

Title:
**The Economic Factor: Why ORV Use is Encouraged –
A Case Study of Economic Impact**

Bylines:

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Abstract:

This presentation uses a study of the ORV facility of Barnwell Mountain and its economic impact on the surrounding communities. By using this study as a base, the presentation explores not only how the economic factor enters into the ORV equation, but also how managed areas can be a positive impact, and how partnerships with private clubs help maintain that positive impact.

Keywords:

OHV, ORV, Economic Impact, Texas

Text:

The documentation of the economic impact of OHV recreation areas on their surrounding communities may influence the future expansion of designated areas for the sport. This particular study looks at the economic impact of the Barnwell Mountain Recreation Area (BMRA) on Gilmer, Texas in Upsher County and on the surrounding areas. Located in Northeast Texas, BMRA was funded by the Recreational Trails Fund Grant granted by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to the Texas Motorized Trail Coalition (TMTC), a private member-based organization. The 1800 acre site opened in July 2000 and continues to provide opportunities for weekend use and special events. Users join TMTC and participate in the upkeep of the site, as well as use the trail system.

Data collection for this study began on July 1, 2005 and continued through June 31, 2006. The results presented here are based on collection through May 1, 2006 and are to be considered as preliminary. Complete data entry and analysis will be available at the 2006 SAF conference. The objectives for the study were: to determine socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the visitors to Barnwell Mountain Recreation Area; to determine the overall economic impact of Barnwell Mountain Recreation Area to Gilmer, Longview, and Upsher County areas; and to determine participant attitudes concerning development of BMRA.

Self-administered surveys were distributed to on-site visitors at BMRA as they registered at the park or, on request, upon departure. One adult per party completed the survey one time, regardless of the number of visits over the survey season. Information requested included distance traveled in mileage to BMRA; types of vehicles utilized; location and cost of fuel, food, lodging, parts, supplies, and retail shopping; and demographics that included annual income, age, ethnicity, education, and employment status.

As of May 1, 2006 a total of 326 surveys had been collected and the data entered into SPSS data files. The following information is based on those surveys:

95%	Reported Texas as their state of residency
98%	Reported BMRA was the primary reason for their visit
65%	Reported OHV as their usage vehicle
24%	Reported OHM as their usage vehicle
11%	Reported ATV as their usage vehicle
11%	Reported retail shopping in Gilmer
25%	Bought parts and supplies while at BMRA for a mean expenditure of \$94.95 and total expenditure of \$30,670.00
25%	Stayed in local motel with a mean expenditure of \$36.58 and a sum of \$11,888.00
53%	Reported visiting BMRA 2-5 times last year
14%	Reported RV camping at BMRA
27%	Reported tent camping at BMRA
34%	Reported buying fuel locally, total expenditure \$25,194.00
\$31.76	Average cost of meals in the surrounding areas
188 miles	Average travel distance, reported median 177 miles
2 nights	Average length of stay, range of 1 – 7 nights

General demographic characteristics:

44%	Reported earnings \$51,000 - \$100,000 per year
34%	Reported earnings over \$100,000 per year
85%	Male Respondents completing the survey
66%	Male visitors
34%	Female visitors
96%	Respondents reporting themselves as Caucasian
80%	Reported having degrees greater than high school
35%	Reported having bachelor degrees or higher

The average total expenditure in the local economy for each party per visit was as follows:

\$00.68	Activities outside of BMRA
\$11.26	Retail Shopping
\$31.76	Meals at Restaurants
\$36.58	Local Motel
\$94.95	Parts and Supplies
\$27.41	Fuels
\$202.64	Total Dollar Amount – Party per Visit

The information here is extremely preliminary and does not reflect the totality of the survey questions, those surveys collected after May 1, 2006, or statistical analysis of the data beyond the basic above. Therefore analysis and discussion based on that analysis are withheld until all data input is complete. Per the results above, there is noteworthy expenditure of each party on each visit, regardless of the fact that 75% of the respondents reported that they stayed at BMRA, rather than at a local motel in town. Please contact the above parties for complete information after November, 2006.