

# ECONOMIC BENEFITS

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Various studies on the economic benefits of shared-use paths were consulted during the development of the CC2ST Master Plan. The following studies provide insight into the possible economic benefit that could result from CC2ST.

### THE IMPACTS OF RAILS-TRAILS: A STUDY OF USERS AND NEARBY PROPERTY OWNERS FROM THREE TRAILS

This study focused on the economic impacts of the following rails-trails projects: Heritage Trail, St. Marks Trail, and Lafayette/Moraga Trails. All the trails showed positive economic impacts in and around their area. The St. Marks Trail generated an average of \$11.02 per user per day, resulting in \$1.2 million in total annual economic impact. Visitors to the St. Marks Trail bring in an average of \$400,000 annually. The article states that, if economic benefits are desired to be gained from a trail, efforts in marketing the trail to out-of-town visitors should be the priority.

The trail examples in this article also expressed a positive correlation between property value and property along the trails, or no impact on property values. The trails also have positive health, fitness, and recreational opportunities in their communities.

Source: Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program National Park Service (1992). The Impacts of Rail - Trails. Retrieved January 9, 2014, from: [http://www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/pdf/1\\_Exec\\_summ\\_\\_contents.pdf](http://www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/pdf/1_Exec_summ__contents.pdf)

### HOME SALES NEAR TWO MASSACHUSETTS RAIL TRAILS

This article discusses the impact of the Minuteman Bikeway and Nashua River Rail Trail which run through seven Massachusetts towns. Studies show that houses along these trails were sold within an average length of 29.3 days from when put on the market, compared to 50.4 days for houses not located along the trails. The study suggested a greater desire for homes along trails due to the higher listing price for those homes. On average, the listing price for houses near rail trails were over one percent higher than for other home sales in this area. This article is a great example of how homes near trails tend to be a desirable community feature for homeowners.

Source: Craig Della Penna (2006). Home Sales near Two Massachusetts Rail Trails. Retrieved January 9, 2014, from: [http://www.sehsr.org/trails/mass\\_home\\_sales.pdf](http://www.sehsr.org/trails/mass_home_sales.pdf)

### THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

This article encompasses the enormous impact outdoor recreation and sports have on all areas of the economy, including impacts on other economic sectors. Outdoor recreation brings in the third largest consumer spending behind financial services, insurance, and outpatient healthcare. Outdoor recreation has approximately \$646 billion in direct sales in the

United States. "Outdoor recreation is a no longer 'nice to have,' it is now a 'must have' as leaders across the country recognize the undeniable economic, social, and health benefits of outdoor recreation." Outdoor Recreation.

Source: Outdoor Industry Association. (2012). The Outdoor Recreation Economy: Take It Outside for Florida Jobs and a Strong Economy. Retrieved June 26, 2013, from: [http://outdoorindustry.org/images/ore\\_reports/FL-florida-outdoorrecreationeconomy-oia.pdf](http://outdoorindustry.org/images/ore_reports/FL-florida-outdoorrecreationeconomy-oia.pdf)



Signage Along Ochlockonee Bay Trail

### ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS OF ORANGE COUNTY TRAILS

This study was conducted to determine how the Little Econ Greenway, West Orange, and Cady Way Trails impacted Orange County's economy. The total employment created from these three trails in Orange County was 516 (totally employment weighs full time jobs and part-time jobs equally). The trails resulted in \$42.6 million in sales for the County. Between 30,000 and 55,000 people a month visit Orange County to utilize the trails for recreation, fitness, nature viewing, and as a means of transportation. The article also found that the trails not only contribute to the downtown economy, but to the housing market in the area.

Along with the economic impact from the trails, surveys were conducted to gauge trail users behavior for future trail development in the area, and together economic data. The surveys were accessible online as well as at various locations along each of the trails. The survey found that trail users spend an average of \$20 per visit to one of the trails.

Source: East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (2011). Economic Impact Analysis of Orange County Trails. Retrieved January 9, 2014, from: [http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/economic/PDF/Orange\\_County\\_Trail\\_Report\\_final\\_May2011.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/economic/PDF/Orange_County_Trail_Report_final_May2011.pdf)

### ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY TRAILS

A survey was conducted to collect data on spending habits by users of the Seminole County Trail system. The trails that are a part of this system include: the Cross Seminole Trail, Seminole Wekiva Trail, Sanford Riverwalk, and Flagler Trail. The surveys aimed to gain information on the users of the trails, the businesses located near them, and corporations in the Tech Corridor. The total sales generated from the trails were \$14 million, along with the creation of 174 jobs in Seminole County. The survey also found that over 75 percent of survey respondents strongly agreed that the Seminole County Trail System greatly impacted the quality of life in the County.

