



NATURE HEALS

How the outdoors benefits you and your
community

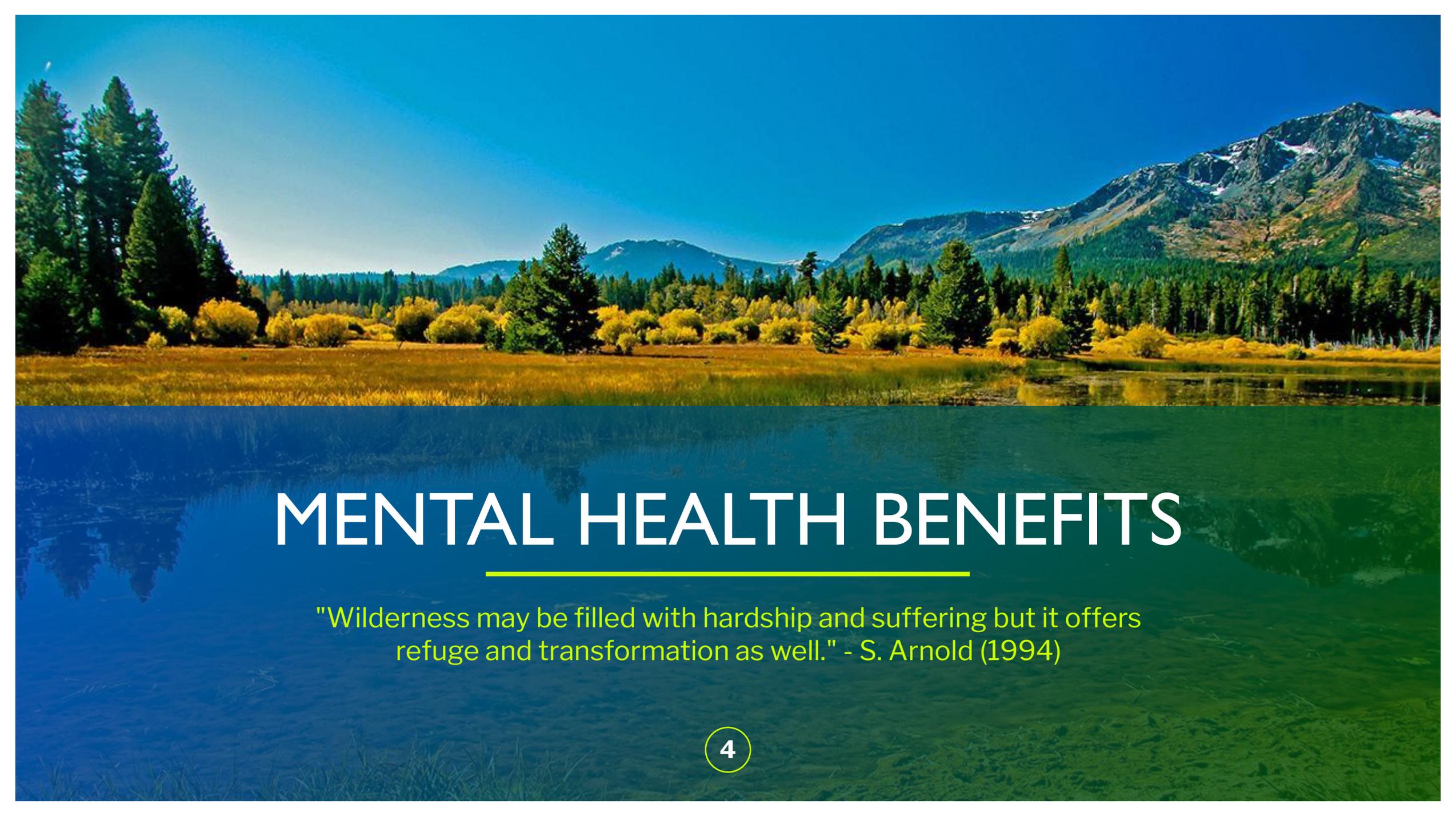


PHYSICAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Recreating outdoors can reduce the risk of several adverse health effects.

