

2026 National Outdoor Recreation Conference - Concurrent Session Program Schedule-At-A-Glance

Please note: Schedule subject to change. A more detailed agenda available via the Whova app.

THEMES COLOR SCHEME	Advancing Belonging and Quality of Life	Building and Sustaining Recreation Infrastructure	Engaging Communities and Navigating Governance	Innovation and the Future of Outdoor Recreation	Regional and Cultural Approaches
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Monday Plenary, Tuesday, and Thursday Luncheons take place Lake Superior Ballroom (LMNOPQ)
 Concurrent sessions and workshops take place in rooms as noted in the associated column

Meeting Rooms at Duluth Entertainment Convention Center

DATE	TIME	Room 304/305	Room 303	Room 202	Room 203	Room 204	Room 205
Pre-Conference Workshops	All day until Opening Plenary (view individual workshop start and end times in the app)	Accessible Outdoor Recreation & Adaptive Cycling Workshop	Leadership That Lasts: Cross-Sector Stewardship & Resilience	The Regional Activation Lab: Designing regional strategies that unite recreation, conservation, and revitalization	Building and Sustaining Trust	Universal Trail Assessment Process	SCORP University
Monday, May 11	Limited capacity, first come first serve via registration	9:00am - 2:30pm	8:00am - 2:30pm	9:00am - 2:00pm	8:00am - 2:30pm	8:30am - 3:00pm	8:30am - 2:30pm
Opening Plenary	3:30 - 5:00 pm	<p>Welcome Plenary starts with a welcome from SORP and co-host Duluth Area Outdoor Alliance (DAOA). The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe will provide an opening welcome and grounding followed by our Keynote Alexandera Houchin. Alexandera Houchin is known in the bikepacking world for her accomplishments in long-distance, ultra-endurance mountain bike races such as the 2,700-mile Tour Divide, the Colorado Trail, and the Arizona Trail. As a citizen of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe, her cultural identity shapes how she moves through the world. She spends her time riding bikes, working toward greater food sovereignty, and sharing stories to invite people to think deeper about how they perceive their worlds.</p> <p>Taking place in Lake Superior Ballroom (LMNOPQ)</p>					
Monday, May 11							
SORP Scholarship Fundraiser, Silent Auction	5:30 - 7:30 pm (light apps and cash bar available)	<p>Posters are displayed entire duration of conference but presentations taking place at date and time noted.</p> <p>(#004) Designing Trust: Brand Systems for Belonging</p> <p>(#007) Experiential Ecology: Mapping the Hidden Language of Landscape and Human Response</p> <p>(#104b) The Future of E-Bikes on Public Lands</p> <p>(#109) NPS Pilot Study of License Plate Readers for Use Monitoring</p> <p>(#146) Build Tourism Partnerships To Support Public Land Goals</p> <p>(#155) Social norms and plastic reform: Leveraging Lake Tahoe's unique ecological and social characteristics to target and improve recreationist behavior</p> <p>(#168) Cleaner Shores Through Collaboration: The Tahoe Blue Beach Model</p> <p>(#179) Everyone Can Bird</p> <p>(#180) Representation & Access: Black Minnesotans and the North Shore</p> <p>(#181) Get Outdoors & Get Together Day: A Day of Inclusion in New York</p> <p>(#182) Shifting Lenses: An Age-Friendly Trail Survey of Northern MN</p> <p>(#183) Understanding Pathway Use in Grand Teton National Park</p> <p>(#184) Where Tech Meets Trails: Powering Outdoor Access Through Partnership</p> <p>(#185) Ope! EV Fleet - Park Rangers and Beyond</p> <p>(#186) Expanding Visitor Use Management at Local Reservoirs</p> <p>(#187) Trail construction effects on wildlife and visitor attitudes</p> <p>(#188) Engaging Community Through a Local Safety and Etiquette Campaign – The Tale of Myrtle the Turtle</p> <p>(#189) Outdoor Recreation in a Changing Climate: Visitors' Impacts, Coping Strategies, and Intent to Return to NH PPAs</p> <p>(#190) Land Stewardship in Higher Ed: The Ithaca College Case</p> <p>(#192) Utilizing Floodplain Buyout Properties as Green Spaces</p> <p>(#193) A regional approach to understanding recreation displacement</p> <p>(#194) Pathways to Reconciliation: Fostering Culturally-Sustaining Outdoor Early Learning</p> <p>(#221) Applying a new allocation framework in a National Forest</p>					
Monday, May 11							
Concurrent 1	8:30 - 9:15 am			#110 Planning for Sustainable	#124 Camaraderie or crowds? Social encounters on trails	#030 After the storm: community response to Hurricane Helene on	#066 OSM US Trails Stewardship Initiative: New Collaborations for

