Byway Awareness and Impact on Livability and Economy: Applications, Perspective, and Discussion
Session overview

• overview of project that identifies consumer perceptions & spending related to byways,
• implications of the project,
• questions & answers
Background: Minnesota byways

Byways:
In the US: 150 national
In MN: 22 designated scenic drives

• Driving on designated scenic byways accounts for 13% of travel activities (EMT 2007)
• Annual # travelers in MN: 39 Million

Travelers to the Northcentral/West Region June 2007 - May 2008 spent $2.220 billion in the region
Project purpose

Assess

impact on quality of life

&

Economic impact of byway visitors
Methods – Study sites

- **Paul Bunyan Byway**
  - **Length**: 54 miles
  - **Annual visitation**: ??
  - **Area**: Rural-city--lakes--national forest -- state parks

- **Lake Country Byway**
  - **Length**: 88 miles
  - **Annual visitation**: 250,000 during summer
  - **Area**: Rural-city--lakes;--national forest -- state parks
Methods-Sample & questionnaire

- Sample:
  - Residents & Travelers
  - Summer & Fall 2010
- Volunteers collected data
- Sample size:
  - Paul B Total: 337
    - Residents: 198
    - Travelers: 139
  - Lake Country: 176
    - Residents: 84
    - Travelers: 92
- Compliance Rate
  - Unknown

- On-site questionnaires (2 pg instrument)
  - Demographic/travel characteristics
  - Byway awareness
  - Visitation
  - Residents:
    - 14 Quality of life & Byway contributions
  - Traveler:
    - Expenditures & Byway effects on travel

- Selected intercept sites:
  - Area Chambers, local businesses, area attractions, events, retail centers, restaurants/bars & visitor center parking lots
  - Proportioned across month & weekday
Methods – Quality of life data analysis

SPSS 17.0

- Descriptive & frequencies
  - Demographics
  - Visitation
  - Important community attributes & byway contribution

- Comparisons:
  - Season, residents/travelers
Methods: Economic impact analysis of byway tourists

Direct Impacts

Indirect Impacts

Induced Impacts

Local Economy
Methods: Byway Tourist Spending

Steps:

1. Determine total spending by byway tourists
   1) Tourist spending profile
   2) Determine total number of byway travelers
Results: Resident key findings

LC:
- cult/history preservation, natural area preservation, community beauty, quality recreation, fairs/events

PB:
- quality recreation, natural area, community beauty, cult/historical, community amenities
Resident findings: so what?

- Build on those residents see as most important
- Area relocation considerations
- Sponsor opportunities
- Develop baseline measures & consider if/how change
Results: Visitors

Paul Bunyan:
• 40% non-resident, 60% resident
• 5% visited due to byway, 14% said it altered route, 2% altered length of stay
• 50% paid accomm., 40% unpaid, 10% day visitors

Lake Country:
• 52% non-resident, 48% resident
• 8% visited due to byway, 10% said it altered route, 2% altered length of stay
• 29% paid accomm., 32% unpaid, 39% day visitors
Results: visitor key findings

- Expenditures:
  - Lodging
  - Dining & drinking out
  - Food stores
  - Fuel

Impacts to counties

$LC$: $12-38$ million
$PB$: $15-38$ million
Visitor findings: so what?

- % Patterns mirror previous research
- Data from 2010: could be greater with ‘recovery’
- Increase with longer stays, # visits
  - Greater impact on visitation: Initial, length & return
- Targeted marketing to groups (fams vs couples)
Limitations & future research

• Limitations:
  – Onsite visitors
  – Seasonal constraints
  – Volunteer data collection

• Future research
  – Assess non-visitors
  – Longitudinal studies to examine factors influencing values associated with quality of life
Session overview

• overview of project that identifies consumer perceptions & spending related to byways,
• implications of the project, &
• questions & answers
Implications
Session overview

• overview of project that identifies consumer awareness & spending related to byways,
• lessons learned in the project, &
• questions & answers
Questions and Discussion

For more information contact: ingridss@umn.edu or tuckb@umn.edu
tourism.umn.edu/researchreports

Thanks to the Carlson Chair for Travel, Tourism & Hospitality, Explore Minnesota Tourism & UMN Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership for project support!