

# Economic Impact



One way to look at the economic impact and benefits of investing in bicycle tourism and infrastructure, such as the [U.S. Bicycle Route System](#), is to look at the economic impact of bicycle travel and tourism, both domestically and abroad. Several states have commissioned surveys, reports, and summaries of the economic effects of bicycle travel, while several other such reports have looked at the success of cycling investments abroad. Below are the economic figures from several of those reports.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

### **Europe: \$57 Billion Per Year from EuroVelo Bicycle Route Network**

The European Cyclists Federation coordinates the EuroVelo network which is signed, numbered, mapped, well promoted and supported by numerous governments across the continent. This [economic impact study](#) conducted in 2012 was funded by the European Parliament and shows an impact of \$57 billion from 2.295 billion bicycle tourism trips taken on EuroVelo routes.

In June 2013, ECF released another study: [Calculating the Economic Benefits of Cycling in EU-27](#) (PDF) which takes into account everyday cycling and its health benefits. ECF estimates this impact to be well above \$265 billion annually, or more than \$530 for every person that lives in the EU.

## **Canada: \$214 Per Day Spending on La Route Verte Network in Québec**

A 2014 study by UQAM's Transat Chair in Tourism in Quebec Province shows cycle tourists spend an average \$214 per day, 6% more than other types of tourists while cycling the La Route Verte network. Two-thirds of those surveyed plan to return for another trip. Read the [summary on Velo Quebec's website](#) where you can download the study highlights or (if you read French) [download the full report](#). A older study found that La Route Verte cyclists spent a total of \$95.4 million in 2000 and estimates brought the impact total to \$134 by 2006, which corresponds to over \$38 million in government revenues and helps support 2,861 jobs. Retombées économiques de la Route Verte. (March 2003. [Read summary](#).)

## **DOMESTIC STUDIES**

### **United States: Bicycling Contributes \$133 Billion Annually to U.S. Economy**

The Outdoor Industry Foundation released a study in 2006, "[The Active Outdoor Recreation Economy A \\$730 Billion Annual Contribution to the U.S. Economy](#)," that valued the total outdoor recreation economy at \$730 billion in the U.S., with bicycling contributing \$133 billion. The study shows that the national bicycle recreation economy also supports nearly 1.1 million jobs across the U.S, generates \$17.7 billion in annual federal and state tax revenue, produces \$53.1 billion annually in retail sales and services, and provides sustainable growth in rural communities. Check out [the summary](#) about bicycling economic impacts.

### **Arizona: \$88 Million from Non-Resident Bicyclists**

In June 2013, Arizona Department of Transportation released a report, [An Economic Impact Study of Bicycling in Arizona: Out of State Bicycle Tourists and Exports](#) (PDF), which focused on the impacts from out-of-state cyclists traveling to Arizona for events, guided tours, races, and training camps. The study documented \$57 million in retail sales and 721 jobs created across the state.

### **Colorado: \$1 Billion from Bicycling in 2000**

The Colorado Department of Transportation commissioned an economic study that measured the benefits of bicycling in Colorado at \$1 billion. [Bicycling and Walking in Colorado: Economic Impact & Household Survey Results](#) includes the economic impacts of bicycle manufacturing, retail, tourism, and events. Bicycle tourism and events contributed \$250 - \$300 million to the state's economy. Read this [summary](#) for an overview of the study.

### **Colorado, Pikes Peak Region: \$28 Million from Bicycling**

[The Economic Impact of Cycling in the Pikes Peak Region](#) is a 2015 study commissioned by the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments and shows that 1) bicycling contributes \$28 million per year and 2) bicycle tourism contributes \$23 million per year in direct economic impact to the Pikes Peak region. For each dollar invested in cycling, the Pikes Peak region can yield \$1.80 to \$2.70 in direct economic benefits to the community, making bicycling among the most cost-effective

transportation investments the region can make. Check out this [infographic](#) for highlights from the study.

## **Florida, Orange County: \$33 Million from Three County Trails**

Between 2010-11, an [economic impact survey](#) (PDF) performed on three trails in Orange County Florida estimated 1.7 million people use the trails each year, providing \$32.556 million in economic impact for the county's economy.