Source: East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (2012). Economic Impact Analysis of Seminole County Trails. Retrieved January 9, 2014, from: <http://www.ecfrpc.org/Document-Library/Environment/Economic-Impact-of-Trails-in-Seminole-County.aspx>

### PROSPERITY COMES IN CYCLES

The Great Allegheny Passage/C&O Canal Towpath is a 335-mile bikeway connecting Washington D.C. to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This "super-bikeway" is a prime example of how a multipurpose trail can bring economic development and prosperity to small communities. According to the Trail Town Manual, there is a positive correlation between the length of a trail and how far people will travel to ride the trail, how long they will visit, and how much those visitors will spend. The Great Allegheny Passage/C&O Canal Towpath is a prime example of the economic opportunities that come along with a trail. An informal survey conducted found that 80 percent of the guests at the Inn on Decatur in Cumberland were bicyclists. In 2008, there were \$40 million in direct spending and \$7.5 million in wages from the trail. It was also found that a trail user who must travel to a trail in order to ride will spend four times as much as a local user; an overnight rider will spend twice as much as a day visitor. The CC2ST will be similar to this trail as it will be a regional trail encouraging bicyclists and other trail users to come for the entire day or an overnight trip.

Source: Pruetz, R. (2013, November). Prosperity Comes in Cycles. The Magazine of the America Planning Association, Pages 10-15.

## ESTIMATING THE ECONOMIC VALUE AND IMPACTS OF RECREATIONAL TRAILS: A CASE STUDY OF THE VIRGINIA CREEPER RAIL TRAIL

The Virginia Creeper Trail is a 34-mile long rail-trail which runs through Damascus, Virginia, commonly referred to as 'Trail Town, USA.' The trail was previously the Norfolk and Western Rail line, abandoned in 1977. A survey was conducted by trained surveyors on trail user type which was determined and then users were approached to answer a more detailed questionnaire. The survey found that, of the total number of trips made on the trail, 45 percent were non-locals, and non-local overnight tourists made up 9 percent of the total number of trips. It was found that primary purpose overnight users spent an average of \$82.10 per visit, and primary purpose day users spent \$17.16 per visit; a primary purpose user is defined as when the entire expenditures from one's trip are attributed to the trail. This study is a great example of how the Virginia Creeper Trail brings users for day trips as well as overnight trips, both of which generate economic benefits for the region.

Source: Bowker, J.M., Bergstrom, J.C., Gill, J. (2007). Estimating the economic value and impacts of recreational trails: a case study of the Virginia Creeper Rail Trail.

Iconic Local Business in St. Marks



## ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF EQUESTRIAN ACTIVITIES

The economic benefit of equestrian activities include:

- Horse population in the U.S exceeds 9.2 million
- Florida ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> with over 500,000 horses<sup>1</sup>
- Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson and Gadsden have around 10,000 horses.<sup>2</sup>
- Economic impact nationally exceeds \$40 billion directly and over \$102 billion when indirect and induced spending is included
- The recreational segment contributes \$ 32 billion alone<sup>1</sup>
- Over 1.4 million full-time jobs produced<sup>1</sup>
- Over 2 million people own horses<sup>1</sup>
- 4.6 million people involved with the horse industry, as owners, breeders, trainers, service providers, or otherwise.<sup>3</sup>
- In the CC2ST service area it is estimated that there is a capital investment of over \$ 210 million and cash flow exceeding \$18 million.<sup>2</sup>
- Horse riders trail concerns and preferences include (in order of preference); water for horses, bathrooms, trail diversity, overall safety, ample parking for trailers, attractive scenery, shade, loop trails, maps and trail markings, cleared trails, adequate trail tread/footing, long trails, limited vehicular and bike traffic.<sup>4</sup>
- Equestrians who travel with horses are concerned more about safe places to stay for their horses than for themselves. i.e campgrounds, event facilities.<sup>4</sup>
- Riders state they spend on the average \$100-150 for gas, food, registrations, etc for horse events.<sup>4</sup>
- The majority of equestrians (65 percent) prefer day trips, 48 percent state they camp out.<sup>4</sup>
- The length of trail preferred ranged from 5-10 miles for day trips and 20-30 miles for multi-day trips. (4) Local update; The Southern Trailriders Association (STA) states that they prefer 10-15 miles for day trips and 30-40 miles for multi day trips. This better suits endurance riders and those with gaited horses, two more riding group types that will be attracted to Leon/Wakulla.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> American Horse Council Study 2005

<sup>2</sup> Tallahassee Democrat June 1989

<sup>3</sup> American Horse Council 2009

<sup>4</sup> Virginia Horse Council - Equestrian Trails Survey 2008

<sup>5</sup> Southern Trailriders Association 2013