



Ohio Outdoor Recreation Conference 2025

Outdoor Recreation Entrepreneurship

Partnering to Customize Building an Entrepreneur Friendly Community

Curriculum for the Outdoor Recreation Sector



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

The Team:

Lead Investigator:

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- Myra Moss, Professor & Educator, Community Development, OSU Extension
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The Outdoor Recreation sector curriculum was developed through a USDA-funded grant from the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development's Small Grants program to Ohio State University Extension & University of Minnesota Extension.



NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTER
FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT





Wolf Run Lake
Source: Noble County CVB

The **Building an Entrepreneur Friendly Community** program provides the resources, training, and tools to develop community capacity to better understand and support the local entrepreneurial economy.

**Now customized to the
Outdoor Recreation Sector!**

Why Are We Doing This Project?

1 Help Local Leaders
Understand the vital role of entrepreneurs in the local economy

2 Provide Actionable Insights
Provide applicable & relevant tools for local entrepreneurial growth

3 Empower Local Communities
Cultivate a supportive environment for entrepreneurial success

4 Tailor for Impact
Customize curriculum collaboratively for outdoor recreation gateway communities



Zooming In: State Level



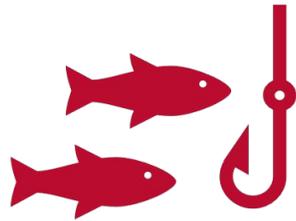
Image: Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District, Seneca Lake

Ohio's Outdoor Recreation Economy (2023)

- Generated \$19.3 billion in state's economy
- 2.2% of state GDP
- 147,986 jobs supported (2.6% of OH's workforce)
- Produced \$8 billion in wages and salaries – crucial for many rural communities
- Ranked 7th in value-added among all states
- More than half (61.2%) of Ohioans participate in outdoor recreation

Zooming In: Outdoor Recreation Economy in OH

Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife Watching: Big Participation, Big Impact (ODNR 2023)



- **1.7M** adult Ohioans fish
- Anglers spent **\$5.5B**
- **37%** took at least one trip to Lake Erie



- **500k** adult Ohioans hunt
- Spent **\$1.9M**



- **4.1M** participates in wildlife viewing
- Spent **\$1.6M**
- **1/3** used only public lands

Zooming In: State Level



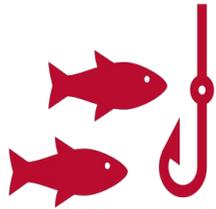
Image: Sandstone Ice Climbing Festival at Robinson Park, exploreminnesota.com

Minnesota's Outdoor Recreation Economy (2023)

- Generated \$13.5 billion in state's economy
- 2.8% of state GDP – most robust in the Upper Midwest
- Outdoor rec sector grew 10.5% since 2022
- 95,937 jobs supported (3.1% of MN's workforce)
- Generated \$5.9 billion in wages and salaries
- Ranked 16th in value-added & 10th in employment growth among all states

Zooming In: Outdoor Recreation Economy in MN

Economic Impact by Select Top Industries



- Boating & fishing remain dominant
- Contributed **\$1.1B** to MN's economy



- RVing – **\$528M** generated



- Hunting, shooting & trapping – produced **\$554M**



- Snow activities – generated **\$238M**

Building an Entrepreneur-Friendly Community

- ✓ **Local leaders play a key role**
- ✓ **What factors make up a supportive culture**



Photo: Wayne National Forest

BEFC Program Goals

To help local leaders...

- Understand the Outdoor Recreation sector and its entrepreneurship opportunities
- Understand the contribution of entrepreneurs to their local economy and jobs
- Identify and plan strategies that can help to grow local entrepreneurs
- Position their community as an ecosystem supportive of/conducive to entrepreneurial success

To build local capacity to promote entrepreneurship through...

