



# CHAPTER 3

## Supply of Outdoor Recreation Acreage in Indiana

Chapter Three examines the current supply of outdoor recreation acreage in Indiana. The two previous chapters gave an overview of the public input for this SCORP, determined the main issues and trends, and subjected them to a needs analysis at the end of Chapter 2, which directly informs the SCORP goals shared at the end of the Introduction. The surveys looked at both the public point of view and that of the parks and recreation provider. The purpose was to better understand the outdoor recreation needs of all Hoosiers.

Looking at the supply of outdoor recreation acreage in Indiana gives us yet another measurement of assessing outdoor recreation needs. The DNR maintains an internal database of facilities statewide to help track the supply of these resources. This inventory database is maintained primarily from self-reported local government data, research (including the internet, park websites, etc.), and data reported in local five-year parks and recreation master plans kept on file with the DNR. This data is the best available, and given cost and time constraints, is as complete as the DNR can make it. Because the facility inventory database is more than 50 years old, the data has been “cleaned”, re-organized, and checked for accuracy as often as possible, but errors and changes happen. Re-checking aspects of the database and incremental improvements occurs as staff time allows. As one ex-

ample, stakeholders have previously claimed that the “school” category of acreage in the database could be a problem. In the preparations for this SCORP, the SCORP staff verified that the “school” category of acreage was not only outdated, incomplete and inaccurate, but its presence was biasing the calculations for the critical counties data, especially for lightly populated counties. DNR has not included schools as LWCF-eligible for decades, and this, in addition to the incomplete and inaccurate schools acreage data, was more than enough reason to remove the existing schools acreage entries from the database. Many of those school sites no longer existed due to school district consolidations and were essentially a false record of potential outdoor recreation acreage. The removal of the schools database entries, plus database record alterations and removal of other issues like duplicate entries, sites that were not actually available to the public, and previously undiscovered data entry errors, typos, and inaccurate entries resulted in removal of roughly 40,000 acres from the database, from a total of more than 950,000 acres statewide. This means that although slightly smaller, the database is now more accurate than in past SCORP cycles. The database has improved over time.

The data from this inventory are used in this chapter to compare the current amount of public outdoor

recreation acreage on the local, State/federal/non-profit, and total levels with national and state guidelines, and provide another basis for statewide strategic park planning. All population data used in this SCORP are taken from the latest available primary source: the U.S. Census 2024 Population Estimates, which were released in July of 2024 for public use.

## NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC PARK ACREAGE

Drs. James D. Mertes and James R. Hall co-authored (with editor Roger A. Lancaster) the definitive book on recreation, park, and open-space level of service guidelines in 1983. The book was published by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), and for decades was considered the gold standard for determining the minimum desired acreage of outdoor recreation lands at the local and regional level. This book featured a relatively simple classification system for parks and provided recommended acreages for parks on a population-ratio basis—so many acres of parks per 1,000 people residing in a community.

Here are the most basic level-of-service guidelines, as they were published in 1983:

- **Mini-Park:** Has a service area with less than a quarter-mile radius, and approximately a quarter- to half-acre per 1,000 people.
- **Neighborhood Park:** Has a service area between a quarter-mile and half-mile radius, with population up to 5,000. Has 15-plus acres, equaling 1.0 to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people.
- **Community Park:** Has a service area with a 1- to 2-mile radius (would normally include several neighborhoods), and is 25-plus acres, which equals 5.0 to 8.0 acres per 1,000 people.
- **Regional/Metropolitan Park:** Has a service area of one hour's driving time (would normally include several communities), and is 200-plus acres, which equals 5.0 to 10.0 acres per 1,000 people.
- **Regional Park Preserve:** Has a service area of one hour's driving time (would normally include several communities), and is 1,000-plus acres. A total of 80% of this land would be reserved for natural resource management and conservation, and 20% would be reserved for recreational development. The number of acres per 1,000 people for a regional park preserve would vary widely depending on

the property available.

- **Linear Park, Special-Use Area, or Conservancy Area:** No applicable guidelines were set in the document.

During the next 20 years or so, these guidelines were widely accepted, but even the NRPA noted that the guidelines were meant as a flexible benchmark, not an absolute number. Anyone who has tried on a one-size-fits-all T-shirt knows that “fits all” isn't always true. Academics and park professionals started trying to create a new method of determining how much park and open-space land a given community might need, taking unique local priorities into account. A more locally based and flexible means of determining the minimum number of parks and recreation land or facilities began to emerge in the mid-1990s. Level of Service (LOS) is a process of strategic planning that considers the unique aspects of individual communities. LOS also measures demand for recreation opportunities, current parks and recreation resources, and the needs and preferences of community residents. Indiana has used the 1983 NRPA guidelines as a benchmark since they were first published, but has created its own LOS guidelines for park and recreation open space.

## INDIANA'S LOS GUIDELINES FOR PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

To simplify processing of the facilities inventory data, Indiana divides the current supply of recreation acreage into three categories: Local, State/federal/nonprofit and Total (statewide):

- **Local (County, Township, City or Town) recreation acres:** Land owned by municipal, township and county governments, as well as land privately owned but open for public use.
- **State/federal/nonprofit recreation acres:** Mostly land owned by either State or federal governments, as well as some publicly accessible nonprofit Land Trust sites, for public recreational use.
- **Total (Statewide) recreation acres:** Total of all statewide public recreation land that is owned by all the entities in the other two categories.

The State of Indiana took the above categories and created LOS guidelines for publicly owned parks, recreation and open space for all Hoosiers. Indiana's guidelines for outdoor recreation in terms of acres per 1,000 people are:

- **Local LOS:** 20 acres per 1,000 people (.02 acres per person).
- **State/Fed LOS:** 35 acres per 1,000 people (.035 acres per person).
- **Total (Statewide) LOS:** 55 acres per 1,000 people (.055 acres per person).

Because the Indiana SCORP is a document with a focus on statewide, public-owned parks and recreation, these guidelines are on a different scale than the NRPA guidelines mentioned earlier. Indiana’s parks, recreation, and open-space LOS guidelines are set according to the government level owner/operator of public recreation property (such as local, State/federal or total/statewide levels), instead of by types or sizes of park property. All acreages discussed in the SCORP are based on publicly owned or accessed lands. The SCORP acreage data now excludes all schools. This is because many schools do not allow public access to their outdoor facilities; therefore, the DNR has no means to verify true public access to all school properties statewide. Private or commercial for-profit lands not open for public use are also excluded. Tables are included in this chapter that examine the supply of Local, State/federal and Total/statewide owned outdoor-recreation acres, organized and tallied by county and by region. The tables also look at current population (and population growth in the Critical Counties), as well as the best available inventory of public outdoor recreation acres available within each county and region.

### LOCAL OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES LISTED BY COUNTY AND BY REGION: MUNICIPAL, TOWNSHIP, COUNTY, AND PRIVATELY OWNED BUT OPEN FOR PUBLIC USE

As previously mentioned, Indiana uses an LOS guideline (20 acres of locally owned and operated

public outdoor recreation acres per 1,000 people) to determine which local government entities have an adequate supply of acreage or a deficit of small-scale, local-level parks.

#### Local (owned by a county, township, city, or town) Acres by County

The first data tables in this SCORP provide data on local outdoor recreation acres, tallied by county, to illustrate those counties that may need more assistance in improving their supply of locally owned and managed public outdoor recreation acreage. In the “Difference” column, a bracketed number in red print (X), indicates a negative or deficient number of acres of OR land.

