



LAKE SULLIVAN

# Economic Impact Study

**Sullivan County Park  
and Lake Board**

**Sullivan County  
Community Foundation**

an affiliate of the Wabash Valley  
Community Foundation

Prepared by:  **RJL Solutions**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sullivan County Park and Lake Board (SCPLB) has identified an urgent need to dredge Lake Sullivan due to extensive sediment accumulation. This sediment buildup threatens the lake's ecological health, recreational appeal, and long-term economic value to the region. Dredging—a widely used approach for managing sediment—improves water quality, restores aquatic habitats, and increases public access, all of which are vital to the lake's functionality and appeal. Typically, lakes are dredged every 10 to 15 years to ensure sustainable use; however, Lake Sullivan has not undergone dredging since its establishment in 1968, resulting in significant environmental and economic challenges.

To assess the broader impact of Lake Sullivan on the local economy and identify potential revitalization strategies, the Wabash Valley Community Foundation, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) VIII initiative, awarded a planning grant from its Sullivan County affiliate, in December 2023. This initiative included a community-wide survey and forums to capture resident feedback, along with analyses of population trends, health metrics, and economic development opportunities tied to the lake.

**The findings demonstrate Lake Sullivan's substantial role as a driver of local economic activity, supporting tourism, recreation, and adjacent businesses.** The lake attracts visitors for fishing, boating, hiking, and other outdoor pursuits, creating revenue for local businesses such as restaurants, retailers, equipment rentals, and accommodations. The lake's role in boosting property values and supporting job creation is also significant, underscoring its importance not only as a natural asset but also as an economic anchor.

By addressing sedimentation issues and investing in essential improvements, Sullivan County has the opportunity to secure the lake's economic and recreational potential for future generations. Enhanced amenities, ecological restoration, and strategic marketing could position Lake Sullivan as a premier regional destination, fostering community pride, encouraging sustainable tourism, and contributing to long-term economic growth. This report consolidates these insights, emphasizing the critical need for dredging and strategic planning to ensure Lake Sullivan remains a valuable resource for Sullivan County and its surrounding communities.

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# INTRODUCTION





## BACKGROUND

Sullivan Park and Lake is central to the community, offering an inviting retreat for residents and visitors alike. Anchored by the scenic Sullivan Lake, the park provides a beautiful setting for numerous recreational activities including fishing, kayaking, swimming, and boating, allowing guests to enjoy the calm waters. Surrounding the lake, well-maintained walking trails, picnic spots, and playgrounds cater to families, while sports enthusiasts are drawn to the park's golf course, disc golf, pickleball courts and open fields. With its lush green spaces, diverse amenities, and peaceful ambiance, Sullivan Park and Lake are treasured as a community hub and a valued regional attraction.

The lake's significance extends beyond recreation, contributing greatly to the local economy. Visitors support a range of local businesses, including dining, retail, and outdoor equipment rentals, creating revenue and job opportunities within the area. The park's regional appeal also helps increase property values, fosters tourism, and supports the area's rural and agricultural heritage.

The vision for Sullivan Lake began in 1954 under the Soil Conservation Department's Busseron Watershed Project (BCW), which spans over 252 square miles in West-Central Indiana, largely within Sullivan County. The Busseron Watershed, with Busseron Creek flowing toward the Wabash River, is a primarily rural area with a strong agricultural heritage. It is characterized by 58% farmland, 30% forested land, and 7% developed land, with over 16,000 acres managed by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for conservation. Nearby, the Goose Pond Fish & Wildlife Area enriches the region's biodiversity, attracting rare migratory bird species and providing critical habitats.

Construction on Sullivan Lake began in April 1967, marking the start of a \$1.2 million investment (equivalent to \$11.4 million in 2024) and was completed two years later in May 1969. Since then, the lake has served as a focal point for recreation and tourism. However, over time, sediment buildup has compromised its water quality, ecological health, and usability, threatening its long-term sustainability.

In response to these challenges, the Sullivan County Park and Lake Board (SCPLB) has prioritized a dredging project to restore lake health and enhance its economic and recreational value. Dredging, a process that removes accumulated sediment, is essential for improving water quality, boosting recreational use, and preserving aquatic habitats. Although experts recommend dredging every 10 to 15 years, Sullivan Lake has not been dredged since its creation, mainly due to funding constraints. This delay has reduced the lake's effectiveness as both a recreational and economic resource for the community.

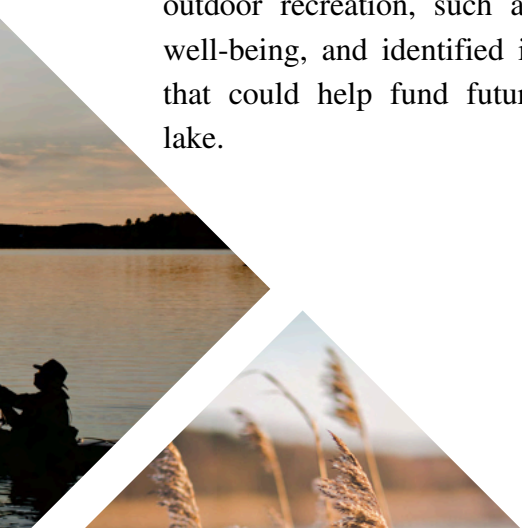
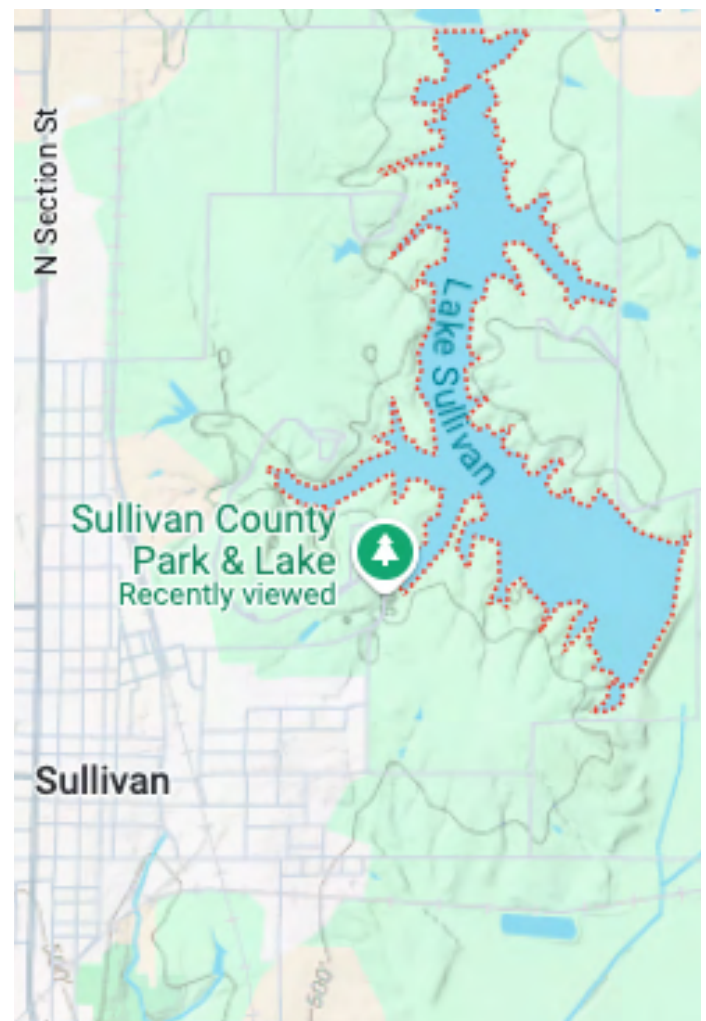
In 2024, the SCPLB received funding from the Indiana DNR’s Lake and River Enhancement Program (LARE) to develop a Sediment Removal Plan. Everclear Aquatic Management, LLC was contracted to conduct the project and assess eight target sites within the 468-acre lake for potential dredging. This restoration plan will lay the groundwork for maintaining the lake’s health, ensuring that Sullivan Park and Lake continue to serve as both an ecological asset and a sustainable economic driver for the region.

## **OBJECTIVE: ASSESSING THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SULLIVAN PARK AND LAKE**

The economic impact study for Sullivan Park and Lake aimed to quantify the lake’s full economic contributions to the local and regional economy across several dimensions. It evaluated the lake’s direct, indirect, and induced effects on tourism, recreation, and property values, providing a detailed picture of its value to the community. The study analyzed how Sullivan Lake’s recreational appeal boosts local business revenue, attracts tourism, and supports real estate growth. Additionally, it highlighted job creation driven by increased park visitation, as well as expanded opportunities for local retailers, restaurants, and service providers.

