

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNTY

As part of the five month study, a cursory review of each of the seven counties and the City of Norton was conducted. Within this chapter is a visual pictorial of a “first time visit” to the region along with preliminary recommendations for each of the communities visited. **A more in-depth study of each of the participating communities should now be conducted to determine how best to proceed to capitalize fully on the assets each area offers and how best to overcome any obstacles in the way of establishing SW Virginia as a trail destination.**

Below are a few of the recommendations brought out in the report:

- Lee County should work with local landowners to obtain permission to establish public trails on trails currently being used by both horseback riders and OHV riders. The county should also pursue the establishment of public trails that connect with public trails being developed in Kentucky. They should also open additional trailheads that offer overnight camping to encourage multiple day stays in the area.
- Scott Countians should take a “road trip” to the Big South Fork Recreational Area in Scott County and Fentress counties in Tennessee as well as McCreary County in Kentucky to see how entrepreneurs have developed horse camps and stables outside the boundaries of the park. It would also be strongly recommended that they visit Knott County Kentucky during either the Fall or Spring Trail Ride which takes place the first weekend in October and May respectively.
- Scott County should also establish itself as a “river mecca” by fully capitalizing on its many riverways especially the Clinch River. The potential is huge! Visiting locations such as Eminence Missouri located near both the Jack’s Fork and Current Rivers or all along the Meramac River near St. Louis might help residents and entrepreneurs to better understand the potential.
- Buchanan and Dickenson Counties need to pursue the development of the southern route of the Great Eastern Trail through their communities. Tazewell County has also expressed interest and a meeting needs to be set up immediately between those three counties and interested parties in West Virginia to develop a plan to submit to GET Board of Directors.
- The City of Norton needs to establish itself as a “bicycle-friendly” community by developing bicycle routes on city streets and working with surrounding landowners to develop looped stacked mountain bike trails that bring riders into town. Russell County also has tremendous potential in establishing itself as a “bicycle-friendly” area and also has potential to further develop their riverway.
- The Towns of Haysi, Appalachia, and Pocahontas should establish themselves as “OHV-friendly” communities. Meetings should be set up immediately with surrounding landowners to obtain access to their properties. There are indications that Vansant, Richlands and Dante might benefit greatly by establishing themselves as “OHV-friendly”. Connecting trails to communities such as Jewell Ridge and Bandy as well as Coeburn and St. Paul is suggested.
- Wise County and in particularly Big Stone Gap, has the potential to draw a large number of visitors due to the sheer number of museums, historic downtown, the theater and its ties to the literary world, if properly developed and marketed.