task for each group was to decide on 3-5 “action asks.” These would be priorities that the groups would like to see realized from the taskforce recommendations. The priorities from the groups were then compiled into actionable items for agencies related to the taskforce to act on. This method allows for distilling priorities into a unified and informed voice from the listening sessions. The aim is that someone who did not participate in the workshop can clearly understand what the action plan is proposing.

The listening sessions were adapted to the participating group. For example, Los Angeles and Jacksonville participants opted to work collaboratively, as one large group, throughout the session, rather than smaller groups first. As such, the results were tallied slightly differently than for the Augusta session. This could be a limitation in the data collection. However, working with one group from the beginning allowed us to narrow down priorities and identify the top ones. Those priorities are listed in the following section.

VETERAN PROFILE

Amber Kulesza

Disabled Air Force Veteran, Chief Adventure Officer (CAO) of AmbersAdventures, LLC

What impact has being able to spend time outside had on you?

The biggest impact spending time outdoors has had on me, is that it gives me peace. It makes me feel like I’m whole and complete, and not broken. It aids my mental health when I can go walk on the beach, listen to the waves, and get the salt therapy that makes me happy, lowers my anxiety, and just makes me feel content. **When I can go fishing, or simply ride my bike, this reminds me of physically how far I’ve come, while making me feel strong and capable to tackle anything else that comes my way.** I’m reminded that I’m the athlete I always was, I can do it now in ways that keep me healthy, and by just getting outside to feel the sun on my face, makes anything before me feel attainable.



What is the biggest change you would hope to see for getting more veterans outdoors?

The biggest thing I would like to see is the EASE of ACCESSIBILITY. I would like to see beaches, parks, recreation centers, bike pathways, etc. create an easier way for people to find what and where things are accessible. If there is equipment like beach chairs with bubble wheels, or wheelchairs with tracks, please HIGHLIGHT that on your website, in addition to showing pictures and dimensions for the equipment. Create an easy online reservation system for the public to know the cost, how much equipment is available for usage, learning links/videos on how to operate the equipment before a reservation is made, and which pathways/areas of the park or beach can be accessed with this equipment. Having someone there at the reservation time to help answer questions so that people will feel comfortable using the equipment.

Military Community Input

Survey Results

From November 2023 to March 2024, Sierra Club disseminated an online survey to better understand veterans' and military community's preferences for outdoor activities, as well as some of the barriers encountered. The goal was to identify priorities that would allow for policy recommendations. The survey had questions on respondents' frequency of visiting parks, trails and waterways for outdoor activities, the type of activities they participate in, preference for activities they would like to try individually or as part of a group, as well as on safety concerns and barriers to participation. In total, 716 surveys were completed. A summary of the results can be found in this section of the report.

Overview of Survey Respondents

The distribution of the survey and the collected responses reflect for the most part the diversity of age, gender, ethnicity, military or veteran status, and branch of service. Tables 1 through 7 reflect the distribution of respondents by different demographics. As the data illustrates there was a good representation of working age (25-64 years old) and 65 and older military/veteran participants. Most survey participants identified as either male or female, were Caucasian, were retired or employed full-time, had some college degree or associate degree or higher, were veterans and from Army, Navy or Air Force. Furthermore, 57% of veteran participants reported having a service-connected disability. Additional respondent characteristics by military/veteran status are included in the Appendix.

Table 1. Distribution of survey respondents by age

| Age group | Number of respondents | Percent of total |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 18-24 | 4 | 1% |
| 25-34 | 21 | 3% |
| 35-44 | 100 | 14% |
| 45-54 | 148 | 21% |
| 55-64 | 177 | 25% |
| 65-74 | 138 | 19% |
| 75-84 | 108 | 15% |
| 85+ | 15 | 2% |
| Total | 711 | 100% |

Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 2. Distribution of survey respondents by ethnicity

| Ethnicity | Number of respondents | Percent of total |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Caucasian | 516 | 79% |
| Black or African American | 55 | 8% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 39 | 6% |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 21 | 3% |
| All other identities | 19 | 3% |
| Total | 650 | 100% |

Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 3. Distribution of survey respondents by gender

| Gender | Number of respondents | Percent of total |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Male | 387 | 56% |
| Female | 295 | 42% |
| All other identities | 13 | 2% |
| Total | 695 | 100% |

Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 4. Distribution of survey respondents by employment

| Employment | Number of respondents | Percent of total |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Disabled and unable to work | 66 | 10% |
| Employed Full-time | 198 | 29% |
| Employed Part-time | 36 | 5% |
| Retired | 288 | 42% |
| Self-employed | 41 | 6% |
| Student | 18 | 3% |
| Unemployed | 43 | 6% |
| Total | 690 | 100% |

Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 5. Distribution of survey respondents by education level

| Education | Number of respondents | Percent of total |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Bachelor's degree | 189 | 28% |
| Graduate or professional degree | 286 | 43% |
| High school diploma or equivalent | 27 | 4% |
| Less than high school | 3 | 0% |
| Some college or Associate degree | 179 | 27% |
| Total | 670 | 100% |

Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 6. Distribution of survey respondents by income

| Household Income | Number of respondents | Percent of total |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Less than \$25K | 41 | 6% |
| \$25K - \$50K | 130 | 19% |
| \$50K - \$75K | 115 | 16% |
| \$75K - \$100K | 105 | 15% |
| \$100K - \$150K | 115 | 16% |
| \$150K or more | 98 | 14% |
| Prefer not to answer | 98 | 14% |
| Total | 702 | 100% |

Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 7. Distribution of survey respondents by military/veteran status

| Military/veteran status | Number of respondents | Percent of total |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Active Duty | 37 | 6% |
| Military Family | 33 | 5% |
| National Guard | 17 | 3% |
| Reserve | 16 | 2% |
| Veteran | 567 | 85% |
| Total | 670 | 100% |

Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 8. Distribution of survey respondents by branch of service*

| Branch of Service | Number of responses | Percent of total |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Air Force | 138 | 18% |
| Army | 333 | 44% |
| Coast Guard | 22 | 3% |
| Marine Corps | 76 | 10% |
| Navy | 171 | 23% |
| NOAA Corps | 4 | 1% |
| Space Force | 5 | 1% |
| Total | 749 | 100% |

**Distribution of military and veteran status by branch of service can be found in the Appendix. Totals may not add up due to rounding.*

Preference for outdoor activities

When asked about the frequency of visiting parks, trails, and waterways for outdoor activities, most respondents participate either multiple times per week or a few times per month (Table 9). The reasons are mainly to enjoy the natural scenery, hiking, for relations and stress relief, for physical exercise and connecting with wildlife (Table 10). Though many respondents participate frequently in

outdoor activities, there were still some activities that respondents have not tried (Table 11). When asked about their interest in outdoor activities, most respondents have indicated that they are interested or very interested in outdoor group activities (Table 12). Overall, 60% of the respondents have already participated in a group activity.

Table 9. Frequency of outdoor activities

| Military/veteran status | A few times a month | Multiple times a week | Never | Once a week | Rarely |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Active Duty | 10 | 14 | 1 | 8 | 4 |
| Military Family | 11 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| National Guard | 8 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| Reserve | 8 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Veteran | 189 | 171 | 9 | 78 | 118 |
| Total | 226 | 202 | 11 | 93 | 136 |

Table 10. Top 5 reasons for outdoor activities

| Outdoor activity | Number of responses |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Enjoying natural scenery | 606 |
| Hiking and walking trails | 600 |
| Relaxation and stress relief | 593 |
| Physical exercise and fitness | 564 |
| Connecting with wildlife | 445 |

Chart 1. Most respondents are interested in group outdoor activities. (n = 587)

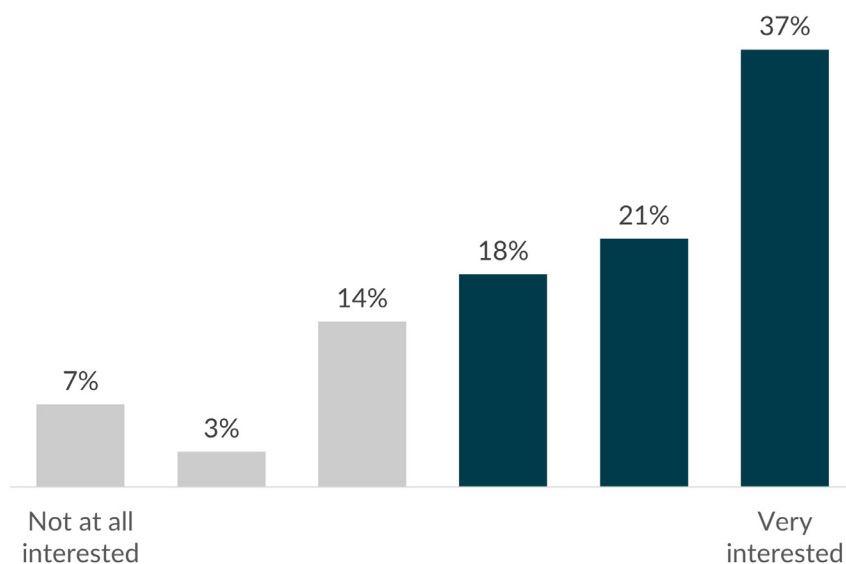


Table 11. Top outdoor activities NOT tried

| Outdoor activity | Number of responses |
|---|---------------------|
| Kayaking | 17 |
| Rafting/white water rafting | 10 |
| Sailing, scuba diving | 6 (each) |
| Fishing, fly fishing, rock climbing, zip lining | 5 (each) |
| Backpacking, biking, hunting, | 4 (each) |

VETERAN PROFILES

Antoinette Lee, MBA

Kokatat and Badfish SUP Brand Ambassador

What impact has being able to spend time outside had on you?

When my Veterans Administration physical therapist recommended kayaking as recreational therapy, I used a walker, a service dog, and a full-time caregiver. Unfortunately, disabilities resulting from a traumatic brain injury and spinal cord injury severely debilitated me after eleven years of military service.



What I immediately loved about sitting in a little plastic boat running rapids on a wild and scenic river was the feeling of freedom and normalcy. The anxiety from the disease afflicting me melted away. In my daily life, I feared the things I imagined might happen when I left home. On the river, real consequences like boulders, sticky holes, and rapids might flip my boat upside down. After leaving the river, I felt confident in my ability to handle daily life, and eventually, the anxiety became manageable. Today, I'm in the process of becoming an American Canoe Association (ACA) certified paddleboard instructor so that I can help other veterans and their families access paddlesports for recreational therapy and exercise.