Environmental improvements such as enhanced water quality and restored habitats were also assessed for their economic benefits, as these factors are key to maintaining the lake’s attractiveness as a recreational destination. By improving ecological health, Sullivan Lake can generate sustained tourism and long-term value for the area. The study further explored public health benefits associated with outdoor recreation, such as improved community well-being, and identified investment opportunities that could help fund future enhancements to the lake.

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT AREA



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# METHODOLOGY

## OVERVIEW

This report uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the project's potential impacts. The Sullivan Lake Economic Impact Study was developed through a three-phased planning process that collected qualitative and quantitative data to assess the lake's impact on the City of Sullivan and Sullivan County.

### PHASE I: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

The data for this study was collected from a variety of sources. In February 2024, a dynamic survey was distributed to the public to collect feedback from residents and business owners located in the City of Sullivan and Sullivan County. Sullivan County has a population of 20,572, with 4,232 located in the City of Sullivan. The survey was conducted for eight weeks and collected 247 responses from community members.

Additional feedback was gathered through a comprehensive public engagement process, which included publicized community forums and stakeholder interviews. This approach allowed local residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to share their perspectives on the current state and future of Sullivan Lake. Alongside community input, data collection efforts were carried out to obtain valuable insights into population trends, recreational use, and economic development potential. By integrating public feedback with data analysis, a more comprehensive understanding of the community's needs and priorities emerged, ensuring the project accurately reflects the perspectives of those most affected.



## PHASE II: DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis for the Sullivan Lake dredging project involved a multi-faceted approach to assess the lake's current conditions and its economic and environmental impact on the surrounding community. Several key data sources were utilized, including historical records, economic reports, environmental assessments, and community feedback gathered through surveys and public forums.

- **Environmental Data:** Reviewed data provided from the Sediment Removal Plan finalized in April 2024 by Everclear Aquatic Management, LLC. The plan provided a descriptive outline of the proposed sediment removal project, identify the location, extent, and approximate volume of sediment to be removed, identify the proposed location(s) for sediment disposal, and provide a discussion of likely regulatory requirements.
- **Economic Data:** Tourism, recreation, and property value data were collected and analyzed to determine the lake's contribution to the local economy. This included an examination of visitor spending, park entry fees, and the economic activity generated by surrounding businesses. The analysis also explored the potential for increased economic activity following the dredging project, particularly in tourism, real estate, and hospitality.
- **Demographic and Usage Data:** Population trends and recreational usage data were reviewed to better understand the community's engagement with Sullivan Lake. This analysis included evaluating the frequency and type of recreational activities conducted at the lake, such as fishing, boating, and picnicking, and how these activities have changed over time. Additionally, demographic data helped identify key user groups and underserved populations who could benefit from improved lake conditions.
- **Community Feedback:** Survey data was analyzed to assess public perceptions of Sullivan Lake's current state and its importance to the community. This feedback provided insight into the community's priorities, concerns, and potential support for the dredging project. Key themes from the forums and surveys were categorized and cross-referenced with economic and environmental data to ensure alignment between public opinion and project objectives.

The findings from these various data sources were synthesized to create a holistic view of the lake's current challenges and the expected impact of the dredging project. This analysis helped form the foundation for recommendations on how to maximize both the economic and environmental benefits of the project for the community.

## PHASE III: PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Sullivan Economic Impact Study reflects a strategic balance of environmental stewardship, community engagement, and economic foresight, ensuring the provided recommendations will serve as a guide in future initiatives.



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# PRELIMINARY RESEARCH



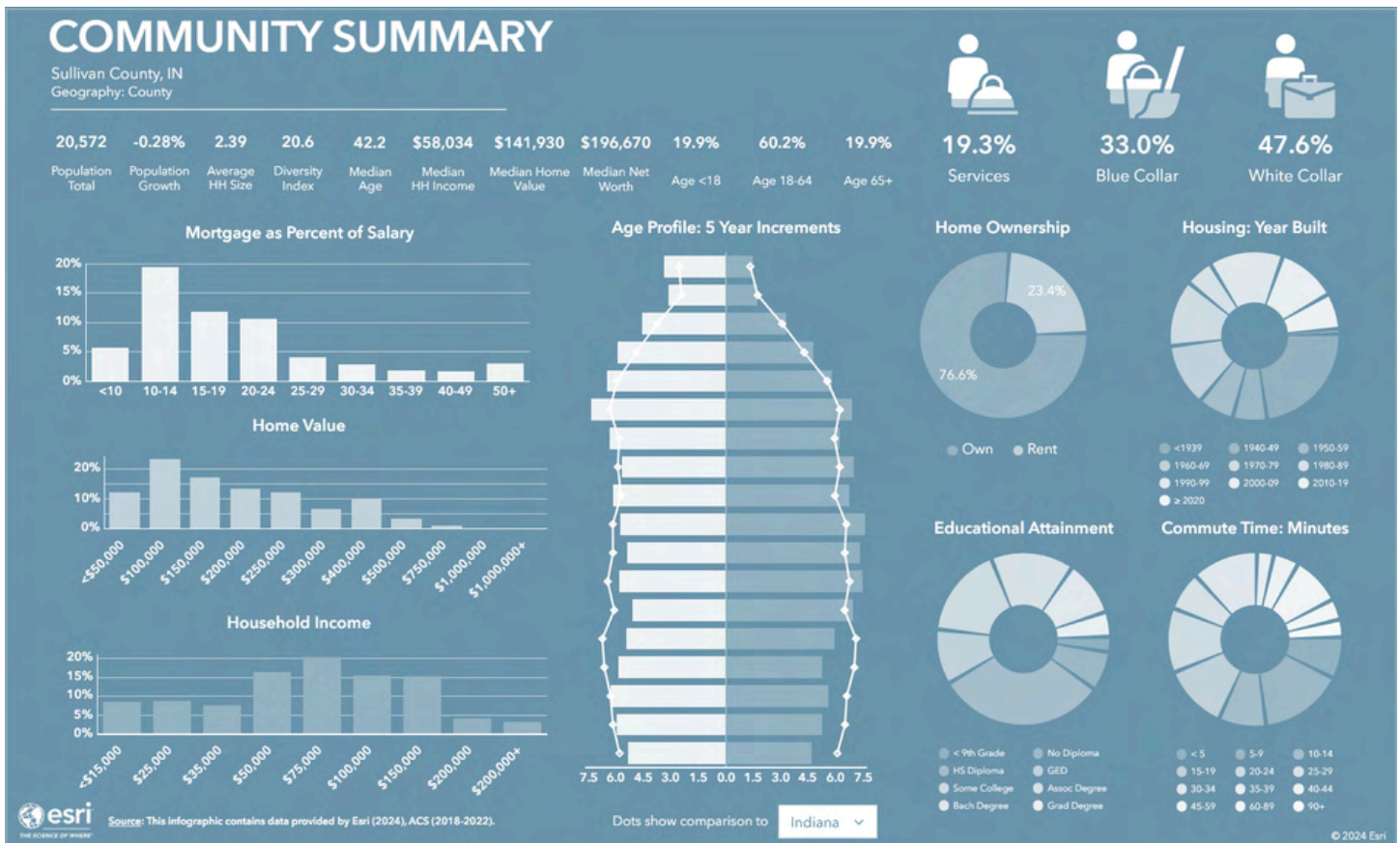
# COUNTY OVERVIEW

Sullivan County, Indiana is home to 20,572 residents. With a population of 20,572 and a median age of 42.2 years, the county shows a balanced age distribution, with 19.9% under 18, 60.2% aged 18-64, and 19.9% aged 65 or older. Economic insights reveal a median household income of \$58,034, a median home value of \$141,930, and a median net worth of \$196,670, with employment divide among services (19.3%), blue-collar (33.0%), and white-collar jobs (47.6%). Housing trends indicate that 76.6% of residents are homeowners, and most properties were built between 1940-1999. Education levels show a majority holding a high school diploma or some college, while commute times remain predominantly under 30 minutes.

The labor force is divided among various industries, with manufacturing leading at 16.6%, followed by healthcare (14.7%) and retail trade (11.7%). Other significant sectors include public administration (8.1%) and educational services (7.5%), while industries like arts/entertainment and information each account for less than 1% of the workforce.

Commute times vary, with the largest group (15.6%) traveling 10–14 minutes, while smaller percentages endure commutes longer than 60 minutes (3.9%). The majority of workers (84%) drive alone to work, with only 11.8% carpooling, 0.7% walking, and 0.4% biking. Public transportation usage is minimal at 0.1%.

Figure 1



Sullivan County is home to 588 businesses employing 6,067 individuals, reflecting a stable economic environment. This profile highlights the county's reliance on core industries like manufacturing and healthcare while emphasizing individual commute patterns and transportation preferences.

