

TRAVEL WISCONSIN UPDATES 12-17-25

GOVERNOR'S BIKE COUNCIL MEETING

Winter Campaign, Recording, Snow Widget and Report

- As the holidays arrive and winter travel plans take shape, we're launching our Here's to Those Who Wisconsin campaign across 14 key markets. Always-on tactics run from December 1 through February 28, with brand efforts from January 5 through February 22. Designed for impact and efficiency, the campaign reaches travelers at the right moments and in the right places.
- Our "snow vs. no snow" strategy returns to ensure relevancy to our audience, and flexibility for our marketing team throughout the season. When snow falls, we highlight activities like downhill skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, tubing and ice skating. During lighter snow periods, we elevate non-snow-dependent experiences, such as culinary adventures, cabin stays, events and waterparks. A dedicated snow-activation budget ensures we can amplify the Wisconsin Snow Report the moment conditions change.
- This year's plan also introduces standout placements designed to capture attention in high-impact environments, most notably digital billboards throughout the Minneapolis Skywalk system, a high-recall setting with heavy winter commuter traffic. By moving fully to digital out-of-home, we're increasing OOH impressions by 37% year-over-year.
- At the top of the funnel, brand efforts position Wisconsin as the Midwest's premier winter destination through high-visibility channels, including CTV, online video, audio, out-of-home, display and social. These placements showcase the magic of winter and the variety of experiences the season offers.
- Winter Campaign Recording: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/0552be94-e23b-4095-b2cf-34e51ef7e0fe@f4e2d11c-fae4-453b-b6c0-2964663779aa?vod&attendeeld=a9e75fd2-6f45-4433-b6f4-6f78b2094eca>
- 2025-2026 Winter Campaign - <https://industry.travelwisconsin.com/promote/seasonal-marketing-plan>
- Winter snow report widget: <https://www.travelwisconsin.com/snowreport/widgetcreate>
- Winter Snow Report: <https://www.travelwisconsin.com/snowreport/snowmobile>

Website Traffic

A Record-Breaking Year for TravelWisconsin.com

This month, we reached an exciting milestone—**setting new all-time records for both users and sessions on [TravelWisconsin.com](#)**

On **NOVEMBER 11**, we exceeded our previous sessions record with **14,933.164 total sessions** (2024 record: 14,094,587), followed by a new **users record on NOVEMBER 11, with 11,290,630 total users** (2024 record: 10,925,402). These achievements mark our third consecutive record-breaking year,

continuing a remarkable run of growth and engagement since 2023.

Our website remains one of the most powerful tools for inspiring and guiding travelers, and the numbers tell a story of sustained interest and connection.

Our top-performing content continues to highlight the experiences and stories travelers love most about Wisconsin:

- [*Hiking Report*](#) – 957,646 users
- [*8 Wisconsin Supper Clubs with Gorgeous Lake Views*](#) – 933,796 users
- [*Fall Color Report*](#) – 767,207 users
- [*Islands in the Sun: Surprise! They're in Wisconsin*](#) – 676,755 users
- [*Events Page*](#) – 649,907 users

Seasonal reports continue to drive significant engagement, accounting for **nearly 25% of all users and sessions**, showing how travelers depend on these tools to plan trips throughout the year.

Geographically, interest remains strongest just south of our border, with Illinois leading all states and Chicago accounting for **more than 2.5 million users and 3.2 million sessions**.

These achievements are more than just metrics; they're proof that interest in Wisconsin continues to grow. Each new visitor and returning traveler adds to the story, reaffirming that TravelWisconsin.com remains a trusted source of inspiration.

Travel Green

Sustainability matters! Among global travelers, 87% are looking to travel sustainably.

Travel Wisconsin's Travel Green program enables you to demonstrate your commitment to sustainability and connect with like-minded travelers as they plan their trips.

Are there businesses in your region that qualify for Travel Green?

[Travel Green program](#)

Travel Green Pledge Process:

- New pledges will be accepted Nov 1-Dec 31 2025.
- Take the pledge [here](#).