Ana Collins
Army Veteran

What is the biggest change you would hope to see for getting more veterans outdoors?

I'd like to see more veterans feel safe enough to utilize public lands/parks, etc. particularly in the form of a "buddy" outreach (many veterans isolate and don't feel safe going on outdoor adventures solo).

Experience or interest in working in an outdoor industry

Respondents were also asked if they are currently working or are interested in working in an outdoor industry. Sixty-five (65) respondents have indicated that they do work in an outdoor industry. The distribution of employment by industry is illustrated

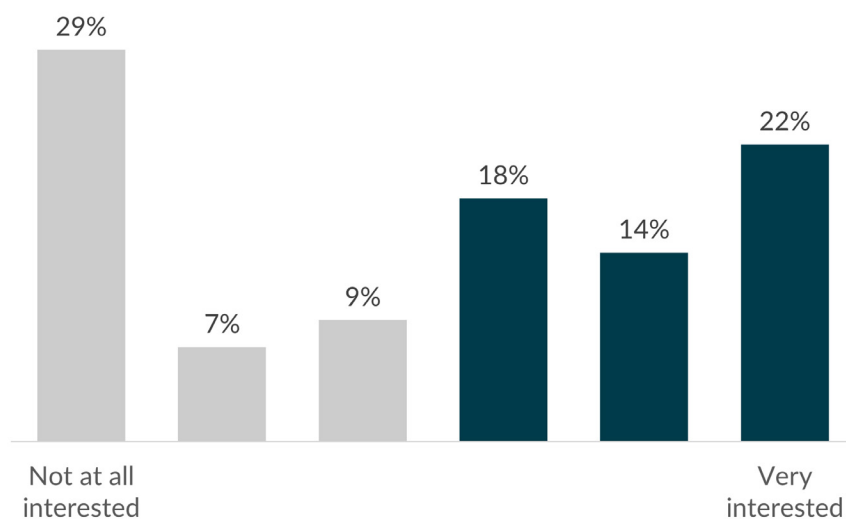
in Table 12 below. Of those that do not work in the outdoor industry, approximately 200 respondents have indicated that they are interested or very interested in an outdoor career (Chart 2 below).

Table 12. Respondents working in an outdoor industry

| Industry | Number of responses | Percent of total |
|---|---------------------|------------------|
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 12 | 18% |
| Construction | 1 | 2% |
| Environmental advocacy | 10 | 15% |
| Landscaping | 1 | 2% |
| Leisure, hospitality, or outdoor recreation | 23 | 35% |
| Mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction | 1 | 2% |
| Transportation and warehousing | 2 | 3% |
| No industry reported | 15 | 23% |
| Total | 65 | 100% |

Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Chart 2. More than half of all respondents have at least some interest in an outdoor career. (n = 566)



Physical and other limitations

The last section of the survey asked respondents about their physical limitations when participating in outdoor activities, their safety concerns and potential measures to increase access to outdoor activities.

The responses to those questions are summarized in Tables 13 through 15 and Chart 3. Overall, 32% of respondents have a physical limitation that makes it difficult to participate in outdoor activities.

Table 13. Top 5 physical limitations*

| Physical limitation | Number of responses |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Knee or leg injury/difficulty walking | 46 |
| Chronic pain/Arthritis/MS | 42 |
| Back pain//surgery | 20 |
| Walker/cane/wheelchair | 10 |
| Feeling unsafe | 5 |

*Other limitations mentioned: age, allergies, blindness, PTSD

Table 14. Experience with discrimination and feeling unwelcome while accessing the outdoors*

| Answer | Number of respondents | Percent of total |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Yes | 89 | 12% |
| No | 605 | 84% |
| Prefer not to answer | 22 | 3% |
| Total | 716 | 100% |

*A breakdown of responses by selected respondent demographics is included in the Appendix. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Chart 3. Most respondents feel safe when doing outdoor activities.
(n = 641)

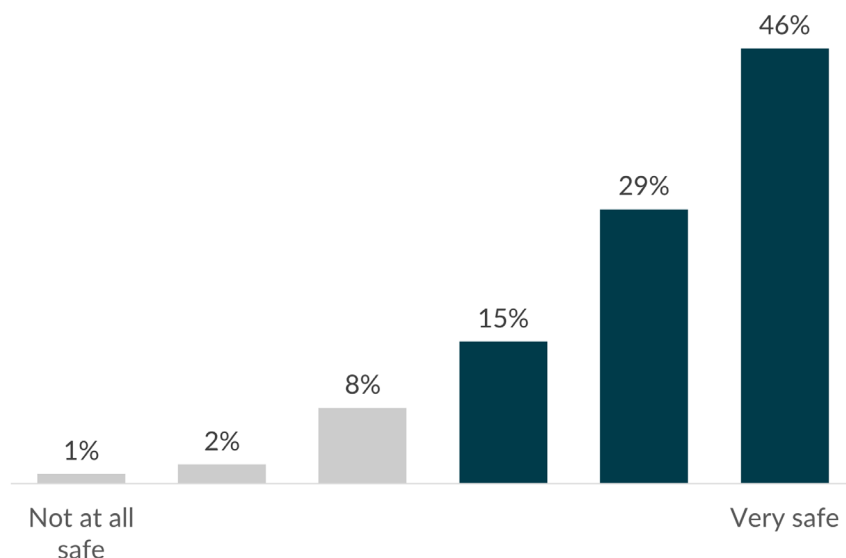


Table 15. Top 5 recommendations to make outdoor activities more accessible*

| Recommendation | Number of responses |
|--|---------------------|
| More advertising/better communication | 73 |
| Reduce prices/more free or discounted options | 66 |
| Increase/improve access for all levels of disability | 54 |
| More affordable and easy group activities (e.g., 5K walk, hiking, family events, etc.) | 40 |
| Better public or alternative transportation | 22 |

*Other recommendations: activities focusing on specific groups (veterans, women), more rest areas and options for breaks, more funding, and better signage.