Sullivan County, Indiana, offers a variety of resources and amenities that contribute to the community's quality of life. The county has numerous restaurants, providing diverse options for both dine-in and take-out services. Entertainment options include unique venues, offering opportunities for performance and amusement. For transportation, the area has limited public transport options, with only one recorded facility.

In terms of lifestyle and wellness, Sullivan County boasts several food and beverage outlets, ensuring a range of grocery options for residents. Healthcare is supported by 11 local facilities, including hospitals and healthcare centers. The educational landscape includes schools to places for skill development, alongside four libraries for lifelong learning opportunities.

The community aspect is robust, with 36 government facilities that serve as civic engagement hubs. Spiritual enrichment is well-represented with 45 places of worship. Recreational amenities include City and County parks. Additionally, there are multiple sports facilities, offering spaces for individual and group activities.

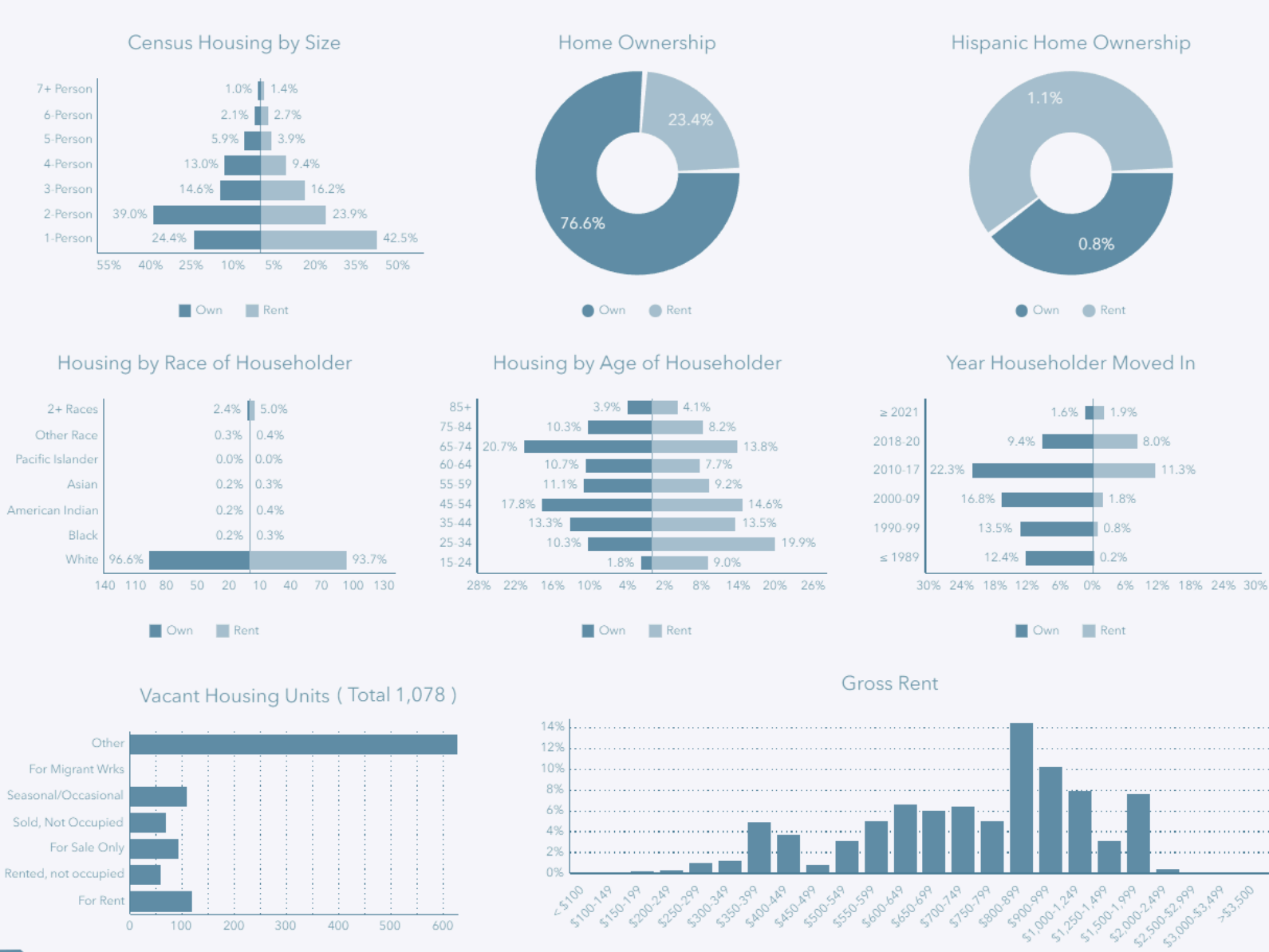
For Sullivan County, the majority of housing units are owner-occupied (76.6%), with renter-occupied units accounting for 23.4%, and Hispanic homeownership making up less than 1%. Home values show a diverse distribution, with the largest proportion (23.3%) of homes valued between \$100,000 and \$150,000. Household income levels are also varied, with the highest percentage (20.4%) earning \$50,000–\$75,000 annually.

Figure 2 provides detailed insights into housing demographics, focusing on census housing characteristics by size, homeownership rates, and other housing-related variables. Housing size varies, with two-person households comprising the largest group (37.8% owner-occupied and 27.3% renter-occupied). The race of householders is predominantly White (95.5%), and homeownership is consistent across different age groups, with 35–44 being the most common age range (27.3%). Additionally, data on when householders moved in reveals that a significant portion of residents moved in between 1990–1999 (30.2% combined for owners and renters). Vacant housing units, totaling 39, are mainly rented or for seasonal use. Gross rent is most common in the \$1,000–\$1,499 range, highlighting the rental market's affordability levels.



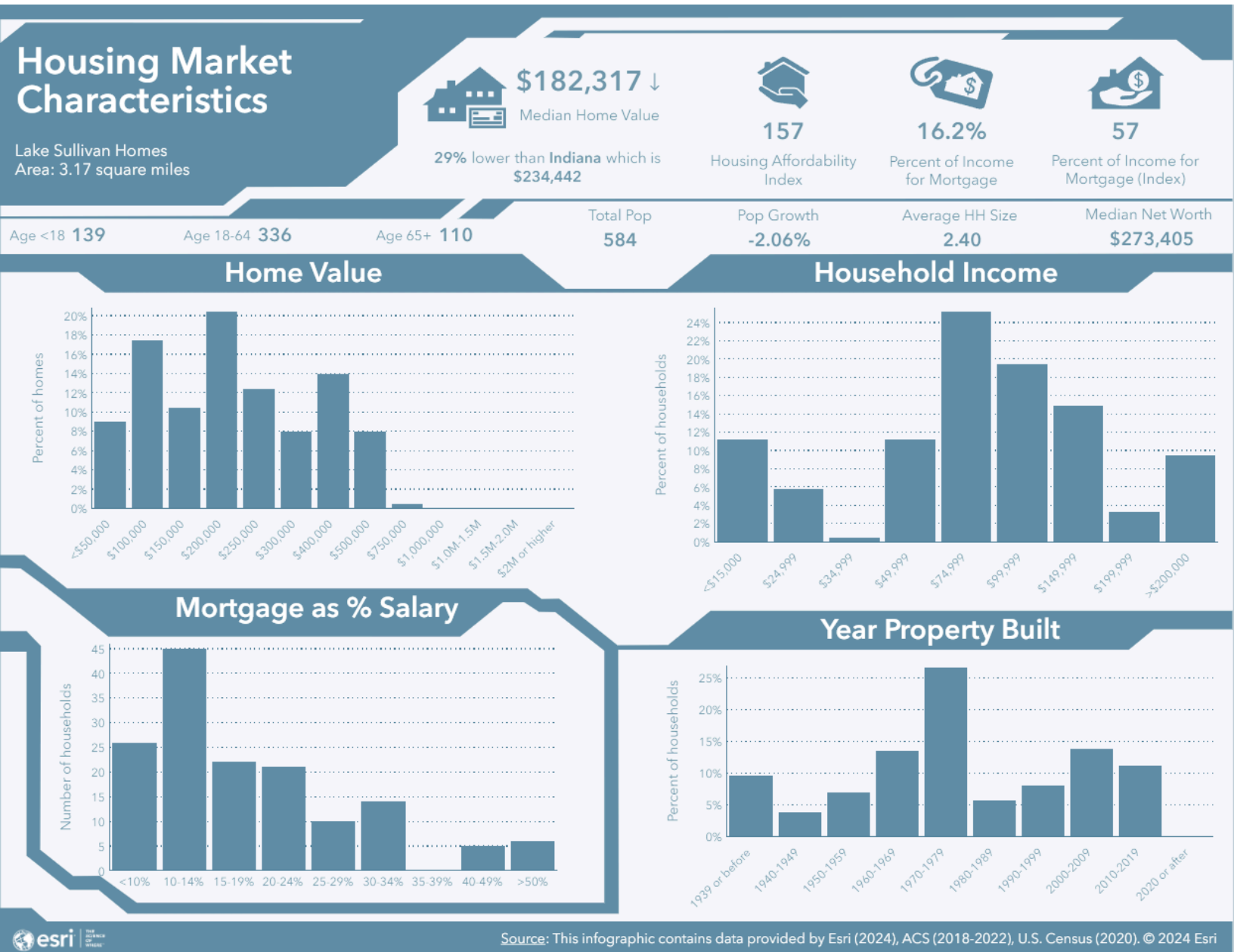
Figure 3 focuses on the housing market characteristics of Lake Sullivan Homes, which spans 3.17 square miles. It emphasizes a median home value of \$182,317, which is 29% lower than the Indiana state median. The housing affordability index is 157, with households spending 16.2% of their income on mortgages. The total population in the area is 584, with an average household size of 2.4. Data on home values reveals that the majority fall within the \$150,000–\$249,999 range, while household income shows a peak in the \$75,000–\$99,999 range. Year of property construction highlights a spike in homes built during 1970–1979. Additionally, the distribution of mortgage payments as a percentage of salary demonstrates that most households fall into the 10–14% category, indicating a balanced cost-to-income ratio for many homeowners. The infographic concludes with a median net worth of \$273,405, reflecting the community's financial stability.

