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# RECREATION AND TOURISM

## Challenges and Opportunities for Cooperative Extension



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## RECREATION AND TOURISM TASK FORCE

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Approved by the Community Resource Development  
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## WHAT ARE RECREATION AND TOURISM?

Both recreation and tourism can be viewed as relative terms. That is, mention them to various individuals and each will conjure up an individual interpretation. For example, ask a:

**Rural development council:** tourism — generates jobs and community income.

**Homemaker:** recreation — means music and the performing arts.

**Municipal council member in a county seat city:** recreation — includes management of parks, playgrounds, and picnic areas.

**4-H teenager:** recreation — means swimming, camping, and getting ready for the county fair.

**Motel operator:** tourism — signifies a full house.

**Retiree:** recreation — reflects backyard gardening, and handiwork.

**State commissioner of natural resources:** recreation — envisions hunting and fishing.

**Parents of a young family:** recreation — means a vacation trip with a camping trailer.

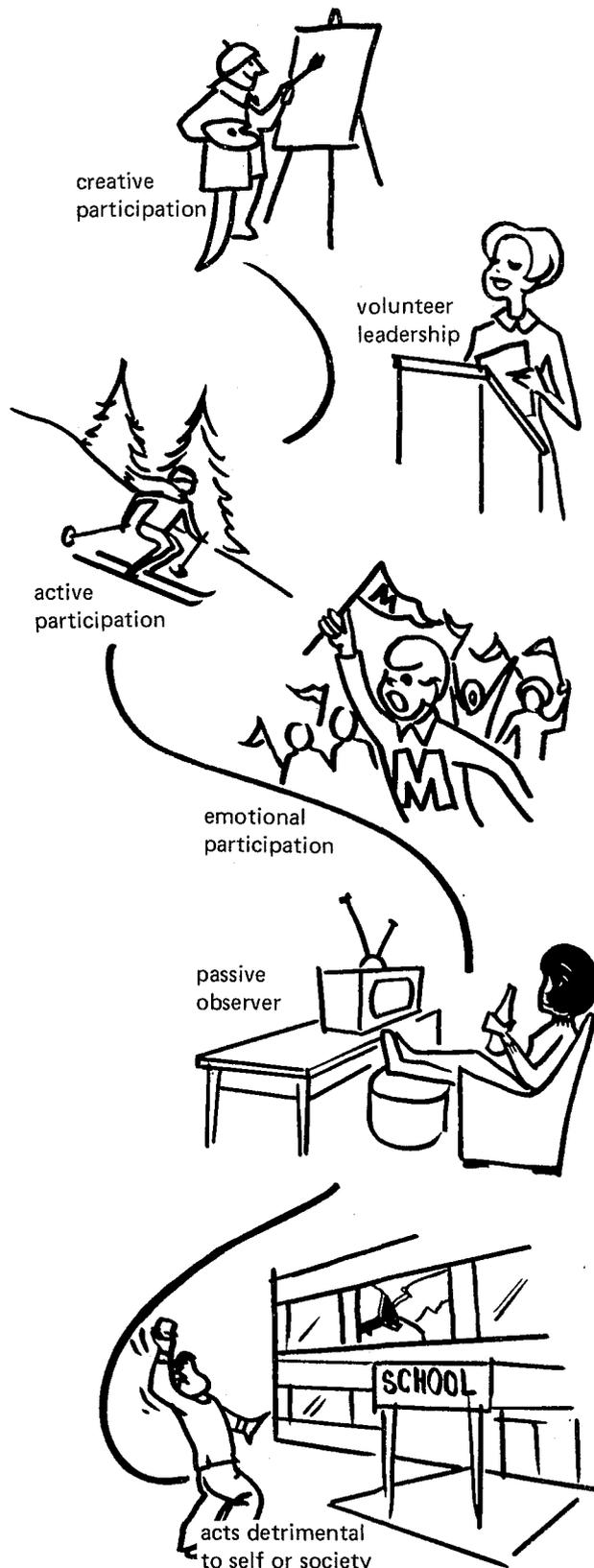
These responses focus on new lifestyles. Recreation and tourism may enrich and fulfill human life. They also contribute in an economic sense by generating jobs, tax base and profits, as do agriculture, manufacturing, and other industries.

