



ANNUAL REPORT

July 2024 – June 2025

Dear Birkie Friends,

The “Birkie” is a year-round lifestyle that keeps us active outdoors all year long! Whether you are training hard to move up a wave, or getting out whenever you can in hopes of finishing your first Korte....or you stopped by MTV for a hike to up to the Kawabaming tower, the lifestyle, the friendship, and the community, motivates you to be out living the lifestyle. And for us, here at the Birkie, we pride ourselves in doing all we can to grow our impact – increase the users, improve the experiences and strengthen the community. Thank you to all of you for being part of this great community!

The 2025 Birkie was another nailbiter with the weather, but at the last second mother nature blessed us with just enough snow and cold to be able to ski the original courses and get everyone into downtown hayward...yea! Huge kudos to the entire team of staff, volunteers, community members and supporters that really came together and made it happen, just by the skin of our teeth!

It was exciting to the get the new Hub building up at Mt. Telemark Village open and rolling as well. Can you believe we had over 25,000 visitors from Dec 20 – Jan 15 alone! With Backroads, New Moon, Trek and the Birkie Store all up and running, they are there to welcome you to the village and help get you out on an adventure on one of the many trails – be it the the George Hovland paved trail, the Trek Trails powered by OTM, the Kawabaming observation tower/Tony Wise trail, one of the World Cup ski trails or just the Birkie trail itself! If you have not yet been there, I’d highly recommend you make a visit to Mt. Telemark Village and experience all it has to offer.

Our year was once again filled with diverse events, from trail runs and bike races, to thrilling ski events and demos, catering to participants of all backgrounds and skill levels. A united, supportive community helped individuals achieve their goals, making the journey enjoyable for everyone.

While we all have different goals and ideas about “what is fun”, what really comes to mind when I think of the Birkie is “community”. Local civic leaders. Race chiefs and volunteers. Staff and board members. Family and friends. Competitors. Spectators. Contractors. Residents. Loved ones near and far...together we are the Birkie community and when we put our mind to it, we can accomplish anything...like skiing 50+km through the hills of Northern Wisconsin, or riding 35+ miles of single track in the Epic, or running a marathon on the hills of Mt. Telemark Village, or standing out in the cold for hours waiting for a loved one, or willing to stand at an aid station supporting thousands of racers, or....you get the idea! Thanks for being a part of an amazing community!

See you up here in the Northwoods soon! - Ben Popp



Agenda

2025 ABSF Annual Meeting

WELCOME

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

YEAR IN REVIEW

FINANCIAL REVIEW

ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Louise Droessler, Development Director
- Paul Eckerline, ABSF President
- Paul Eckerline, ABSF President
- Ben Popp, Executive Director
- Kris Bjerkness, ABSF Treasurer
- Ben Popp, Executive Director





Paul Eckerline

Board President

BIRKIE®
PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

2025 ABSF

Board Election Results



ANDY UBEL



CHRIS MORLEY



MIKE CLEARY



Ben Popp

Executive Director

YEAR IN REVIEW

Mission

Host world-class events
Be good stewards of the American Birkebeiner Trail and associated trails
Promote healthy, active outdoor lifestyles for people of all ages and abilities



Values

Bring joy
Integrity
Be a team player
Everything can be improved
Value diversity
Lead by example
G.S.D

Vision

Inspiring
people to
challenge themselves outside

Creating memories that
shape their lifestyle
and the community

SHELLIE MILFORD Award

Sue Scheer

Recipient



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Award

Paul Eckerline

Recipient



Birkie Facilities

140,000 individual users hosted events, camps, meetings and other venue rentals across all Birkie venues!

- SCJ Family Outdoor Center at OO entrance counter shows 68,700 visits
- 28,000 visitors to MTV Dec 20 - Jan 20!
- From trail side launch to finding a place to park - enabling people to get outside and be active!



Mt. Telemark Village

- Pedestrian bridge and GG Tunnel completed!
- The Hub building opened August 17, 2024
- Front entrance counter shows 183,700 entrances/exits from the front door since August!
- 12 miles of the Trek Trails Powered by OTM singletrack mountain bike trails have been built and Phase 4 is being built this fall.