Let’s look at the Indiana Local Acres by County Table listing for Adams County as an example (Figure 3.1). From the left-hand column:

- County ID number (1).
- County Name (Adams).
- 2024 U.S. Census County Population Estimate (36,584 residents).
- DNR-recommended LOS Local Acres of outdoor recreation land (.02 acre \* 36,584 people = 731.68 acres recommended).
- Current inventory of local acres of OR land (370.5 acres).
- Recommended number of OR acres—current number of local OR acres = “Difference” (370.5 local acres – 731.68 recommended acres = 361.18-acre deficit of OR acres in Adams County).

Of 92 counties in the state, 77% (71 counties) are deficient in local-level public outdoor-recreation acres.

Figure 3.1 Local Acres Example

County Number	County Name	2024 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Local 20a/1 000 People	Sum of Local Acres	Difference
1	Adams	36,584	731.68	370.5	(361.18)

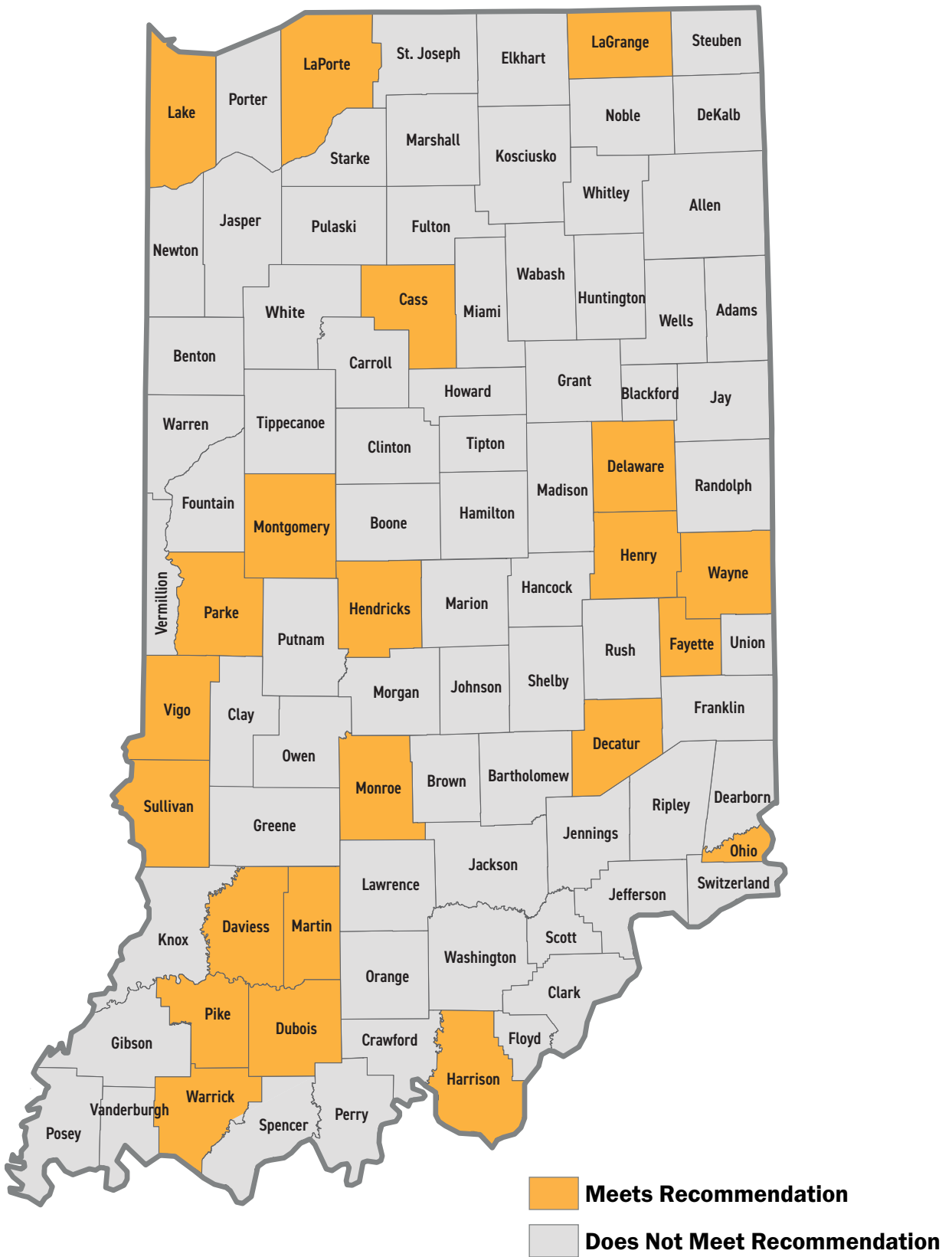
Table 3.1 **LOCAL ACRES BY COUNTY**

County Number	County Name	2024 (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Local 20a/1000	Sum of Local Acres	Difference
1	Adams	36,584	731.68	370.5	(361.18)
2	Allen	399,295	7985.90	4356.67	(3629.23)
3	Bartholomew	84,741	1694.82	903.56	(791.26)
4	Benton	8,853	177.06	60.68	(116.38)
5	Blackford	11,816	236.32	146.94	(89.38)
6	Boone	78,773	1575.46	875.84	(699.62)
7	Brown	15,650	313.00	222.1	(90.90)
8	Carroll	20,747	414.94	206.82	(208.12)
9	Cass	37,559	751.18	1123.91	372.73
10	Clark	127,479	2549.58	1223.58	(1326.00)
11	Clay	26,424	528.48	210.35	(318.13)
12	Clinton	32,895	657.90	184.59	(473.31)
13	Crawford	10,523	210.46	28	(182.46)
14	Daviess	34,097	681.94	2770.44	2088.50
15	Dearborn	51,435	1028.70	807.87	(220.83)
16	Decatur	26,421	528.42	217.27	(311.15)
17	Dekalb	44,330	886.60	247.99	(638.61)
18	Delaware	112,951	2259.02	2418.37	159.35
19	Dubois	43,629	872.58	1608.77	736.19
20	Elkhart	207,436	4148.72	2737.69	(1411.03)
21	Fayette	23,335	466.70	909.4	442.70
22	Floyd	81,931	1638.62	821.16	(817.46)
23	Fountain	16,833	336.66	203.75	(132.91)
24	Franklin	23,136	462.72	305.9	(156.82)
25	Fulton	20,004	400.08	195.21	(204.87)
26	Gibson	33,038	660.76	342.75	(318.01)
27	Grant	66,458	1329.16	337.25	(991.91)
28	Greene	31,219	624.38	340	(284.38)
29	Hamilton	379,704	7594.08	4315.15	(3278.93)
30	Hancock	88,810	1776.20	496.18	(1280.02)
31	Harrison	39,978	799.56	885	85.44
32	Hendricks	190,629	3812.58	3893.37	80.79
33	Henry	49,081	981.62	1527.7	546.08
34	Howard	84,082	1681.64	1170.96	(510.68)
35	Huntington	36,944	738.88	250.13	(488.75)
36	Jackson	47,420	948.40	247.95	(700.45)
37	Jasper	33,387	667.74	237.82	(429.92)
38	Jay	20,164	403.28	200.2	(203.08)
39	Jefferson	32,921	658.42	333.15	(325.27)
40	Jennings	27,634	552.68	525	(27.68)
41	Johnson	170,614	3412.28	1662.97	(1749.31)
42	Knox	35,872	717.44	697.45	(19.99)
43	Kosciusko	80,669	1613.38	304.18	(1309.20)
44	LaGrange	41,122	822.44	838.32	15.88
45	Lake	502,955	10059.10	11092.34	1033.24
46	LaPorte	111,348	2226.96	2645.15	418.19
47	Lawrence	45,192	903.84	516.04	(387.80)

