

Hunting Web site debuts

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WATERVILLE—The Natural Resource, LLC has launched the first comprehensive online directory of businesses and resources specifically tailored to Ohio's outdoor enthusiasts.

The company's Internet site — located at www.thenaturalresource.com — displays conventional contact information through icons on interactive, Google(tm)-based road maps. This content is available at no charge to those who hunt, fish, boat, and camp in Ohio.

"The Natural Resource is a unique, map-driven directory that organizes thousands of businesses and other resources to promote and enhance the outdoor experience in Ohio," said Eric Kraus, company founder and editor. "We've filtered and cross-referenced hundreds of public directories and outdoor-related databases to help create a one-stop, information-rich tool focused on a state that's rich in outdoor recreational offerings. Its navigation is point-and-click simple, and its topographic mapping and aerial photography features provide a new and exciting level of detail that will help even the most avid enthusiast."

Activity-based categories,

Interactive maps

At present, The Natural Resource's expansive directory organizes nearly 4,000 Ohio businesses, services, and public access areas under the primary headings — Hunting, Fishing, Boating, and Camping. Biking and Golf categories will be added soon. Each of these main subjects in turn consists of smaller, more specific subcategories. The hunting-related listings, for example, appear in more than a dozen subcategories, including license vendors, game check stations, guides, gun clubs, butcher shops, taxidermists, and public access areas.

Visitors to the site have the capability to select any subcategory map, "zoom in" to the geographic area of interest, and then browse vendors or resources of interest. Another click reveals a vendor's contact information.

Business listings and public access areas are further illustrated by U.S. Geological Survey (U.S.G.S) topographic maps and aerial photographs, which can provide the outdoor enthusiast with such details as local terrain contours, the path of small streams and tributaries, and even the configuration of a marina's boat ramp.

"I was born and raised in northwest Ohio and was spoiled to have world-class water resources right at my finger tips," the Toledo-born Kraus said. "But opportunities to enjoy the outdoors are not always easy to come by. I'm all too aware that the success of many outdoor excursions rests, to a degree, on upfront research and planning. The Natural Resource is designed to help residents and visitors alike quickly locate the best vendors, service providers, and access points for their specific outings."

More features to come

Unlike print directories, [thenaturalresource.com](http://www.thenaturalresource.com) will evolve and be updated constantly. By spring, the Biking and Golf sections, along with an "Other Resources" section, will be populated with more outdoor-oriented businesses and services. New subcategories and listings will also regularly be added to the four sections launched this month. The Natural Resource currently provides the name, address, and telephone number for each listing, but anticipated growth in the directory will dramatically expand helpful details about individual listings to include information like hours of operation, specific goods and services offered, and even links to participating vendors' independent Web sites.