

Knott Country 2008 Trail Ride
Hosted by the Fiscal Court and the Knott County Saddle Club
Event Visitor Analysis

Peter H. Hackbert, Co-Director, Entrepreneurship for the Public Good Program, Berea College

On October 3-5, 2008 the Knott County Trail Ride hosted by the Knott County Fiscal Court and the Knott County Saddle Club was held at Sutton Memorial Park in Knott County, Kentucky. During the event, a visitor intercept survey was conducted by the Berea College, GSTR 110 Creative Writing Classes with a focus on NEAT (**n**ature-based, **e**cotourism and **a**dventure **t**ourism) visitors. A total of 146 intercept surveys were accepted for analysis. The questions included:

1. Where do you live?

Individuals and groups representing the following states traveled to the event. The number and the percentage or outbound communities of individuals or groups included: Florida (1), Illinois (1), Indiana (1), Kentucky (123), Michigan (1), Ohio (2), Virginia (8), and West Virginia (9).

Within Kentucky, the following out-of-town Kentucky cities were cited by 84% or 123 of the 146 visitors including: Ball (1), Banner (3), Belcher (1), Bethel (1), Brodhead (1), Buckhorn (1), Busy (1), Canada (1), Carrie (1), Cynthiana (2), Dana (2), Dire (1), Dorton (1), Epleys (1), Elcomb (1), Emma (1), Emmalena (1), Fisty (1), Flemingsburg (2), Floyd County (2), Foy County (1), Hardy (2), Harrodsburg (1), Hazard (2), Hindman (6), Hueysville (2), Hyden (2), Jackson County (3), Jenkins (1), Kite (1), Knott County (9), Lacky (1), Leslie County (2), Letcher County (1), Lexington (3), Lick Creek (1), Lilse Fork (1), Louisville (2), Madison County (2), Magoffin County (2), Majestic (1), Manchester (2), Mousie (2), Melvin (1), McDowell (1), Mud Creek (1), Oil Springs (1), Paintville (1), Pike County (1), Pikeville (6), Prestonburg (2), Raven (1), Smallville (1), Salyersville (7), Somerset (1), Springfield (3), Stanville (3), Steele (1), Stopover (3), Talcum (1), Topmost (2), West Liberty (3), Wheelwright (1), Whitesburg (4), Williamsburg (1), and Winchester (2).

2. How did you hear about the event?

One hundred twenty-three separate groups or individuals responded to one or multiple media when asked: How did you hear about the 2008 Knott Count Trail Ride event? Radio (10), TV (16), Newspapers (14), Website (11), Friends and family (96) and other (28). The other media identified included: brochures, been here before, Saddle Club, direct mailing, post card and frequent visitor to the area.

3. How many in your group?

The intercept survey asked each respondent how many people were in the group. The groups varied in size from 1 to the largest of 50. The average group size was 9.41 persons in a group. Of those that replied, 48 respondents cited traveling with from 0 to 30 persons. The medium size reported included 3 persons in a group. When asked how many horses 135 responded. The range included traveling with 0 to 40 horses, with a median of 4 horses in a group.

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4. *Where are you staying?*

Of the 149 visitors who responded to this question, 20 (13%) were staying at home, 43 (29%) camped, 83 (56%) stayed in RVs and trailers in Sutton Memorial Park, and 3 (2%) selected other arrangements such as driving home.

5. *How many days will you be staying in the area?*

140 individuals responded to the question on how many days they would be staying in the area with a range of 1 to 7 days. The number of total persons in the group or group size was multiplied by the length of stay producing the average length of stay per person. The length of stay for the average person was 3.5 days in the area.

6. *How much do you anticipate spending on food, lodging, gas and merchandise souvenirs while in the area?*

130 persons or groups responded to this question. The total cited expenses divided by the group size produced an average spending per person on food, lodging gas, and merchandise in the area. The average spent per person was \$92.83 per day. With the length of stay averaging 3.5 days in the area, average expenditures came to \$324.91.

7. *Which years have you attended?*

122 persons or groups responded to this question. Fifty-eight persons (48%) attended the 2006, 2007 and 2008 events; twenty-five persons (12%) attended 2007 and 2008 event. The spring 2008 event produced 28 (23%) repeat visitors to the Knott County Trail Ride.

8. *What can we do or add to make the event better next year?*

111 persons or groups responded. Overall respondents enjoyed the event. A few suggestions and/or recommendations for the next year included:

- 49 (44%) people discussed the availability or lack thereof of water.
- 20 (18%) referred to safety factors: lighting at night, proper sanitation and the road accessibility of horses and motorized vehicles, and alcohol issues.
- 17 (15%) people reported the lack of electricity.
- 14 (13%) people referred to the lack of the availability and high price of showers.
- 12 (7%) people were disappointed with the lack of restrooms.
- 11 (6%) people recommended the watering of the camping area to reduce dust.
- 11 (6%) people commented on the quality of the road.
- 6 (4%) people referred to the trail markings: lack thereof, difficulty, and map locations.
- 6 (4%) people referred to the cost and the distance or accessibility of food.

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WRITTEN IN COMMENTS ON SURVEYS...

- Good job, flat tops were good, great trails
- Great
- Excellent place to ride
- Beautiful and breath taking
- Very well kept and very well organized.
- Beautiful
- Very good
- Riding fast horses through the gravel road should not be allowed where people are camping on both sides of the road
- Reclaimed very nice. No litter or dumps. Needs trees planted for shade in camp area
- Beautiful
- Very nice trails
- Excellent
- Good
- Nice
- Beautiful
- Fantastic
- I'd come up just to camp on weekend since hill was black topped
- Very nice
- Looks great! Although it could use some trees for shade
- Awesome place! We have ridden and owned cabin in Big Southfork but this is much better.
- Beautiful scenic area
- Very beautiful
- Good trail riding
- I'm a resident and spend a lot of time here and South Fork. Great horse country
- Beautiful and peaceful
- The area was wonderful, but trails need to be marked more clearly
- Great
- Great trail ride. Very enjoyable. It amazes me how they can take out a mountain and make some of the most beautiful land. If they hadn't we wouldn't be able to trail ride.