

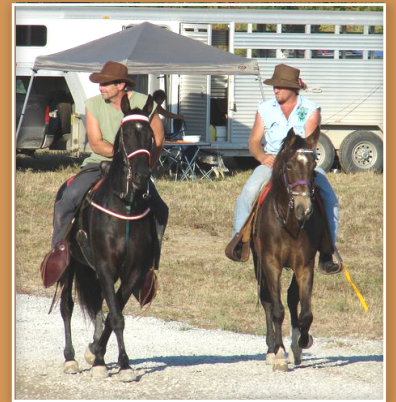
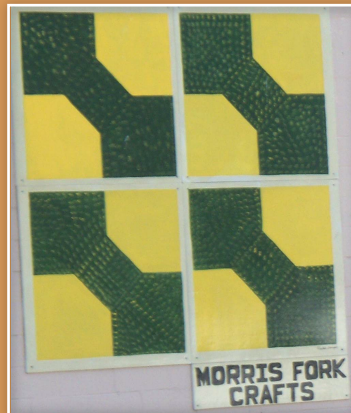
KENTUCKY

Beautiful Breathitt

Located in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains,
Breathitt County has much to offer!



INVENTORY & ACTION PLAN FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM



1127 Main Street



Jackson, Kentucky 41339



(606) 666-4159

trailsrus.com/breathittcounty

Inventory & Action Plan for Adventure Tourism in Breathitt County

*This project was funded through a grant from the Appalachian Research
Commission and the Kentucky Department of Local Government.*

Study conducted by:

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P.O. Box 51153
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WMTHcorp.com

For the Breathitt County Action Team

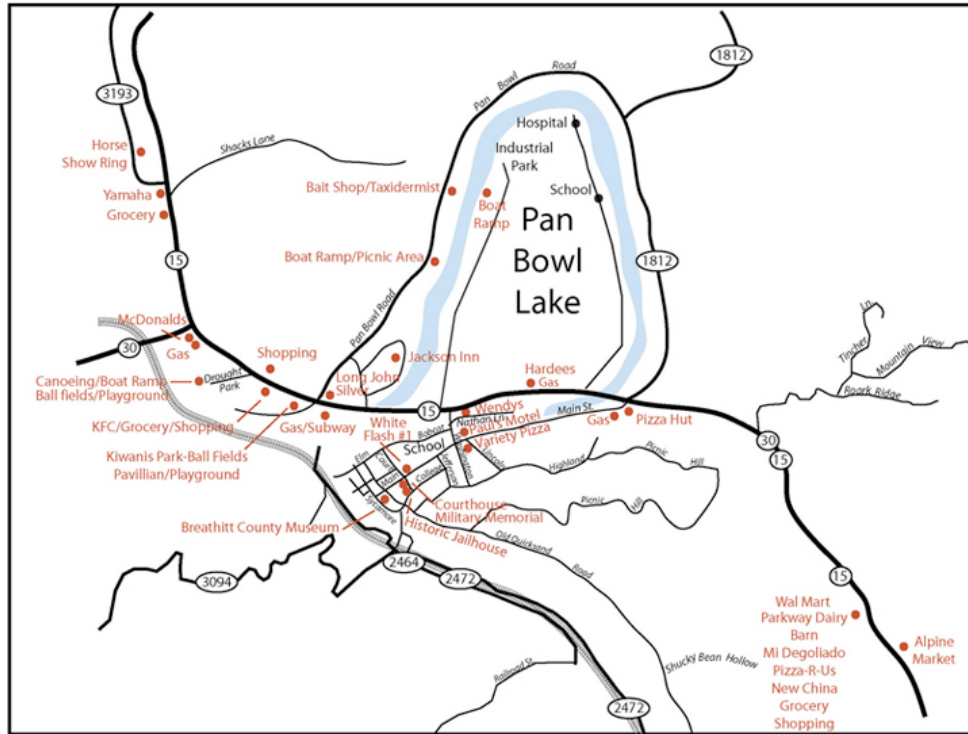
BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

PRELIMINARY MEETING AS A “FIRST TIME VISTOR”

A meeting was held on April 18th 2008 with representatives of the Breathitt County Action Team to develop a concept action plan on how best to proceed. In June, a “first time visitor” drive was conducted throughout the county to inventory all the county had to offer that might interest a visitor. Photos were taken of special features and offerings. From this information, a detailed map of the county was developed. (See page 7).

It was noted that most commercial offerings were found in close proximity to the City of Jackson so a detailed map of Jackson itself was developed. (See below).

MAP OF JACKSON



A few of the notable sites around the county were the number of suspension bridges, multiple rivers and streams, windy roads and breathtaking views. Breathitt County was also the first to develop an elk viewing station. (More on this later.)

A DRIVE THROUGH BREATHITT COUNTY IS AWORTHWHILE EXPERIENCE



Unique rock nearly in the road



Multiple swing bridges



Elk View Station

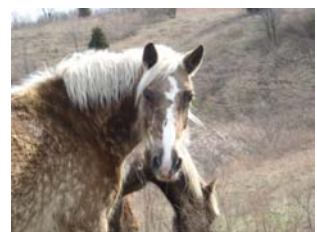
BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
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DEVELOPING AN ADVENTURE TOURISM BASED WEBSITE

A preliminary website was created at <http://trailsrus.com/breathittcounty/> highlighting all the county currently has to offer. A printed copy of the website is available in APPENDIX A of this document. Below is an overview of the major offerings in the county featured on the website:

Jackson Kentucky in the heart of the Appalachian mountains has much to offer...

