



Pennsylvania
Department of Conservation
and Natural Resources

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Pennsylvania Office of Outdoor Recreation Rolls Out ‘Elevate’ Initiative to Engage Outdoor Businesses

The Elevate initiative encourages Pennsylvania’s outdoor recreation businesses to provide feedback that will shape the Commonwealth’s future outdoor economy, as the outdoor industry supports over 164,000 Pennsylvania jobs and brings \$17 billion in economic impact annually.

Easton, PA – Today, **Pennsylvania Director of Outdoor Recreation Nathan Reigner** visited Easton Outdoor Company to announce the launch of *Elevate*, a new business engagement initiative designed to strengthen Pennsylvania’s outdoor recreation industry by engaging directly with the businesses that drive it.

The [Elevate initiative](#) will connect with outdoor recreation businesses across the Commonwealth to identify barriers to growth, develop workforce solutions, and highlight Pennsylvania as a premier destination for outdoor recreation and a place where related businesses can thrive. Pennsylvania businesses involved in or benefiting from outdoor recreation are invited to **complete a brief questionnaire**.

This initiative advances **Governor Josh Shapiro’s** commitment to [strengthening Pennsylvania’s outdoor industry](#), delivering on his promise to make Pennsylvania a national leader in outdoor recreation, entrepreneurial opportunity, and job creation.

“Outdoor recreation is already a major economic driver in Pennsylvania and my Administration is working to grow the industry even further by connecting the dots between businesses in the Commonwealth’s outdoor recreation economy so they can help each other grow and succeed,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “This initiative is an example of how our commitment to outdoor recreation can lift up communities, create good jobs, and fuel economic growth across Pennsylvania. Outdoor recreation isn’t just about business or economics — it’s about our quality of life and enjoying the incredible natural beauty we’re lucky to have here in Pennsylvania.”

The outdoor recreation industry in Pennsylvania employs more than 164,000 people and contributes \$17 billion to the state’s economy annually. Pennsylvania’s outdoor recreation economy is vibrant and diverse — from designers, manufacturers, and retailers to distributors, experience providers, and creative professionals — each contributing to a thriving sector.

“Pennsylvania’s outdoor industry is a diamond in the rough,” said **Director Reigner**. “Elevate is a vital process that will help us engage outdoor businesses, understand their needs, and support this industry in delivering family-sustaining jobs, innovative products, and exciting services. Together, we can elevate Pennsylvania as a national leader in outdoor recreation.”

Businesses benefiting from outdoor recreation include local mainstays like Easton Outdoor Company, national brands like Dick’s Sporting Goods and *Runner’s World* magazine, as well as independent guiding and artisanal ventures.

“This business is more than just a gear shop,” said **Adam Fairchild, owner of Easton Outdoor Company**. “Our staff are ambassadors for Pennsylvania’s Great Outdoors, and our storefront plays a vital role in Easton’s ‘Main Street’ revitalization. Elevate will strengthen not only our business but also help us serve and grow our community.”

“It takes a village to run a successful outdoor business,” said **Karen Prieto, owner of Twin Rivers Tubing**. “With Elevate, we’ll have the support of the entire state, making it possible to achieve even greater success for our business, community, and Pennsylvania as a whole.”

“Careers in outdoor recreation extend far beyond the service sector,” said **Bill Strickland, Editorial Director for Hearst Publications Enthusiast Group, publisher of Runner’s World, Bicycling, and Popular Mechanics magazines**. “We employ numerous creative and technical professionals working at the cutting edge of content creation. Having abundant outdoor opportunities in Easton and the greater Lehigh Valley is key to recruiting and retaining these talented individuals.”

The Office of Outdoor Recreation’s [Growing Outdoor Recreation for Pennsylvania report](#), released in January, highlighted the need to organize and strengthen Pennsylvania’s outdoor industry, an objective that *Elevate* will address directly. The Office coordinates efforts with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Departments of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and Health (DOH), PennDOT, and others, to create a cohesive strategy for the growth and expansion of the outdoor sector.

“The Shapiro Administration is committed to supporting Pennsylvania’s businesses and increasing the competitiveness of our industries, including the outdoor sector,” said **Neil Flower, Executive Director of the Center for Strategic Partnerships, DCED**. “By implementing strategies outlined in Pennsylvania’s Economic Development Strategy and engaging directly with industries through Elevate, Pennsylvania is empowering businesses to thrive and drawing new entrepreneurs to the Commonwealth.”

In addition, the Shapiro Administration committed the [largest investment in public land infrastructure](#) in decades and focused on making Pennsylvania’s wealth of natural resources more [accessible and inclusive](#).

Read more Pennsylvania's first Economic Development Strategy in nearly 20 years [here](#) and how Governor Shapiro's budget [creates economic opportunity](#) for all Pennsylvanians.

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Election Day
Nov. 5, 2024



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