Trails of the Birkie

The last few seasons show snowmaking becoming a bigger and bigger part of being able to host events and enable snowy winter adventures. Utilizing the old Telemark wells, along with approx 3 miles of electrical service/pedestals and 1.5 miles of water lines, we are now delivering approximately 6km of ski trails at MTV. We will continue to invest in this to improve the efficiency and sustainability of the program.



- 12 miles of MTB trails.
- Over 125km of ski trails for year-round use!
- Quality trail maintenance allowed the Birkie week courses to finish on Main St! Now...investing even more!



Birkie Events

- 40 events
- 18,500 participants
- Ski - Run - Bike !



Birkie Green

- Composted 2,900 lbs from Birkie week
- 68,000 plastic water bottles diverted because of Repreve fabric for Birkie week bibs
- 2,000 Birkie week bibs were prepped for recycling
- More than 100% of the power needs for the Hub at Mt. Telemark Village are offset by the Thatcher Solar Prairie



Birkie Programs

Even with some weather challenges, we were thrilled to provide on-snow instruction to all 2nd- and 4th-grade students at Lac Courte Oreilles elementary school! Both staff and students gave the program rave reviews!

- Sue Scheer & Ernie St. Germaine

- 6 programs for youth and adults
- 400 participants
- Partnerships with New Moon, Hayward Fitness Fanatics and the Lac Courte Oreilles School District

BIRKIE[®] ONE





TEAM BIRKIE®

Born out of a collaboration between CXC, Loppet Foundation and the ABSF, Team Birkie is based on the original pro ski team from the 1990s at Telemark, founded by U.S. ski team coach Steve Gaskill. With athletes competing at the FIS World Cup, U.S. SuperTour, and at regional marathon levels, the team is dedicated to advancing skiing in the Central Region and providing role models for the next generation. We are proud to be a leading contributor to Team Birkie!

- 11 athletes on Pro Team in 2024-2025
- 7 athletes competed internationally
- 5 athletes native Midwesterners
 - 3 from MN and 2 from WI

- All 7 athletes qualified to World Championships
 - 5 for cross country and 2 for biathlon
- 79 World Cup starts
- 23 World Championships starts

Endowment Report

The Foundation for the Endowment of the American Birkebeiner was created to play a vital role in the financial sustainability of the ABSF. Started in 2017, FEAB and its board of trustees works alongside the Eau Claire Community Foundation to raise money and use the investment returns to help fund ABSF projects and operations. FEAB is a great avenue for supporting the future of the Birkie with a legacy gift!

- **TOTAL ASSETS:** \$1,678,793.40 = 32.6% GROWTH!
- **TOTAL REVENUE:** \$472,680.23 = 143% GROWTH!!
- 18% of total assets are from direct contributions in the 2024-25 fiscal year



ENDOWMENT FOR THE
**AMERICAN
BIRKEBEINER**

TARGETED LEGACY FUNDS

- Priority (General) Fund
- Forerunner Fund
- Bidwell Engebretson Tusen Takk Volunteer Support Fund
- Pierce Lampman Trail Fund
- Schwartz-Miller Scholarship Fund
- **NEW!** Tony Wise Museum Steve Gordon Legacy Fund

BIRKIE STORE®

The retail arm of the Birkie, **Birkie Enterprises** handles all its merchandise and retail sales. From T-shirts and hats to glassware and gifts, **Birkie Enterprises** handles it all!

Total items sold:

11,674

Total online store visitors:

41,419

“At The Birkie Store, our mission is to equip outdoor enthusiasts with high-quality gear, apparel, and accessories that fuel adventure and inspire an active lifestyle. We're dedicated to fostering a vibrant community that celebrates outdoor recreation, promotes sustainability, and nurtures a passion for silent sports. Whether you're a competitive athlete or a devoted hobbyist, we're here to support your journey and help you connect with fellow outdoor lovers.”