Opportunity Attraction Fund

The Opportunity Attraction Fund grant is now offered through the WEDC. The \$5 million Opportunity Attraction Fund allows Wisconsin to bid against other states or jurisdictions to attract opportunities or events that will draw national exposure and drive economic development and visitors to Wisconsin. If you know of an event, art exhibition, concert, tournament, or exhibition that could attract significant economic impact, reach out to the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

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<https://wecd.org/programs/opportunity-attraction-fund/>

Point of Contact at WEDC for the Opportunity Attraction Fund
Peggy Burke
Marketing Projects Manager
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New Grant Portal

The new Travel Wisconsin grant portal, powered by Salesforce, is now live.

Consider applying for a [JEM Grant](#) or [Ready-Set-Go Sports Marketing Grant](#) for bike-related events.

JEM Grant Deadlines: 2/1, 4/1, 8/1, 11/1

RSG Grant Deadlines: 2/1, 4/1, 9/1

Applying for a Grant - <https://grants.travelwisconsin.com>

Note: Please reach out to David Spiegelberg – dsiegelberg@travelwisconsin.com or Heidi Schultz – hschultz@travelwisconsin.com 4-6 months in advance of the event date for an initial consultation.

Pet-Friendly Travel

According to [Polaris Market Research](#), the pet travel industry is expected to double by 2032. We're looking for details on lodging options that go above and beyond for pets — pet-friendly attractions, unique events and festivals, outdoor experiences and more — to showcase how Wisconsin embraces pets on the go.

https://www.travelagewest.com/Industry-Insight/Business-Features/pet-travel-planning?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=taw_dailymuse&pk=taw_email_newsletter_taw-dailymuse&oly_enc_id=7708G1350967E1B

Free Listings on TravelWisconsin.com

[List](#) your bike events, trails, shops, tours, etc. on [TravelWisconsin.com](#) for free. TravelWisconsin.com is our call to action with all our marketing channels. Utilize this free marketing opportunity to highlight Wisconsin's bike tour assets and experiences.

Contact:

David Spiegelberg – Tourism Development Specialist - dsiegelberg@travelwisconsin.com – 262-515-2806

OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION UPDATES

Do-It-Yourself Economic Impact Program- Cohort Two

- The Office is wrapping up the second cohort of the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Economic Impact program. This program helps communities answer the question “What is the economic impact of outdoor recreation in my community?” This year, the program featured two public workshops, a practicum, and one-on-one coaching from the Harbinger Consultancy, resulting in a produced short economic impact report. Teams collected visitor spending and data through surveys and trail counters. Five teams were selected through the practicum, including:
 - o Heart of the Vilas Trail System: connecting five communities (Boulder Junction, Manitowish Waters, Mercer, Sayner and St. Germain) in Northern Wisconsin, this team came together to collect visitor information and spending on the 52-mile paved bike route.
 - o Oconto County: looked at visitor spending of all outdoor recreation visitors.
 - o Olbrich Botanical Gardens: looked at the visitor spending of all visitors to Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison
 - o Peninsula State Park: collected data and visitor counts of riders at the State Park’s new mountain bike trails in Door County. Their findings are preliminary because phase 2 of the mountain bike trails is scheduled to open in early 2026.
 - o Three Eagle Trail: connecting Three Lakes and Eagle River in Northern Wisconsin, this team looked at visitor spending and use on the 12.7 miles of this multi-use trail system.
- The 2025 cohort economic impact reports will be released in early January, and the 2026 workshop dates will be announced at the same time.

Wisconsin Governor’s Outdoor Industry Awards

- Following the inaugural event in June 2025, the Office will hold the second year of the awards in 2026! These awards recognize the individuals, businesses, organizations, and places that lead Wisconsin’s outdoor recreation industry. Nominations for the second year of the Awards will open in April. 2025 winners included:
 - o **Destination of the Year:** Wisconsin State Park System
 - o **Outdoor Business of the Year:** Adventure Outfitters, LLC
 - o **Trailblazer of the Year:** Bill Menke, volunteer

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- **Tandem Award for Collaboration:** Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin's Field Trip Program
- **Big Tent Award:** Bill Bertram, outdoor recreation organizer
- **First Ascent Award for Innovation:** The Glide by Boulder Junction Parks and Recreation Board
- **Rising Star Award:** Kennedy Domerchie, Outdoors Development Manager, Visit Eau Claire

Contact:

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