- *The Breathitt County Museum features exhibits on prehistoric life, farming, logging, coal mining, home life and the military along with an outstanding photograph collection providing fascinating views of life in the Kentucky Mountains.*
- *Restoration of the old Breathitt County Jail is currently underway and will someday serve as both a welcome center and future home of the museum.*
- *The Breathitt County War Memorial, adjacent to the courthouse, brings honor to those who served their country and is a “must stop” when in the area*
- *Pan Bowl Lake (once an arm of the Kentucky River) is one of the better game fishing lakes in all of Kentucky and is abundant in both bass and crappie.*
- *Douthitt Park, located on the banks of the Kentucky River, offers picnic shelters, playgrounds, ball fields, a walking track, and boat ramp for accessing the river for wonderful fishing and “lazy river” canoeing experience.*
- *Just outside of town on Hwy 30 is Sugar Camp Golf Club, a nine-hole golf course.*
- *South Fork Elk View located 16 miles off Highway 15 on Hwy 1098 is an excellent location to look for both elk and horses roaming free.*
- *Breathitt County is also home of Morris Fork Crafts which boasts over 60 members noted for their hand-made Eastern Kentucky crafts - the heart of Appalachia.*
- *And you will definitely want to take one of the Venom Tours through our scenic mountainous terrain. Whether by car or motorcycle, Spring, Summer or Fall, you will definitely enjoy the ride!*



BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

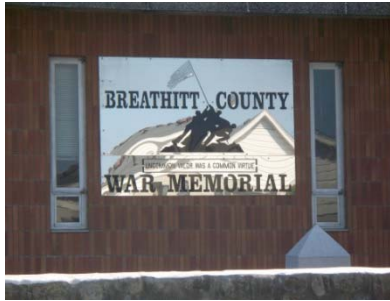
COMMUNITY MEETING

A second meeting was held at the Breathitt County Museum and included most of the Action Team and a few people from the community. Following the meeting, a tour was taken of the museum, the old jail and a few other notable sites downtown. The Breathitt County Museum was a pleasant surprise. The museum has numerous displays on a variety of subjects that are done very professionally and well worth seeing. But the museum is located in the upper level of the senior citizen building which is a bit confusing to a first time visitor. And the parking in the rear of the building made access to the museum a bit challenging. A first time visitor might not know what to do.

TWO OF THE NOTABLE SITES DOWNTOWN



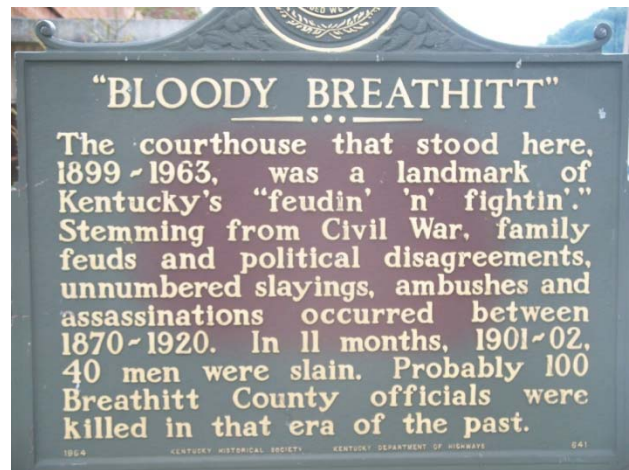
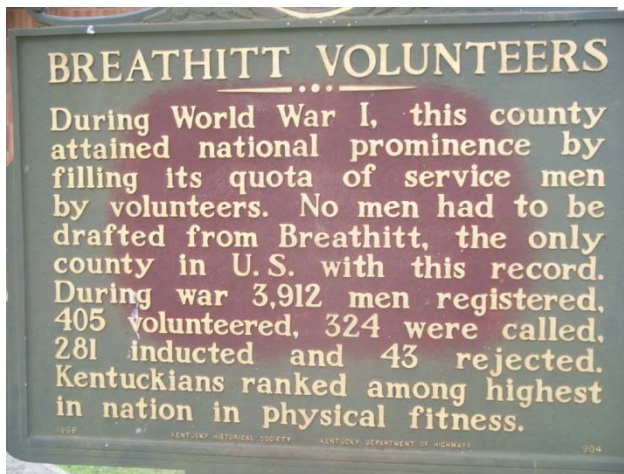
Historic Jailhouse



War Memorial



Two other worthwhile stops downtown is the historic jailhouse and Breathitt County War Memorial which were both quite impressive. The jailhouse is now being restored and has recently added an elevator to access its upper levels. (*See next page for more on the jail*). Located next door is the Breathitt County War Memorial which is quite impressive. More people should be encouraged to visit this very moving memorial recognizing those who served our county and noting the number of men who served and the significance of this.



Breathitt County was known for its many volunteers and numerous "bloody" feuds

And although this may not seem to some to have anything to do with adventure tourism, Breathitt County has a very rich history for "feudin' 'n' fightin'" as evidenced from the historical marker above. The stories are rich and colorful and tell of a time when men settled arguments with a fist and a gun.

BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

The feuds and fights that occurred in Breathitt County make the Hatfield & McCoy feuds look like a picnic. Think how much that area has capitalized on their history. Is there a reason Breathitt Countians should not do the same?

It is also highly recommended that consideration be made to move the Breathitt County Museum into the historic jail. The facility itself has such a history to be told and how better to tell it than to make it a part of the museum. Its close proximity to the war memorial plus the fact that it has its own parking area and a completed elevator makes it all the more perfect.