Birchleggings Club

Paul Thompson Board President



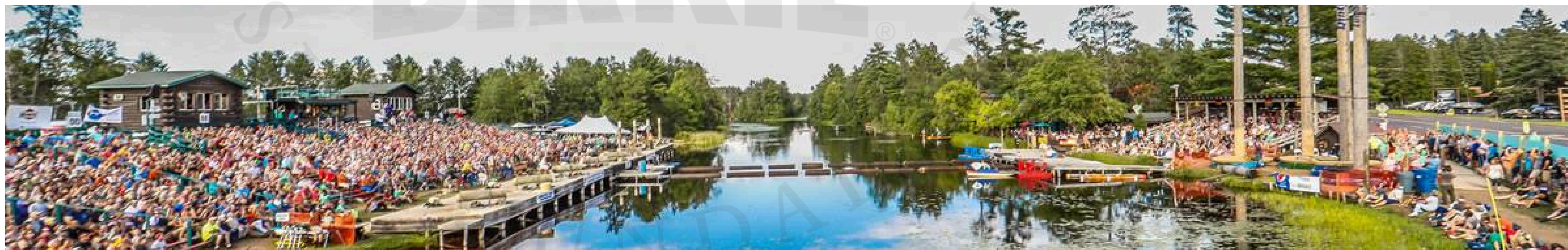
The genesis and purpose of the Birchleggings Club is from a letter that was written by John Kotar, one of the Birkie Founders, to the ABSF Board of Directors on November 8, 1992. Using the Founders Group as a nucleus, the idea was to create an organization that would remain after all the original founders were gone by recognizing all those skiers who completed 20 or more Birkebeiner races.

The Birchleggings Club is a strong promoter of continued participation in the American Birkebeiner and contributes toward enhancement of the rich traditions that mark the Birkie as a unique skiing event in not only North America, but the world!





Lumberjack World Championships, started in 1960 by Tony Wise, is a great Northwoods tradition and part of the Birkie/Tony Wise legacy. Since 2018, LWC and its board of directors has contracted with the ABSF to manage the operations of this event.



Financial Report

It is our pleasure to present the annual financial report for the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF) for fiscal year ended June 30, 2025.

Overall, the ABSF achieved a net income surplus of \$1.54 million and saw net assets grow by 17.9%. This growth was largely driven by continued capital expense investments in facility improvements related to Mt. Telemark Village (MTV), which better positions the organization for the future.

Total assets increased due to the progress of the MTV build-out, while total liabilities declined as debt principle payments continued.

As anticipated, revenue saw a decline as the MTV project entered its final fundraising and construction phases. Event revenue was down 5% from projections post-50th anniversary, with a similar decline in expenses.

Looking ahead, as the ABSF shifts fully to operating its new assets, future revenue growth will be focused on expanding events, increasing facility use, and developing new products and projects to optimize the use of its assets.

Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Presentation: The financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) as applicable to not-for-profit organizations.

Capital Assets and Depreciation: Capital assets are recorded at cost or fair value at the date of donation. Assets with an estimated useful life of more than one year and a cost exceeding are capitalized. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method.

Kris Bjerkness, ABSF Treasurer

Mike Brown, ABSF CFO

Balance Sheet	24-25	% to PY
Current Assets	\$610,081	-41.90%
Fixed Assets	\$12,236,052	7.60%
Other Assets	\$30,528	-4.40%
Total Assets	\$12,876,661	3.40%
Current Liabilities	\$1,709,836	-35.70%
LongTerm Liability	\$1,373,573	-7.20%
Total Liabilities	\$3,083,408	-25.50%
Net Assets	\$9,793,252	17.90%
Total Liab. & Equity	\$12,876,661	3.40%

Capital Expense	
Events	\$7,422
Trails & Facilities	\$88,852
Snowmaking	\$206,425
Telemark	\$1,083,220
Total Capital Expense	\$1,385,919

Statement of Activity	24-25	% to PY
Revenue		
Events	\$2,718,810	-5.40%
Don/Grant/Spon	\$1,273,474	8.30%
Restricted	\$1,801,504	-38.20%
Other	\$279,164	-53.40%
Total Revenue	\$6,072,952	-19.70%
Expense		
Admin	\$583,447	-9.90%
Event Op	\$2,058,028	-3.00%
Facilities	\$474,265	24.00%
Marketing	\$253,280	-7.70%
Dev & Sponsor	\$252,705	-43.40%
Sport Dev	\$61,143	-75.80%
Trail	\$848,735	-22.00%
Total Expense	\$4,531,604	-12.70%

AMERICAN BIRKEBEINER



THE NATION'S GREATEST
SKI MARATHON

JEROME P. POLING





Future?