For a working definition, recreation and tourism are basically defined as:

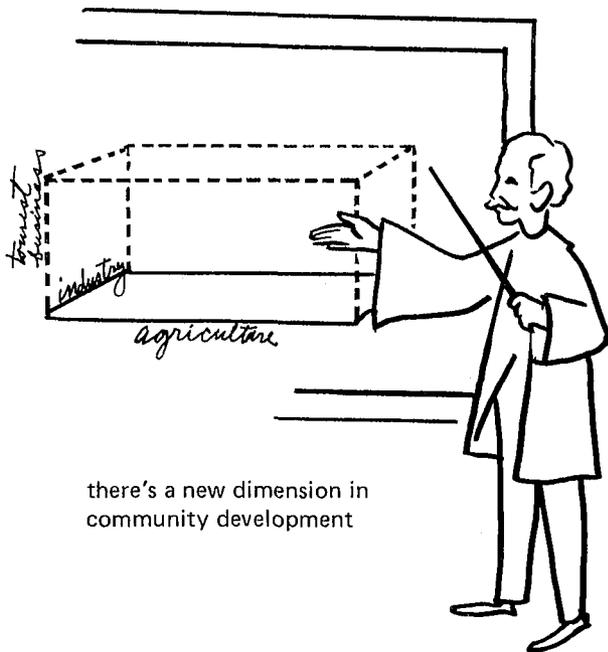
**Recreation** — activity undertaken voluntarily with enjoyment as a primary aim.

**Tourism** — travel and activities away from one's usual residence or work.

The concept of leisure relates closely to recreation and tourism. Leisure's meaning is more complex and broad than that of recreation and tourism. It is commonly equated with voluntary free or unobligated time. The key leisure concept involves individual choice based on an activity's worth to the participant.



Extension clientele need education in the many opportunities for constructive leisure.



## FOREWORD

Extension Administration has requested an analysis of the implications, present and future, of the practical use of leisure as it relates to both human and community development. They have asked for a fresh look at Extension's educational role, commitment, and program direction in recreation and tourism. The Task Force was specifically charged with exploring some of the current trends in this field and with examining Extension's role in providing direction for Extension programs.

This report is an effort of the Cooperative Extension Service's community resource development program to fulfill a program responsibility that contributes significantly to the enrichment of family life and considers ways for creating employment opportunities and additions to the local economic base. The Task Force hopes to illustrate examples of leisure activities enriching lives by adding new dimensions and showing how the economic welfare of a community can benefit from the demands for leisure services. Cooperative Extension Service is in a unique position to educate those who supply, as well as those who use, recreation and tourist facilities and services by sharing its resources of expertise and practical knowledge.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Extension Committee on Policy (ECOP) asked the Task Force to take a fresh look at Extension's educational role, commitment, and program direction in the field of recreation and tourism.

### The Demand

- People have time for recreation and travel. (Fewer hours are worked each week and there are longer paid vacations.)
- People have more money to use for recreation. (The basic necessities take a smaller portion of most family expenditures.)
- Therapeutic recreation is an important requirement in the rehabilitation process of 26 million Americans who have some disabling condition.
- Recreation and tourism can enrich life and contribute to physical and mental health. Therefore there is a greater demand today than ever before for recreational opportunities and facilities.

### The Supply

- Federal agencies manage 700 million acres of land, much of which is suitable for outdoor recreation.
- State and local governments have more money than ever to spend on recreational development (Land and Water Conservation Fund). However, there are limited local tax funds for matching, management, and operation.
- Private enterprise plays a major role in both recreation and tourism and this role must increase if demands are to be met.

### On The Horizon

- Modern technology is bringing new and exciting leisure pursuits and new private investment in providing them.
- Increased opportunities are being developed by progressive community leaders and the private sector (such as imaginative parks and school gyms opened to the community).
- The cultural arts are being brought to nonurban America where these opportunities have been limited.
- Focus is on the home and home community as "the place" for recreation.
- Curtailment of energy supplies and rising costs will stimulate development of innovative recreational programs in local areas.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

The Task Force recommends that Extension administrators and staff encourage development of a comprehensive educational program in recreation and tourism that will provide the following:

- Education of **individuals and families** for the most constructive use of leisure time.
- Educational assistance to **community leaders and recreational professionals** to develop and manage facilities and services.
- Educational guidance to **private recreation and tourism firms**.
- Improvement in the management of natural resources and the maintenance of a high level of environmental quality.
- The interpretation of research for informed decisions concerning resource allocations.

To develop effective educational programs, Extension administrators should make a specific organizational commitment to recreation and tourism which:

- Establishes it as a part of the state's Extension objectives.
- Identifies program leadership.
- Supports the efforts of staff members in recreation and tourism program development.
- Recognizes the need for trained professionals, and provides for additional formal and informal training to upgrade competency.
- Seeks out nontraditional funding sources to expand the educational efforts.
- Recognizes the interdependence between the Extension Service and other divisions of the University which deal with human and community issues.
- Recognizes the need for research and its interpretation.