County Number	County Name	2024 (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Local 20a/1000	Sum of Local Acres	Difference
48	Madison	134,222	2684.44	1203.92	(1480.52)
49	Marion	981,628	19632.56	11899.06	(7733.50)
50	Marshall	46,464	929.28	523.74	(405.54)
51	Martin	9,864	197.28	264.6	67.32
52	Miami	35,613	712.26	308.23	(404.03)
53	Monroe	140,702	2814.04	4676.94	1862.90
54	Montgomery	38,633	772.66	923.48	150.82
55	Morgan	73,825	1476.50	526.6	(949.90)
56	Newton	14,131	282.62	133	(149.62)
57	Noble	47,811	956.22	855.56	(100.66)
58	Ohio	5,996	119.92	131.71	11.79
59	Orange	19,824	396.48	184	(212.48)
60	Owen	21,851	437.02	23	(414.02)
61	Parke	16,508	330.16	515.2	185.04
62	Perry	19,320	386.40	263.35	(123.05)
63	Pike	12,116	242.32	427.87	185.55
64	Porter	175,860	3517.20	2882.44	(634.76)
65	Posey	25,067	501.34	210.81	(290.53)
66	Pulaski	12,421	248.42	74.44	(173.98)
67	Putnam	37,804	756.08	175.5	(580.58)
68	Randolph	24,337	486.74	184.25	(302.49)
69	Ripley	29,214	584.28	543.18	(41.10)
70	Rush	16,759	335.18	155.85	(179.33)
71	St. Joseph	273,744	5474.88	3411.46	(2063.42)
72	Scott	24,751	495.02	157.6	(337.42)
73	Shelby	45,654	913.08	386.15	(526.93)
74	Spencer	20,192	403.84	390.77	(13.07)
75	Starke	23,463	469.26	270	(199.26)
76	Steuben	34,862	697.24	420.09	(277.15)
77	Sullivan	20,768	415.36	2619.96	2204.60
78	Switzerland	9,988	199.76	71.61	(128.15)
79	Tippecanoe	191,650	3833.00	2868.86	(964.14)
80	Tipton	15,324	306.48	246.3	(60.18)
81	Union	6,884	137.68	30	(107.68)
82	Vanderburgh	180,387	3607.74	1956.21	(1651.53)
83	Vermillion	15,516	310.32	182.51	(127.81)
84	Vigo	106,166	2123.32	4167.52	2044.20
85	Wabash	30,777	615.54	282.5	(333.04)
86	Warren	8,451	169.02	164.96	(4.06)
87	Warrick	66,339	1326.78	2364.66	1037.88
88	Washington	28,345	566.90	499.4	(67.50)
89	Wayne	66,410	1328.20	1751.8	423.60
90	Wells	28,798	575.96	320.96	(255.00)
91	White	24,833	496.66	185.39	(311.27)
92	Whitley	34,885	697.70	261.8	(435.90)
<b>Statewide Local Acres</b>		<b>6,924,275</b>	<b>138485.50</b>	<b>106113.66</b>	<b>(32371.84)</b>

Figure 3.2

### LOCAL OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES, BY COUNTY



### Local (owned by a county, township, city, or town) Acres by Region

**A word about “Regions” in this document:** Previous authors of the Indiana SCORP, going back decades, have used a number of different ways to divide the state into manageable regions or groups of counties. These regions would share some aspects that gave certain advantages to analyzing them in aggregate. The past several SCORPs have used a regional map first obtained from the Indiana Association of Regional Councils, under the former State of Indiana Department of Planning in the early 1970s. This map divided Indiana into 18 regions, based on groups of counties that had officially banded together in development districts or planning commissions for shared economic development, coordination of urban and regional planning, and intergovernmental cooperation. Since created, the IARC’s member county groups have changed many times, and by

2010 many of the new regional councils bore little resemblance to their old counterparts. This made it time for the DNR to adopt the latest version of IARC’s regions. The latest (as of August 2025) map of the IARC’s member councils shows 16 different regional councils (all with different names), listed in alphabetical order and numbered 1-16. (The old list had several “subdivided” regions, such as 3A and 3B). The current IARC map also makes it clear that a number of counties in the western and southern portions of the state have opted not to participate in any regional planning councils; these counties will be numbered as region 17 on the DNR maps in this SCORP and will be listed as unaffiliated.

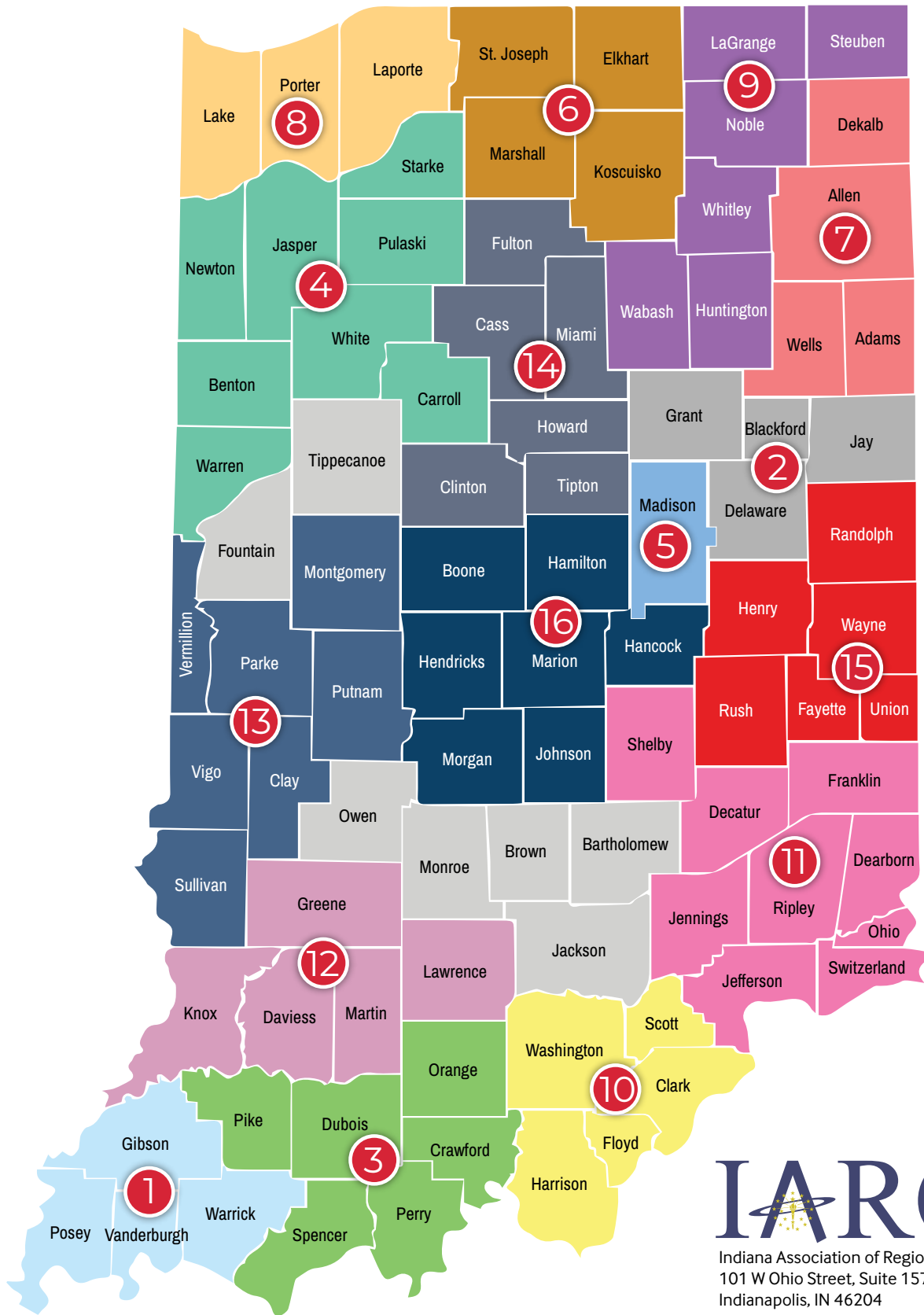
Out of the 16 IARC member regions and 17th unaffiliated group of counties, 12 regions (56%) are deficient in local-level public outdoor-recreation acreage.