- Understanding entrepreneur's needs
- A county Entrepreneurship Wellness Profile with targeted opportunities
- Federal, state and local programs that support entrepreneurs
- A strategic plan to build an entrepreneur friendly community

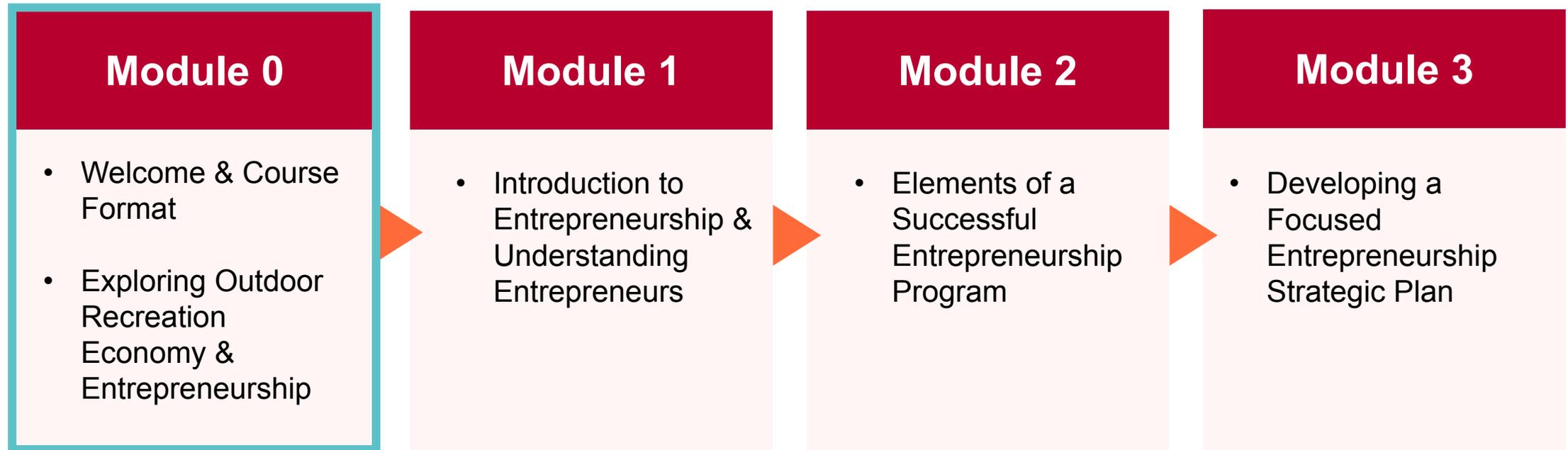
Capacity Building

- ✓ Understanding Outdoor Rec. sector opportunities
- ✓ Understanding entrepreneurs' needs
- ✓ Creation of a locally targeted "Entrepreneurship Wellness Profile"
- ✓ Awareness of related supportive federal, state, and local programs
- ✓ Creation of an entrepreneur friendly community strategic plan – a roadmap to implementing local development initiatives



Photo: Wayne National Forest

Course Overview



Start here!

Module 0 Overview



Section 1

Welcome & Course format
What Is Outdoor Recreation & Why It Matters

2

Community Examples



3

Why Entrepreneurship Matters

4

How Communities Can Support Entrepreneurs



5

What's Next: A Look Ahead to Module 1



Module 1-3 Overview

Module 1

Intro to Entrepreneurship & Understanding Entrepreneurs

- Review entrepreneurship Wellness Profile
- Panel of local entrepreneurs
- Understanding entrepreneur basics

Module 2

Elements of a Successful Entrepreneurship Program

Module 3

Developing a Focused Strategic Plan

Building Entrepreneur-Friendly Communities

Key Elements



Diverse sources of capital



Enabling culture



Essential linkages: networks



Supportive Infrastructure

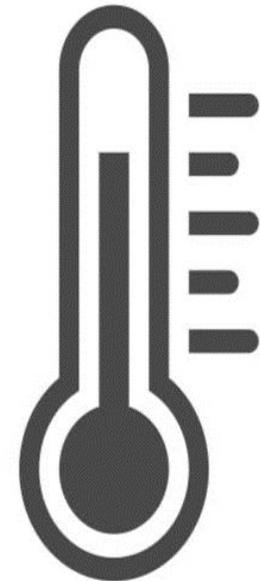


Government: fast, transparent, flexible

Entrepreneurship Wellness Profile

Purpose

- To establish a benchmark from which to measure change
- To source and cite data that measures entrepreneurial growth
- To inform on current economic conditions using relevant data
- To create a shareable profile infographic that tells the story
- To research and utilize new data sources and review old sources
- To teach constituents how to interpret and update data
- To track progress of entrepreneurial support system