**Figure 2**



Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri (2024), ACS (2018-2022), U.S. Census (2020). © 2024 Esri

Figure 3



## SULLIVAN COUNTY PARK AND LAKE: LOCAL TOURISM

In 2014, Rockport Analytics conducted a report on the economic impact of tourism in Sullivan County. The assessment revealed that visitor spending in Sullivan County amounted to \$8.1 million, supporting 147 jobs and generating \$3.2 million in labor income. These figures indicated a growth trend in the county's tourism sector, with a 2.3% increase from the previous year, propelling Sullivan County to rank 52nd out of 92 Indiana counties for tourism growth in 2014.

Focusing on the tourism categories within Sullivan County, recreation and entertainment accounted for approximately 12% of tourism spending, which can be largely attributed to the Sullivan County Park and Lake. Lodging expenditures comprised 18% of tourism spending, contributing to local revenue through the County Innkeeper's Tax, which is currently set at 5% for hotel accommodations less than 30 days. As a significant tourism asset, the Sullivan County Park and Lake directly influences this revenue, which in 2023 amounted to \$12,063.32, with 49% of that income generated between May and September.

Examining local spending habits, Sullivan County residents exhibit a strong market potential for outdoor recreation, as evidenced by data from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (Esri). Several product and consumer behaviors in Sullivan County display a Market Potential Index (MPI) above the national average of 100. Activities such as Boating (119), Canoeing or Kayaking (109), Fresh Water Fishing (135), and Overnight Camping (112) all surpass the national average, indicating a robust market for outdoor recreation in Sullivan County and underscoring the Park and Lake's significant economic impact.



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# ECONOMIC CONTEXT



## MACRO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The broader economic environment in Indiana has been marked by consistent growth in tourism and outdoor recreation, both of which are increasingly important contributors to the state's economy. This upward trend is fueled by a combination of factors, including rising interest in nature-based activities, greater emphasis on health and wellness, and a desire for local and accessible recreational opportunities. As more people seek out outdoor experiences, regions with well-maintained natural attractions are poised to attract visitors, stimulate local economies, and enhance community well-being.

The project aligns perfectly with these economic trends. By improving the lake's ecological health and enhancing its recreational appeal, the project can serve as a catalyst for increased tourism and outdoor activity in Sullivan County. A well-restored Sullivan Lake will draw more visitors for fishing, boating, swimming, and other water-based activities, directly benefiting local businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and retail shops. This influx of tourists will create a ripple effect throughout the local economy, increasing demand for goods and services, which in turn will lead to job creation and higher local tax revenues.

Furthermore, regional economic conditions in Indiana increasingly reflect a commitment to environmental sustainability. There is a growing recognition that long-term economic success is intertwined with the health of natural resources. State and local policies now often prioritize sustainable development, conservation, and restoration projects that ensure both economic growth and environmental stewardship. Sullivan Lake embodies these values by aiming to restore the lake's natural ecosystem while simultaneously boosting the local economy. By understanding the lake's overall economic impact on the community, the SCPLB will identify initiatives for proper maintenance and care of the lake to be an economic engine long-term, positioning Sullivan County as a forward-thinking community that values both economic prosperity and environmental responsibility.

The Sullivan County Park, as well as the lake, is widely perceived as having a significant positive impact on the City of Sullivan, particularly in terms of recreation, community engagement, and economic benefits. An overwhelming 97.44% of respondents to the survey believe that Sullivan Lake enhances recreational opportunities in the area, offering residents and visitors a space to enjoy outdoor activities. This is complemented by the park's role as a community gathering and event space, with 87.18% of respondents recognizing its positive contribution to fostering social connections and hosting local events.

Sullivan Lake's influence extends to the economic realm as well, with 89.74% of respondents acknowledging its positive impact on the local economy. By attracting visitors and supporting local businesses, the park contributes to the financial health of the city. Furthermore, 82.05% of respondents feel that the park enhances the overall quality of life in Sullivan, offering a place for relaxation, recreation, and community interaction.

In addition to these social and economic benefits, the park also plays a role in environmental conservation, with 71.05% of respondents viewing its impact positively. The preservation of natural spaces within the park is seen as a valuable contribution to the local environment. Moreover, the park's presence is believed to boost property values, with 67.57% of respondents indicating that it has a positive effect on real estate in the area.



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# INDUSTRY OVERVIEW





## COMMUNITY LAKES

Community lakes, such as Sullivan Lake, serve as essential assets that influence the economic, environmental, and social fabric of the regions they inhabit. These lakes not only offer recreational spaces for residents and visitors but also drive local economies, support environmental conservation efforts, and create enriching social and recreational opportunities.

Lakes are powerful economic drivers, boosting local economies through increased tourism and supporting a variety of businesses such as restaurants, outdoor equipment rentals, hotels, and retail shops. Visitors drawn to lake activities—fishing, boating, swimming, and camping—bring a steady revenue stream to nearby communities, which supports job creation and stimulates business growth. Moreover, lakes enhance property values by making nearby real estate more desirable, which benefits homeowners and attracts new residents. The presence of a vibrant recreational area also invites investment opportunities, from infrastructure improvements to commercial development, positioning community lakes as both immediate and long-term contributors to economic vitality.

Community lakes play a crucial role in environmental conservation. They provide habitats for fish, birds, and other wildlife, contributing to local biodiversity and preserving ecosystems essential to the environment's health. Lakes with restored habitats and high-water quality can become conservation landmarks, often partnering with local environmental organizations to protect native species and combat invasive ones. By maintaining clean and accessible lakes, communities can also support efforts to improve air and water quality, safeguard watershed health, and promote sustainable practices that benefit both people and wildlife. The conservation of these natural resources helps protect surrounding forests, wetlands, and other vital ecosystems, ensuring that they remain resilient and sustainable for future generations.

Lakes provide invaluable social and recreational opportunities, serving as gathering places that strengthen community bonds and enhance quality of life. They offer residents of all ages a place to unwind, connect with nature, and engage in physical activities that support mental and physical health. The addition of facilities like trails, picnic areas, playgrounds, and sports courts around lakes enhances their accessibility and appeal, transforming them into year-round destinations for families, groups, and individuals. Beyond recreation, lakes serve as venues for community events, outdoor education programs, and environmental awareness initiatives, creating spaces where people can come together, learn, and contribute to shared conservation efforts.

In summary, community lakes, like Sullivan Lake, are critical to local and regional sustainability. They drive economic growth, preserve and protect natural ecosystems, and provide social and recreational benefits that enrich community life. Recognizing and supporting the full impact of these resources enables communities to maximize their potential as both cherished natural assets and pillars of economic and social well-being.

## Relevant Trends

A majority of businesses in Sullivan County acknowledge the positive impact of tourism at the Sullivan County Park and Lake during the summer months. Specifically, 69.23% of businesses reported that tourism from the Park and Lake directly affects their operations, with noticeable increases in customer flow and traffic in the surrounding areas.

Businesses who participated in the economic impact survey noted they see an increase in revenue during the summer months, ranging from an average increase of 29% from respondents located within the City of Sullivan and an average increase of 42% from respondents located outside city limits. Participants were also asked if they hire additional staff to manage increased workload or seasonal demands. Of the respondents 76.9% of respondents within city limits noted they do not hire additional staff, while 23% hire additional staff. Within the county, 42.8% of respondents noted they do not hire additional staff, while 57.1% hire additional staff. For those who responded yes, they stated they hired 1-2 additional staff members.