5 Year Strategic Plan

Filters of Values



■ Core

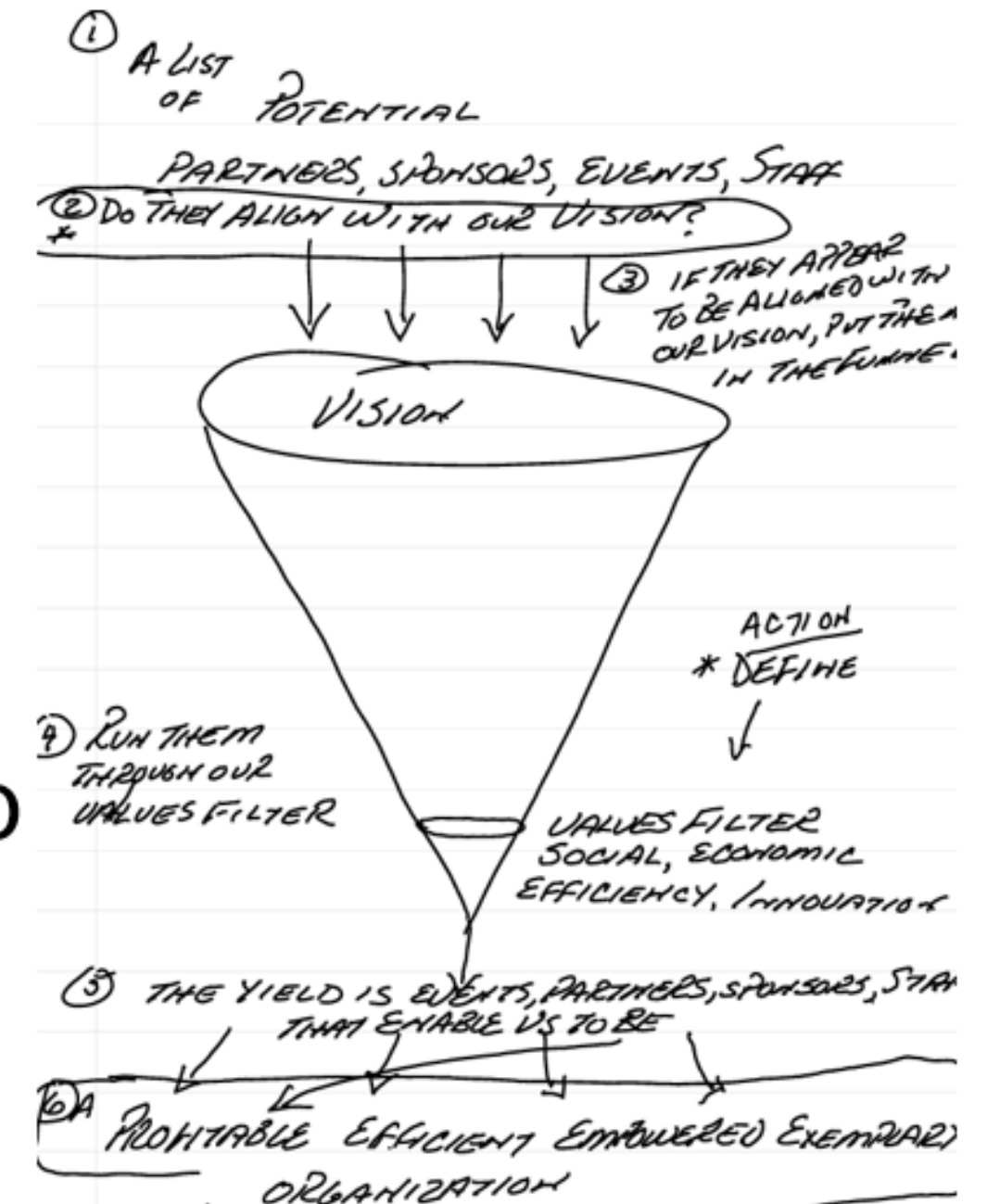
- GSD / Bring Joy / Do the Right Thing / Teamwork / Ask Why / Lead by Example / Value Diversity