The cells themselves would make excellent settings and the old metal bunk beds the inmates once slept in could become shelving for artifacts just as they are.



Side of Jail showing parking area



Front of Jailhouse



Interior view of the large interior cell



One of the cells

To the left is a photo of one of the smaller cells. Note the metal bunk beds which could be used to display artifacts and information.



Another room in the jail

Other rooms in the jail (as shown in the photo to the right) are just basic rooms which could be set up under different themes and showcase items now on display at the current Breathitt County Museum location.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

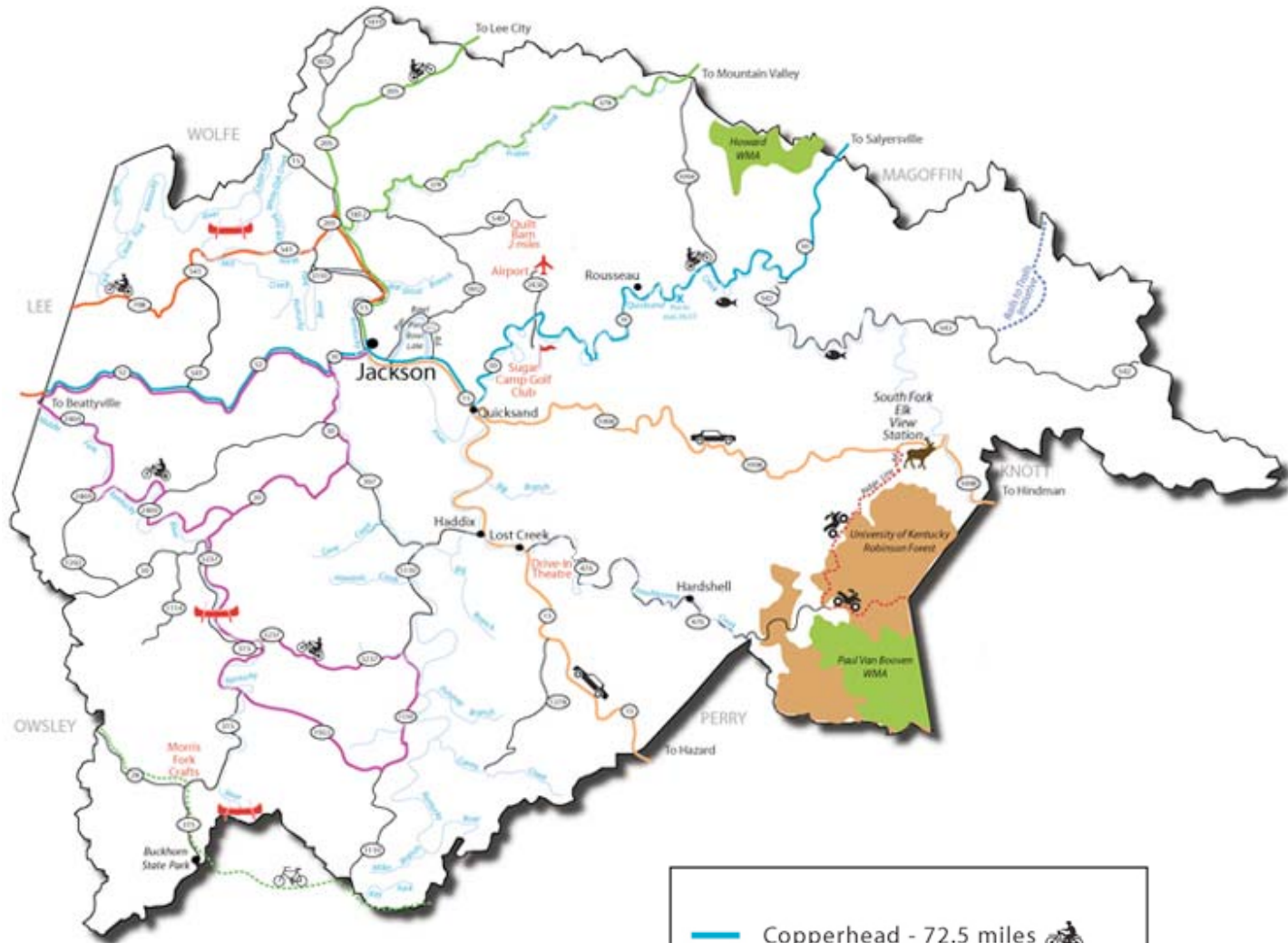
1. *Move the Breathitt County Museum in its entirety to the Old Historic Jailhouse.*
2. *Capitalize on Breathitt County's rich and colorful past.*

MAPPING THE ADVENTURE TOURISM OFFERINGS

After touring the downtown area, a guided drive through the county was conducted and notes taken. *On the following page is a detailed map of the county and its current adventure tourism-related offerings which include motorcycle trails, canoeing and fishing opportunities, bicycle route, and an ATV trail. Both the proposed scenic byway driving tour and rail to trails initiative are also shown on the map.*

**BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE**

**A MAP FEATURING MANY OF THE ADVENTURE TOURISM
OFFERINGS IN BREATHITT COUNTY**



- Copperhead - 72.5 miles
- Black Widow - 54.4 miles
- Fatal Fiddler - 75.6 miles
- Rattler - 72.1 miles
- **SCENIC BYWAY** (3 counties) - past 2 elk viewing stations
- - - **BIKE TRAIL**
- - - **RAILS TO TRAILS INITIATIVE**
- - - **ATV TRAILS**
- **CANOEING**
- FISHING**

As indicated by the legend to the right, Breathitt County offers wonderful windy roads for motorcycles whose routes are marked in blue, green, red and purple. There is also a proposed 3-county scenic byway, an existing bicycle route, ATV trails, a canoe trail and fishing. A three-county rails to trails initiative has been delayed but public officials feel it may be developed soon.