## WHAT THIS MEANS TO EXTENSION

There are three principal client groups needing assistance from the Cooperative Extension Service:

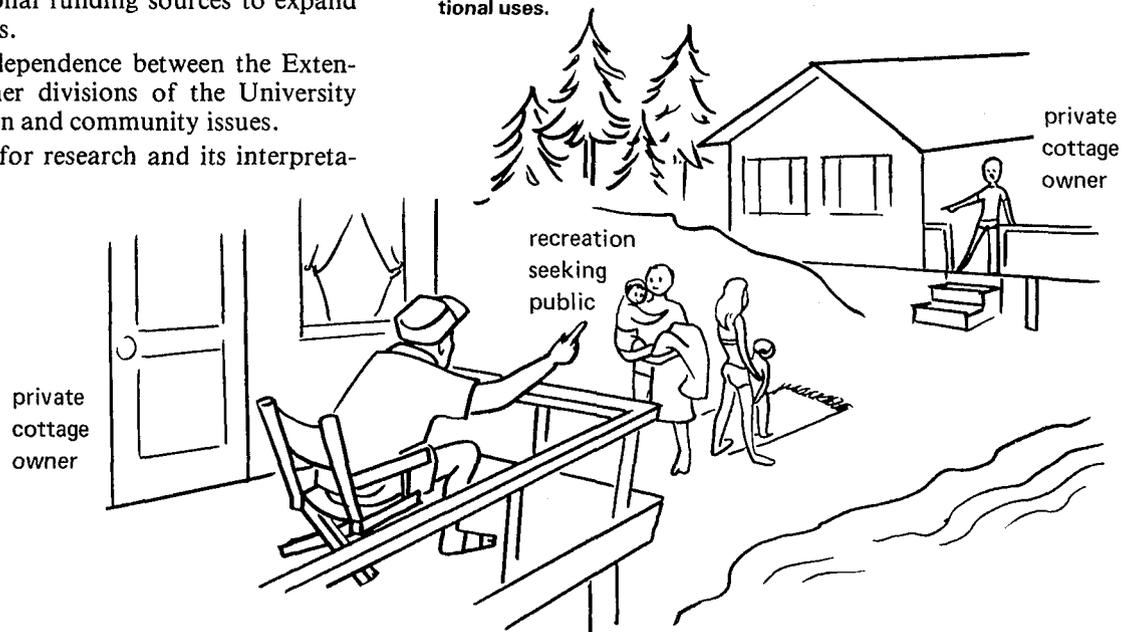
- **Individuals and families** — to improve the quality of life through wise use of resources devoted to leisure.
- **Public and private suppliers** — to make better informed decisions in the planning and development of parks and recreation areas.
- **Community leaders** — to serve more adequately local needs for recreation and cultural development.

To meet these needs, Extension must make a specific organizational commitment to recreation and tourism, establishing it as an important part of the state's Extension thrust. It must delineate responsibility for program leadership and support efforts of staff members in program development.

Educational programing in recreation and tourism is much too big a job for Extension alone: it must join hands with other recreation and tourism professionals in both the public and private sector. There are many opportunities for mutual undertakings today.

Extension has demonstrated the ability to meet and solve critical problems facing humans in their environment. The problems and opportunities associated with recreation and tourism form the basis of a new challenge that can be met if there is coordinated effort.

Conflicts in recreational use of natural resources occur among recreation users as well as between recreational and non recreational uses.



## INTRODUCTION

The social, economic, and political changes since World War II, have led to a focus in the 1970's on the resulting new problems and opportunities. A renewed awareness and questioning of the quality of life being led by Americans is underway. Different lifestyles are emerging. The value placed on work — so dominant a force since the founding of this nation — is now being reevaluated.

The concept of constructive leisure is at the core of a quality life. For the purpose of this report, leisure is defined as freedom from obligatory work or personal maintenance responsibilities. Recreation is defined as any activity undertaken voluntarily, either on a spectator or participant basis, with pleasure or human enrichment as the primary purpose. Tourism is defined as travel and activities away from one's usual place of residence and work.

Historically, Extension has directed its major effort toward improvements in agriculture, the home, family, and youth. While programs in recreation and tourism have been a part of the total educational effort of Cooperative Extension for many years, these have not been considered major programs in more than a dozen states.

The foundations laid through past programming now serve as a springboard for an expanded program. The need is apparent from present day conditions.

Extension is committed to a mission of maintaining rural America as a place to live. A challenging opportunity exists for the Cooperative Extension Service to help people improve the quality of their lives through better understanding of recreation and tourism. The specific challenges to Extension are:

- To help individuals and families make careful decisions in allocating their nonwork time.
- To help the suppliers of recreation and tourism goods and services meet the demand for their products efficiently.
- To help community leaders gain an improved understanding of the relationship of recreation and tourism to community development and public policy.

Cooperative Extension is capable of meeting educational challenges posed by expanded leisure. It has the delivery system; it has access to the research base of the land-grant system; and it has the essential: trained personnel.

Historical interpretation, art and culture are increasingly available to enrich human lives.