Table 3.2 **Local Acres by Region**

Region	2024 Population (Estimated)	Percent of Population Change	Recommended Acres; Local 20a/1000	Sum of Local Acres	Difference
1	304,831	0.74	6096.62	4874.43	(1222.19)
2	211,389	0.25	4227.78	3102.76	(1125.02)
3	125,604	0.27	2512.08	2902.76	390.68
4	146,286	1.07	2925.72	1333.11	(1592.61)
5	134,222	3.12	2684.44	1203.92	(1480.52)
6	608,313	0.39	12166.26	6977.07	(5189.19)
7	509,007	3.15	10180.14	5296.12	(4884.02)
8	790,163	0.71	15803.26	16619.93	816.67
9	226,401	0.91	4528.02	2908.4	(1619.62)
10	302,484	2.82	6049.68	3586.74	(2462.94)
11	252,399	0.79	5047.98	3321.84	(1726.14)
12	156,244	0.64	3124.88	4588.53	1463.65
13	261,819	0.87	5236.38	8794.52	3558.14
14	225,477	(0.37)	4509.54	3229.2	(1280.34)
15	186,806	(0.13)	3736.12	4559	822.88
16	1,963,983	4.09	39279.66	23669.17	(15610.49)
17	518,847	1.93	10376.94	9146.16	(1230.78)
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>6,924,275</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>138485.50</b>	<b>106113.66</b>	<b>(32371.84)</b>

Figure 3.3

### INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS PLANNING REGIONS



Indiana Association of Regional Councils  
101 W Ohio Street, Suite 1575  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
317.829.3659

**1. Evansville Regional Economic Partnership**

Patrick Hickey  
 318 Main Street, Suite 400,  
 Evansville, IN 47708  
 P: 812.423.2020 F: 812.423.2080  
 phickey@evvregion.com  
 www.evansvilleregion.com

**2. East Central Indiana Regional Planning District**

Bill Walters, Executive Director  
 1208 White River Blvd, Ste 127, Muncie, IN 47303  
 P: 765.713.7000  
 bwalters@ecirpd.org  
 www.ecirpd.org

**3. Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission**

Nathan Held, Executive Director  
 221 E First Street, Ferdinand, IN 47532  
 P: 812.367.8455 F: 812.367.8171  
 nathan@ind15rpc.org  
 www.ind15rpc.org

**4. Kankakee - Iroquois Regional Planning Commission**

Edwin Buswell, Executive Director  
 115 E 4th Street, PO Box 127 Monon, IN 47959  
 P: 219.253.6658 F: 219.253.6659  
 elb@kirpc.net  
 www.kirpc.net

**5. Madison County Council of Governments**

Jerrold Bridges, Executive Director  
 739 Main Street Anderson, IN 46016  
 P: 765.641.9482 F: 765.641.9486  
 jerry@heartlandmpo.org  
 www.mccog.net

**6. Michiana Area Council of Governments**

James Turnwald, Executive Director  
 227 W Jefferson Blvd, 1120 County/City Building  
 South Bend, IN 46601  
 P: 574.287.1829 F: 574.287.1840  
 jturnwald@macog.com - www.macog.com

**7. Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council**

Dan Avery, Executive Director  
 200 E Berry Street, Suite 230  
 Ft. Wayne, IN 46802  
 P: 260.449.7309 F: 260.449.7682  
 Dan.avery@co.allen.in.us  
 www.nircc.com

**8. Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission**

Ty Warner, Executive Director  
 6100 Southport Rd, Portage, IN 46368  
 P: 219.763.6060 F: 219.762.1653  
 twarner@nirpc.org  
 www.nirpc.org

**9. Region III-A Economic Development District & Regional Planning Commission**

Matt Brinkman, Executive Director  
 217 Fairview Blvd, Kendallville, IN 46755  
 P: 260.347.4714 F: 260.347.4718  
 mbrinkman@region3a.org  
 www.region3a.org

**10. River Hills Economic Development District & Regional Planning Commission**

Corey Cochran, Executive Director  
 300 Spring St, Suite 2A, Jeffersonville, IN 47130  
 P: 812.288.4624 F: 812.288.8105  
 ccochran@riverhills.cc  
 www.riverhills.cc

**11. Southeastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission**

Mary McCarty, Executive Director  
 405 W. US Hwy 50, PO Box 765 Versailles, IN 47042  
 P: 812.689.5505 F: 812.689.3526  
 mary.mccarty@sirpc.org  
 www.sirpc.org

**12. Southern Indiana Development Commission**

Greg Jones, Executive Director  
 PO Box 442, Loogootee, IN 47553  
 P: 812.295.3707 F: 812.295.3717  
 gejones@sidc.cc  
 www.sidc.cc

**13. Thrive West Central**

Ryan Keller, Executive Director  
 2800 Poplar Street Suite 9A  
 Terre Haute, IN 47803  
 P: 812.238.1561 F: 812.238.1564  
 rkeller@westcentralin.com  
 www.thrivewestcentralin.com

**14. North Central Indiana Regional Planning Council**

Steven Ray, Executive Director  
 1525 West Hoosier Boulevard, Suite 204  
 Peru, IN 46970  
 P: 765.689.4026  
 sray@ncirpc.com  
 www.ncirpc.com

**15. Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission**

Gertrud Whitaker, Executive Director  
 401 East Main Street  
 Richmond, IN 47374  
 P: 513.325.6351  
 gwhitaker@easternindianarpc.org

**16. Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization**

Anna Gremling, Executive Director  
 200 East Washington Street, Suite 2322  
 Indianapolis, IN 46204  
 P: 317.327.5487 F: 317.327.5950  
 info@indympo.org  
 www.indympo.org

### Total (statewide) Local Acres

Just because local acres of public outdoor recreation land are deficient by both county and region, it does not mean that the total (statewide) level is deficient. Indiana has grown 1.97% in population, to 6,924,275 residents, according to the population projections published by the U.S. Census in 2024. Multiplying the current population by the recommended Local LOS of 20 acres of public outdoor recreation land per 1,000 people (.02 acre per person) equals 138,485.50 acres. Subtracting the current supply of local acres (106,113.66 acres) equals a statewide deficit of local public outdoor recreation land of 32,371.84 acres.

### Why Are There Deficits in Locally Owned Public Outdoor Recreation Acres?

There are many reasons why such a high percentage of counties and regions in the state have a deficit in the number of local public outdoor recreation acres. A few possible explanations are:

- Nearby State- or federal-owned properties may provide for significant public recreation needs, causing local governments to perceive that they may not have to supply as many local parks.
- A lack of community resources and support to acquire, develop and/or maintain local outdoor recreation properties.
- Communities in that county/region may lack the capacity, organization or structure—such as park boards and/or park departments—to operate new or existing parks.
- The communities in that county/region may not have enough advocacy among underserved users and user groups to motivate local government leaders to acquire and/or develop sufficient local park land.
- A need for adequate funding for acquisition, development, personnel, operations and maintenance of existing or new public outdoor recreation properties.