- Improvements in biomarkers including cortisol, blood pressure, heart rate, PBF, & cholesterol
- Reduced incidence of type II diabetes, all-cause & cardiovascular mortality, & some cancers
- "Old Friends" Hypothesis – proper immune system development
- Improvements in mobility





MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

"Wilderness may be filled with hardship and suffering but it offers refuge and transformation as well." - S. Arnold (1994)

The outdoors is like the battery for our brains.

- Attention Restoration Theory - stress & anxiety reduction
- Overall reduction in nervous system arousal
- Symptoms of ADD lessen in natural environments
- Mood & self-esteem improvements
- Increased attention levels
- Opportunity for solitude
- Social connectedness
- Unique therapeutic role





COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Outdoor spaces benefit the individual AND their surrounding environment.

- Job provision for millions of people
- Billions of dollars in federal & state tax revenue
- Reduced air & noise pollution
- Sustainability for our planet!



TYPES OF OUTDOOR SPACE

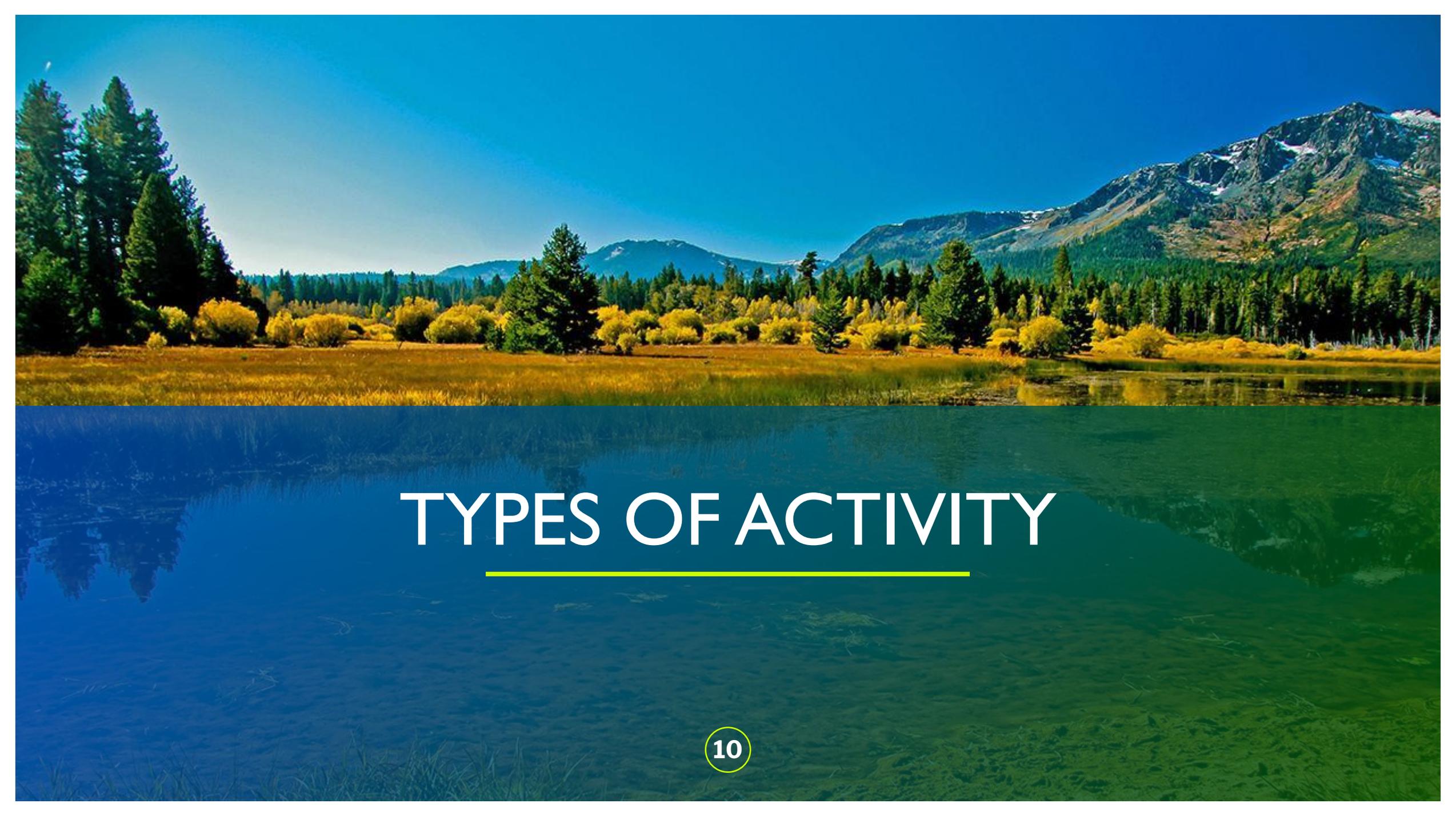
Communities should have a variety of outdoor spaces to offer its residents to encourage recreation in nature.