VETERAN PROFILE

Tammy Barlet
Coast Guard Veteran

What is the biggest change you would hope to see for getting more veterans outdoors?

The biggest change I hope to see in getting more veterans outdoors is recognizing and promoting the diverse ways nature can be experienced, from nature photography to rock climbing. **By highlighting that there is something for everyone, we can encourage more veterans to find their own unique connection with the outdoors.** Additionally, including our families in these activities is vital, as they are our first line of support.



Team River Runner (TRR) is dedicated to getting veterans in boats, regardless of disability or ability. Their mission is to create an environment of healthy adventure, recreation, and camaraderie for healing active duty and veteran service members through adaptive kayaking. Crucially, this also includes their families. This meant I could bring my sister along as I met new people and tried an activity I had never done before on this scale. **TRR brings together what I missed the most since my medical discharge from the Coast Guard: being on the water and being around my comrades, whom I often call my “water family.”** TRR has not only relieved some of the symptoms of my depression and physical pain but also increased my overall wellbeing. Since then, I participated in many TRR biathlons and discovered that I still have a competitive spirit. This drive led me to compete in the 2017 and 2018 Valor Games South East, coming home with multiple medals in kayak, rowing, and power lifting. Even though I don’t have the chance to compete as much as I used to, I am outdoors at least once a week regardless of the season; hiking, sailing, kayaking, geocaching, orienteering, swimming, or playing pickleball.

By creating opportunities for veterans and their families to enjoy outdoor activities together, we can strengthen these support systems, foster a deeper appreciation for nature’s healing and unifying power, make lifelong memories, and spark the next generation to serve their communities and beyond.

Listening Sessions Results

Listening sessions provide an opportunity to have a facilitated discussion about the needs and issues that affect military and veterans' participation in outdoor activities. The Sierra Club team has organized 3 in-person and 1 online listening session. The virtual listening session focused on women veterans. The distribution of participants by branch of service

and military affiliation are provided in Tables 16 and 17. The listening sessions allowed for the identification of action tasks or priorities for each theme. The results are depicted in Table 18. Overall, the participants at the Los Angeles location were mainly male. For the other locations and the virtual session, a total of 48 women and 14 men participated.

Table 16. Distribution of participants by branch of service

| Women Virtual Session | Augusta | Los Angeles | Jacksonville |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Army (18) | Army (7) | Army (4) | Army (5) |
| Navy (6) | Air Force (1) | Marine Corps (3) | Navy (3) |
| Air Force (5) | No affiliation mentioned (1) | No affiliation mentioned (2) | Air Force (3) |
| No affiliation mentioned (2) | | Navy (1) | No affiliation mentioned (2) |
| Coast Guard (1) | | Air Force (1) | |



VETERAN PROFILE

Dr. Orlando Goodwin

*Assistant Principal, Rodgers Middle Magnet School, Riverview, Florida (Troops to Teachers Alumni)
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army, (Retired)*

What impact has being able to spend time outside had on you?

A sense of freedom and excitement always seeing something new has had a good impact. It is also a stress relief where everything else is placed aside with the focus on my surroundings.

What is the biggest change you would hope to see for getting more veterans outdoors?

The change would be to touch base with them and their families earlier and often. Make them aware and take them out as an “icebreaker” to introduce them to the outdoors from a non-military (in the field) perspective to the recreational and landmarks available to them in their home areas and around the country. Link them with their interests and their friends to help sustain their participation.

Table 17. Distribution of participants by military affiliation

| Women Virtual Session | Augusta | Los Angeles | Jacksonville |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Veteran (21) | Veteran (5) | Veteran (8) | Veteran (10) |
| Retired (11) | Veteran family (2) | Retired (1) | Retired (3) |
| Veteran family (2) | Retired (1) | | |
| Active duty (1) | No affiliation mentioned (1) | | |
| Active-duty family (1) | | | |
| Reservist (1) | | | |
| National Guard (1) | | | |
| Blue Star family (1) | | | |
| Gold Star family (1) | | | |

Table 18. Listening sessions recommendations

| Access | Awareness | Employment |
|---|---|--|
| Affordability of outdoor recreation opportunities | One VA Department for outdoors activities | More outdoor jobs for veterans |
| Transportation | Distinct website, branding and communication hub | Resume assistance |
| Availability of physical accommodations | Clear and clean communication | Training/certifications for outdoor jobs |
| Outdoor safety (buddy system, training, etc.) | Awareness of the VA patient advocates that are easy to find | |