## STATE/FED OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES LISTED BY COUNTY AND REGION: STATE AND FEDERAL PUBLIC OUTDOOR RECREATION LAND

The DNR examines the supply of State/federal public outdoor recreation acres (public outdoor recreation acres mostly owned by the State or federal government, as well as some nonprofits) at the same geographic scale as it does local public outdoor recreation acres: by county, region and total (statewide).

### State/Federal (State and Federal-owned) Acres by County

The third set of data tables in this SCORP covers State, federal, and certain nonprofit (when open to the public) outdoor recreation acres by county, illustrating those counties that may need more assistance in improving their supply of State and federal public outdoor recreation acreage. In the “Difference” column, a bracketed number in red print (X), indicates a negative or deficient number of acres of outdoor recreation land.

Let’s look at the Indiana State/Federal Acres by County Table listing for Adams County as an example (Figure 3.2). From the left-hand column:

- County ID number (1).
- County Name (Adams).
- 2024 U.S. Census County Population Estimate (36,584 residents).
- DNR-recommended LOS Local Acres of Outdoor-Recreation Land (.035 acre\* 36,584 people = 1,280.44 acres recommended).
- Current inventory of State/federal acres of outdoor recreation land (570.42 acres)
- Recommended number of outdoor recreation acres—current number of State/federal outdoor recreation acres = “Difference” (570.42 State/Fed Acres - 1,280.44 Recommended Acres = 710.02 acre deficit of OR acres in Adams County)

Out of 92 counties total in the state, 42% are deficient in State/federal public outdoor recreation

Figure 3.4 State/Fed Acres Example

County Number	County Name	2024 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; State/Fed 35a/1,000 People	Sum Of County State/Fed Acres	Difference
1	Adams	36,584	1280.44	570.42	(710.02)

acres (39 counties).

In Indiana, 39 counties (42%) do not meet the DNR recommendation of 35 acres of State/federal outdoor recreation acres per 1,000 people.

Indiana has a wide and varied array of state parks and federal properties that provide for the outdoor recreation needs of Hoosiers. The nature of these less-numerous, much larger, more widely scattered parks, which serve a bigger service area, tends to create gaps between service areas when viewed at the county level.

These gaps don't happen as often with local outdoor recreation acreage. Some counties have an abundance of State, federal or nonprofit acres. Those that do not often have little or no State, federal or nonprofit properties. When looking at the data broken down by county, please note that the sheer size of some of these State/federal properties tends to emphasize the haves versus the have-nots.

Figure 3.5

### STATE/FED OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES, BY COUNTY



Table 3.3 **STATE & FEDERAL ACRES BY COUNTY**

County Number	County Name	2024 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; State/Fed 35a/1000	Sum Of County State/Fed Acres	Difference
1	Adams	36,584	1280.44	570.42	(710.02)
2	Allen	399,295	13975.33	1643.5	(12331.83)
3	Bartholomew	84,741	2965.94	1344.2	(1621.74)
4	Benton	8,853	309.86	2268	1958.15
5	Blackford	11,816	413.56	0	(413.56)
6	Boone	78,773	2757.06	38.16	(2718.90)
7	Brown	15,650	547.75	68372	67824.25
8	Carroll	20,747	726.15	313.5	(412.65)
9	Cass	37,559	1314.57	37	(1277.57)
10	Clark	127,479	4461.77	19845.21	15383.45
11	Clay	26,424	924.84	2496	1571.16
12	Clinton	32,895	1151.33	29	(1122.33)
13	Crawford	10,523	368.31	39229.13	38860.83
14	Daviess	34,097	1193.40	9779.01	8585.62
15	Dearborn	51,435	1800.23	817.2	(983.03)
16	Decatur	26,421	924.74	137.08	(787.66)
17	Dekalb	44,330	1551.55	350.4	(1201.15)
18	Delaware	112,951	3953.29	132	(3821.29)
19	Dubois	43,629	1527.02	11850.66	10323.65
20	Elkhart	207,436	7260.26	578.41	(6681.85)
21	Fayette	23,335	816.73	108	(708.73)
22	Floyd	81,931	2867.59	1530	(1337.59)
23	Fountain	16,833	589.16	735.86	146.71
24	Franklin	23,136	809.76	9640.96	8831.20
25	Fulton	20,004	700.14	789.94	89.80
26	Gibson	33,038	1156.33	5681.66	4525.33
27	Grant	66,458	2326.03	1422	(904.03)
28	Greene	31,219	1092.67	17146.05	16053.39
29	Hamilton	379,704	13289.64	23	(13266.64)
30	Hancock	88,810	3108.35	0	(3108.35)
31	Harrison	39,978	1399.23	18947.29	17548.06
32	Hendricks	190,629	6672.02	0	(6672.02)
33	Henry	49,081	1717.84	3912.46	2194.63
34	Howard	84,082	2942.87	86	(2856.87)
35	Huntington	36,944	1293.04	15519	14225.96
36	Jackson	47,420	1659.70	38335.47	36675.77
37	Jasper	33,387	1168.55	6544.1	5375.56
38	Jay	20,164	705.74	614.28	(91.46)
39	Jefferson	32,921	1152.24	19113.52	17961.29
40	Jennings	27,634	967.19	18355.86	17388.67
41	Johnson	170,614	5971.49	4649	(1322.49)
42	Knox	35,872	1255.52	418.52	(837.00)
43	Kosciusko	80,669	2823.42	4669.59	1846.18
44	LaGrange	41,122	1439.27	9870.33	8431.06
45	Lake	502,955	17603.43	5386.47	(12216.96)
46	LaPorte	111,348	3897.18	10460.47	6563.29
47	Lawrence	45,192	1581.72	17356.32	15774.60

County Number	County Name	2024 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; State/Fed 35a/1000	Sum Of County State/Fed Acres	Difference
48	Madison	134,222	4697.77	285	(4412.77)
49	Marion	981,628	34356.98	2213.41	(32143.57)
50	Marshall	46,464	1626.24	1436.85	(189.39)
51	Martin	9,864	345.24	17956.41	17611.17
52	Miami	35,613	1246.46	1481.22	234.77
53	Monroe	140,702	4924.57	41999.6	37075.03
54	Montgomery	38,633	1352.16	1781.77	429.62
55	Morgan	73,825	2583.88	6743.36	4159.49
56	Newton	14,131	494.59	22189.69	21695.11
57	Noble	47,811	1673.39	5986.34	4312.96
58	Ohio	5,996	209.86	22.29	(187.57)
59	Orange	19,824	693.84	47985	47291.16
60	Owen	21,851	764.79	12667.87	11903.09
61	Parke	16,508	577.78	8165.07	7587.29
62	Perry	19,320	676.20	63020.46	62344.26
63	Pike	12,116	424.06	17040.79	16616.73
64	Porter	175,860	6155.10	13437.38	7282.28
65	Posey	25,067	877.35	13617.92	12740.58
66	Pulaski	12,421	434.74	10524.17	10089.44
67	Putnam	37,804	1323.14	8600.65	7277.51
68	Randolph	24,337	851.80	930.72	78.93
69	Ripley	29,214	1022.49	33369	32346.51
70	Rush	16,759	586.57	0	(586.57)
71	St. Joseph	273,744	9581.04	4234.47	(5346.57)
72	Scott	24,751	866.29	10683.2	9816.92
73	Shelby	45,654	1597.89	2	(1595.89)
74	Spencer	20,192	706.72	3728	3021.28
75	Starke	23,463	821.21	3996.74	3175.54
76	Steuben	34,862	1220.17	7028.93	5808.76
77	Sullivan	20,768	726.88	13653.41	12926.53
78	Switzerland	9,988	349.58	1307.39	957.81
79	Tippecanoe	191,650	6707.75	2496.56	(4211.19)
80	Tipton	15,324	536.34	37	(499.34)
81	Union	6,884	240.94	9506.54	9265.60
82	Vanderburgh	180,387	6313.55	632	(5681.55)
83	Vermillion	15,516	543.06	464.02	(79.04)
84	Vigo	106,166	3715.81	480.13	(3235.68)
85	Wabash	30,777	1077.20	15349.55	14272.36
86	Warren	8,451	295.79	332	36.22
87	Warrick	66,339	2321.87	7914.1	5592.24
88	Washington	28,345	992.08	18039.96	17047.89
89	Wayne	66,410	2324.35	637.7	(1686.65)
90	Wells	28,798	1007.93	2667.7	1659.77
91	White	24,833	869.16	623.79	(245.37)
92	Whitley	34,885	1220.98	717.07	(503.91)
<b>Statewide State/Fed Acres</b>		<b>6,924,275</b>	<b>242349.63</b>	<b>807134.26</b>	<b>564784.64</b>