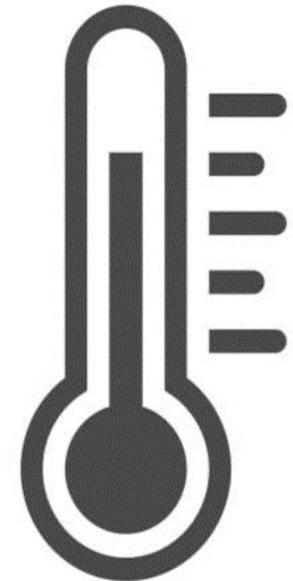
Questions You May Ask of the Data

- What are the overall business conditions supporting entrepreneurship?
- What are the characteristics of small businesses?
- How much of the overall economy do they represent?
- In which sectors are they concentrated?
- What is the contribution of these sectors?
- Are there any obvious sectoral gaps?
- What opportunities emerge for growth?



Profile Current Components

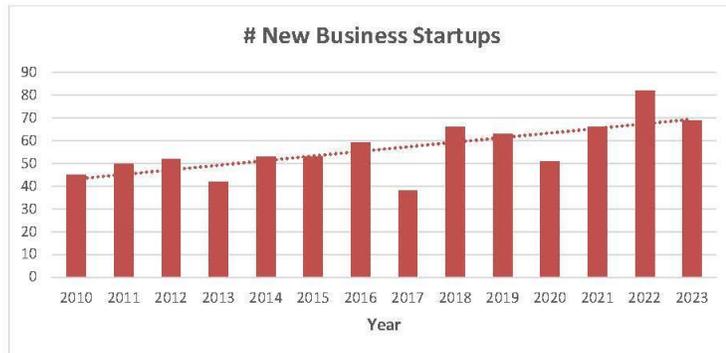
- Demographics/Occupational Data Analysis
- Proprietorship Core Index (overall business conditions)
- SB representation (% of total)
- SB success rates (starts vs. closed)
- Top five SB sectors
- SB sector economic contribution
- Consumer segment profile



Wellness Profile

The Wellness Profile is a compilation of five public source indicators that summarize existing status, trends, and overall wellness of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Noble County, Ohio. Indicators include: change in the number of business startups, percent employment in small firms, percent contribution of jobs per 1000 population, change in proprietorship rate, and change in high-tech employment.

Indicator #1 uses Census County-Level Business data, (<https://www.census.gov/econ/bfs/data/county.html>) to show changes in business startups (based on permit applications) in Noble County, Ohio. The trend line for a 13-year span from 2010 to 2013 indicates a gradual positive change, with a net number of new businesses ranging from a low of 45 in 2010 to 69 in 2023. In 2022, 82 startups were recorded, the highest number in 13 years. This positive trend suggests overall wellness in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.



Indicator #2 measures the percentage of employment in small firms (less than 50 employees) relative to Ohio. A higher percentage indicates a stronger presence of small businesses in the county. In Noble County, small businesses (0-49 employees) employ over half of the local workforce, compared to Ohio at about 25%. These and other labor force statistics are available from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Economic Profiles: https://ohiolmi.com/docs/CountyProfiles/Noble_Co_Profile.pdf

Indicator #3 is a group of indicators from the Kaufman Foundation's Indicators of Entrepreneurship. The link for county-based data, <https://indicators.kauffman.org/data-tables/jobs/county/oh/2020>, includes indicators that reflect overall entrepreneurship wellness. Table 1 below summarizes data for firms aged 0-1 years in Noble County.

TABLE 1: Kaufman Foundation Indicators of Entrepreneurship (2020, Firms Aged 0-1 Years)

County	Contribution (Share of private sector jobs held)	Compensation (Relative earnings of private sector jobs compared to the U.S.)	Creation (Number of net new jobs created at firms per 1,000 people)	Constancy (Share of jobs held at firms that are stable (lasting 3+ quarters))
Noble County, OH	2.58%	34.01%	2.30	39.51%

Indicators 4 & 5: StatsAmerica provides easy-to-use actionable data for economic and community development decision-making. It is a service of the Indiana Business Resource Center and funded through the Economic Development Administration. One of the broad elements is an Innovation Intelligence Index that provides a set of data to help community leaders gain an understanding of a county or region's business weaknesses, strengths, and potential.