Conclusion and Recommendations

Numerous studies have highlighted the physical health benefits of outdoor activities for veterans and the military community. Caddick and Smith (2014) reviewed various interventions and found that physical activities such as hiking, kayaking, and cycling significantly improve cardiovascular health, muscle strength, and overall fitness levels among veterans. Outdoor activities have been shown to provide substantial mental health benefits, particularly in reducing symptoms of PTSD, anxiety, and depression. Conneeley (2003) noted that nature-based activities, including hiking and camping, promote relaxation and stress relief, contributing to improved mental health outcomes. The concept of “nature therapy” or “ecotherapy” is gaining traction as an effective supplementary treatment for mental health conditions among veterans (Jordan & Hinds, 2017). In addition, engagement in outdoor activities fosters social connections and helps build a sense of community among veterans. A study by Vella et al. (2013) found that group-based outdoor activities enhance social support networks, reduce feelings of isolation, and improve overall well-being. These activities often serve as a platform for veterans to share experiences and support each other, strengthening community ties. The survey and listening sessions results included in the previous section support these findings. Furthermore, policies supporting outdoor activities for veterans have been recommended by various

researchers and practitioners. For instance, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has integrated outdoor recreation into its therapeutic programs, recognizing its value in holistic health care (Goldberg et al., 2010). The VA's Adaptive Sports Program is a notable example, providing grants to organizations that facilitate outdoor activities for disabled veterans.

However, despite the documented benefits, there are challenges and barriers to the effective implementation of outdoor programs for veterans. These include funding constraints, accessibility issues, and the need for specialized training for program leaders. Van Slyke et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of overcoming these barriers through increased funding, public-private partnerships, and enhanced training for facilitators to ensure the safety and effectiveness of these programs. Additionally, exploring the effectiveness of different types of outdoor activities and how they benefit veterans and the military community can provide deeper insights for policymakers and program designers. Tailoring programs to address the specific needs and preferences of veterans can yield the most significant benefits.

As previous research denotes, military and veterans' outdoor activities can play a significant role in improving physical health, mental well-being, and social connections. Recommendations to support and enhance these activities include:



Access

General recommendations:

Increase funding and resources: We recommend allocating specific funding for outdoor activity programs tailored to military community and veterans, providing grants, and partnering with private organizations to sponsor outdoor events and programs.

Increase access and inclusivity: We recommend developing and maintaining outdoor recreational facilities, ensuring they are accessible to individuals with disabilities and offer a variety of activities catering to different interests and physical capabilities, such as hiking, fishing, camping, adaptive sports, and family-friendly events.

Our recommended actions:

Establish a new VA Grant Program connecting veterans to public lands by funding established and emerging outdoor access programs

- We recommend the Department of Veteran Affairs expand its recreation and art grant program to include a funding opportunity for veterans serving organizations (VSOs), nonprofits, State Veterans or Military Affairs Offices, and State Offices of Outdoor Recreation to fund veteran outdoor access programs with a focus on reaching underserved veteran populations. Underserved populations include post 9-11, rural, women, and minority veterans. We have

seen existing needs for educational programs, outdoor recreation skills training gear libraries, and transportation costs.

Expand and permanently fund the Military Families Outdoors Program (MFOP)

- We recommend the expansion and permanent funding of MFOP, a recently established funding opportunity managed by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Department of Defense-Defense Health Agency (DOD-DHA). MFOP provides funding ranging from \$100,000 to \$5 million to state, local, and tribal governments, educational institutions, and nonprofits to improve the health and well-being of the over 4 million active-duty military community and their families. Overall goals include: addressing public health concerns; offering fun, positive, and sustainable programming on public land and waters; and empowering families to enjoy nature independently. Ultimately, this will lead to better health outcomes for active-duty service members and their families.

Improve equitable access at state and federally managed public lands, waters, and recreation facilities by creating a more inclusive system of adaptive equipment and assistive technologies

- We recommend funding allocations to federal land management agencies to provide adaptive recreation equipment (all-terrain wheelchairs,

Mobi-mats, ramps, ADA kayak launch aids, etc.), and improve signage that outlines trail grades and accessibility.

- Additionally, we recommend conducting an inventory of existing adaptive recreation amenities, trails, and land management agency partnerships with VSOs that work to improve access for the military and veteran community.

Improve and expand transit solutions to public lands and waters for the veteran and military community

- We recommend the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, Department of Transportation, the National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Indian Affairs, & Morale, Welfare, Recreation (MWR) collaborate to conduct a transit access study aimed at closing public transportation gaps to public lands and waters from military bases, off-base military communities, and veteran centers. Additionally we recommend leveraging the VA's existing transit service programs and forming partnerships with ride-sharing services to offer discounted or complimentary rides.

Create a national standard for the integration of green spaces, healing nature areas, and trails in VA community-based outpatient facilities, hospitals, centers, and clinics

- We recommend collaboration between landscape architects, healthcare providers, and veterans to create outdoor spaces that are aesthetically pleasing, designed for sustainability, and conducive to healing and relaxation. Developing standards around the integration of elements such as green roofs, vertical gardens, permeable pavements, and native plants not only helps to reduce the ambient temperature but also improves air quality, provides shade, lowers utility costs, and will have a positive impact on patient and staff well-being. Existing VA facilities, such as the Portland Veteran Affairs Hospital can be inventoried as examples for such features and the successful integration needed to develop those standards.