### State/Federal Acres (State, Federal and non-profit owned) by Region

Six regions in Indiana (28%) do not meet the DNR recommendations of 35 acres of State/federal/non-profit outdoor recreation acres per 1,000 people. The service-area gaps mentioned at the county level of State/federal/non-profit acres are not as pronounced when viewed at the region level. The scattered nature of State/federal outdoor recreation properties simply doesn't show up as well when viewed at this larger geographic scale. It should be noted that the majority of the regions that are deficient in State/federal acres of public outdoor recreation land are either in the central or northern portions of the state. The large number of State and federally owned public outdoor recreation properties in the southern portion of the state, such as Hoosier National Forest and Morgan-Monroe State Forest, help those areas meet the DNR State/federal/nonprofit LOS recommendations for public OR land when viewed by region.

### TOTAL OUTDOOR RECREATION ACRES LISTED BY COUNTY AND REGION: ALL PUBLIC OUTDOOR RECREATION LANDS CURRENTLY RECORDED IN THE DNR FACILITIES INVENTORY

DNR also examines the supply of public outdoor recreation lands in Indiana by tallying the local and State/federal/nonprofit data and looking at them as a total. The total (statewide) LOS for Indiana is created by adding the other two LOS figures: 20 acres/1,000 and 35 acres/1,000, for a total LOS of 55 acres/1,000 people. These totals of all recorded public outdoor recreation acreage will be listed under county-, region- and statewide-level totals in the same way the local and State/federal/nonprofit data were. This provides a snapshot of all public outdoor recreation lands as recorded in the DNR facilities inventory database.

Table 3.4 **State & Federal Acres by Region**

Regions	2020 Population (Estimated)	2024 Population	Percent of Population Change	Recommended Acres; State/Fed 35a/1000	Sum Of State/Fed/ Non-Profit Acres	Difference
1	302,582	304,831	0.74	10669.09	27845.68	17176.60
2	210,854	211,389	0.25	7398.62	2168.28	(5230.34)
3	125,261	125,604	0.27	4396.14	182854.04	178457.90
4	144,741	146,286	1.07	5120.01	46791.99	41671.98
5	130,160	134,222	3.12	4697.77	285	(4412.77)
6	605,931	608,313	0.39	21290.96	10919.32	(10371.64)
7	493,454	509,007	3.15	17815.25	5232.02	(12583.23)
8	784,588	790,163	0.71	27655.71	29284.32	1628.62
9	224,356	226,401	0.91	7924.04	54471.22	46547.19
10	294,174	302,484	2.82	10586.94	69045.66	58458.72
11	250,421	252,399	0.79	8833.97	82765.3	73931.34
12	155,249	156,244	0.64	5468.54	62656.31	57187.77
13	259,571	261,819	0.87	9163.67	35641.05	26477.39
14	226,315	225,477	(0.37)	7891.70	2460.16	(5431.54)
15	187,043	186,806	(0.13)	6538.21	15095.42	8557.21
16	1,886,770	1,963,983	4.09	68739.41	13666.93	(55072.48)
17	509,027	518,847	1.93	18159.65	165951.56	147791.92
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>6,790,497</b>	<b>6,924,275</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>242349.63</b>	<b>807134.26</b>	<b>564784.64</b>

### Total (statewide) Acres by County

A total of 50 counties in Indiana meet DNR's recommended total LOS of 55 acres of public OR land per 1,000 people. That is three fewer counties meeting the Total LOS (when tallied by county) than during the last SCORP cycle.

Of the 50 counties that meet the total LOS recommendation, 13 counties (14% of all Indiana counties) actually meet all three LOS recommendations—Local, State/federal/nonprofit and Total (statewide):

- Daviess
- Dubois
- Harrison
- Henry
- LaGrange
- LaPorte
- Martin
- Monroe
- Montgomery
- Parke
- Pike
- Sullivan
- Warrick

Of the 42 counties that do not meet the total LOS recommendation, 31 (34% of all Indiana counties) are deficient in all three LOS recommendations—Local, State/federal and Total (statewide):

- Adams
- Allen
- Bartholomew
- Blackford
- Boone
- Carroll
- Clinton
- Dearborn
- Decatur
- Dekalb
- Elkhart
- Floyd
- Grant
- Hamilton
- Hancock
- Howard
- Jay
- Johnson
- Knox
- Madison
- Marion
- Marshall
- Rush
- St. Joseph
- Shelby
- Tippecanoe
- Tipton
- Vanderburgh
- Vermillion
- White
- Whitley



Table 3.5 **TOTAL ACRES BY COUNTY**

County Number	County Name	2018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Total 35a/1000	Sum Of County Total Acres	Difference
1	Adams	36,584	2012.12	940.92	(1071.20)
2	Allen	399,295	21961.23	6000.17	(15961.06)
3	Bartholomew	84,741	4660.76	2247.76	(2413.00)
4	Benton	8,853	486.92	2328.68	1841.77
5	Blackford	11,816	649.88	146.94	(502.94)
6	Boone	78,773	4332.52	914	(3418.52)
7	Brown	15,650	860.75	68594.1	67733.35
8	Carroll	20,747	1141.09	520.32	(620.77)
9	Cass	37,559	2065.75	1160.91	(904.84)
10	Clark	127,479	7011.35	21068.79	14057.45
11	Clay	26,424	1453.32	2706.35	1253.03
12	Clinton	32,895	1809.23	213.59	(1595.64)
13	Crawford	10,523	578.77	39257.13	38678.37
14	Daviess	34,097	1875.34	12549.45	10674.12
15	Dearborn	51,435	2828.93	1625.07	(1203.86)
16	Decatur	26,421	1453.16	354.35	(1098.81)
17	Dekalb	44,330	2438.15	598.39	(1839.76)
18	Delaware	112,951	6212.31	2550.37	(3661.94)
19	Dubois	43,629	2399.60	13459.43	11059.84
20	Elkhart	207,436	11408.98	3316.1	(8092.88)
21	Fayette	23,335	1283.43	1017.4	(266.03)
22	Floyd	81,931	4506.21	2351.16	(2155.05)
23	Fountain	16,833	925.82	939.61	13.80
24	Franklin	23,136	1272.48	9946.86	8674.38
25	Fulton	20,004	1100.22	985.15	(115.07)
26	Gibson	33,038	1817.09	6024.41	4207.32
27	Grant	66,458	3655.19	1759.25	(1895.94)
28	Greene	31,219	1717.05	17486.05	15769.01
29	Hamilton	379,704	20883.72	4338.15	(16545.57)
30	Hancock	88,810	4884.55	496.18	(4388.37)
31	Harrison	39,978	2198.79	19832.29	17633.50
32	Hendricks	190,629	10484.60	3893.37	(6591.23)
33	Henry	49,081	2699.46	5440.16	2740.71
34	Howard	84,082	4624.51	1256.96	(3367.55)
35	Huntington	36,944	2031.92	15769.13	13737.21
36	Jackson	47,420	2608.10	38583.42	35975.32
37	Jasper	33,387	1836.29	6781.92	4945.64
38	Jay	20,164	1109.02	814.48	(294.54)
39	Jefferson	32,921	1810.66	19446.67	17636.02
40	Jennings	27,634	1519.87	18880.86	17360.99
41	Johnson	170,614	9383.77	6311.97	(3071.80)
42	Knox	35,872	1972.96	1115.97	(856.99)
43	Kosciusko	80,669	4436.80	4973.77	536.98
44	LaGrange	41,122	2261.71	10708.65	8446.94
45	Lake	502,955	27662.53	16478.81	(11183.72)
46	LaPorte	111,348	6124.14	13105.62	6981.48
47	Lawrence	45,192	2485.56	17872.36	15386.80