Overall, the data collected from survey respondents suggests that while tourism at Sullivan County Park and Lake positively impacts business revenue during the summer, most businesses are able to manage the increased demand without the need for substantial changes to their staffing levels.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

### Indirect Economic Impact

Indirect economic impacts refer to the secondary effects of economic activity that occur as a result of initial investments or actions. In the context of the Sullivan Lake dredging project, indirect economic impacts extend beyond the immediate benefits of enhanced tourism and recreational activities.

Moreover, the dredging project's environmental improvements—such as better water quality and restored habitats—can enhance the lake's long-term appeal as a regional attraction. As tourism grows, so does the demand for infrastructure and services, leading to further investment in roads, utilities, and public spaces. Local governments may see increased tax revenues from higher property values and sales taxes generated by visitor spending.



**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

<b>RECREATION EXPENDITURES SULLIVAN COUNTY, INDIANA</b>			
<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>SPENDING POTENTIAL INDEX</b>	<b>AVERAGE AMOUNT SPENT</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Recreational Vehicles and Fees</b>			
Docking and Landing Fees for Boats and Planes	65	\$12.99	\$99,878.00
Camp Fees	63	\$35.30	\$271,341.00
Payments on Boats/Trailers/Campers/RVs	95	\$76.08	\$584,756.00
Rental of Boats/Trailers/Campers/RVs	120	\$49.14	\$380,693.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>\$173.91</b>	<b>\$1,336,669.00</b>
<b>Sports, Recreation and Exercise Equipment</b>			
Exercise Equipment and Gear, Game Tables	45	\$48.26	\$370,929.00
Bicycles	86	\$69.14	\$531,423.00
Camping Equipment	41	\$6.89	\$52,979.00
Hunting and Fishing Equipment	87	\$53.52	\$411,367.00
Winter Sports Equipment	57	\$7.34	\$56,416.00
Water Sports Equipment	80	\$10.02	\$77,016.00
Other Sports Equipment	91	\$9.73	\$74,768.00
Rental/Repair of Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment	69	\$2.03	\$15,619.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>\$207.38</b>	<b>\$1,593,927.00</b>

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2024 and 2029; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2021 and 2022 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Induced Economic Impact

Induced economic impact refers to the additional economic activity generated as a result of increased income and spending by employees and workers directly or indirectly involved in a project. For the Sullivan Lake dredging project, the creation of jobs, both temporary and permanent, will lead to increased household incomes for workers employed in construction, environmental services, and businesses supporting the lake's operations.

As the project enhances the lake's appeal and increases tourism, the induced economic impact can expand significantly. For instance, as local businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and recreational facilities experience growth due to increased visitor numbers, they may hire additional staff. The cycle of income generation and spending continues to ripple through the community, multiplying the economic benefits initially generated by the project. This sustained spending activity can lead to a broader economic uplift for the region, improving overall quality of life and fostering long-term community development.

## Direct Impacts

Among the business owners in the City of Sullivan, the predominant industries included various unspecified businesses (46.15%), retail (15.38%), and real estate (15.38%). The majority of these businesses were small, with 76.92% employing 1-10 employees. A significant number of these businesses (69.23%) reported positive impacts from increased tourism during the summer, experiencing an average revenue increase of 29%. Additionally, most businesses (76.92%) did not require extra staff during peak seasons, indicating manageable workloads despite the influx of tourists. However, those that did indicate they hire additional staff (23.08%) indicated anywhere from 1 – 10 new staff during the summer to accommodate increased foot traffic.

Business owners in Sullivan County, particularly those outside the city, also noted substantial impacts from summer tourism, with 57.14% acknowledging increased customer flow and revenue. Agriculture and retail were the most common industries, each representing 28.57% of the respondents. All county businesses surveyed had small staff sizes of 1-10 employees.

On average, these businesses saw a 43% rise in revenue during the summer months, with some reporting increases as high as 100%. A majority (57.14%) of these businesses also answered that they employ, on average, 1 - 3 additional staff members in the summer months to manage increased workloads.

Residents living in the Sullivan County Park and Lake area primarily cited scenic beauty (79.49%) and outdoor activities (76.92%) as reasons for their residence. A notable 65.79% observed increased activity in both the park and the City of Sullivan during the summer. Many residents expressed concerns about sediment build-up in the lake, which affects boating, fishing, and overall water quality, contributing to challenges in recreational use and wildlife impact.

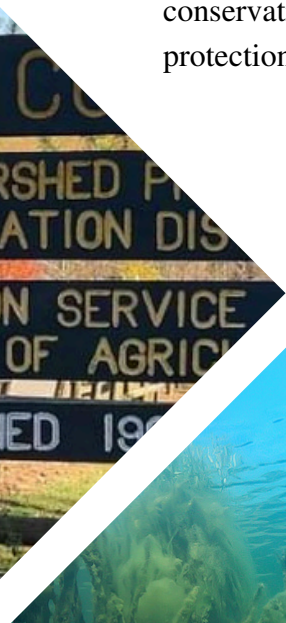
County residents similarly noted the positive contributions of the Sullivan County Park and Lake, particularly in recreation (93.40%) and economic impact (86.54%). However, sediment build-up and water quality remained significant concerns, alongside challenges like limited amenities and the need for modernization.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The dredging of Sullivan Lake is a critical initiative designed to restore the lake's ecological balance and improve water quality. However, as with any large-scale environmental project, the dredging process may lead to short-term disruptions that must be carefully managed. These disruptions could include disturbances to local wildlife habitats, increased sedimentation, and temporary changes in water quality. Species that rely on the lake's ecosystem, such as fish, migratory birds, and aquatic plants, may experience temporary displacement during the dredging operations. This is particularly concerning for sensitive species that are already under pressure due to habitat degradation.

To address these potential impacts, a comprehensive mitigation strategy will be implemented. This strategy will involve careful timing of the dredging activities to avoid critical periods for wildlife, such as breeding seasons. Additionally, sediment barriers and other containment measures will be used to prevent the spread of disturbed materials, thereby minimizing the impact on water quality and downstream ecosystems. These measures will be guided by environmental assessments and consultations with local wildlife experts to ensure that the natural environment is protected as much as possible.

Long-term ecological benefits are a central goal of the project. By removing accumulated sediments and restoring the lake's depth, water circulation and oxygen levels will improve, leading to a healthier aquatic environment. The removal of pollutants trapped in the sediment will further enhance water quality, benefiting both the wildlife and the local community. Over time, the restored lake is expected to support a more diverse and resilient ecosystem, with increased populations of fish, birds, and other wildlife. In addition to direct environmental improvements, the project will also raise awareness of conservation efforts in the region, potentially leading to further investments in environmental protection.



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# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS



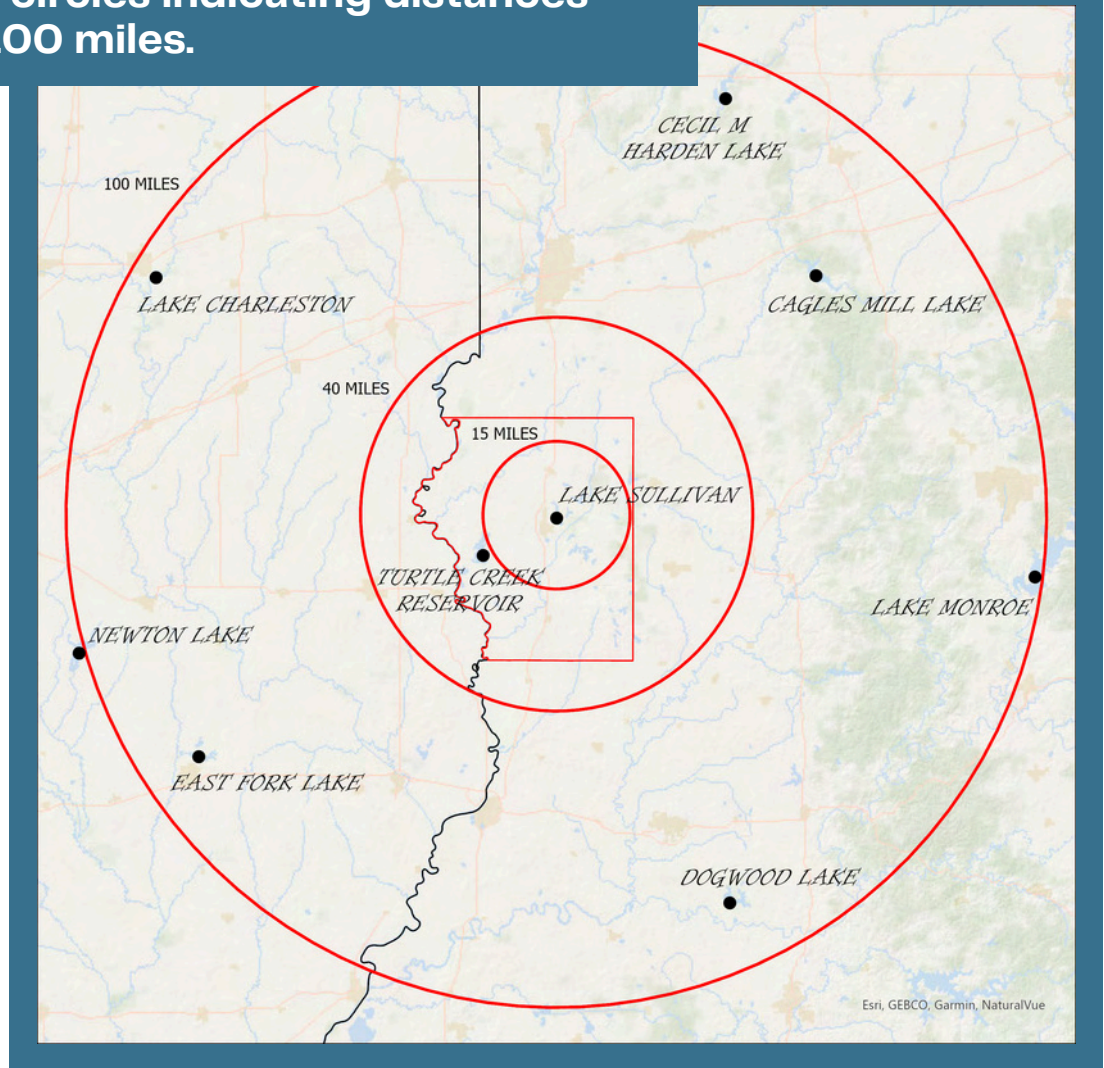
## ASSESSING THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SULLIVAN COUNTY PARK AND LAKE

The Sullivan County Park and Lake Board has made significant efforts to enhance the park's amenities, accessibility, and infrastructure and continues to progress in constantly improving Sullivan County Park and Lake. Enhancing the park's community role, drawing tourists, and promoting local economic growth are the goals of these improvements. The establishment of a golf cart ordinance that allows the use of golf carts on local roadways and the future connection to the Sullivan's Greenway Trail System, which links local resources like the park to downtown Sullivan, have been important achievements. When taken as a whole, these projects and programs significantly affect local companies, tourism, real estate values, and community engagement.

- **Positive Impact on Retail and Service Industries:** Businesses near the Greenway Trail are likely to benefit from an increase in pedestrian traffic, particularly if the trail passes by retail stores, restaurants, and recreational facilities.
- **Tourism Revenue Potential:** With Sullivan County Park and Lake serving as key features for outdoor recreation, along with the Greenway Trail connecting these assets to the downtown, the city is well-positioned to attract weekend visitors and regional tourists. The park could continue to offer and host events (e.g., fishing tournaments, outdoor festivals), increasing hotel stays, restaurant visits, and local shopping.
- **Sustainable Tourism Growth:** Emphasizing eco-tourism and promoting the park and lake for activities such as hiking, bird watching, and kayaking could cater to sustainable tourism trends, ensuring long-term benefits to the town.
- **Increased Property Demand:** Studies consistently indicate that properties located near parks and trails tend to experience higher market values. A report by the IU Public Policy Institute highlights the substantial economic impact of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail on nearby property values. Since its creation in 2008, property assessments within one block of the eight-mile trail have surged by 148%, translating to a \$1 billion increase in assessed value. Using GIS software, the analysis revealed a total property value increase of \$1,013,544,460 between 2008 and 2014. Remarkably, 25 properties—including a mix of commercial, residential, and lodging establishments—contributed to 68% of this growth. This evidence reinforces the trend that proximity to parks and trails enhances property values.
- **Improved Health and Well-being:** Parks and trail networks promote social interaction, walking, and bicycling, all of which enhance mental and physical well-being. More physical activity among locals will be promoted via the Greenway Trail, improving social cohesion and public health results.

Sullivan, Indiana is poised to benefit significantly from these ongoing improvements, contributing to a more vibrant local economy and a higher quality of life for its residents. The map highlights lakes within varying proximity to Sullivan Lake, marked with concentric red circles indicating distances of 15, 40, and 100 miles. Sullivan Lake serves as the focal point, with other notable water bodies mapped out for comparison in the surrounding region. Nearby, Turtle Creek Reservoir is situated within a 15-mile radius. Expanding outward, lakes such as Cecil M. Harden Lake and Cagles Mill Lake to the northeast and Newton Lake and East Fork Lake to the west fall within the 40- and 100-mile zones. Prominent larger lakes, including Lake Monroe to the southeast and Dogwood Lake further south, are also depicted within the regional scope. The map underscores the abundance of lakes and reservoirs in the area, showcasing potential for recreational activities

**The map highlights lakes within varying proximity to Sullivan Lake, marked with concentric red circles indicating distances of 15, 40, and 100 miles.**



## BENCHMARKING – DREDGING PROJECTS

To better understand the impact and intricacies of the dredging process, the experiences of the following communities serve as valuable case studies. These examples provide insight into the procedures, successes, and challenges faced during their dredging projects.



### Lake Lemon, Indiana

Lake Lemon Conservancy District (LLCD) was established in 1995, tasked with managing and maintaining Lake Lemon. The LLCD quickly faced various challenges, particularly sedimentation, which poses the greatest threat to the reservoir's longevity. With the lake nearing its half-life of 125 years, the LLCD secured a federal grant in 1999 to study sedimentation and formed a committee to identify critical areas for sediment removal. From 2006 to 2008, over 30,000 cubic yards of sediment were removed through contracted dredging services. In 2009, the LLCD shifted to a self-managed dredging program, acquiring necessary equipment by 2010 to enhance efficiency. Additionally, the use of rip-rap for shoreline erosion control has improved ecological stability, while ongoing water quality monitoring ensures compliance with health standards. Overall, these initiatives emphasize the importance of active sediment management and dredging to preserve Lake Lemon's health and sustainability for future generations.



### Clear View Lake, Iowa

The project to restore Clear View Lake in Iowa was a monumental undertaking aimed at reversing decades of sediment accumulation that had severely diminished both the lake's environmental health and its recreational appeal. Launched in the early 2000s, the initiative involved the removal of over 2 million cubic yards of sediment, which had led to deteriorating water quality, disrupted aquatic habitats, and limited the lake's use for recreational activities such as boating, fishing, and swimming. The total cost of the dredging effort exceeded \$10 million, with funding provided by a partnership between state and local governments and private investors. This collaborative funding approach reflected widespread recognition of Clear View Lake as a crucial economic and community asset. Prior to the project, the lake was estimated to contribute around \$60 million in economic value to the region, a figure that was projected to rise to \$90 million following the completion of the dredging, thanks to improved water quality, enhanced recreational opportunities, and increased property values around the lake.

Upon completion, the dredging project delivered immediate and long-lasting environmental benefits. One of the most significant changes was a sharp reduction in nutrient levels in the lake, which had previously fueled frequent algal blooms that compromised water quality and dissuaded visitors. The removal of sediment also improved water clarity, restored aquatic habitats, and made the lake more accessible and enjoyable for recreational users. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources reported marked improvements in lake health during post-dredging monitoring, reinforcing Clear View Lake's standing as a premier destination for outdoor activities in the region.



The revitalization of Clear View Lake also had a profound impact on the local economy. Increased tourism and recreational use led to higher demand for local businesses, including hotels, restaurants, marinas, and recreational service providers. These businesses saw significant increases in revenue as the lake attracted more visitors eager to take advantage of its now-pristine waters. Additionally, property values around the lake rose as homeowners and investors recognized the enhanced quality of life and economic potential that the dredging had unlocked. With the lake restored to its former glory, Clear View Lake not only provided a healthier ecosystem but also became a stronger economic driver for the surrounding community, demonstrating how large-scale environmental restoration efforts can yield lasting financial and social benefits. The project has since become a model for other communities grappling with similar sedimentation challenges, underscoring the importance of investing in natural resources to secure long-term economic vitality.



### **Upper Nemahbin Lake District, Wisconsin**

In 2022, an assessment of Upper Nemahbin Lake District in Wisconsin identified that 11,000 cubic yards of sediment needed to be dredged from both the lake and the adjacent river to restore water levels to their natural state. The excessive sediment accumulation had been negatively impacting water quality, reducing boat safety, and disrupting local ecosystems, all of which limited the community's recreational use of the lake. In addition to threatening biodiversity, the sediment buildup hindered the lake's overall usability, affecting everything from boat motors to piers and boat lifts. The community and environmental stakeholders recognized that the lake's economic and recreational potential was diminishing as a result of these issues.