The Innovation Intelligence Index includes five core measures, two of which can specifically inform business strengths related to entrepreneurship. The scores rank counties relative to 3,110 other counties in the United States. Scoring results for both core measures, Business Dynamics and Business Profile, are listed for Noble County in the table below.

TABLE 2: Two Core Measures (indicators)

Core Measure	Score	Rank
Business Dynamics	111.5	1,805
Business Profile	68.0	2,316

The core measures, which includes many data inputs, sort two of the top ranked measures for the indices:

Business Dynamics Index:

1. Jobs attributed to establishment births to total employment ratio (**rank 155**)
2. Jobs attributed to establishment expansions to establishment contractions (**rank 240**)

Business Profile Index:

1. Change in proprietorship rate (**rank 111**)
2. Latent innovation (**rank 483**)



Overall, the StatsAmerica core measures indicate that Noble County has a moderate level of resources and competitiveness for small businesses and entrepreneurs. The county shows above-average strength compared to other U.S. counties and ranks relatively high on two key metrics within each of the Core Measures.

In summary, with current startup trends moving in a positive direction and higher than average rankings in several StatsAmerica data categories, Noble County appears to have a healthy ecosystem for the startup and expansion of small businesses. Additional analysis using private data resources could further strengthen and support these findings.

Entrepreneur Interviews

CFAES



**La Petit Chevalier Vineyards & Farm Winery - Vinton
County, Ohio**

Margit Chevalier, Owner
www.lepetitchev.com



The Treehouses at Owl Hollow – Monroe County, Ohio

Casey Bott, Owner
www.owlhollowtreehouses.com



Module 1-3 Overview

Module 1

Intro to Entrepreneurship & Understanding Entrepreneurs

Module 2

Elements of a Successful Entrepreneurship Program

- Key elements that build an entrepreneur-friendly culture
- Strategies to identify, reach out to, and engage entrepreneurs

Module 3

Developing a Focused Strategic Plan

Developing a Local Enabling Culture



- Learn more about what makes an entrepreneurship enabling community culture
- Learn how to develop a local support team
- Explore successful entrepreneur networks
- Explore methods to celebrate local entrepreneurs
- Discuss Data Collection Options

Strategic Planning

- Explore the benefits of strategic planning
- Become aware of the basic elements of a strategic plan
- Begin to consider and construct a strategic plan to create an entrepreneur- friendly community

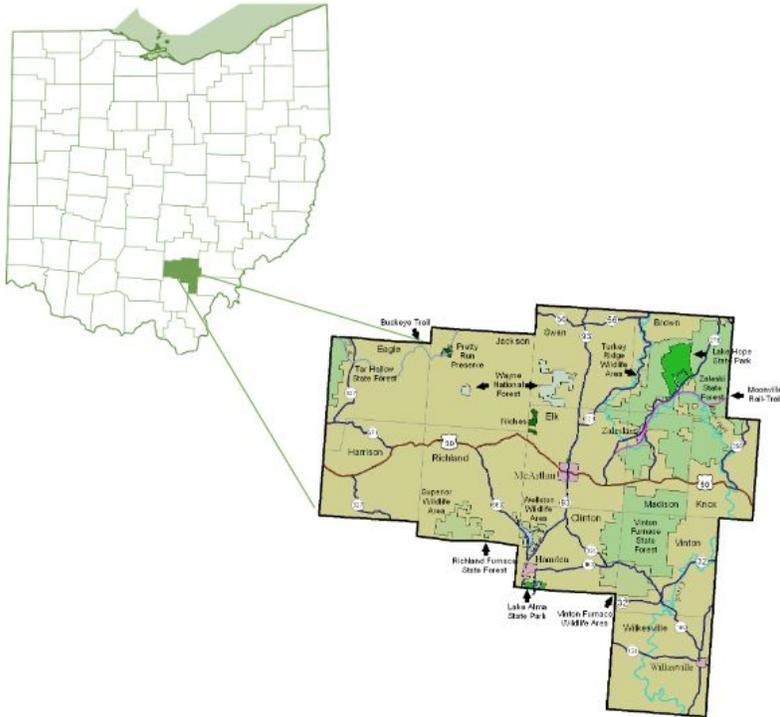
Where are we now?

Where do we want to be?

How do we plan to get there?

How will we stay on track and check progress?