## SITUATION

### Work and Leisure Trends

**Less Physical Labor.** A highly developed technology following World War II brought vast changes not limited to manufacturing methods. The move from production- to service-type jobs has been great, too, and many besides factory workers have sedentary jobs.

**Implication** — Physical activity is needed to balance sedentary work on a daily basis. This becomes an important responsibility of suppliers in the local community.

**A Shorter Work Week and More Discretionary Time.** At the turn of the century the typical American worked 57 hours per week. There was not as much time then to think about recreation. After World War II, more time became available for leisure activities. Between 1950 and 1975, the typical work week dropped from 42 to 36 hours. It is estimated that the typical American now has 30 percent of a year available for discretionary use, meaning uncommitted to work, sleep, or personal duties[1]. **Implication** — The American public will seek out recreational opportunities to use newly freed time. People want to find nearby sources of recreation for evenings and weekends which will not permit long distance travel.

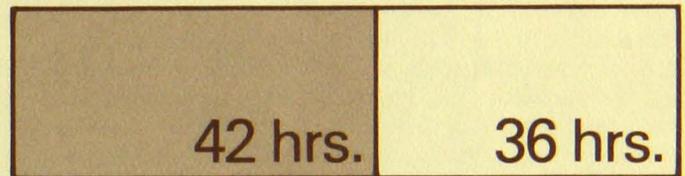
**Longer Paid Vacations.** Most American workers now benefit from increased employer-supported vacation time (more holidays, longer weekends, and vacations). From 1960 to 1969, average vacation time increased from 1.8 to 2.2 weeks per year. The entire work force now has over 60 million weeks of vacation time. **Implication** — This increased block of free time allows extensive recreational travel — much of which will be to rural America to provide a change of scene from urban and suburban life.

**Greater Income Per Family.** Shortly after World War II, the median American family earned a real income of \$7,300 (in 1975 dollars). In 1975, it earned \$13,700[2]. More wives are employed in the national labor force. In 1975, both partners in 47.1 percent of all marriages (it was 43.6 in 1967) were employed. Wives' earnings produced 26.3 percent of all family income in 1975[3]. **Implication** — As income increases, recreational demand both in the home community and in vacation areas will increase.

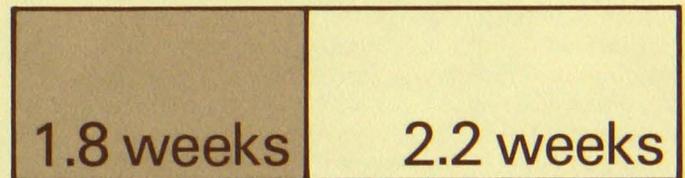
**More Dollars for Discretionary Use.** People's basic needs for food, clothing, and housing now take a smaller proportion of total household expenditures. In 1950, about 60 percent of consumption expenditures went for the basic necessities: food, clothing, and housing. In 1975, despite a 6-fold increase in housing expenditures, only 54 percent went for these purposes. **Implication** — Families, individuals, and the commercial supplier will benefit from these increased dollars. The public recreation supplier will be faced with intensified use of facilities.

Figure 1. Major trends influencing American families and their lifestyle patterns, 1950;1975.

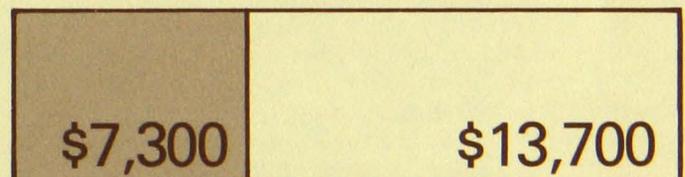
#### Work Week



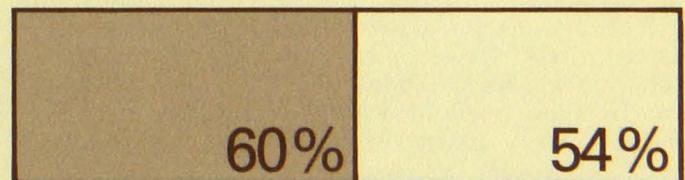
#### Vacation Time



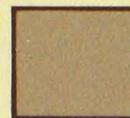
#### Median Family Income (1975 dollars)



#### Spending for Necessities



1950



1975



**Greater Interest in the Arts.** In 1975, about 93 percent of those surveyed in a national poll felt that the arts and cultural facilities such as museums, theatres, and concert halls were important to the quality of life of a community[4]. There were 15,000 movie houses, 1,821 museums, 1,463 symphony orchestras and 807 opera companies reported in 1976[5]. There were 4,840 historical societies listed in 1975-76[6]. Art festivals and craft fairs have become increasingly popular. **Implication** — There is growing interest and an involvement in many different cultural art activities, many of them based in the local communities. Something of interest to all ages and abilities can be programmed.