By 2023, multiple bids for the dredging project were received, with costs ranging from \$632,000 to \$1.3 million. To finance the project, the Lake District approved a tax increase for all landowners in the area, supplemented by a 20-year loan from the State of Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands. This funding approach demonstrated a collaborative effort among local residents and the state government to preserve and enhance the lake's value for future generations.

The environmental impact was a key concern, as the sediment, in some areas as deep as 13 feet, posed serious risks not only to boat motors and swimmer safety but also to fish and other aquatic life. The lake's usability had been severely compromised, with sediment preventing access to piers and making boating, fishing, and swimming increasingly hazardous. This situation had led to a decline in tourism and recreational activities, further exacerbating the lake's economic decline.

In response, the dredging project officially commenced in January 2024, with plans to restore the lake to its former health. The removal of sediment is expected to improve water clarity, increase fish populations, and create safer conditions for recreational use. The long-term benefits include a revitalized lake that will once again serve as a key economic driver for the local community, attracting tourists, increasing property values, and enhancing quality of life for residents. The project is seen as a critical investment in both environmental restoration and economic sustainability for Upper Nemahbin Lake District.



### **Arrowhead Cove, Deep Creek Lake, Maryland**

In 2016, Garrett County, Maryland, initiated a comprehensive evaluation process to determine the feasibility of dredging various coves within Deep Creek Lake, focusing on cost-effectiveness and the potential community benefits. After extensive discussions with the state of Maryland, local stakeholders, and property owners, Arrowhead Cove was identified as a high-priority area for dredging. The decision was based on its potential to significantly improve water quality, enhance fish habitats, and create the greatest impact on recreational water activities. Arrowhead Cove, one of 10 coves impacted by severe sediment buildup, stood out due to its ability to attract large public boating crowds, making it a central hub for water-based recreation in the area.

The selection process for these 10 coves involved a detailed analysis of environmental, economic, and logistical factors. The sediment buildup in Arrowhead Cove had led to degraded water quality, reduced fish populations, and restricted access for boats, which hindered recreational use and posed safety risks. Addressing these issues was deemed essential for preserving the ecological balance and ensuring the continued popularity of Deep Creek Lake as a destination for both locals and tourists. Additionally, dredging Arrowhead Cove was expected to bolster the local economy by drawing more visitors and facilitating a wider range of water-based activities, such as fishing, boating, and swimming.

Throughout the project planning phase, collaboration with local property owners was essential in securing the necessary funding and support. Stakeholders recognized that restoring the cove would not only improve the lake's environmental health but also have a positive ripple effect on property values and the local tourism industry. By improving access for larger boating crowds, the dredging would increase the usability of the lake, boosting economic activity for nearby businesses, including restaurants, marinas, and recreational outfitters.

The dredging of Arrowhead Cove was successfully completed in January 2024. The results have already begun to materialize, with improved water clarity, healthier fish habitats, and enhanced boating conditions. The project is expected to lead to a resurgence in recreational use, further positioning Deep Creek Lake as one of the region's premier destinations for outdoor water activities. This benchmark project highlights how targeted environmental investments can revitalize both local ecosystems and economies, ensuring long-term benefits for the community and the region.



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# BEST PRACTICES

Environmental considerations are paramount in any dredging project. Testing lakebed sediments for contaminants is a necessary step, as is implementing measures to minimize ecological disruption. For instance, dredging activities should be scheduled to avoid critical breeding or migratory periods for wildlife, and erosion control methods should be used to stabilize the shoreline. Selecting the appropriate dredging method—whether mechanical or hydraulic—also depends on the sediment type and the project's scale, balancing efficiency with environmental protection.

Proper management and disposal of dredged materials are essential to the project's success. Identifying suitable disposal sites that comply with environmental regulations and exploring opportunities for reusing the material can reduce costs and environmental impacts. Continuous monitoring during and after the dredging process helps ensure that water quality and ecosystem health are maintained, allowing for adaptive management if issues arise.

Communication with the community and stakeholders regarding environmental concerns throughout the project fosters transparency and builds support. Emphasizing the long-term benefits, such as improved water quality and recreational opportunities, can help mitigate concerns. Additionally, efficient cost management, safety protocols for both workers and the public, and post-dredging restoration efforts contribute to the project's sustainability and long-term success. Ultimately, documenting and reporting on the project's progress and outcomes ensure accountability and provide valuable insights for future initiatives.

## **SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS**

By assessing how different variables in the Sullivan Lake Economic Impact Study project could impact its overall outcomes, particularly the economic, environmental, and social benefits, a sensitivity analysis was conducted to evaluate resources and potential risks. By evaluating potential risks and uncertainties, we can better understand the project's viability under various scenarios and identify critical factors that could influence its success. The analysis considers key variables such as project costs, funding availability, environmental outcomes, and economic impacts.



### **Cost Variations**

The projected cost of the Sullivan Lake dredging project is a major factor in its sensitivity. While estimates suggest a baseline cost, fluctuations in labor, equipment, and material prices could significantly alter the financial requirements. For example, a 10% increase in material or labor costs would raise the project budget, potentially requiring additional funding or project delays. Conversely, a 10% reduction in costs due to favorable market conditions or efficient resource management could improve the project's financial feasibility and allow for more investment in additional lake improvements.



### **Funding Availability**

The success of the dredging project is highly dependent on the availability of state, local, and private funding. A significant risk lies in the potential for funding shortfalls if tax revenues or grants are reduced. Delays in securing a 20-year loan or other funding sources could slow progress or require scaling back the scope of the dredging. On the other hand, securing additional funds from private investors or increased government support could allow for expanded project scope, including further environmental improvements or long-term maintenance initiatives.



### **Environmental Impact Variability**

The environmental outcomes of the project, such as improvements in water quality, aquatic habitat restoration, and reduced sediment levels, are dependent on factors like weather conditions, the accuracy of environmental assessments, and the dredging method selected. If sediment removal is less effective than expected or additional environmental challenges arise, the lake's ecosystem may not experience the anticipated improvements. Alternatively, exceeding environmental goals could further enhance the lake's appeal and biodiversity, boosting the long-term sustainability of the project.



### **Tourism and Recreational Usage**

The projected economic benefits of the dredging project are strongly linked to increases in tourism and recreational activity at Sullivan Lake. However, external factors such as regional competition from other recreational areas, weather conditions, or economic downturns could dampen visitor numbers, thereby reducing the expected economic boost. Conversely, successful marketing of the lake's enhanced recreational offerings and the improvement of infrastructure (such as better access points or amenities) could attract higher-than-expected visitation, increasing local business revenues and enhancing property values.



### **Property Value Impact**

The dredging project is expected to enhance property values around Sullivan Lake due to improved water quality and recreational opportunities. However, the actual increase in property values may be influenced by broader economic trends in the real estate market. For instance, if there is a regional downturn in real estate or a decline in demand for lakefront properties, the anticipated rise in property values could be smaller than expected. Conversely, if the regional housing market thrives, the dredging project could significantly elevate property values, further boosting tax revenues for the local government.

## RISK MITIGATION ASSESSMENT

This section outlines strategies for managing potential risks associated with the Sullivan Lake dredging project. It focuses on four key areas: cost variations, funding availability, environmental impact variability, tourism and recreational usage. For each risk area, the section provides targeted mitigation strategies designed to reduce the likelihood of adverse outcomes and ensure the project stays on track.

### **Cost Variations**

To address potential cost increases, a contingency reserve of 10-15% of the budget will be established. The project will also use fixed-price contracts for high-cost resources and services to prevent unexpected price spikes. Regular resource audits and monitoring of market conditions will help optimize resource allocation and adjust plans accordingly.

### **Funding Availability**

To ensure continuous funding, the project will diversify its funding sources by seeking support from state, federal, local, and private sectors. The project will be broken into manageable phases to allow work to proceed even if full funding is delayed, and proactive communication with stakeholders will help secure additional support if needed.

### **Environmental Impact Variability**

To minimize environmental risks, adaptive dredging techniques will be used, and continuous environmental monitoring will track factors like water quality and sediment levels. Close collaboration with local ecologists and environmental organizations will ensure compliance and optimize the project's ecological impact.

### **Tourism and Recreational Usage**

To maintain steady visitation to Sullivan Lake, targeted outreach and marketing campaigns will raise awareness among tourists and locals. Partnerships with regional tourism agencies and seasonal event planning will drive consistent traffic, ensuring year-round engagement and boosting the economic impact of the lake.