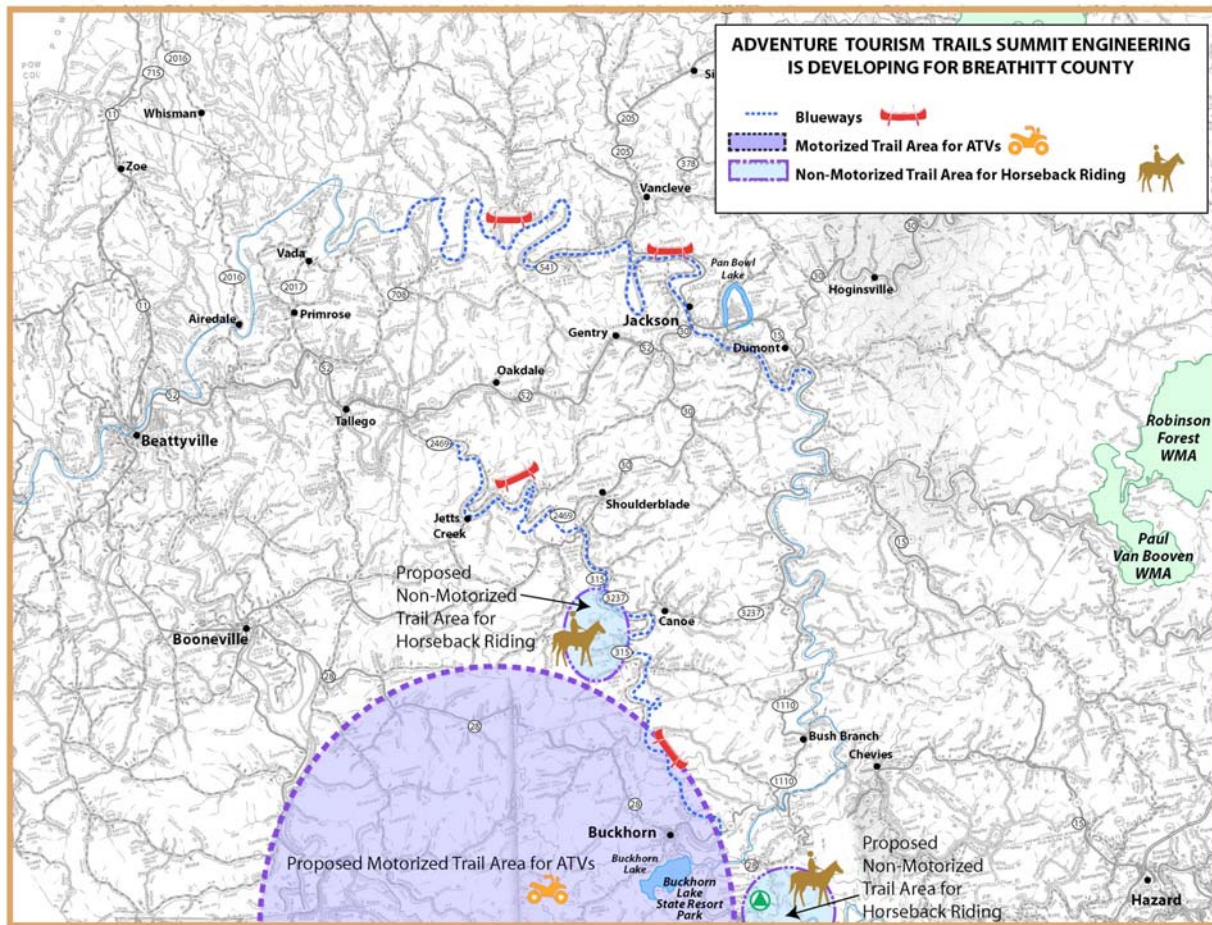
BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
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BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

The Breathitt County Fiscal Court was awarded two adventure tourism flexi-grants to establish blueways for the Middle Fork and for the southern portion of the North Fork of the Kentucky River. They were also awarded a flexi-grant for a multi-county ATV trail in the southwest quadrant of Breathitt County and have identified a potential site for horseback riding trails on private property. They hired Summit Engineering to administer the grants and develop the trails.

A meeting was held between Summit Engineering and WMTH Corporation in August to share information and findings. Site locations for each of the activities mentioned above were incorporated into the master map developed by WMTH Corporation. The map below highlights potential areas Summit Engineering identified and will be developing as part of the requirements of the adventure tourism grants they received.



BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

EXPERIENCING THE RIVERS FIRSTHAND

On the weekend of August 16th, a river trip was taken on one of the existing canoe trails. Notes were taken and this blueways route was added to the adventure tourism inventory. The boat ramp at Douthitt Park served as an excellent put-in with plenty of parking and easy river access.



Put-in at Douthitt Park



One of the canoeists



Take out point on the river

The canoe trip is an annual event in which all Breathitt Countians are invited to attend. They have had over 100 attend in years past. Ten canoes were purchased by the county park board and paid for by individual businesses throughout the county who then put their logo on the canoe they purchased.

During the event special markers were set up along the route the coordinated with a brochure handed out that talked about the historical significance of that particular site or subject.