**Household Numbers Up Sharply.** By 2000, the number of individuals ages 35-49 will have increased 72 percent over 1977. **Implication** — These represent people in the prime family recreation age which means a sharp increase in the demand for household-related recreation activities.

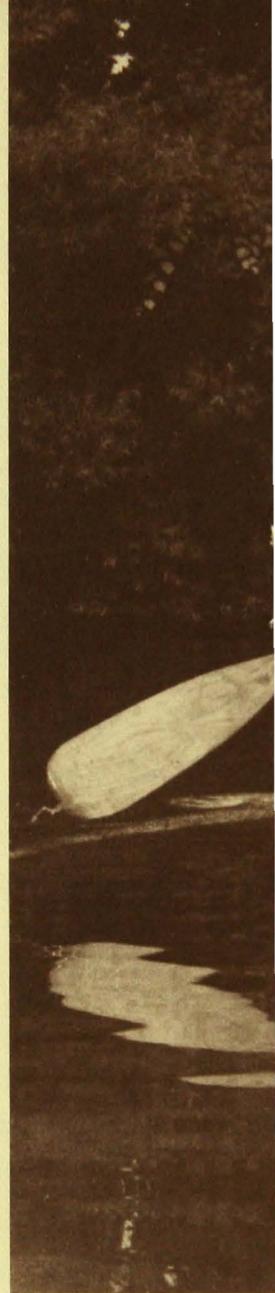
**More People in Retirement.** In 1950, about 8 percent of the U.S. population was 65 years or older. In 1975, just over 10 percent was in this age group. By 2000, this segment of the population will comprise about 12 percent. Life expectancy has shifted from an average of 54 years in 1920 to 71 years in 1977[2]. By 2000, average life expectancy is projected to be 74 years. **Implication** — The senior citizen wants and needs recreational opportunities. Providing the most appropriate type for this age group represents a challenge to both public and private suppliers in the home community.

**Energy Scarcity.** The lifestyle of Americans during the last three decades required a vast amount of fossil fuels — a resource which is becoming more scarce. In 1977, national attention was focused on energy resources and national policy. Short supplies and rising prices of fossil fuels may cause decline in real income for some families and suppliers of recreation and tourism facilities. **Implication** — Recreation and tourism pursuits may be affected by costs of travel and of supplying services and facilities.

**Equal Opportunity.** Currently there are almost 26 million Americans with some disabling condition (crippled, blind, deaf, mental impairment, etc.). Almost 5 million school children are handicapped in some way. Over 2 million people were institutionalized in homes or schools in 1970[2]. **Implication** — Only in recent years has consideration been given to the recreational needs of such persons. Therapeutic recreation is immensely beneficial to those in disadvantaged groups. The specialist in therapeutic recreation has a great opportunity to serve society.

Most Americans have gained from the national economic growth. While allowing for inflation, personal incomes have increased steadily. However, events

Through Extension efforts, youth and adults can gain greater knowledge and appreciation of our natural recreational resources.



of the mid-70's have slowed down the spurt of 30 years of unprecedented national economic growth, among them the Arab oil embargo of 1973-74, and the economic recession of 1974-75. As a result, experts now expect the future growth rate to slow[6]. Current lifestyles will be examined, alternatives weighed, and careful choices will have to be made concerning the most productive use of leisure time.

## Recreation and Tourism Supply

Many agencies and organizations, public and private, contribute to the supply of recreation and tourism services. It is useful to make a distinction between suppliers of "recreational" activities and suppliers of "tourism" facilities. Recreation suppliers include (1) all levels of government, (2) nonprofit groups, (3) private entrepreneurs, (4) organized groups of individuals, and (5) individual landowners. Tourism suppliers include



(1) hotels and motels, (2) restaurants, (3) entertainment firms, (4) government and private travel service agencies, and (5) recreation sensitive industries such as grocery stores, sporting goods, transportation services, etc.