Tuesday, May 12	9:00 - 9:15 am	#205 Core Competencies for Outdoor Recreation	#178 An Examination of Outdoor Recreation Use at National Marine Sanctuaries in the Great Lakes	Visitation in Banff National Park	#129 Air Quality and Outdoor Recreation Decision-Making	Response to Hurricane Helene on Western NC trails	Innovative New Collaborations for Responsible Recreation
	9:15 - 10:00 am			#108 BC Parks Innovative Visitor Use Monitoring Strategy and Pilot Study	#125 Parks as Community Hubs: Insights from MacGregor Park	#033 Response, Recovery, Resilience: Disaster-Ready Parks	#051 Be Always Sure You're Right, Then Go Ahead: Rebirth of a Park
Concurrent 2	10:30 - 11:15 am	#037 Dig In! Building a National Movement for Stewardship and Trail Skills	#165 Building an Outdoor Rec System with Tribal Engagement	#174 Closing the Park Access Gap: Tap into \$120M in Federal Funding	#138 Visitor Adaptation and Loyalty in Wilderness Areas	#177 Gateway Communities: Collaboration in the Chesapeake	#061 Synthesizing Existing Conditions for Idaho Trail Planning
Tuesday, May 12	11:15 - 12:00 pm	#032 Backpacks, Bikes, and Motorized Recreation Converge to Support NE Minnesota's Regional Economy		#085 Leveraging Collaboration in Planning: How combining efforts between the state office of outdoor recreation and the SCORP created a statewide plan that actually works	#104 Research-Driven Policy: Latest eMTB Trail Study Insights		#096 Visitor Research at Scale: The NPS Socioeconomic Program
Awards Luncheon	12:00 - 1:30 pm	Awards Luncheon (National Leadership Award, Project Excellence Awards, Individual Service Awards)					
Tuesday, May 12		Taking place in Lake Superior Ballroom (LMNOPQ)					
Concurrent 3	1:30 - 2:15 pm	#169 Confluence of States: Navigating Governance and Innovation	#112 Engaging Indigenous Communities on Trail	#218 Improving access to the outdoors through EXPLORE Act Implementation	#141 Who's beefing? Predictors for perceived conflict	#043 Utah's Strategic Approach to Outdoor Recreation Investment & Regional Long-Range Planning	#020 The Case for Introducing the Outdoors at a Young Age
Tuesday, May 12	2:15 - 3:00 pm		#120 Tribal Guided Cultural Landscape Planning at Knife River	#090 Exploring EXPLORE: New Recreation Policy on Federal Lands	#144 From Trail to Transformation: Climate Concern and Action in Impacted Landscapes		#044 Wetting the Appetite for Outdoor Recreation Experiences in Pennsylvania: Nurturing "Gateway Experiences" and "Life-Long Addictions"
Concurrent 4	3:30 - 4:15 pm	#216 Creating (and Sustaining) Community with Accessible Trails!	#114 The Red Road - Regaining an Indigenous Cultural Corridor	#083 Dark Skies of the CDT: Exploring the Intersections of Wonder and Worship	#140 From Gear to Career: CANOE's Rural Workforce Model	#045 When the Lifts Stopped Turning: Marshall Mountain's Journey from Shuttered Ski Hill to a Thriving Public Mountain	#111 Building a New Outdoor Economy in Southern Michigan
Tuesday, May 12	4:15 - 5:00 pm		#116 Integrating Culture and Conservation: The Value of CRMPs	#105 Revitalization: Camping and the Outdoor Hospitality Industry	#142 Bridging Visitor Use and Emergency Management		#161 Using Multicultural EE to Examine BIPOC Connection to Nature
Aquarium Event	6:00 - 8:30 pm	Tuesday Social Hosted by Duluth Area Outdoor Alliance (DAOA) 353 Harbor Dr, Duluth, MN 55802					
Tuesday, May 12		Join us for an evening of networking and education at the Great Lakes Aquarium! Local nonprofit organizations and land managers that are part of DAOA will have information stations where you can fill your bingo card as you explore the aquarium. Prizes will be given to bingo card participants. Light apps will be served and a cash bar will be available. Space is limited for this event and registration is required and is first-come, first-served. A short walk from the convention center, but complimentary continuous transportation will be provided between the aquarium and convention center.					
Field Workshops	All day (view individual workshop start and end times in the app) Limited capacity, first come first serve via registration	Restoration of Lands and Waters: A Visit to Wisconsin Point and the Lake Superior Estuarium 8:00am - 1:00pm	Lakewalk Bike Trail Coastal Tour 8:30am - 12:30pm	Resilient Landscapes: A Short Hike at Jay Cooke State Park 8:30am - 3:30pm	Climate Resilience in Minnesota's State Parks: Hiking on the North Shore of Lake Superior 8:30am - 5:00pm	Hiking Duluth's Natural Surface Trails: Connecting Community, Education, and Sustainability 9:00am - 3:00pm	
Wednesday, May 13		The Duluth Traverse Mountain Bike Trail: How Duluth Rebranded as the Best Outdoor Town in America	R to R to R Paddle: Exploring Remediation, Restoration, and Recreation on the St. Louis River Estuary	History at Two of Wisconsin State Parks: Hiking Amnicon Falls and Pattison	Re-Creation into Recreation: Growing Winter Outdoor Success through Snowmaking and Ice Farming	Get to Know the Superior Municipal Forest by Paddling the Pokegama ("Poh-Kaw-Gah-Ma")	