Temporary markers along the route.

RECOMMENDATION: Permanent signs should replace the temporary paper signs and more brochures printed that tell about each of the sites. Additional sites along the way can point out other features such as unique formations, plant life, etc.

RECOMMENDATION: The Breathitt County Parks Department offers canoe livery service on a limited basis due to time constraints and conflicts with other programs. It is suggested that an entrepreneur be encouraged to take over the livery service

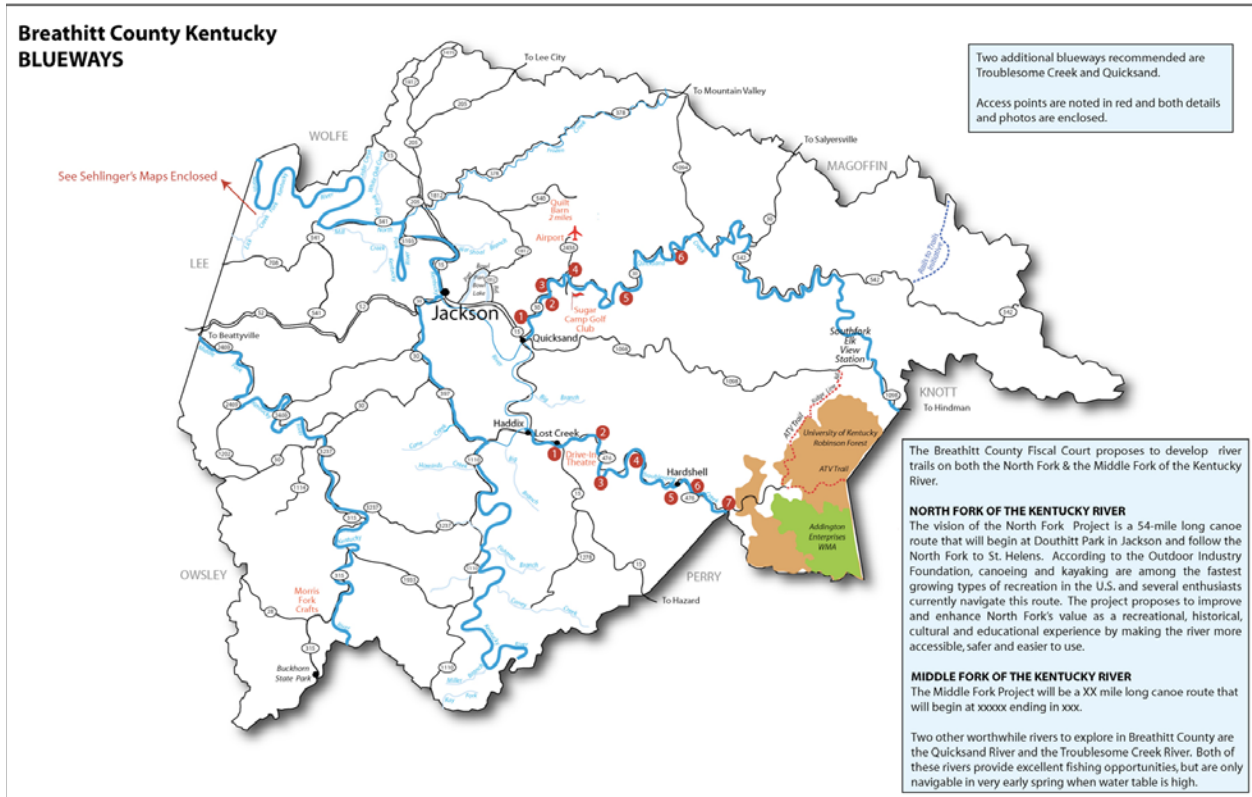


Transporting canoeist back to the put-in and their vehicles will be one of the primary challenges

BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

DEVELOPING ADDITIONAL BLUEWAYS

In further conversations with community leaders, it was determined that additional waterways had potential for becoming a part of the blueways other than those researched by Summit Engineering. On August 20th, Dr. Steve Spencer, a consultant with expertise in developing blueways spent the day and toured the county with Steve Thomas, a local resident knowledgeable of the area. The two GPS mapped access points for additional fishing/canoe trails on both Troublesome Creek and Quicksand Creek and additional access points on the North Fork of the Kentucky River. A larger map and detailed GPS coordinates are provided in APPENDIX B.



At Noble Landing Bridge on Troublesome Creek



Round Bottom Access Bridge on Quicksand Creek



Big Branch Kragan on the North Fork of the Kentucky River

A detailed plan was developed and copies sent to Summit Engineering and key people in the community adding two additional blueways to the inventory. Their findings and recommendations are included in APPENDIX B of this Action Plan.

BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

MOTORCYCLE TRAILS

Through the efforts of one of the members of the Breathitt County Action Team, the Venom Motorcycle Trails have been developed along a number of roads in Breathitt County and expanding into other counties. Signs have been added, a website created, and brochures are being distributed at the Yamaha Shop on Highway 15. The consultant developed a map of all four of the routes to augment the brochure and website. *See map on following page.*



Motorcyclists on one of the Venom Trails

Motorcyclists are excellent tourists, love to stay at smaller motels and B&B's and partake in local cuisine. They also like to explore the back roads and love twisty, windy roads that have limited traffic. Breathitt County offers all of this. Already people from all parts of the state and beyond are hearing about the Venom Trail and coming to try it out.

A few of the sites one will see along the Venom Trails include:



Bridge crossings



Windy twisty scenic roads



Scenic Views



Unique features



Hwy 540 is a worthwhile side trip for riders where one can see numerous intricate quilt patterns on the sides of barns, homes and outbuildings.



