

# Together Outdoors Marks One Year of Fostering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Outdoor Recreation

***Coalition begins its second year emboldened with over 100 members and launching new initiatives to create a more accessible and welcoming outdoors***

Together Outdoors (TO), a coalition committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of the outdoor recreation experience, commemorated its first anniversary with a look back at a year of progress, and a look ahead at new efforts to make the outdoors more accessible and welcoming for everyone.

More than 100 organizations joined TO in its first year, with an initial focus on educating coalition members on the history of exclusionary practices in the outdoors and the challenges that remain for members of under-represented groups who seek to enjoy America's outdoor spaces. TO's debut learning tool was an eight-module online training program for outdoor companies, nonprofits, and land management agencies. Topics included insights into, and best practices for, hiring and retaining a diverse workforce, implementing DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) at all levels of the organization, and improving accessibility for the disabled.

"Together Outdoors was born as the result of outdoor industry leaders asking how they could help provide education and drive desperately needed change. TO's first year was one of reflection,

strategic planning and learning,” **said Coalition Lead Gerry Seavo James.** “With the support of our funders, member organizations, Governance Council, and Advisory Council, we have built a solid foundation and developed effective programs to help make the great outdoors great for everyone. We are proud of everything Together Outdoors has accomplished in its first year and are excited for what’s to come.” Read more of Gerry’s reflections on TO’s first year [here](#).

Together Outdoors’ new efforts build upon 12 months of work made possible by foundational and multi-year support from THOR Industries and the guidance of our [Advisory Council and Governance Councils](#).

TO’s next phase is focused on helping members put what they’ve learned into practice, as well as launching more tools and programs to support its vital mission and to provide ways for the general public to become involved with the coalition’s efforts.

### **Together Outdoors’ new initiatives include:**

**Resource Hub Beta Launch** – This innovative online database provides a wealth of curated information about building an outdoor community where everyone belongs. These materials include books, articles, research papers, videos, podcasts, and toolkits. Additionally, the hub includes a directory of inclusion-related outdoor organizations, a grant opportunity directory, and the ability to host web-based training programs. The platform will be launched as a Beta with user feedback providing the basis for upgrades and improvements.

**Inclusive Spaces Program** – Together Outdoors, in partnership with the Trust for Public Land, is piloting a program to help recreation space operators and public land management agencies improve accessibility and inclusion in their spaces. Findings from the pilot program, conducted in the Chattanooga, TN region, will be used to develop best practices in every area of outdoor space operation, including the design of physical facilities, staff trainings, storytelling, and language used in printed materials and signage.

**Branding and Merchandise** – Together Outdoors is pleased to unveil its new logo, which visually conveys the coalition’s message of accessibility and inclusion. The new online store offers logoed clothing that allows people to show their support for TO and a more accessible and welcoming outdoors for all people.

**Grant Program** – TO recently debuted a grant program designed to support organizations on the front lines of building a more accessible and welcoming outdoor ecosystem thanks to support from THOR Industries and Winnebago Industries. To help offset the history of exclusion of marginalized communities in the grant-making process, TO's criteria will give priority to individuals from those communities, as well as organizations run by members of those groups.

**See more commentary and reflection from coalition members and partners below and [here](#).**

“The first year of Together Outdoors was an impactful bringing together of many insightful voices throughout the outdoor landscape,” **said Danica Carey, Seirus Innovation, Director of Marketing Operations.** “Now moving into their second year, I am very hopeful that the strong leadership of Gerry James supported by the team at ORR will be able to continue to grow this network of resources and collaboration. There is great foundation here for the community building needed to bring forward the cultural shift that is crucial for all of us to thrive into the future.”

“We are proud to serve on the Together Outdoors Governance Council, which has allowed Brunswick Corporation a distinct opportunity to work collaboratively with our peers across the outdoor industry to promote our shared goals of ensuring equitable access to our public lands and waters,” **said Lee Gordon, Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs for Brunswick Corporation.**

“Together Outdoors’ mission to celebrate and share the joys and experiences found in the great outdoors with communities from different walks of life, experiences, and backgrounds is just the first step toward creating a more inclusive and welcoming outdoor recreation space,” **said Kevin Williams, Vice President of Marketing at the National Marine Manufacturers Association and Together Outdoors Governance Council Member.** “As we celebrate our one-year anniversary, this milestone marks the exciting next step in nurturing an environment where all are welcome and we look forward to continuing our partnerships with leaders across diverse spaces, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and historically

marginalized people to create a better, more inclusive outdoor space.”

“Together Outdoors has been a great resource for Polaris, as we focus on engaging with new diverse customer audiences and inviting them to participate in Powersports,” **said Tommy Hillman, Senior Marketing Director at Polaris.** “Together Outdoors has provided a forum that allows us to engage with other outdoor-focused organizations that are on a similar journey, where we can learn from each other’s experiences and discuss best practices.”