		9:00am - 3:00pm	9:00am - 4:30pm	10:00am - 3:00pm	10:30am - 3:00pm	12:00pm - 4:00pm	
Concurrent 5	8:30 - 9:15 am	#217 Climate related effects on outdoor recreation in Minnesota	#175 Outdoor Recreation in Higher Education: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities	#001 Building out a Resilient National Water Trail – Mississippi River	#133 Coastal Volunteers and Cultural Ecosystem Services	#072 Creating Redhead Trailhead: Cooperative Funding & Partnering	#093 The Future of Recreation in Ireland's National Parks
Thursday, May 14	9:15 - 10:00 am			#012 Mission-Driven Protection: How Veteran-Led Stewardship Advances Belonging and Quality of Life on the Arizona National Scenic Trail	#132 Nature-based Integration for Immigrants in Minnesota		
Concurrent 6	10:30 - 11:15 am	#094 Trail Support: Building Valuable Private-Public Partnerships for Good	#162 Reconnecting to Water Through Education and Outreach	#013 Natural Resilience: The Healing Bond Between Veterans and the Outdoors	#139 Beyond the Launch: Paddler Use and Access in NC	#058 Policy to Programs: Equity work in Regional Parks and Trails	#085 Revolutionizing Outdoor Recreation with AR & AI
Thursday, May 14	11:15 - 12:00 pm			#049 River daylighting as a catalyst for redevelopment	#157 Is that a robot in the water? Managerial and visitors perceptions of water-based robot use in public waters		
						#143 Creating Impact, Not Crowds: Social Media for Good	#160 Modeling fall foliage and spatiotemporal recreation patterns
Closing Keynote Luncheon	12:00 - 1:30 pm	<p>A Closing Luncheon Panel on the Restoration and Revitalization focused on NORC 2026 conference themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building/Sustaining Rec Infrastructure (Kenny Blumenfeld, MN Sr. Climatologist) • Communities/Governance (Thomas Howes, Fond du Lac Tribe) • Economic/Quality of Life (Randolph Briley, MN Office of Outdoor Rec) • Innovation/Tech (Mary Clark, Agents of Discovery) <p>Taking place in Lake Superior Ballroom (LMNOPQ)</p>					
Concurrent 7	1:30 - 2:15 pm	#167 State Parks at a Crossroads: Funding, Volunteers, and Logistics	#172 Visitor use in a changing climate	#176 Robotic realities for water resource monitoring *afternoon of either day	#018 Mapping the Future: Transit to Trails Storymap as a Model for Equitable Access	#122 Who's Driving the Bus? Regional Outdoor Economy Leadership	#077 Trail Interpretive Planning with Community Voices Guiding the Way
Thursday, May 14	2:15 - 3:00 pm		#050 Third Party Operators to Reduce Public Funding Requirements	#115 Working Towards a Binational Great Lakes Waterfront Trail	#017 Mapping Our Trails for All: Real-World Inclusion on Trails	#118 Driving Discovery: Connecting Byways, Recreation, & Heritage	#078 Building Support for Public Lands through Friends Groups and Community Partnerships
Concurrent 8	3:30 - 4:15 pm	#173 State-Led Tools for Building Strong Outdoor Recreation Economies and Communities	#101 Health Pays: Funding Outdoor Spaces Through a Public Health Lens	#097 A Conservation Agency's First Attempt at Recreation Planning	#023 Culture as Infrastructure: Belonging through Recreation	#121 Changing Mines: the recreation potential of idled mine lands	#057 Planning a Lift-Served Trail Destination in Mena, Arkansas
Thursday, May 14	4:15 - 5:00 pm		#034 Wayfinding for Connection: Enhancing Visitor Experience through Reimagining Trail Signage at French Regional Park	#100 From Data to Demand: Turning Recreation Insights into Actionable Marketing	#024 Engaging visitors in all seasons: Outcomes and actions from a Winter Park Visitor Study	#113 Evolving Economies: From Farmstead Heritage to Trail-Based Tourism in Vermont	#064 From Statewide Trends to Trail-Level Impacts: Measuring the Economic Value of Outdoor Recreation in Minnesota
Official end of conference! Join us for one final networking hurrah!							
Takeover Night	5:00 - 10:00 pm	<p>Takeover Night hosted at Canal Park Brewing Company 300 Canal Park Dr, Duluth, MN 55802</p> <p>Join us as we close out NORC with your final evening of networking and celebration at Canal Park Brewing Company! Attendees and the general public can join this no-host evening for drinks and delicious food within walking distance from Harbor Side Convention Center (transportation not provided). Canal Park Brewing Company is graciously donating \$1 to SORP for every beer purchased between 5:00pm-10:00pm!</p>					
Thursday, May 14							