

Appendix E - Trail Ride Creates Impact

APPENDIX E Bi-Annual Trail Ride Creates Huge Economic Impact

Horse trails, if properly developed and of adequate length, can become major draws in attracting visitors to come to an area and stay multiple days. They can also create significant economic impact to a region. One of the best examples of this is in Knott County Kentucky, just an hour's drive from Buckhorn KY.



CASE STUDY: Knott County Bi-Annual Trail Ride in East Kentucky

In 2006, through a partnership with the Knott County Fiscal Court and Western Pocahontas Land Company, a portion of 43,000 acres of reclaimed coal land was opened for horseback riding.

Initially the trail system developed was three overlapping looped trails totaling 25 miles. Over the past few years, the trail system has been expanded to nearly 100 miles of looped trails which all start at a central trailhead. Through a private/public partnership, the trailhead site now offers a stable, campground, shower house and full hook-ups. The trails are well marked and open to the public year-round.



Since the Fall of 2006, Knott County has held a Fall ride the first weekend in October and a Spring ride the first weekend in May. The first ride attracted over 500 riders and 250 horses. By Spring 2013, that number had grown to nearly 6000* and over 3,500 horses with riders coming from VA, WV, OH, TN, NC, IN, CT, CA, FL, MI, AL, SC, WI, TX, ND, LA, KY plus Puerto Rico and Germany.

Economic Impact of the 2012 Fall Trail Ride:

In a 2012 survey², visitors stayed 5.2 days in the area and spent on average \$670 on gas, food, ice, t-shirts, tack, etc. This resulted in total direct expenditures of \$1.3 million. Incorporating an IMPLAN multiplier, the total is closer to \$2.5 million in the region.

**\$670 per family x 3780 registered adult attendees*

Nearly all the vendors except a few of the tack shops were local organizations using this event as a primary fundraising opportunity. A local community center and the fire department each raised over \$3000 for their organizations which in turn goes right back into the community to help others. The impact on the local economy was felt immediately. Anyone trying to find