■ Economic

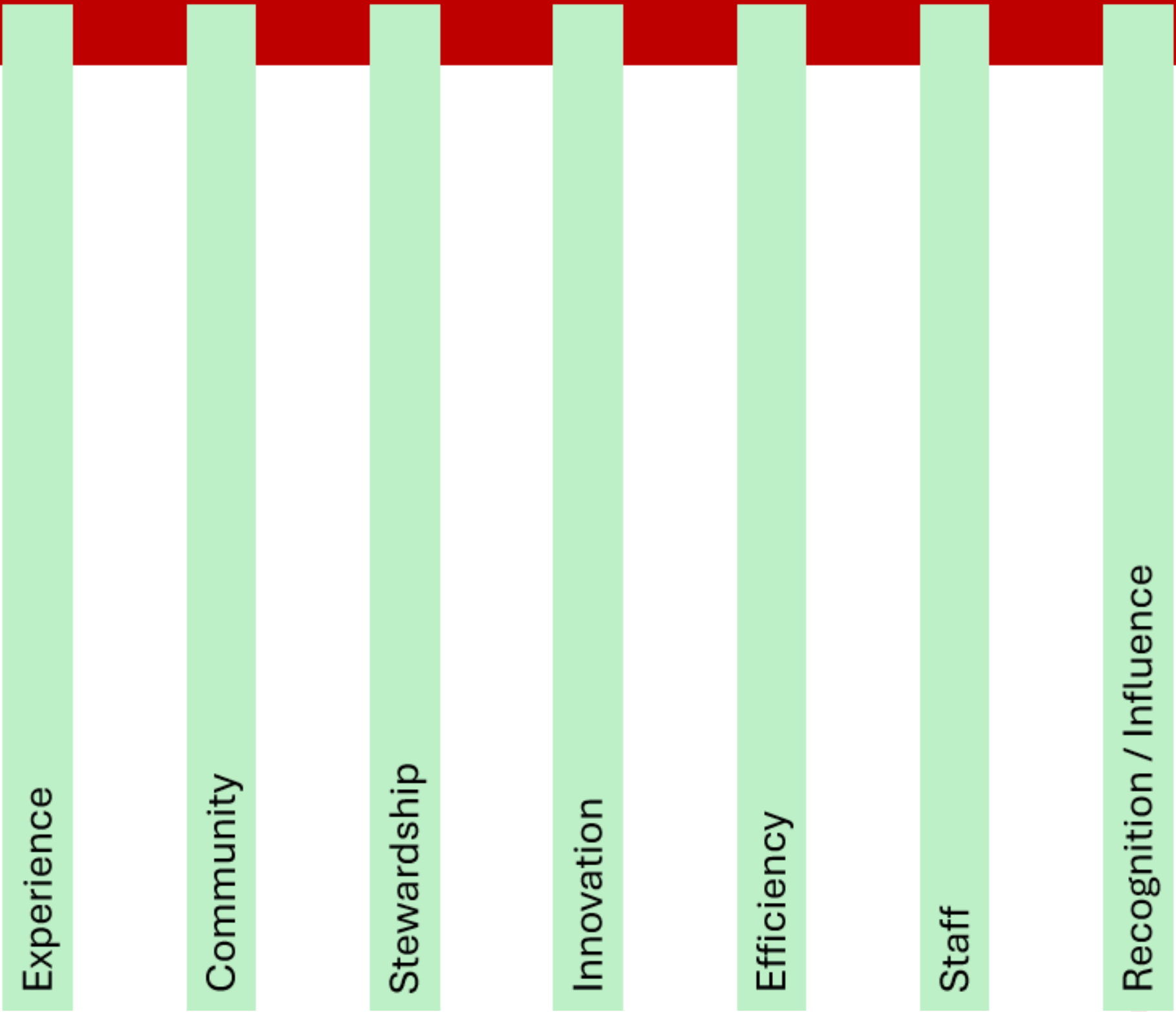
- Mike finalizing but a start: profitability / Opportunity Cost

■ Business Alignment

- Healthy / Active / Location / Trail Integral to it / Target Market – Total addressable market analysis / Market Assessment



Enabling 250,000 Outdoor Experiences that Shape Peoples Lives



THANK YOU!
for joining us this afternoon