Spaces

- Natural environments/wildlands – landscapes dominated by blue, green, or brown space with flora & fauna minimally influenced by humans
- Green space
- Brown space
- Blue space

Utility

- Nature-based components
 - Parks, ballfields, playgrounds, conservation areas, forests, greenways, trails, etc.
- Nature-based interventions
 - Programs/strategies/activities for engaging people in nature to achieve improved health/well-being
- Nature-based therapeutic interventions
 - Using natural areas for therapeutic interventions (e.g. adventure therapy)



TYPES OF ACTIVITY





NATURE PRESCRIPTION

Spending time outdoors can give us access to the countless health benefits that nature gives us. But how much time is enough?

- Recommended “dosage”: 120 minutes/week
- Hard threshold; one study found no benefits for those not meeting this 2 hours/week prescription
- Collaboration between park services & healthcare providers to prescribe patients time outdoors can assist the population in meeting physical activity guidelines & making improvements in their mental health



ACCESSIBILITY

BARRIERS

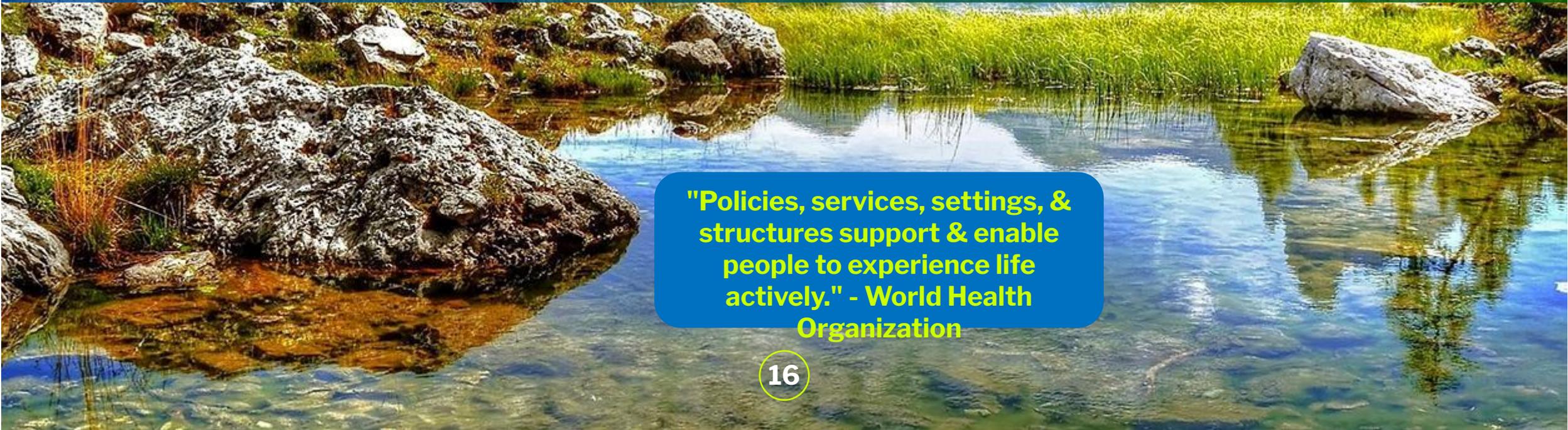
Being outdoors is obviously wonderful for us... why shouldn't everybody be able to reap the benefits?