Sample Strategic Plan



Purpose

Vinton County BEFC Team

OSU Extension BEFC Teaching/Facilitation Team

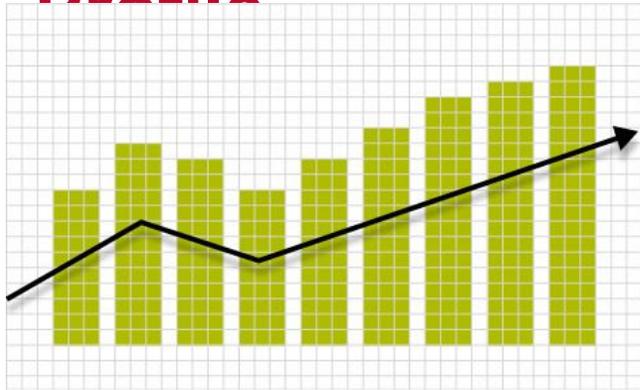
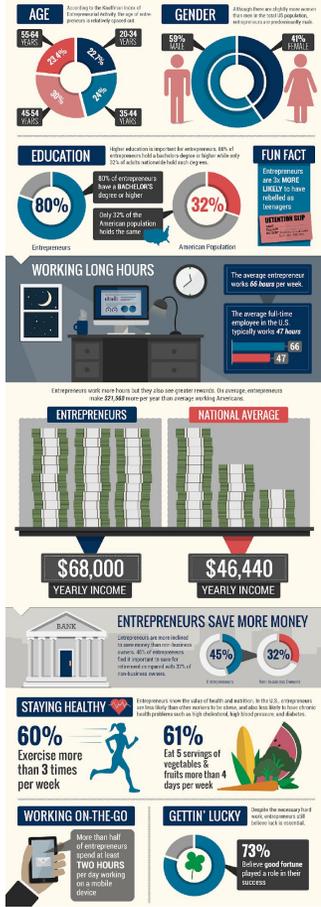
2022-2024 Strategic Priorities and Goals

Community Support Goal and Actions

Education & Marketing Goals and Actions

Deliverables

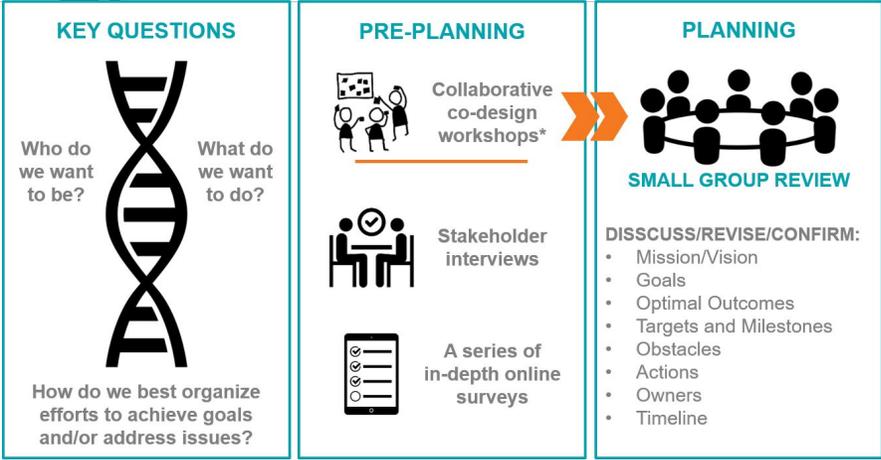
Wellness Profile



Entrepreneurship Support Team



Actionable Strategic



Grants Resources



Learning Support Tools

- **Wellness Profile**
- **Actionable Strategic Plan**
- **Entrepreneurship Support Team**
- **Videos**
- **Activity Sheets**
- **Discussion Boards**

Delivery Formats



1. A **“train-the-trainer”** approach for persons/groups/organizations that plan to deliver this program in their communities

OR

2. **Direct delivery** to local leaders by the OSU Extension Building an Entrepreneur-Friendly Community team
3. **Scarlet Canvas Online Delivery Option**
Coming Soon!

go.osu.edu/BEFC



Piatt Park – Monroe County, Ohio

Learn More:
Gwynn Stewart | Stewart.1818@osu.edu



The Treehouses at Owl Hollow – Monroe County, Ohio