County Number	County Name	2018 Population (Estimated)	Recommended Acres; Total 35a/1000	Sum Of County Total Acres	Difference
48	Madison	134,222	7382.21	1488.92	(5893.29)
49	Marion	981,628	53989.54	14112.47	(39877.07)
50	Marshall	46,464	2555.52	1960.59	(594.93)
51	Martin	9,864	542.52	18221.01	17678.49
52	Miami	35,613	1958.72	1789.45	(169.27)
53	Monroe	140,702	7738.61	46676.54	38937.93
54	Montgomery	38,633	2124.82	2705.25	580.44
55	Morgan	73,825	4060.38	7269.96	3209.59
56	Newton	14,131	777.21	22322.69	21545.49
57	Noble	47,811	2629.61	6841.9	4212.30
58	Ohio	5,996	329.78	154	(175.78)
59	Orange	19,824	1090.32	48169	47078.68
60	Owen	21,851	1201.81	12690.87	11489.07
61	Parke	16,508	907.94	8680.27	7772.33
62	Perry	19,320	1062.60	63283.81	62221.21
63	Pike	12,116	666.38	17468.66	16802.28
64	Porter	175,860	9672.30	16319.82	6647.52
65	Posey	25,067	1378.69	13828.73	12450.05
66	Pulaski	12,421	683.16	10598.61	9915.46
67	Putnam	37,804	2079.22	8776.15	6696.93
68	Randolph	24,337	1338.54	1114.97	(223.57)
69	Ripley	29,214	1606.77	33912.18	32305.41
70	Rush	16,759	921.75	155.85	(765.90)
71	St. Joseph	273,744	15055.92	7645.93	(7409.99)
72	Scott	24,751	1361.31	10840.8	9479.50
73	Shelby	45,654	2510.97	388.15	(2122.82)
74	Spencer	20,192	1110.56	4118.77	3008.21
75	Starke	23,463	1290.47	4266.74	2976.28
76	Steuben	34,862	1917.41	7449.02	5531.61
77	Sullivan	20,768	1142.24	16273.37	15131.13
78	Switzerland	9,988	549.34	1379	829.66
79	Tippecanoe	191,650	10540.75	5365.42	(5175.33)
80	Tipton	15,324	842.82	283.3	(559.52)
81	Union	6,884	378.62	9536.54	9157.92
82	Vanderburgh	180,387	9921.29	2588.21	(7333.08)
83	Vermillion	15,516	853.38	646.53	(206.85)
84	Vigo	106,166	5839.13	4647.65	(1191.48)
85	Wabash	30,777	1692.74	15632.05	13939.32
86	Warren	8,451	464.81	496.96	32.16
87	Warrick	66,339	3648.65	10278.76	6630.12
88	Washington	28,345	1558.98	18539.36	16980.39
89	Wayne	66,410	3652.55	2389.5	(1263.05)
90	Wells	28,798	1583.89	2988.66	1404.77
91	White	24,833	1365.82	809.18	(556.64)
92	Whitley	34,885	1918.68	978.87	(939.81)
<b>Statewide Total Acres</b>		<b>6,924,275</b>	<b>380,835.13</b>	<b>913,247.92</b>	<b>532,412.80</b>

Figure 3.6

### TOTAL RECREATION ACRES, BY COUNTY



### Total (statewide) Acres by Region

Eleven regions in Indiana meet DNR's recommended total LOS of 55 acres of public outdoor recreation land per 1,000 people. This statistic decreased by one region since the last SCORP cycle. The six regions deficient in total outdoor recreation acreage (35% of all Indiana regions) are the same as recorded in the current State/federal acreage tables, tallied by region. Given the size of many of the State/federal parcels, as noted earlier, the State/federal property effect carries over into the total data.

Of the 11 regions that meet the total LOS recommendation, five regions (29% of all Indiana regions) actually meet all three LOS recommendations—Local, State/federal and Total (statewide):

- Indiana 15 Regional Planning District (Region 3).
- Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (Region 8).
- Southern Indiana Development Commission (Region 12).

- West-Central Indiana Economic Development District (Region 13).
- Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (Region 15).

The six regions that do not meet the total LOS recommendation (35% of all Indiana regions) are actually deficient in all three LOS recommendations—Local, State/federal and Total (Statewide):