ACTION: *Continue to encourage motorcycle groups to come to Breathitt County. Periodically hold rallies and special events specifically for them to encourage multiple visits.*

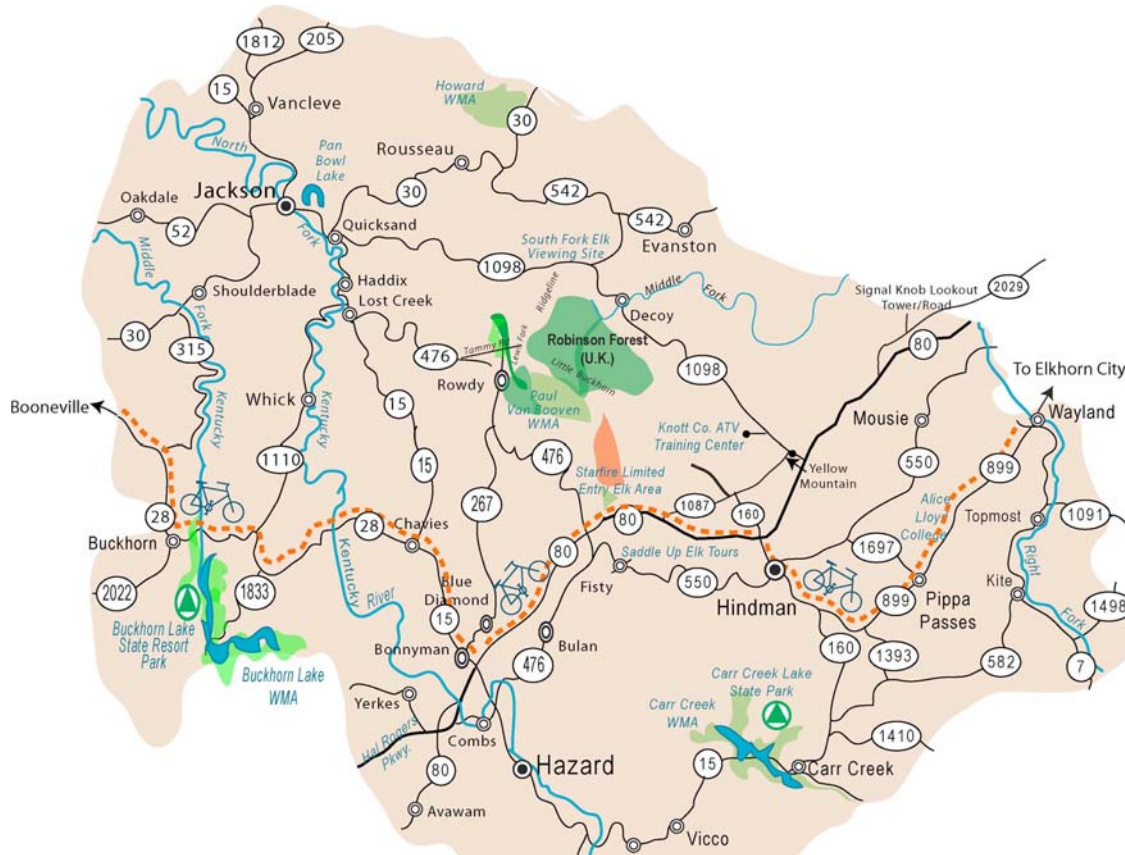
BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
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Insert VenomMotorcycle map

BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

BICYCLE TRAILS

The TransAmerica Bicycle Route across the United States established in 1976 travels eastward out of Owsley County along Highway 28 across Breathitt County then turning south towards Buckhorn through Perry County following Highway 15 then east on Highway 80 into Knott County. The route is clearly marked on all state maps and takes one through Booneville, past Morris Fork Crafts, then through Buckhorn and Chavies, past the Artisan Center in Hindman and Alice Lloyd College, taking the rider eventually through Elkhorn City and into Virginia.



ACTION: *Breathitt County needs to capitalize on the fact that the TransAmerica Bicycle Route goes through their county by providing markers along the existing route, and developing brochures highlighting worthwhile stops along the way such as Morris Fork Crafts and Buckhorn State Park to encourage bicyclists to travel the route.*

ACTION: *Bike clubs should be notified and additional routes developed on roads within the county that either have limited traffic and fairly smooth surfaces or have wide shoulders in which a bicyclist may travel safely.*



The wide shoulder along Hwy 15 makes an excellent bike path.

**BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE**

HORSEBACK RIDING TRAILS

There is strong interest by the general public to horseback ride in East Kentucky as indicated by the increasing number of people who are attending the Knott County Trail Ride each year which exceeded 4,000 this Fall from 12 states. Breathitt County needs to capitalize on this.

Breathitt County is home to hundreds of horses, many of which are free ranging on property near the elk view station. There is also an excellent riding ring located in the northwest quadrant of the county on Highway 3193. Summit Engineering has also identified private landowners in the southern portion of the county near Highway 315 who are interested in developing horse trails for public access.