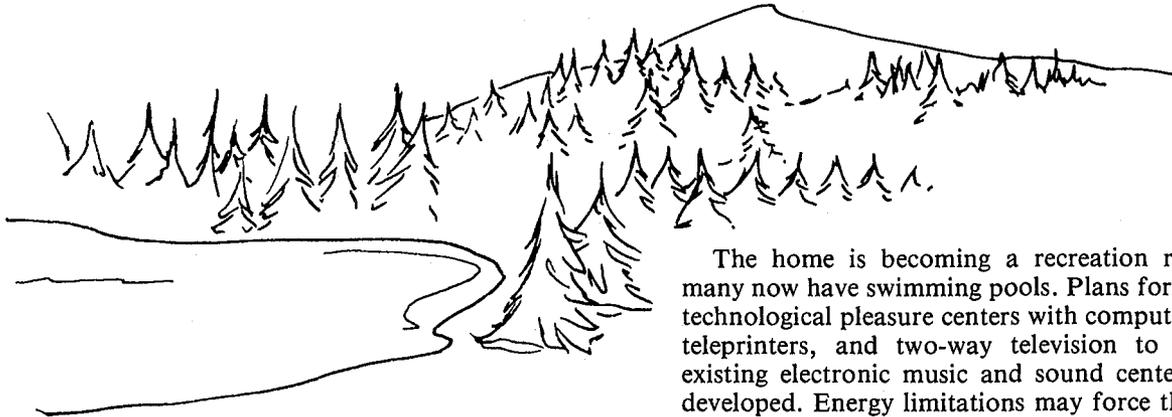
**The Federal Government.** The National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are major suppliers of recreation. The programs of these agencies are varied and change with legislation. These agencies control over 755 million acres of public recreation land[7].

**State and Local Government.** Each state operates a network of parks and manages other recreation resources. State-administered outdoor recreation areas totaled nearly 42 million acres in 1972[5]. Units of county and local government provided another 11 mil-

lion acres for public recreation in 1972[7]. The number of areas provided by municipal and county government doubled between 1950 and 1970 as increased funds were made available to government units through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. In 1976, legislation was passed authorizing the purchase of an additional 6 million acres of recreation land over the next 12 years.

**Nonprofit Organizations.** The functions of nonprofit organizations are varied and difficult to classify. Nonprofit organizations include the Audubon Society, country and yacht clubs, swimming, hunting and fishing clubs, conservation and related societies, local garden clubs and youth, religious, and civic groups among others. Together, they control an estimated 467 million acres which have about 800 million visitors a year[7].

**Private Enterprise.** At least half of the total recreation opportunity comes from the private sector[7].



Facilities such as baseball and football parks, swimming pools, skating rinks, camps, museums, art galleries, theatres, and resorts may be privately owned. The tourist industry primarily provides hospitality services. In this group are about 500,000 food service organizations and 80,000 lodging operations, plus many other travel-related operations. Many recreation and tourism firms are small businesses. Altogether they generate more than \$200 billion in sales annually — a major contribution to the economy of many small communities. In addition, they provide employment to over 5 million. Private recreation and tourism firms play important roles in supplying facilities to meet leisure needs.

### **Management of Land and Water Recreation Resources**

Development of natural resource-based recreation generally takes place in rural America within weekend commuting distances of large population centers. Land use pressures may intensify if recreation development encounters population movement out of urban areas.

Sound land use planning can assure that the rights and privileges of all persons will be protected as conflicts are resolved. Recreational activities compete with other resource uses in a variety of ways. For instance, snowmobiling and cross country skiing may compete for use of the same land or the competition may be between a recreational use and a commercial or industrial development.

### **On The Horizon**

There are things happening which may enhance the recreational opportunities available to the American public. For example:

- Keeping public schools open during nonschool hours as a community-wide recreation resource
- Economic incentives, including tax credits, to open up private lands for public recreation use
- Historic sites and restored villages with interpretive centers
- Cultural centers to bring the arts to the people who have had limited access
- Parks reducing congestion at popular areas

The home is becoming a recreation resource and many now have swimming pools. Plans for home-based technological pleasure centers with computer terminals, teleprinters, and two-way television to complement existing electronic music and sound centers are being developed. Energy limitations may force the American public to find pleasure in the home community rather than in traveling great distances.

Technological progress may be as great in the next 25 years as it has been in the past. Keeping pace with changing family living patterns, community development opportunities, and land use issues will add to the complexity of community and family decisions regarding recreation and tourism.

### **The Situation in Brief**

The demand for recreational goods, facilities, and services will continue to grow, but during the next 25 years it will be tempered by energy scarcity and rising prices.

Most of the growth and development in natural resource-based recreation will occur in rural America, especially areas within weekend commuting distance of large population centers.

In many rural communities recreation and tourism may become, or continue to be, a viable growth industry and provide opportunities for an increasing number of jobs for rural residents.

Conflicts in allocation of natural resources between recreation and other uses will increase.

The provision of tourist or “hospitality” services will continue to be a function of private enterprises: individual entrepreneurs.

Local leaders and governing officials need assistance in making informed decisions about recreation and tourism as a component of total community development. While protecting the community and its resources, these leaders and officials need to know the relationship of benefits for the indigenous populations.

Technical assistance to meet the demands for “home-town” recreation facilities and services for all citizens — young, old, low income, high income, advantaged, and disadvantaged — is needed. The demands from such a heterogeneous population may be quite different — sometimes compatible, and sometimes incompatible.

Energy supplies may be a factor adding pressures for the development of recreation services within the local community.