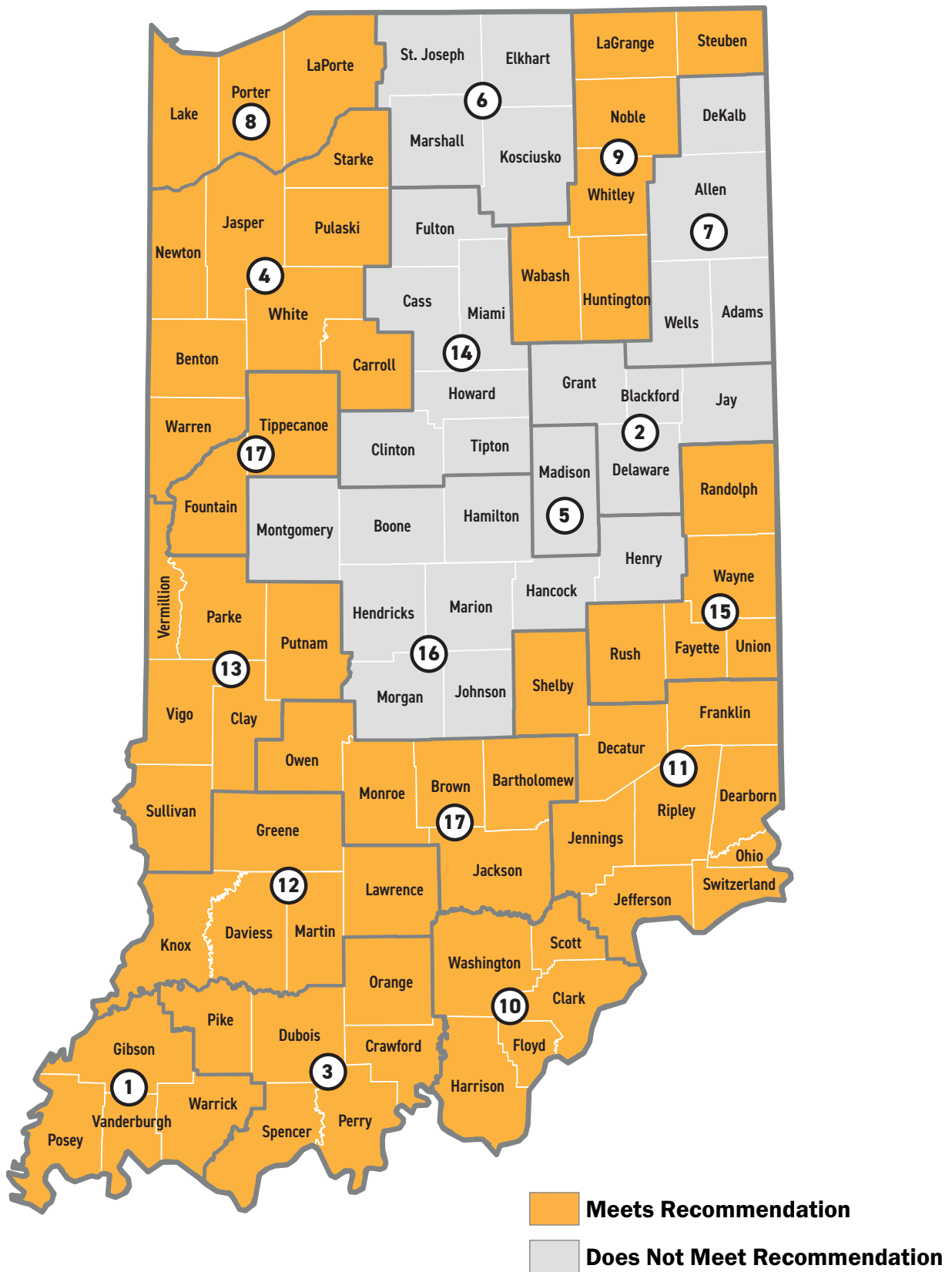
- Energize-ECI Regional Planning District (Region 2).
- Madison County Council of Governments (Region 5).
- Michiana Area Council of Governments (Region 6).
- Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (Region 7).
- North Central Indiana Regional Planning Council (Region 14).
- Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (Region 16).

Table 3.6 Total Acres by Region

Regions	2020 Population (Estimated)	2024 Population	Percent of Population Change	Recommended Acres; Total 55a/1000	Sum of Total Acres	Total Difference
1	302,582	304,831	0.74	16765.71	32720.11	15954.41
2	210,854	211,389	0.25	11626.40	5271.04	(6355.36)
3	125,261	125,604	0.27	6908.22	185756.8	178848.58
4	144,741	146,286	1.07	8045.73	48125.1	40079.37
5	130,160	134,222	3.12	7382.21	1488.92	(5893.29)
6	605,931	608,313	0.39	33457.22	17896.39	(15560.83)
7	493,454	509,007	3.15	27995.39	10528.14	(17467.25)
8	784,588	790,163	0.71	43458.97	45904.25	2445.29
9	224,356	226,401	0.91	12452.06	57379.62	44927.57
10	294,174	302,484	2.82	16636.62	72632.4	55995.78
11	250,421	252,399	0.79	13881.95	86087.14	72205.20
12	155,249	156,244	0.64	8593.42	67244.84	58651.42
13	259,571	261,819	0.87	14400.05	44435.57	30035.53
14	226,315	225,477	(0.37)	12401.24	5689.36	(6711.88)
15	187,043	186,806	(0.13)	10274.33	19654.42	9380.09
16	1,886,770	1,963,983	4.09	108019.07	37336.1	(70682.97)
17	509,027	518,847	1.93	28536.59	175097.72	146561.14
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>6,790,497</b>	<b>6,924,275</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>380835.18</b>	<b>913247.92</b>	<b>532412.74</b>

Figure 3.7

### TOTAL ACRES BY REGION



### Total (statewide) Outdoor-Recreation Acres

As noted elsewhere in the SCORP, Indiana has grown 1.97% in population, to 6,924,275 residents, according to the population estimates published by the U.S. Census in 2024. Multiplying the current population by the recommended Total (statewide) LOS of 55 acres of public outdoor recreation land per 1,000 people (.055 acre per person), yields a total of 380,835.13 acres. Subtracting the Total (statewide) Recommended LOS acres (380,835.13) from the current supply of Total (statewide) public outdoor recreation acres (913,247.92) yields a statewide surplus of total public outdoor recreation land of 532,412.80 acres.

### Conclusion of Total Outdoor Recreation Acres

Indiana now ranks 17th in the country in total population as of the 2024 U.S. Census population estimates. That ranking is the same as in 2018 and is two lower than in 2010. Indiana has gained population since 2010, but not as fast as some other states. The total state acreage of Indiana is 23,307,520. Of that total, 913,247.92 acres are designated for outdoor recreation. Indiana therefore has only 3.92% of its land area available for public outdoor recreation.

One observation that cannot be avoided is the continuing difference between counties and regions that have reported surpluses of public outdoor recreation land, and those that have deficits. There are still significant gaps between the haves and have-nots for outdoor recreation acreage in Indiana. As noted earlier, the southern portion of the state tends to have more counties that meet the total LOS guidelines than the northern tier. And when population distribution and service areas are considered, these differ-

ences grow. It was noted in the last four SCORPs that there was an apparent inequity in the distribution of public outdoor recreation acreage statewide. That still has not significantly changed for this SCORP.

### CRITICAL COUNTIES

The definition of “critical county” in Indiana has changed again for this SCORP. That is because the state’s population-growth rate has increased since the last SCORP. A critical county is defined as:

1. A county that does not have the recommended supply of outdoor-recreation acres of 55 acres per 1,000 population or greater.
2. A population-growth rate higher than the 2020 to 2024 estimated Indiana statewide population growth rate of 1.97% (data obtained from the U.S. Census 2020 and 2024 population estimates).

12 counties meet the critical counties criteria:

- Adams
- Allen
- Bartholomew
- Boone
- Carroll
- DeKalb
- Hamilton
- Hancock
- Hendricks
- Johnson
- Madison
- Tippecanoe

If the critical counties criteria used only the supply of local acres of outdoor-recreation land (at 20 acres/1,000 population), the list above would change significantly (up to 20):

- Adams
- Allen
- Bartholomew
- Boone
- Carroll
- Clark
- DeKalb
- Fountain
- Hamilton
- Hancock
- Jackson
- Johnson
- Madison
- Morgan
- Newton
- Owen
- Putnam
- Switzerland
- Tippecanoe
- Wells

Figure 3.8

### CRITICAL COUNTIES BASED ON TOTAL ACRES



Table 3.7 Critical Counties Based On Total Acres

County Number	County Name	2024 Population	Recommended Acres; Total 55a/1000	Sum of County Total Acres	Difference
1	Adams	36,584	2012.12	940.92	(1071.20)
2	Allen	399,295	21961.23	6000.17	(15961.06)
3	Bartholomew	84,741	4660.76	2247.76	(2413.00)
6	Boone	78,773	4332.52	914	(3418.52)
8	Carroll	20,747	1141.09	520.32	(620.77)
17	Dekalb	44,330	2438.15	598.39	(1839.76)
29	Hamilton	379,704	20883.72	4338.15	(16545.57)
30	Hancock	88,810	4884.55	496.18	(4388.37)
32	Hendricks	190,629	10484.60	3893.37	(6591.23)
41	Johnson	170,614	9383.77	6311.97	(3071.80)
48	Madison	134,222	7382.21	1488.92	(5893.29)
79	Tippecanoe	191,650	10540.75	5365.42	(5175.33)