Update the Military Housing Privatization Initiative Tenant Bill of Rights

- We recommend an additional provision that guarantees the right for active-duty military

members and their families who live in privatized military housing to live in communities that offer ample access to lush green spaces, well-maintained parks, and scenic trails. Additionally, the VA should ensure that these neighborhoods are equipped with complete streets that prioritize the safety and convenience of all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. This would support the mental and physical health, and overall well-being of the military community living in these spaces and offer an additional benefit for recruiting incoming service members.

Formally recognize nature-based intervention support across the VA healthcare system

- We recommend for the VA to integrate **nature-based therapy** into its Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) housing units. This would allow veterans to benefit from a holistic approach to managing their symptoms and improving their overall mental health in residential programs. Outdoor programs can yield numerous benefits in PTSD treatment, such as reducing symptoms of PTSD, anxiety, and depression by providing a calming and grounding natural environment that promotes relaxation and reduces stress. Socially, outdoor activities foster connections and community, reducing isolation and building robust support networks. Higher engagement levels in enjoyable outdoor activities can lead to better treatment compliance and outcomes.
- We recommend the VA **increase partnership opportunities** with local providers to expand the availability and application of outdoor adventure and wilderness therapy. This collaboration can ensure that veterans will be able to access various nature-based therapeutic options, even in areas currently without providers.
- We also recommend the VA's Whole Health program actively engage in partnerships with local nature therapy practitioners, organizations, and academic institutions. Through these collaborations, a standardized framework can be developed, legitimizing it as a form of treatment, providing more options for veterans, and enabling VA health professionals to prescribe these interventions similarly to medication. A comprehensive marketing and communication campaign would raise awareness among veterans and healthcare providers about the benefits and availability of these nature-based therapies and partners.



Awareness

General recommendations:

Increase promotion, awareness and communication about the outdoor activities and events: We recommend running campaigns to raise awareness about available outdoor programs, focusing on the benefits for physical and mental health, and collaborating with veteran organizations to promote these activities and reach a wider audience.

Integrate programs that focus on mental health support into outdoor activities: We recommend including outdoor activities as part of therapeutic programs for PTSD and other mental health issues and providing training for program leaders on how to recognize and support participants dealing with mental health challenges.

Invest in research and evaluation: We recommend conducting research to evaluate the impact of outdoor activities on the physical and mental health of the military community and veterans and implementing regular feedback systems to gather participant input and continuously improve programs.

Our recommended actions:

Increase access to health benefits of national parks and public lands among military and veteran communities by enhancing marketing efforts, representation, and community engagement efforts

- Enhance marketing efforts, by increasing representation and community engagement, especially to underserved groups. This can be achieved by evaluating marketing and outreach campaigns by organizations like Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) to identify gaps and best practices.
- We recommend ensuring that existing information about accessibility is readily available and easily searchable by the veteran and military community. This could involve developing a centralized online platform and/or an app where veterans can find comprehensive and up-to-date information on accessible outdoor facilities and trails, thus supporting their engagement and participation in outdoor activities.



Collaboration and Implementation

General recommendations:

Focus on community building opportunities: We recommend encouraging veterans and military community members to lead and organize outdoor activities, fostering a sense of purpose and community leadership, and create programs that include family members to strengthen familial connections and support systems.

We recommend leveraging public-private partnerships to enhance and grow outdoor access programs for the veteran and military communities, ensuring sustainable support for these programs. Additionally, enabling the reciprocal recognition of the America the Beautiful Park pass to eliminate fees for veterans and active duty members at state recreational areas.

Our recommended actions:

Continue the important work of the VA Taskforce on Outdoor Recreation by improving long-term coordination between federal agencies and veteran serving organizations

- We recommend establishing an Office of Outdoor Recreation to facilitate cooperation among relevant organizations and committees. This office would coordinate providing technical assistance, funding, and resource support to national and community partners focused on providing outdoor access for veterans and military communities. Included in this office should be a comprehensive information hub for veterans in search of assistance accessing the outdoors via park passes, accessible recreational spaces, outdoor programs for veterans, and career prospects in outdoor and conservation fields. Resource distribution could follow a community-focused model similar to that found within VA Vet Centers.
- We recommend permanently authorizing the Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation (FICOR) and including the Department of Defense and Department of Veteran Affairs as member agencies. Both entities manage hundreds of recreation sites (campgrounds, lakes, beaches, trail systems, natural areas and conservation land) across the country.



Skills Training and Education

General recommendations:

Increase employment and volunteering opportunities for veterans and the military community. We also recommend organizing workshops and training sessions on outdoor recreation skills such as trip planning, navigation, survival skills, and first aid, and educating participants on the importance of preserving natural spaces.

Our recommended actions:

Improve and expand initiatives that support transitioning service members, veterans, and family members to pursue conservation and outdoor careers

- Improve and expand initiatives that support transitioning service members, veterans, and family members to pursue conservation and outdoor careers. This can involve the utilization and expansion of existing programs like DOD SkillBridge, the Transition Assistance Program

(TAPS), and the Military Spouse Employment Partnership to provide them with the necessary skills and knowledge to translate their military expertise and unique backgrounds into lucrative positions within the conservation, outdoor, and growing green infrastructure sectors.