Horses at the Elk View Station



One of the existing trails



Existing riding ring

ACTION:

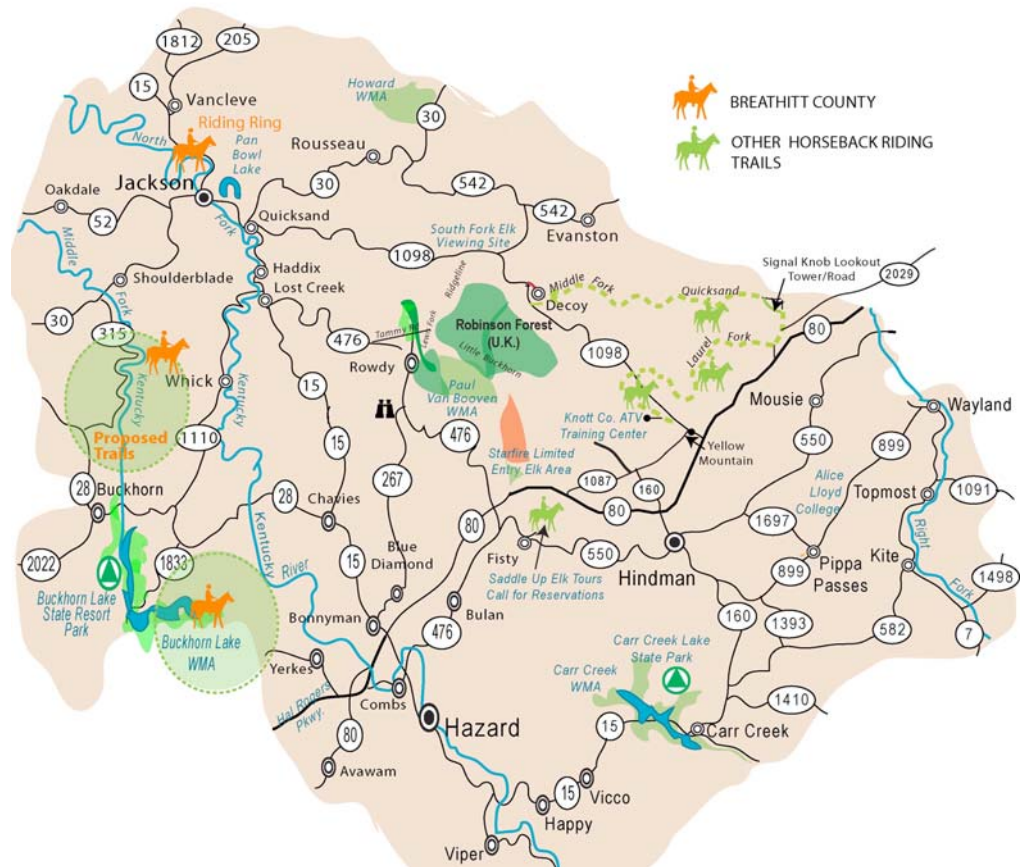
Breathitt County needs to develop public horseback riding trails within the county that are GPS mapped and signage installed to mark the trail.

ACTION:

One suggestion is to develop a trailhead on the private property noted above then establish a second trailhead at Buckhorn Lake State Resort Park with a trail connecting the two.

ACTION:

It has also been suggested to develop trails near the elk view station in the eastern quadrant of the county, connecting with trails already developed in the adjacent county.



BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

STATE AWARENESS AND PUBLIC CONCERN

One of the primary tourism assets in Breathitt County is Panbowl Lake which was formed when the Department of Transportation cut off a section of the Kentucky River to build Highway 15. The lake gets its name from the unique shape it forms and is used primarily for recreational boating, fishing and picnicking. Along Pan Bowl Road which encircles the lake is a public boat ramp and picnic area and a bait/taxidermy shop. In between the two is a “recycling” center, a business located on both sides of the road, often spilling into the road itself as well as blocking vehicles from traveling a public road. The site has become an eyesore as well as creating both traffic issues and safety concerns.



The “Recycling” Center located on both sides of the road often blocks traffic and spill out onto the road itself.

PETITION BEING DISTRIBUTED

PANBOWL PETITION

Whereas the citizens of Breathitt County value and desire to improve the local tourism industry; and

Whereas, the Commonwealth of Kentucky is actively encouraging local governments to develop new tourism facilities and/or improve existing tourism facilities; and

Whereas, increasing tourism activity in Breathitt County will add jobs for our citizens and strengthen our local economy across the board; and

Whereas, Panbowl Lake is one of the primary tourism assets currently existing in Breathitt County; and

Whereas, the natural beauty and ambience surrounding Panbowl Lake is significantly impaired by the presence of the recycling center/junk yard currently operating on Panbowl Road directly against the banks of Panbowl Lake, fouling the visual enjoyment of the lake as well as allowing either the leaking and/or discharge of noxious liquids and materials directly into Panbowl Lake; then

THEREFORE, WE THE UNDERSIGNED, do hereby petition the appropriate state and local authorities, including the Jackson City Council, the Breathitt Fiscal Court, the Department of Transportation, the Division of Water, and the Office of the Breathitt County Attorney to move as expeditiously as possible to remove this nuisance from the banks of Panbowl Lake for the safety and enjoyment of all who come to enjoy the natural beauty of our community. We believe each of these institutions have the authority and obligation to act independently of the others. The time for waiting for some other person or institution to act is past. ACT!!!!

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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Photos were taken and information compiled and shared with state agencies to see what legal right the community might have on the issue. Both the district and the state Departments of Transportation have been notified as has the Breathitt County Fiscal Court, mayor’s office, Lt. Governor’s office, and numerous other state offices.

On July 2nd a representative with the Kentucky Cabinet of Tourism, Arts and Heritage toured Breathitt County with a member of the Breathitt County Action Team and the consultant with WMTH Corporation. Ideas, recommendations and concerns were shared. In August, a petition was developed to determine community support for taking action. Over 1000 citizens have signed the petition requesting the facility either be moved or shutdown.

