

Ghost Town Trail: 2009 User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis

Researched and prepared by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy with assistance from the PA DCNR, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Community and Conservation Partnerships Program, December 2009

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Purpose: This survey was designed to monitor user characteristics and determine the economic impact of the Ghost Town Trail.

Location: The Ghost Town Trail is a multi-use pathway in Pennsylvania traversing 36 miles from Ebensburg in Cambria County to Saylor Park in Black Lick, Indiana County.

Study Design: The survey utilized a methodology previously tested on Pennsylvania trails and documented in RTC's Trail User Survey Workbook. Data collected from four infrared counters positioned along the trail from the beginning of April through October of 2009 was analyzed. Survey forms were available at eight trailhead locations along the Ghost Town Trail. Completed responses were mailed back to RTC's Northeast Regional Office. In all, 441 completed survey forms are included in this analysis.

Key Findings:

- 88.4% of respondents indicated they had purchased "hard goods" (bikes, bike accessories, clothing, etc.) in the past year in conjunction with their use of the trail (3).
 - On average, the purchase of bicycles and bike supplies was \$357.63 (3).
- 72% of respondents said they had purchased "soft goods" (beverages, meals, snacks, etc.) while visiting the trail (3).
 - On average, respondents spent \$13.62 per visit (3).
- 12% of respondents indicated they had stayed overnight in conjunction with their visit (2).
 - They spent an average of \$78.04 per night for lodgings (4).
- The annual user estimate on the spending of hard goods was approximately \$675,157 (27).
- The annual user estimate on the spending of soft goods was approximately \$743,423 (27).
- The annual user estimate on the spending of overnight accommodations was approximately \$947,512 (27).