## **Georgia: \$120 Million and 1,300 jobs from Silver Comet Trail**

A 2013 study called the [Silver Comet Trail Economic Impact Analysis and Planning Study](#) found that in its current form, the Silver Comet Trail generates about \$120 million in total expenditures throughout the state each year, supporting about 1,300 jobs and about \$37 million in earnings. In its expanded form, the Silver Comet Trail will generate about \$180 million in total expenditures throughout the State each year, supporting about 2,000 jobs and about \$55 million in earnings (3-13 through 3-15).

## **Illinois: \$30.40 Per Day Mean Trail User Expenditure**

Trails for Illinois [studied the triple bottom line](#) (economy, environment, and health) on six trails; 35% of trails users spend money in restaurants/bars and a majority bought gear accessories for trail use. Most telling: 70% of trail users found out about the trail through word of mouth; only 0.3% learned about the trails from tourism or visitors bureau, and 3% learn of the trail through a local park or trail agency.

## **Iowa: \$1 Million Per Day from Bicycling**

Iowa brings bicycle tourism to their state through RAGBRAI, their developing trail infrastructure, and emerging city networks. [The Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Iowa](#).

## **Maine: \$36.3 Million Per Year from Bicycle Tourism**

Maine department of transportation's (DOT) Bicycle Tourism in Maine: [Economic Impacts and Marketing Recommendations](#) (Executive Summary, April 2001) documented \$36.3 million in economic impact in 1999. Maine's [DOT bicycling website](#) which links to their state-wide bicycle touring guide, gets 30,000 visitors; 22,000 unique per year, equaling 67 hits per day.

## **Michigan: \$668 Million from Bicycling Per Year; \$21.9 Million from Events**

The [Michigan Department of Transportation](#) released Phase I of "[Community and Economic Benefits of Bicycling in Michigan](#)" in August 2014 and phase II in May 2015. The first study shows an estimated \$668 million per year in economic benefits to Michigan's economy from employment, retail revenue, tourism expenditure, and increased health and productivity. [Phase II](#) examined the economic impacts of bicycle touring and events and found events bring the state \$21.9 million from out-of-state visitors and touring cyclists spend an average of \$71/day with the average trip length 6

days.

## **Minnesota: \$427 Million from Recreational Bicycling**

The University of Minnesota Tourism Center released a 2009 study on the [Economic Impact of Recreational Trail Use](#) (PDF) and a 2008 analysis of [Minnesota Road Biking](#) (PDF). Putting two reports side-by-side, the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota reports 5,000 jobs and \$1 billion in revenue attributed to bicycling.

## **Missouri: Katy Trail Generates \$18.5 Million**

A 2012 study, [Katy Trail Economic Impact Report](#) by Synergy/PRI/JPA found that the 400,000 visitors to the Katy Trail State Park have an economic impact of \$18,491,000 per year, which supports 367 jobs. About 85% of visitors bicycled the Katy Trail and 87% of respondents said the Katy Trail was the main reason for their visit to the area. One in five Katy Trail visitors stopped at a small town along the trail, contributing \$8 million in total value added to the local community.

## **Montana: \$75 - \$103 Per Day Spending by Touring Cyclists**

The Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) conducted a study called [Analysis of Touring Cyclists: Impacts, Needs and Opportunities for Montana](#) (PDF) which found that multi-day cyclists spend \$75 - \$103 per day while in Montana, and stay an average of eight or more nights. Researchers queried cyclists who had visited Adventure Cycling headquarters in 2013, or who had purchased Montana section maps between 2010-2013. Cyclists hailed from 48 states and 18 countries.

## **New Jersey: \$497 Million Generated by Active Transportation**

The department of transportation in New Jersey contracted Rutgers to explore the [economic impact of active transportation related infrastructure, businesses, and events](#) on the state's economy.

## **New York: \$253 million in sales and \$531.47 overnight visitor spending on Erie Canalway Trail**

This study, [The Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail](#) (2012), was commissioned by Parks and Trails New York and found this 277-mile trail provides \$253 million annually in sales, created 3,440 jobs, sees 1.6 million annual visits and overnight travelers spend a whopping \$531.47 per visit.

## **North Carolina: \$60 Million And 1,407 Jobs from Outer Banks**

A nearly nine-fold increase on the initial \$6.7 million in public funds invested in construction of bicycle facilities. Judson J. Lawrie, Thomas P. Norman, Mary Meletiou, and Sarah W. O'Brien. [Bikeways to Prosperity: Assessing the Economic Impact of Bicycle Facilities](#) (TR News 242 January-February 2006).