**The challenge to the Cooperative Extension Service is to assist in establishing goals and priorities for a sound program to provide opportunities to all.**

## IMPLICATIONS FOR EXTENSION

Extension is in a position to carry out an educational role in helping evaluate leisure opportunities. The citizen can choose from an array of leisure activities provided by both public and private suppliers. Extension programing can broaden the interpretation of leisure.

A National Workshop on Cooperative Extension's Role in Outdoor Recreation was held in 1967 at the University of Georgia. W.H. Bennett, director of the Utah Extension Service, made the following observation[8]:

“With tremendous expansion in recreation come opportunities, as well as problems . . . Extension will have the opportunity as well as the challenge to help individuals achieve self-fulfillment and find the rich, full life. Extension has done a good

job in the past, but must do a better job in the future. Certainly no other education group in the country has a better team of resource people . . .”

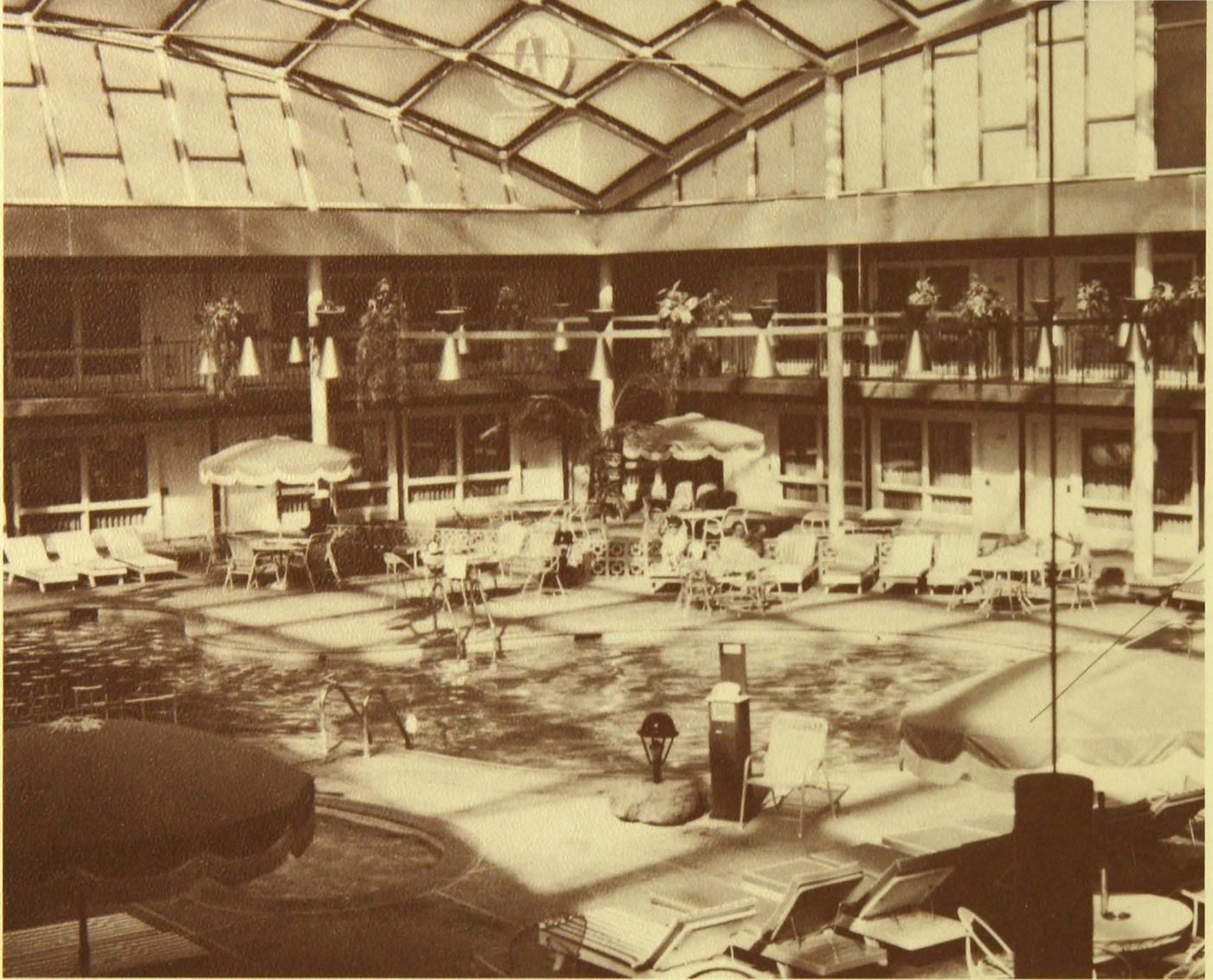
R.P. Davison, director of the Vermont Extension Service, added:

“ . . . For the Extension Service this means a whole new and expanding area of education and information . . . This discipline will become very important in Extension work in the future.”

