

For Immediate Release

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NH BEA Announces New State Outdoor Recreation Director

Janel Lawton of Franconia will lead state's efforts in leveraging outdoor interests in the economy

CONCORD, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA) announces that Janel Lawton of Franconia will be the new director of BEA's Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry Development (ORID).

Outdoor recreation, from hiking, skiing, and mountain biking, to boating, fishing and OHRVing, is a \$2.2 billion industry in New Hampshire, employing 26,500 people, according to the latest statistics from U.S. Department of Commerce.

BEA established ORID in 2021 to support New Hampshire's diverse outdoor economy as a primary strategy for growing the state's workforce and attracting businesses interested in New Hampshire's pro-growth economy.

"New Hampshire has always been a place where people can pursue their passion for the outdoors, but we've seen its importance throughout the Covid-19 pandemic," said BEA Commissioner Taylor Caswell. "Outdoor recreation plays an increasingly vital role in the state's economic development and Janel brings a unique perspective and experience that will serve all those interests."

Lawton joined BEA in 2021 as its rural economic development administrator, working with public and private stakeholders in six rural counties. She was also the state's program manager for the Northern Borders Regional Commission and is an avid bicyclist, snowboarder and Nordic skier. Her professional background includes marketing, sales, and business development in the private sector, including Garnet Hill, Performance Inc. of Chapel Hill, SC., Loon Mountain Recreation Corp., and Heavenly Ski Resort, Lake Tahoe, Calif.

"I am excited to be named the state's outdoor rec director and to combine my economic development experience with my passion for the outdoor recreation opportunities New Hampshire's natural resources offer," Lawton said. "I look forward to working with our industry, advocates, and employers to continue positioning New Hampshire as a national leader in outdoor recreation opportunities and policy."

About the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs

The Department of Business and Economic Affairs is dedicated to enhancing the economic vitality of the State of New Hampshire while promoting it as a destination for domestic and international visitors. For more information visit <http://www.nheconomy.com> or <http://www.choosenh.com>.