These strategies aim to address potential challenges and ensure the successful and sustainable execution of the Sullivan Lake dredging project, fostering long-term environmental and economic benefits for the community.

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# CONCLUSION



## SULLIVAN LAKE IS MORE THAN JUST A RECREATIONAL AREA –

It is the heart of Sullivan County’s natural landscape and serves as a vital economic and cultural resource. Over the years, the lake has attracted residents and visitors alike for its fishing, boating, and recreation opportunities, all while contributing to the region’s economic vitality. However, as with any natural resource, Sullivan Lake has faced environmental pressures, including sediment buildup that has gradually reduced its water quality and recreational capacity. The proposed dredging of Sullivan Lake represents a crucial investment not only in restoring the lake’s health but also in enhancing its role as a recreational and economic engine for the community.

The lake is Sullivan County’s largest natural asset and one of its most well-used attractions. By undertaking the dredging project, the local government, in partnership with community stakeholders, is positioning Sullivan Lake for a future of continued enjoyment, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.

One of the most immediate benefits of dredging Sullivan Lake will be the restoration of its recreational value. Sediment buildup over time has led to shallower water levels, which not only degrade the quality of the fishing and boating experience but also create potential hazards for watercraft. By removing this sediment, the lake will become deeper, cleaner, and more navigable, ensuring that the recreational experience remains a safe, attractive option for visitors.

The dredging of Sullivan Lake is not just an isolated environmental project—it should be integrated with broader efforts to revitalize Downtown Sullivan and transform it into a destination for tourists and residents alike. As the lake becomes more attractive and accessible, efforts to revitalize nearby historic buildings and promote downtown businesses will provide synergistic benefits.

The improvements to Sullivan Lake will have a direct and positive effect on local property values. Proximity to water and recreational areas often results in higher demand for nearby real estate, as residents and investors seek out homes with access to these valuable amenities. As the lake becomes a more attractive destination, local tourism-dependent businesses will likely see an increase in demand for seasonal and permanent staff. Hotels, restaurants, recreational outfitters, and event organizers will all benefit from this increased demand, resulting in sustained job growth.

As with any large-scale environmental project, the Sullivan Lake dredging project faces potential challenges, including fluctuations in project costs and unforeseen environmental conditions. However, these challenges can be mitigated through strategic planning and adaptive management. The partnership between local governments, environmental agencies, and the community will ensure that risks related to sediment disposal, water quality, and the impact on aquatic life are carefully managed. The use of adaptive management strategies will allow for ongoing adjustments as needed, ensuring the long-term success of the project.

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# RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



## Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should support the project through funding initiatives, environmental regulations, and community engagement efforts. These measures will ensure the project's alignment with broader regional development goals.

Sullivan County Park and Lake undeniably serves as an economic asset to the community, leveraging its natural beauty and recreational offerings to drive significant economic activity. The park not only attracts visitors from within Indiana but also draws a notable number of tourists from neighboring states, bolstering local businesses and contributing to job creation. The economic impact study conducted by Rockport Analytics in 2014 revealed that visitor spending alone amounted to \$8.1 million annually, supporting 147 jobs and generating \$3.2 million in labor income. This influx of spending underscores the park's pivotal role in stimulating the local economy, particularly through sectors such as lodging, dining, retail, and recreational services.

Moreover, the park and lake play a crucial role in enhancing Sullivan County's overall appeal as a destination, thereby increasing property values and fostering a more vibrant economic environment. Local businesses, especially those in the City of Sullivan and surrounding areas, experience revenue boosts during peak tourism seasons, highlighting the park's ability to sustain livelihoods and support entrepreneurial endeavors. The diverse array of recreational activities offered, from boating and fishing to camping and hiking, caters to a wide demographic, further amplifying its economic reach and appeal.

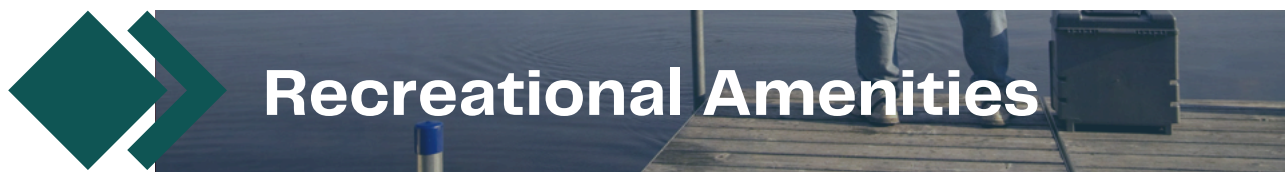
Beyond the direct economic benefits, the park fosters community cohesion, provides residents and visitors alike with valuable recreational opportunities, and enhances overall quality of life. Its role in attracting new residents and businesses cannot be overstated, as the availability of such amenities often influences relocation decisions and stimulates local real estate markets.

In conclusion, Sullivan County Park and Lake stands as a vital economic asset that not only supports the local economy and job creation but also enriches the social fabric of the community. By continuing to invest in infrastructure improvements, expanding amenities, and enhancing marketing efforts, Sullivan County can further capitalize on the park's economic potential while ensuring sustainable growth and prosperity for years to come.



# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Based on the data and community insights, the following key pillars should be prioritized to maximize the economic potential of Sullivan County Park and Lake:



Sullivan County Park and Lake emerges as a robust economic asset, leveraging its natural amenities to drive tourism, support local businesses, and enhance community well-being. By focusing on infrastructure improvements, amenities development, strategic marketing, and fostering community engagement, Sullivan County can optimize the economic benefits of its park and lake while ensuring sustainable growth and development for future generations.



# Infrastructure Enhancements



## **OBJECTIVE: IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH DREDGING AND INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES**

### **Strategy 1.1. Prioritize Sediment Removal**

**Action:** Conduct targeted dredging to restore optimal water depth and improve water quality, supporting aquatic habitats and enhancing recreational activities like fishing, boating, and swimming.

### **Strategy 1.2. Coordinate Infrastructure Enhancements**

**Action:** Align dredging efforts with essential infrastructure upgrades, such as improved access roads, piers, and safety systems, to manage increased visitor traffic and ensure public safety during and after dredging.





# Public Engagement & Marketing

## OBJECTIVE: PROMOTE PUBLIC AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT THROUGH MARKETING AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### Strategy 2.1. Launch a Targeted Marketing Campaign


**Action:** Highlight the benefits of dredging, such as cleaner water, enriched recreational opportunities, and restored aquatic habitats, through a campaign that engages local communities and potential visitors.

### Strategy 2.2. Collaborate with Local Partners

**Action:** Partner with local businesses, tourism boards, and environmental organizations to position the dredging initiative as a key project for revitalizing the lake and boosting regional tourism.

### Strategy 2.3. Form a Community Advisory Board

**Action:** Establish a board to oversee project updates, gather public feedback, and guide educational outreach on the environmental and community benefits of dredging.



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# Community Collaboration

## **OBJECTIVE: PROMOTE PUBLIC AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT THROUGH MARKETING AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

### **Strategy 3.1. Engage Local Schools and Groups in Volunteer Efforts**

**Action:** Involve schools, businesses, and civic organizations in volunteer projects related to the dredging, helping foster a sense of community ownership and support for long-term lake sustainability.

### **Strategy 3.2. Develop Educational Programs**

**Action:** Provide educational resources and programs to raise awareness about the environmental impact and importance of dredging for sustaining local ecosystems.



# Recreational Amenities



## **OBJECTIVE: ENHANCE VISITOR AMENITIES TO ACCOMMODATE DIVERSE RECREATIONAL NEEDS**

### **Strategy 4.1. Expand and Modernize Recreational Facilities**

**Action:** Upgrade amenities such as fishing piers, boat ramps, and shower facilities to accommodate a wide range of recreational activities and visitor expectations.

### **Strategy 4.2. Add Family- Friendly Features**

**Action:** Introduce amenities like playgrounds and picnic areas to attract families and visitors of all ages, promoting the lake as a welcoming destination for the community.



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## Public Engagement

Two public forums were held at the Sullivan Civic Center to gather community input on Lake Sullivan. Each forum attracted approximately 20 residents, who shared their feedback, concerns, and ideas for the lake's future. Members of the Sullivan County Park and Lake Board were also in attendance, actively engaging with participants and taking note of the community's perspectives. These forums provided an opportunity for open dialogue and collaboration between residents and local officials, ensuring that public input is considered in future planning efforts for Sullivan Lake.

In addition, a dynamic community survey ran for eight weeks and was distributed to residents and business owners throughout the county. This survey provided another avenue for stakeholders to voice their opinions, ensuring a broad range of feedback was collected to guide future planning efforts for Sullivan Lake. Together, these initiatives emphasized a collaborative approach to understanding and addressing the community's needs.



