

CASE STUDY: BAILEYS TRAIL SYSTEM IN APPALACHIAN OHIO

Outdoor Recreation Catalyzes Rural Economic Growth

The Baileys: A Differentiated Approach

For centuries, the wealth of natural resources in Southeast Ohio created jobs and industries, including timbering, brick mining, and coal mining. As the market demand for extractive resources continues to decline, economic forces have left Athens County one of the poorest counties in Ohio.

The Wayne National Forest in Athens County has miles of abandoned coal mines. More than 20 years ago, the community started to see these mines not as “scars” but as an underutilized asset. Together, the community and the Wayne National Forest re-envisioned this terrain as a world class trail system that could drive visitors to Southeast Ohio. They had a plan but did not have local capacity or access to capital.

Quantified Ventures worked with local partners and the US Forest Service to move from idea to implementation. We kick-started the development of the Baileys Trail System, a premier mountain biking trail system on the Wayne National Forest, by:

- Producing a feasibility assessment that quantified the trail's regional benefits and informed political decisions
- Creating a local Council of Governments and a non-profit partner to manage the trail as a social enterprise
- Securing \$10+ million from public and private sources to finance the 88-mile trail system
- Providing technical assistance for business strategy, planning, and local capacity building

The Baileys Trail System is a sustainable model of shared stewardship in outdoor recreation, providing a recreation and tourism asset that contributes to the ecological, social, and economic growth and sustainability of Southeast Ohio.

Quantified Ventures' outdoor recreation outcomes-based financing approach allows communities to solve problems together, attract public and private capital, and retain local asset ownership that generates revenues far into the future.

Revitalizing Communities in Appalachian Ohio

As the pillar of the region, the Baileys Trail System is a conduit that supports and fosters new business, grows the region's economy, and decreases the intergenerational poverty that has plagued Appalachia.

The 88-mile Bailey's Trail System is projected to generate multiple regional benefits during the next 10 years*, including:

ECONOMIC

- \$40 million in increased spending
- \$10 million in higher wages
- \$2 million in project revenues
- \$1 million in increased tax revenue

HEALTH

- Greater access to outdoor recreation improves residents' physical and mental health
- \$500k in local healthcare costs avoided

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Remediate abandoned mine land while introducing a new generation of conservationists to the beauty and biodiversity of Ohio's only National Forest
- \$2 million for mine land restoration

SOCIAL

- Asset-based recreation tourism brings Southeast Ohio revenue to maintain critical infrastructure and improve quality of life
- Increased local connectivity, with 5 miles of trails connecting 3 villages
- 78 new jobs and 150 jobs retained in Athens County

* Figures from Quantified Ventures report coupling market research with RIMS II input/output multipliers



"It was easy for me to envision what 88 miles of mountain bike trail could do for Southeast Ohio in terms of driving tourism, opportunities for entrepreneurs, and economic development. The challenge was always going to be where the money would come from to develop the trail. Quantified Ventures was instrumental in educating us about the pay for success model, helping us pursue opportunities for investment and funding, and ultimately unlocking public and private capital to accelerate the Baileys Trail System."

— Mayor Steve Patterson, Athens, OH



"This is just one trail system, but it's catalytic nature presents an opportunity to rewrite the narrative of Appalachian Ohio, by using public land resources to showcase how recreation contributes to quality of life in the region. Quantified Ventures provided high-quality reports, strategy, and counsel that advanced the project and elevated the conversations with public and private stakeholders about the opportunity outdoor recreation provides to diversify our local economy."

— Jessie Powers, Executive Director, Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia

Asset-Based Economic Development and Placemaking Through Outdoor Recreation

As the pandemic has shown, access to nature is crucial to mental and physical health. Now is the time to ensure that rural gateway communities develop the infrastructure and tools to benefit from and conserve their natural assets.

Quantified Ventures has developed an Outdoor Recreation Playbook built on three core principles:



Joint Management – in this case, the US Forest Service, Athens Wayne Outdoor Asset Development Corporation, and the Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia



Blended Financing – through federal, state, and local public funds, as well as private investors, private donors, and local businesses



Sustainability – multiple diversified revenue sources that stay local enable expansion and create sustainability

This holistic approach enables sustainable economic development and catalytic project financing.

The Quantified Ventures' playbook moves outdoor recreation projects beyond the creation of a trail or campground to develop community infrastructure, build local capacity, and enhance the local sense of place.

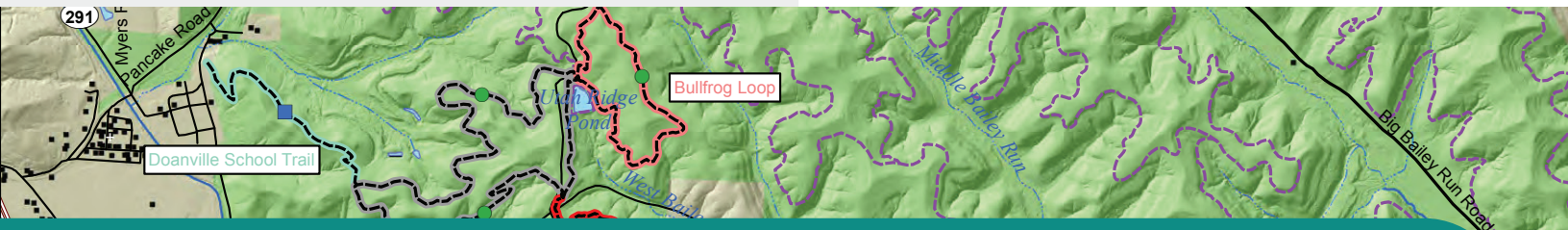
Replication Opportunities

Quantified Ventures applies proven economic development and infrastructure tools, processes, and financing mechanisms to the fragmented and underfunded outdoor recreation asset development sector. Our approach has worked effectively to both develop new outdoor recreation infrastructure and expand existing assets.

We are replicating this playbook across the country including projects in California, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Washington. Our approach addresses the need for local initiatives to:

- Capture and retain project revenues locally
- Monetize project outcomes
- Unify and empower stakeholders through sustainable governance structures that control flexible capital
- Leverage experienced and mission-aligned technical assistance

We are currently seeking additional mission-oriented partners to continue the expansion and enable more communities to realize the economic, social, environmental, and health benefits provided by access to outdoor recreation. To learn more, contact Seth Brown at brown@quantifiedventures.com.



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