Economic and Community Impact of Water Trails

A project of

RiverUp!
TRAILS . . .

• Build strong, economically vital communities
  #1 amenity for potential homeowners
• Provide communities with a valuable amenity
  increase housing values
• Revitalize neighborhoods
  spur development in adjacent sites
• Build local businesses
  trail users spend money

A boon for communities
River recreation pays
• **Stimulate local economies**
• Improve recreational access and opportunities
• Encourage physical activity
• Improve community pride and encourage partnerships
• Make river and communities healthier
• Highlight cultural and historical significance

**Huron River Water Trail Goals**
Washtenaw County Study (2013)
• Prepared by the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development
• User estimate
• Boat rental revenue
• Economic impact estimate
• Day trip and overnight trip distances

Benefit to Washtenaw County: $33 million, annually
Components:
1. Housing Values
2. Economic Impact
   a. Recreational users surveyed
   b. Business surveyed
   c. # of users data being tabulated
3. Value of Recreation
4. Ecosystem Services
Preliminary Findings

1. **Housing Values** – amenity value per mile for 5-county region $678M

2. **Economic Impact** – total summer users on river 1.5-2M

3. **Value of Recreation** – $200 per visit per individual user

4. **Ecosystem Services** – wetlands services, for example. Huron River wetlands offer flood mitigation value of $15.6M, annually
Marketing & Advertising
Trail Towns grow businesses
Trail Towns grow businesses

**AREA ACTIVITIES**
Biking, fishing, bird watching, shopping, boat rentals, picnics, horseback riding, canoe and kayak rentals, shopping, dining, golf, fun festivals all year long, and beer tasting rooms. Dexter boasts a newly constructed river-front park that features sculptures and beautiful native landscaping with a boardwalk and miles of pathway for biking, walking and picnics. Mill Creek is regularly stocked with trout and fly fishing is a popular sport along Mill Creek and the nearby Huron River. Dexter has a wonderful fly shop, The Painted Trout, which is located downtown for all of your fly fishing needs. It is expertly staffed and offers lessons and guided day trips.
In the next 3 years:

• Strive for all portages to be safe and accessible with more universal access locations

• Pursue river recreation programming that reaches the “future majority” with focus on diversity and inclusiveness (e.g., ability, age, socioeconomic, culture)