- Lower income neighborhoods have reduced greenspace/"park deserts" (safety concerns, vacant buildings, litter, poor sidewalks, etc.)
- Lower cognitive ability (e.g. dementia)
- Physical limitations (e.g. walking devices)

ADVOCATE

How can we make change so everyone can have access to our beautiful planet?

- Curb ramps, longer crosswalk times, more & improved sidewalks, well-maintained paths
- Access to restrooms, drinking water, shade, seating, & lighting provides safety & comfort
- Aesthetic appeal
- Accessible location & equipment for various populations (e.g. hiking wheelchair)
- Involve communities in programs like Healthy Parks Healthy People & the Park Prescription program

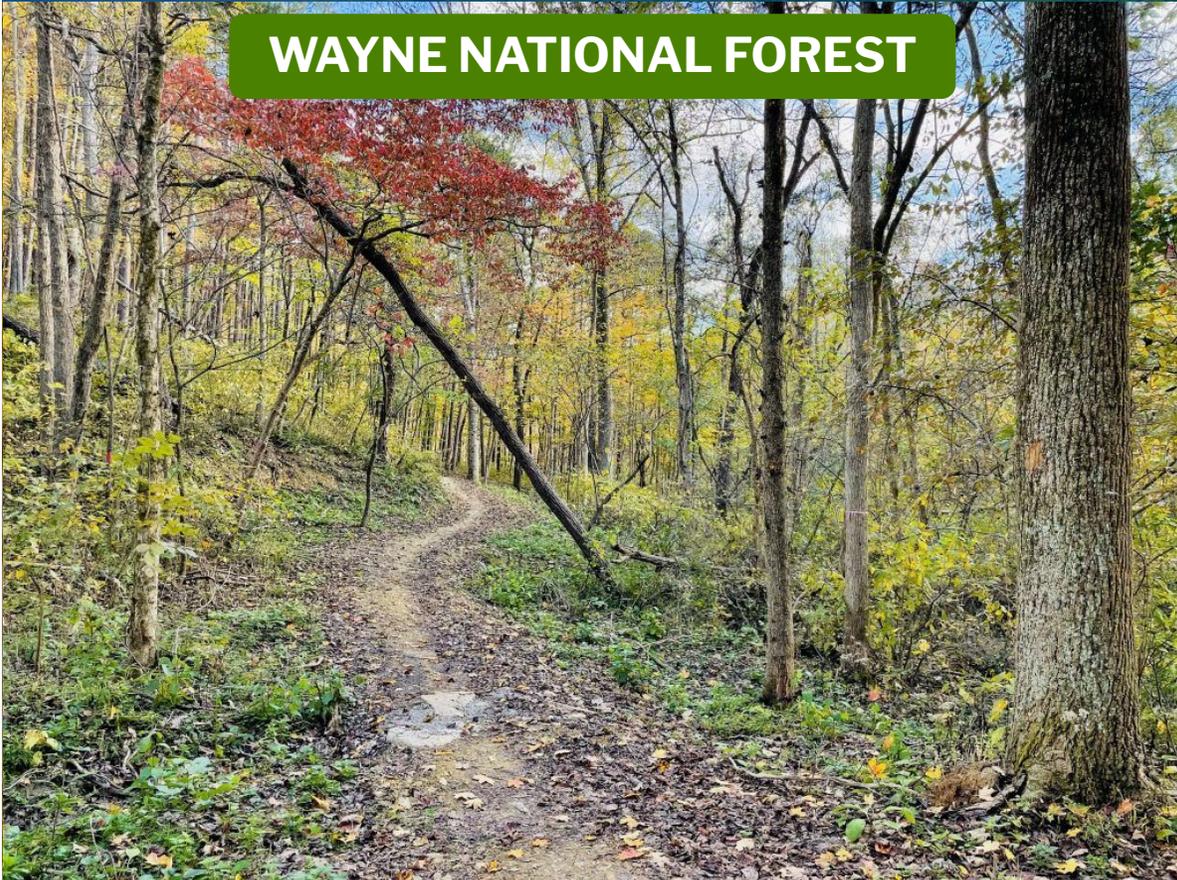


"Policies, services, settings, & structures support & enable people to experience life actively." - World Health Organization