- Organize virtual and in-person job fairs and workshops to highlight the various opportunities available with federal and state land management agencies, as well as with both for-profit and non-profit organizations. These events would serve as platforms to explore potential career paths, network with industry professionals, and gain valuable insights.
- We recommend continuous monitoring and evaluation of these initiatives. This will ensure they meet the needs of transitioning service members, providing valuable career opportunities and benefiting both veterans and the broader community.

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Appendix

Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Veteran Population

| | |
|---|------------|
| Civilian population 18 years and over | 16,200,322 |
| SEX | |
| Male | 14,529,085 |
| Female | 1,671,237 |
| AGE | |
| 18 to 34 years | 1,368,986 |
| 35 to 54 years | 3,859,814 |
| 55 to 64 years | 2,988,539 |
| 65 to 74 years | 3,689,864 |
| 75 years and over | 4,293,119 |
| RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN | |
| White alone | 12,025,853 |
| Black or African American alone | 2,014,035 |
| American Indian and Alaska Native alone | 122,579 |
| Asian alone | 333,249 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone | 35,601 |
| Some other race alone | 450,865 |
| Two or more races | 1,218,140 |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 1,400,832 |
| White alone, not Hispanic or Latino | 11,715,068 |
| MEDIAN INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (in 2022 inflation-adjusted dollars) | |
| Civilian population 18 years and over with income | \$50,476 |
| Male | \$51,091 |
| Female | \$44,237 |
| EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT | |
| Civilian population 25 years and over | 15,987,493 |
| Less than high school graduate | 722,567 |
| High school graduate (includes equivalency) | 4,295,736 |
| Some college or associate degree | 5,913,431 |
| Bachelor's degree or higher | 5,055,759 |
| EMPLOYMENT STATUS | |
| Civilian population 18 to 64 years | 8,217,339 |
| Labor force participation rate | 77% |
| Civilian labor force 18 to 64 years | 6,338,734 |
| Unemployment rate | 3% |
| DISABILITY STATUS | |
| Civilian population 18 years and over for whom poverty status is determined | 15,927,261 |
| With any disability | 4,876,093 |
| Without a disability | 11,051,168 |

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022

| Military/Veteran Status by Age | Number of Respondents |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ACTIVE DUTY | 37 |
| 18-24 | 2 |
| 25-34 | 4 |
| 35-44 | 8 |
| 45-54 | 12 |
| 55-64 | 6 |
| 65-74 | 3 |
| 75-84 | 2 |
| MILITARY FAMILY | 32 |
| 25-34 | 1 |
| 35-44 | 11 |
| 45-54 | 7 |
| 55-64 | 4 |
| 65-74 | 6 |
| 75-84 | 3 |
| NATIONAL GUARD | 17 |
| 35-44 | 7 |
| 45-54 | 4 |
| 55-64 | 3 |
| 65-74 | 3 |
| RESERVE | 16 |
| 18-24 | 1 |
| 25-34 | 1 |
| 35-44 | 1 |
| 45-54 | 5 |
| 55-64 | 5 |
| 65-74 | 1 |
| 75-84 | 2 |
| VETERAN | 563 |
| 18-24 | 1 |
| 25-34 | 15 |
| 35-44 | 70 |
| 45-54 | 112 |
| 55-64 | 147 |
| 65-74 | 115 |
| 75-84 | 90 |
| 85-94 | 12 |
| 95-100+ | 1 |

| Military/Veteran Status by Ethnicity | Number of Respondents |
|---|------------------------------|
| ACTIVE DUTY | 37 |
| Caucasian | 28 |
| Black or African American | 2 |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 1 |
| Hispanic or Latino/a/e | 3 |
| All other identities | 3 |
| MILITARY FAMILY | 33 |
| Caucasian | 21 |
| Black or African American | 1 |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 2 |
| Hispanic or Latino/a/e | 2 |
| All other identities | 7 |
| NATIONAL GUARD | 17 |
| Caucasian | 9 |
| Black or African American | 1 |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 1 |
| Hispanic or Latino/a/e | 3 |
| All other identities | 3 |
| RESERVE | 16 |
| Caucasian | 9 |
| Black or African American | 3 |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 0 |
| Hispanic or Latino/a/e | 1 |
| All other identities | 3 |
| VETERAN | 567 |
| Caucasian | 419 |
| Black or African American | 45 |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 15 |
| Hispanic or Latino/a/e | 31 |
| All other identities | 57 |

| Military/Veteran Status by Gender | Number of Respondents |
|--|------------------------------|
| ACTIVE DUTY | 37 |
| Female | 14 |
| Male | 22 |
| All other identities | 1 |
| MILITARY FAMILY | 33 |
| Female | 27 |
| Male | 3 |
| All other identities | 3 |
| NATIONAL GUARD | 17 |
| Female | 7 |
| Male | 10 |
| All other identities | 0 |
| RESERVE | 16 |
| Female | 7 |
| Male | 9 |
| All other identities | 0 |
| VETERAN | 567 |
| Female | 218 |
| Male | 320 |
| All other identities | 29 |

