

# Outside, Together on the Trails!

A Review of New Jersey's  
2023 - 2028 Statewide Comprehensive  
Outdoor Recreation Plan  
as it Relates to Trails



NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION



# WHAT IS THE SCORP?

Statewide Comprehensive  
Outdoor Recreation Plan

framework for open space  
preservation and outdoor  
recreation planning and  
funding priorities in  
New Jersey

**Evaluation of Supply and  
Demand for open space**

**Identification of  
Trends and Issues in  
outdoor recreation**

# **AO 2022-12**

**CIER &  
OUTSIDE, TOGETHER!**



# NEW JERSEY'S TRAILS & GREENWAYS =

intersection of  
recreation +  
active  
transportation

# 6 PRINCIPLES OF OUTSIDE, TOGETHER!



A large crowd of people is gathered in an open public space, possibly a park or plaza. In the background, there are several tall, thin, reddish-brown poles. The sky is overcast, and a city skyline is visible in the distance. The text "HIGH QUALITY OPEN SPACE" is overlaid on the image in a large, white, outlined font.

HIGH  
QUALITY  
OPEN SPACE

A street scene at dusk with buildings and a flooded street. The street is filled with water, reflecting the streetlights and the sky. The buildings are dark, and the sky is a deep blue. The text "CLIMATE RESILIENCE" is overlaid in large, white, outlined letters.

# CLIMATE RESILIENCE







# TECHNOLOGY



EQUITY



# STEWARDSHIP

CONNECT

# CASE STUDIES & MODELED BEHAVIORS

- **Gateway Park** - connective outdoor spaces
- **Rancocas Greenway Trail, Stags Adaptive Mountain Bike Trail** - accessible trails
- **Hunterdon County's 579 Trail** - economic development and tourism
- **Cramer Waterfront Park** - connects community to natural resources
- **The Greenway** - connects community to recreational opportunities and to local community resources

# GOALS & ACTIONS

- prioritize community outreach efforts and providing high-quality, safe, easily accessible recreational trails to all New Jersey residents
- prioritize climate resilience and habitat protection in planning and design
- facilitate permitting for projects with climate benefits
- promote the outdoor recreation industry
- provide clear, consolidated information
- provide guidance for improved connectivity
- develop interactive mapping that allows users to identify features or amenities
- protect ecological assets through thoughtful management of trails

A photograph of a public engagement event. In the foreground, a woman with long dark hair is looking towards the right. In the background, several people, including children, are gathered around a table covered with a patterned cloth. The scene is outdoors with trees and a building in the distance. The image is overlaid with a dark blue geometric shape on the right side.

**trails are  
important to  
New Jersey  
residents**

# **Public Engagement Findings**



**MOST OFTEN USE  
OUTDOOR SPACE TO:**

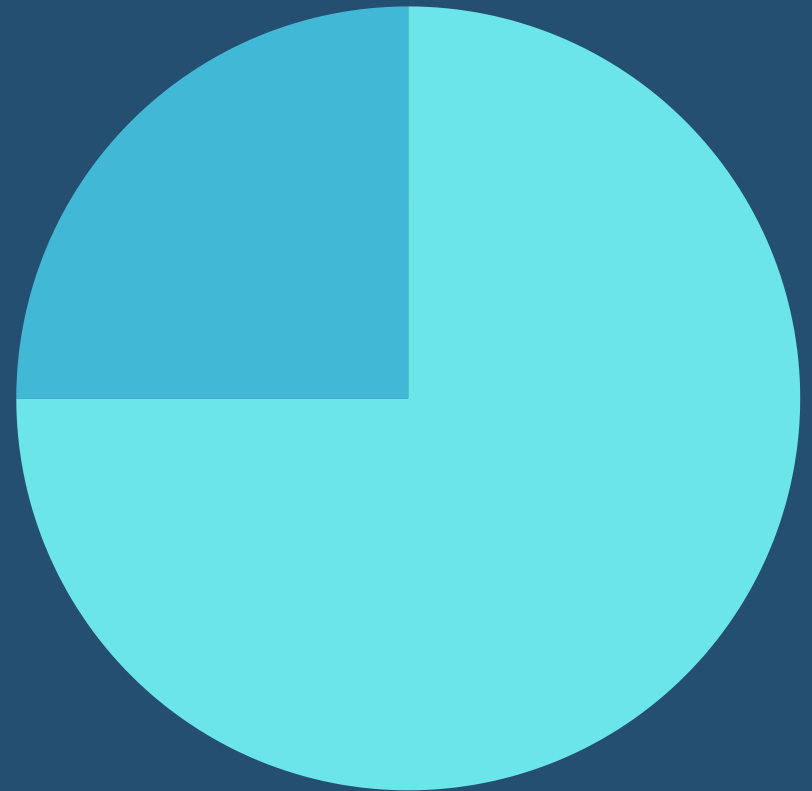
**TAKE WALKS OR HIKE  
GATHER WITH FRIENDS**

**trails top on list of most preferred features in outdoor spaces**





**75% of residents  
primarily utilize  
local parks/trails**



# Other Findings

## TOP PRIORITIES:

- maintenance of existing parks
- protecting habitat

## RESIDENTS WANT MORE:

- trails
- picnic areas
- sitting areas
- cooling features

# Other Findings

## THINGS THAT DETER OUTDOOR RECREATION:

- **36% - mosquitos, ticks, other pests**
- **20% lack of amenities**
- **20% not enough time**
- **19% too crowded**
- **17% safety concerns**
- **17% access fees too high**

## MORE LIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IF:

- **had more information**
- **more passive features**

## **RESIDENTS WANT MORE:**

- **cultural events and festivals**
- **diverse programming**
- **centralized location for park information**
- **better community engagement**
- **more reliable and affordable transportation options**
- **reduced user fees**

## **MOST COMMON BARRIERS TO USE:**

- **lack of information**
- **lack of reliable transportation**
- **expense**
- **changing needs**

# **COMMON THEMES:**

**VALUE PARKS FOR  
COMMUNITY GATHERINGS AND  
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

**PARKS CLOSE TO HOME ARE  
MOST IMPORTANT**

The background is a solid dark blue. In the top right corner, there is a teal-colored triangle pointing downwards. In the bottom left corner, there is a white triangle pointing upwards. Two thin white diagonal lines are present: one in the top right and one in the bottom right, both pointing towards the center of the page.

# **SCORP RECOMMENDS INCORPORATING TRAILS INTO PLANNING**

# Green Acres Program funding for trails



# Thank You!

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