## **Oregon: \$400 Million Generated by Bicycle Tourism**

Travel Oregon commissioned a study, [The Economic Significance of Bicycle-Related Travel in Oregon, Detailed State and Travel Region Estimates](#) (2012) to look at the economic impact of bicycling across Oregon, including mountain biking, scenic bikeways and local bicycle amenities.

## **Oregon: \$12.4 Million from Scenic Bikeways**

The [Economic Significance of Cycling on Oregon Scenic Bikeways](#) study was conducted in 2014 and measured a \$12.4 million economic impact from bicycling on Oregon's 14 official [Scenic Bikeways](#). This spending directly supported over 150 jobs with earnings of approximately \$3.4 million.

## **Pennsylvania & Maryland: \$114 Per Day for Overnight Stays on Great Allegheny Passage**

The [2012 Economic Impact Study](#) of the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) shows that trail users spend an average of \$114 for overnight stays, which has increased from \$98 in 2008. Businesses along the trail attribute 30% of their gross revenues to the GAP, and about half of the businesses said that the trail affected their decision to expand.

## **Vermont: \$83 Million from Bicycling**

A report from [Resource Systems Group and Local Motion](#) shows that in 2009, biking and walking created at least 1,400 jobs, \$41 million in personal income (wages) and \$83 million in revenue. In addition, their research finds, the health and property value benefits could bump that up by more than \$400 million in economic impact.

## **Washington State: \$3.1 Billion from Recreational Bicycling**

A January 2015 study, [Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State](#), prepared by [Earth Economics](#) and commissioned by the [Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation](#), shows that recreational bicyclists (local and out-of-state) spend \$3.1 billion per year statewide and bicycling is the third largest outdoor recreational activity in the state by total expenditures.

## **Wisconsin: \$924 Million from Bicycle Tourism & Recreation**

[Valuing Bicycling's Economic and Health Impacts in Wisconsin](#) tracked health and economic benefits for bicycling at \$1.9 billion annually with \$924 million (and \$533 million in direct impact) attributed to tourism and recreation and \$410 million for health. The employment impact, as measured by full-time equivalent jobs, is 13,193.

## **RELATED RESEARCH**

[Economic Benefits of Trails and Greenways](#) (PDF) is a composite of studies done about rail trails across the U.S. and highlights economic benefits, property values, business investment, and quality of life.

[Economic Benefits of Trail Tourism](#) is an overview by [American Trails](#) of studies measuring the

many economic benefits of trails, including job creation, rural economic development, increased tax revenues and sales, etc.

The [Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research \(ITRR\) at the University of Montana](#) which conducts [non-resident surveys](#) throughout the state of Montana, compiled data based upon visitors in 2012. Road and tour biking impact for Missoula County is estimated at \$19.4 million or 8% of the county's nonresident expenditures. Read [ITRR analysis and summary](#) (PDF), [Cyclists spending per night](#) (PDF), [Nonresident spending by cyclists](#) (PDF).

[Bicycle Tourism and Rural Community Development: An Asset Based Approach](#) (PDF, 679K) by Sally Broadaway is a graduate study that demonstrates how communities can use existing assets to build bicycle tourism. Case studies of two unique communities, Collinwood, TN, and Farmington, MO, provide the model for other rural communities to meet the needs of bicycle travelers.

[Bicycle Tourism as a Rural Economic Development Vehicle](#) (PDF/1.9 MB) by Heidi Beierle, MCPR at University of Oregon. This study examines the different kinds of self-contained bicycle tourists, their spending patterns and the benefits to communities along the TransAmerica Bicycle Trail.

[Estimating the Employment Impacts of Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Road Infrastructure](#) (PDF) — The Political Economy Research Institute compiled data provided by the city of Baltimore to write this case study. They found that on-street bike lanes and pedestrian measures created more direct jobs, more indirect jobs, and more induced jobs per dollar than either road upgrades or road resurfacing.

[Guidelines for Analysis of Investment in Bicycle Facilities](#) (PDF/4.4m) — A compilation study by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, includes literature reviews, cost-benefit analysis, etc.

[Rural Friendliness Pays Dividends](#) is the story about how the small town of Twin Bridges, Montana, has embraced bicycle tourism and benefited.

[Shoppers on Bikes Good for Business](#) (PDF/1.1m) is an article claiming that patrons arriving by bicycle and on foot spend more money than those coming by car.