| Military/Veteran Status by Income | Number of Respondents |
|--|------------------------------|
| ACTIVE DUTY | 37 |
| Less than \$25,000 | 0 |
| \$25,000 - \$49,999 | 5 |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 6 |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 5 |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 12 |
| \$150,000 or more | 7 |
| Prefer not to say | 2 |
| MILITARY FAMILY | 32 |
| Less than \$25,000 | 1 |
| \$25,000 - \$49,999 | 8 |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 1 |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 4 |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 4 |
| \$150,000 or more | 9 |
| Prefer not to say | 5 |
| NATIONAL GUARD | 17 |
| Less than \$25,000 | 0 |
| \$25,000 - \$49,999 | 1 |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 3 |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 2 |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 4 |
| \$150,000 or more | 4 |
| Prefer not to say | 3 |
| RESERVE | 16 |
| Less than \$25,000 | 0 |
| \$25,000 - \$49,999 | 2 |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 1 |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 1 |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 4 |
| \$150,000 or more | 5 |
| Prefer not to say | 3 |
| VETERAN | 556 |
| Less than \$25,000 | 38 |
| \$25,000 - \$49,999 | 106 |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 95 |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 85 |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 83 |
| \$150,000 or more | 69 |
| Prefer not to say | 80 |

Distribution of Respondents by Military/Veteran Status and Branch of Service

| Military/Veteran Status | Air Force | Army | Coast Guard | Marine Corps | Navy | NOAA Corps | Space Force |
|-------------------------|-----------|------|-------------|--------------|------|------------|-------------|
| Active Duty | 8 | 20 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 2 |
| Military Family | 7 | 12 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 0 | 1 |
| National Guard | 9 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Reserve | 3 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Veteran | 105 | 269 | 16 | 66 | 143 | 2 | 1 |

Military/Veteran Status by Frequency of Outdoors Visits

| Military/Veteran Status | Number of Respondents |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| ACTIVE DUTY | 37 |
| A few times a month | 10 |
| Multiple times a week | 14 |
| Never | 1 |
| Once a week | 8 |
| Rarely | 4 |
| MILITARY FAMILY | 33 |
| A few times a month | 11 |
| Multiple times a week | 12 |
| Never | 1 |
| Once a week | 2 |
| Rarely | 7 |
| NATIONAL GUARD | 17 |
| A few times a month | 8 |
| Multiple times a week | 3 |
| Never | 0 |
| Once a week | 2 |
| Rarely | 4 |
| RESERVE | 16 |
| A few times a month | 8 |
| Multiple times a week | 2 |
| Never | 0 |
| Once a week | 3 |
| Rarely | 3 |
| VETERAN | 565 |
| A few times a month | 189 |
| Multiple times a week | 171 |
| Never | 9 |
| Once a week | 78 |
| Rarely | 118 |

Percent of Respondents that Identify as Having a Limiting Disability by Military/Veteran Status

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Active Duty | 49% |
| Military Family | 36% |
| National Guard | 24% |
| Reserve | 25% |
| Veteran | 57% |

Percent of Respondents that Participated in Outdoor Group Activities by Military/Veteran Status

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Active Duty | 62% |
| Military Family | 55% |
| National Guard | 41% |
| Reserve | 88% |
| Veteran | 60% |

Distribution of Respondents with Physical Limitations by Ethnic and Gender Identities

| Ethnicity | Female | Male | All other identities | Total |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Caucasian | 31% | 47% | 3% | 81% |
| Black or African American | 4% | 2% | 0% | 6% |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 5% | 1% | 0% | 6% |
| Hispanic or Latino/a/e | 2% | 1% | 0% | 3% |
| All other identities | 1% | 2% | 0% | 3% |
| Total | 43% | 54% | 3% | 100% |

Distribution of Respondents Who Experienced Any Form of Discrimination by Ethnic and Gender Identities

| Black or African American (n=55) | Male | Female | All other identities | Percent of total |
|---|--------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Yes | 20.0% | 10.9% | 3.6% | 34.5% |
| No | 20.0% | 41.8% | 0.0% | 61.8% |
| Prefer not to say | 1.8% | 1.8% | 0.0% | 3.6% |
| Total | 41.8% | 54.5% | 3.6% | 100.0% |
| Hispanic or Latino/a/e (n=39) | Male | Female | All other identities | Percent of total |
| Yes | 2.6% | 12.8% | 2.6% | 17.9% |
| No | 43.6% | 38.5% | 0.0% | 82.1% |
| Prefer not to say | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Total | 46.2% | 51.3% | 2.6% | 100.0% |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native (n=21) | Male | Female | All other identities | Percent of total |
| Yes | 4.8% | 4.8% | 0.0% | 9.5% |
| No | 33.3% | 57.1% | 0.0% | 90.5% |
| Prefer not to say | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Total | 38.1% | 61.9% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| All Other Underserved Ethnic Identities (n=19) | Male | Female | All other identities | Percent of total |
| Yes | 15.8% | 0.0% | 5.3% | 21.1% |
| No | 26.3% | 26.3% | 5.3% | 57.9% |
| Prefer not to say | 10.5% | 10.5% | 0.0% | 21.1% |
| Total | 52.6% | 36.8% | 10.5% | 100.0% |
| Caucasian (n=516) | Male | Female | All other identities | Percent of total |
| Yes | 3.8% | 4.8% | 0.6% | 9.2% |
| No | 55.7% | 32.1% | 0.6% | 88.4% |
| Prefer not to say | 0.6% | 1.2% | 0.6% | 2.4% |
| Total | 60.1% | 38.1% | 1.8% | 100.0% |

