

Chapter VIII:

Economic Impact Potential for the Area

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The Buckhorn area has tremendous potential for economic growth through the development of an extensive trail system as proposed in this study.

Equestrian Trails will have the most Immediate Economic Impact. The Perry County Fiscal Court understands this and has already made tremendous strides toward establishing the Lakeview Trail. This 7.2 mile trail follows the waterline connecting Eagle's Landing Campground to Buckhorn Lake State Resort Park. If the trail was extended to include a portion of the Fire Break Trail and Forest Land Connector Trail, a looped trail of significant length will be created to entice riders from further distances to come and stay multiple days thus creating greater economic impact.

As the trails gain popularity, other auxiliary businesses will open including, but not limited to, tack shops, feed stores, blacksmiths (farriers), large animal veterinarians, stable facilities, and additional lodging options such as B&B's and cabins that may include stalls for horses. Also guide service, horse camps and riding schools.

Due to its strategic location to proposed equestrian trails, it is anticipated that within just a few years of the trails being opened, Eagle's Landing Campground will bring in conservatively \$9,660 a month seven months of the year with its existing infrastructure of 10 full-service and 37 primitive sites. This will bring in an annual income of over \$67,000 for the campground and create an economic impact in the area of \$379,260 through the purchase of gas, food, and supplies.



Economic Potential for Annual Trail Ride at Buckhorn



In 2006, the adjoining county of Knott started a bi-annual equestrian trail ride. The first event attracted 500 riders and approximately 250 horses to a reclaimed coal site where approximately 25 miles of looped trails had been established. By its sixth year (Fall of 2012), over 5,000 riders from sixteen states attended the 3-day event staying on average 5.3 days in the area. At the Spring 2013 trail ride, the numbers of riders grew to nearly 6,000 which in turn resulted in a \$2.4 million dollar economic impact on the region for its bi-annual event.

For more on the economic impact of the Knott County Trail Ride, see Appendix E - Bi-Annual Trail Ride.