During fiscal year 1975, Extension staff members devoted approximately 168 human-years to recreation and tourism educational programs. About 54 percent of the time was used for 4-H youth programs. Twenty-five percent was used in assisting communities with providing recreation and tourism facilities and services. Another 20 percent of the time was devoted to the development of marketable skills within the private sector.

Governmental agencies manage, directly or indirectly, most of our outdoor recreational resources. This is Center Hill Lake, TN, Tennessee Valley Authority.





Facilities and services an essential part of the recreation/tourism system.

Historically, Extension has channeled its efforts toward improving the quality of life for all Americans. Over the years, Extension has adapted to monumental changes in technology, demographics, and lifestyles. Being a multidisciplinary organization, Extension is capable of handling the complex problems associated with increasing discretionary time and the increased opportunities for leisure.

The demand for leisure educational programs and services has increased far beyond the level which Directors Bennett and Davison envisioned in 1967. This demand extends from 4-H and youth to senior citizens — from public and private suppliers of goods and services to the decisionmakers concerned with land use and community development.

If Extension is to respond to these issues, recreation and tourism programing need to become an integral part of state Extension programs. Extension's commitment to recreation and tourism will be necessary.

Extension's programs should relate to the three client groups: *individuals* and *families* as consumers, public and private *suppliers*, and *community leaders*.

### Programs for Individuals and Families

There is an opportunity to expand educational efforts designed to improve the quality of life through leisure, recreational activity or cultural pursuit. Specific programs might include helping individuals and families engage in leisure pursuits, selecting fulfilling lifestyles, improving natural resource management and selecting recreational services and commodities.

### Programs for Public and Private Suppliers

Educational guidance and assistance is needed in the planning and development of parks, recreation areas, and service facilities for the recreationist and traveler. It is needed by both the private and agency developer. Over the years Extension has effectively worked with small enterprises which dominate today's recreation field. Cooperative Extension has a history of close cooperation with all elements of local and state governments which have responsibility for public recreational development. Specific programs may include:

- Investment decisions in recreation business management.



Creative playgrounds offer opportunities for young children to experience "learning by doing."

- Understanding recreation marketing.
- Development of forestry and wildlife.
- Understanding problems of soil and land use.

### Programs for Community Leaders

Efforts to meet the demand for recreation and tourism facilities and services will have a decided effect on rural communities, especially. New developments will cause social, economic, and political costs for both the indigenous and transient populations. The ability of community leaders to plan for the future and develop realistic guidelines will minimize the costs.

On the positive side, such development can provide job and other income producing opportunities in the community as well as increase the tax base. An intensive educational program will enable communities to capitalize on the economic and social benefits and keep costs to a minimum.

It is likely that community residents will seek more "local" recreation facilities and services to reduce travel requirements. Local government will need to consider carefully the many alternative routes to follow. Com-

munity leaders will need guidance and assistance in this evaluation process. Specific examples:

- Community resource development — to study and analyze recreation facility needs.
- Cultural development — to plan programs in the performing arts.
- Equal opportunity — to assure equal access to recreational opportunities for all including those with special needs such as handicapped and aged.
- Economic development — to generate jobs and increase tax base through recreation and tourism.
- Manpower development — to increase job opportunities through increased tourism.

The field of recreation and tourism is broad and cuts across all program areas currently within the Extension framework. A soundly developed well-rounded program will include inputs from agents and specialists within home economics, agriculture, community resource development, and youth work. Without a coordinated effort within each of these program areas, a well-balanced educational effort will never be achieved.

Traditional Extension educational methods can be effectively used for programing in recreation and tourism. Specific methods used to reach identified audiences may vary from state to state depending on the emphasis placed on each of the major program areas. As programs in recreation and tourism are expanded, increasing use should be made of newer educational tools, capitalizing especially on improved communications technology. Interstate sharing of educational materials and programs offers a realistic route to an expanded recreation and tourism program in states with limited staff resources.

Well-developed training programs and conferences will be needed to keep Extension staff current on developments. Recreation and tourism are dynamic fields and peoples' needs are constantly changing and program modification will be required.

Training aids developed in states quite far advanced in their Extension recreation programing should be made available to staffs in other states where programs are less completely developed. This sharing has long been characteristic of successful Extension endeavors.

Finally, it should be recognized that the needed educational programing in recreation and tourism is much too big a job for Cooperative Extension alone. It must join hands with other recreation and park professionals at land-grant institutions, at other colleges and universities, and in the private sector.

This report examines the need for recreation and tourism programing in light of Extension's overall mission of helping to improve quality of living in the home and community.

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**Much community life centers on community recreation and sports activities.**

**Left: The community seeks a balanced approach to resource management, economic development and living quality for its residents.**

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