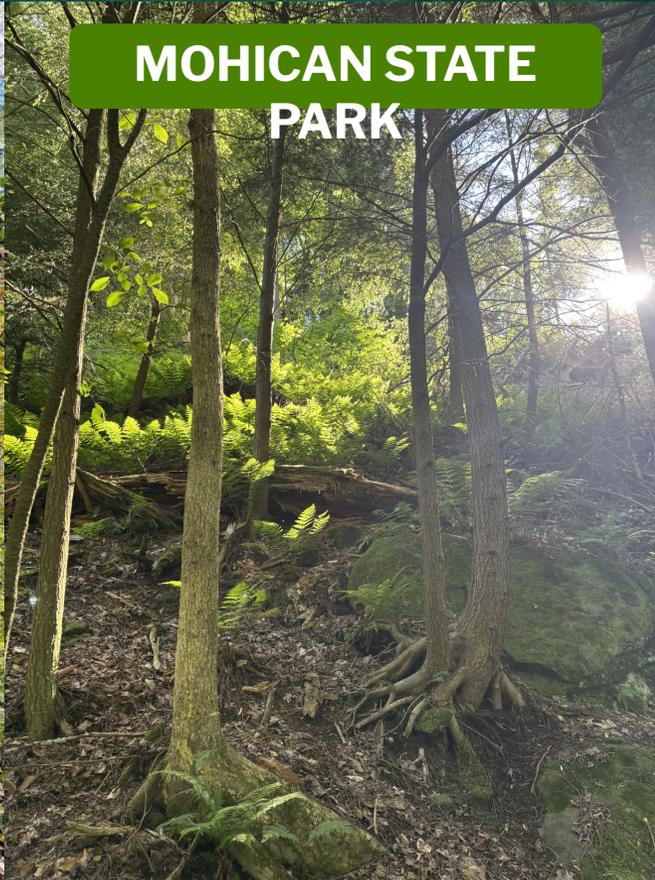
GET OUT IN OHIO!

There are so many gorgeous places right here in Ohio that offer opportunities to recreate outdoors. Here are just a few of them!

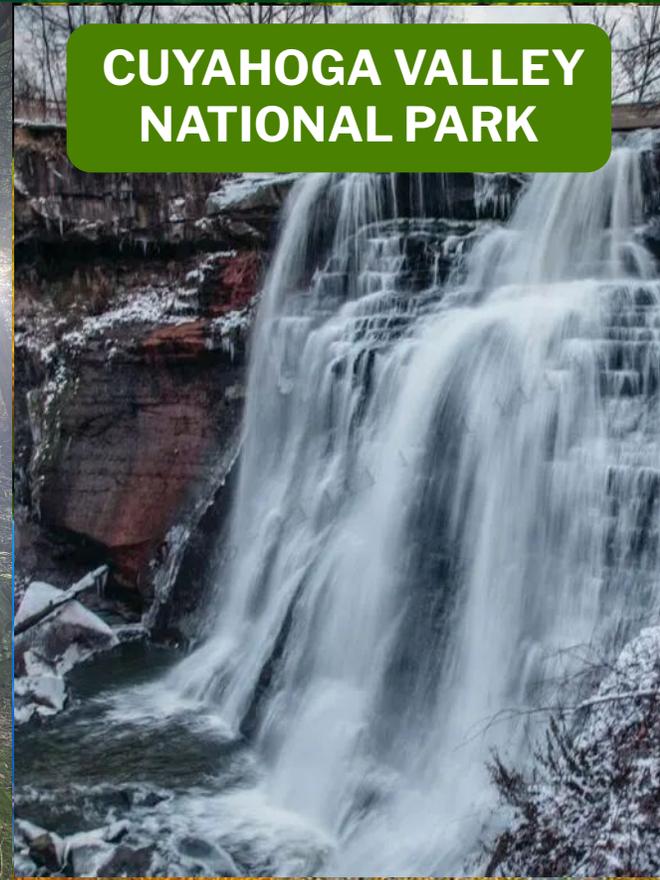
WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST



**MOHICAN STATE
PARK**



**CUYAHOGA VALLEY
NATIONAL PARK**



THANK YOU!

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