It is the intent of the bait/taxidermy shop to eventually add a boat dock and rent paddle boats. There is also some discussion of opening a canoe livery service and making the road around Panbowl Lake a part of the motorcycle Venom Trails and eventually establish it as a scenic byway. But all tourism development around Panbowl Lake is on hold until the current situation is addressed.

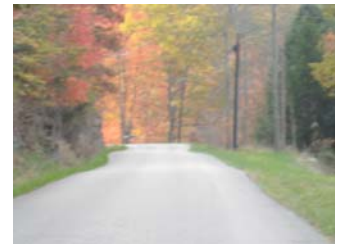
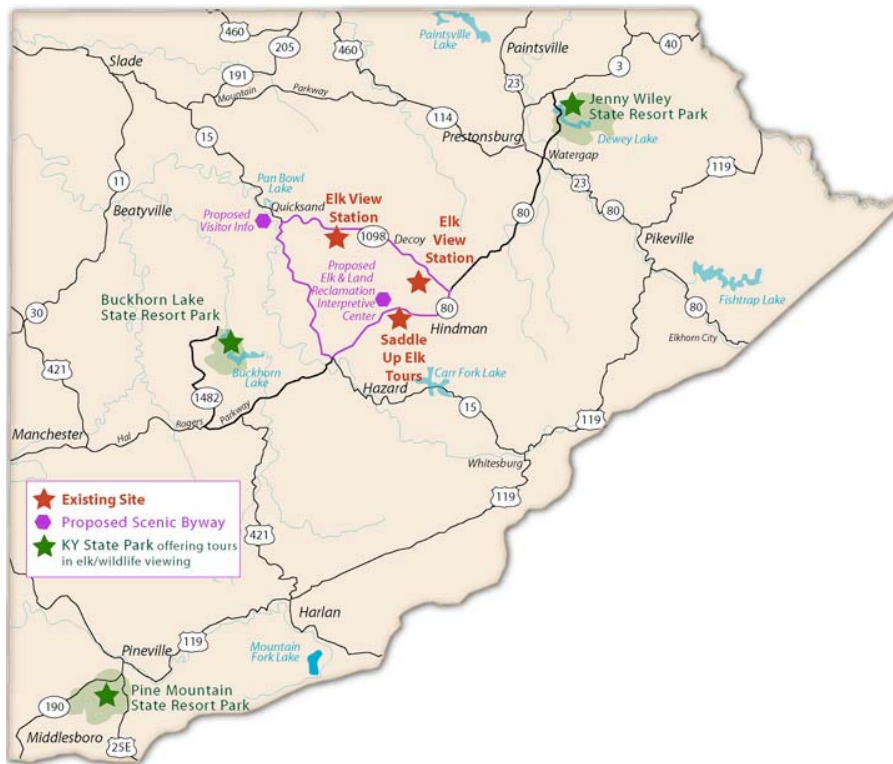
ACTION: Continue efforts to either shutdown or move “Recycling Center” to another location.

BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

STATE SCENIC BYWAY DESIGNATION EFFORTS TO GAIN FUNDING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROPOSED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

In preliminary conversations with county officials, it was determined that Breathitt County proposed to build a visitor information center at the intersection of Highway 15 and 1098 near the community of Quicksand. TEA-21 funds are available to construct welcome centers if the center is located along a scenic byway. To this end, the Breathitt County Action Team was approached and agreed to assist in this effort. The consultant and one of the members of the Action Team traveled the roads and determined that the best route for a scenic byway was along Highways 15, 1098 and 80 actually crossing into both Perry and Knott Counties and creating a loop which started and ended at the site of the proposed visitor information center.

PROPOSED ROUTE FOR SCENIC BYWAY IS NOTED IN PURPLE



A few of the sites along the way include two elk viewing stations, suspension bridges, creeks, barns, a drive-in theater, an entertainment park with water slides, swimming pool, bowling alley and more, as well as multiple businesses which offer both the rental and purchase of all-terrain vehicles. The redbuds and dogwoods lining both Highways 80 and 15 along with the breathtaking autumn colors along all three roads create a beautiful drive both Spring and Fall.

A complete photo inventory of what one will see along the proposed route is included in APPENDIX C.

ACTION TAKEN: Thus far, through the efforts of individuals on the Breathitt County Action Team, over 1,500 citizens have signed petitions in support of the scenic byway.

BREATHITT COUNTY INVENTORY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM INITIATIVE

OBTAINING COUNTY SUPPORT

On August 26th, the consultant met with the Breathitt County Fiscal Court, updated them on the progress of the initiative, shared with them maps that have been created thus far, and requested their support on a public nuisance issue that is limiting adventure tourism opportunities in one section of the county. The Fiscal Court was also asked to sign a resolution and serve as the primary in a request for scenic byway designation in the southeast quadrant of the county and through three counties. The resolution passed and the signed document is included in APPENDIX D of this document along with letters of support from both state representatives, state senator, Perry County Tourist Commission, Knott County Tourism Commission and others.

ACTION: Obtain resolutions from both Knott and Perry County Fiscal Courts, complete state scenic byway application and submit to the KY Transportation Cabinet.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

- The website has been launched at trailsrus.com/BreathittCounty
- The Scenic Byway application has been written and will be submitted
- Placemat/maps have been created and are ready for the printers.
- Entire plan has been added to the website and 10 copies plus a CD provided to members of the Breathitt County Action Team and Fiscal Court.