Awareness of scenic byways & impact on quality of life: Paul Bunyan scenic byway

Ingrid E. Schneider, Ph.D. & Rachel Liechty, Graduate Asst
University of Minnesota

Interim project presentation--August 2010

Thanks to the Carlson Chair for Travel, Tourism & Hospitality, Explore Minnesota Tourism
&
Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership for project support!
Overview

- Background
- Purpose
- Methods
- Results
  - Implications
  - Limitations
  - Future Research
- Questions?
Byways:
In the US: 150 national
In MN: 22 designated scenic drives

- Driving on designated scenic byways accounts for 13% of travel activities (EMT 2007)
- Annual # travelers in MN: 39 Million

Travelers to the Northcentral/West Region
June 2007 - May 2008 spent
$2.220 billion in the region
Purpose: Awareness & quality of life contribution

Assess

awareness of byway &

impact on quality of life &

Compare between travelers & residents
Methods overview

- Study site
- Sample & questionnaire
- Data analysis
Methods – Study site

- **Byway length**: 54 miles
- **Communities**: Brainerd Lakes Area
- **Annual Visitation**: ???
- **Area**: Rural-city--lakes--national forest -- state parks
Methods-Sample & questionnaire

- Sample:
  - Residents & Travelers
  - Summer & Fall 2010

- Sample size:
  Acquired as of 8/13: 228
  - Residents: 121
  - Travelers: 107

- Compliance rate:
  - Unknown (need sheets 😊)

- On-site questionnaires (2 pg instrument)
  - Demographic/travel characteristics
  - Byway awareness
  - Visitation
  - Residents: Quality of life

- Selected intercept sites:
  - Area Chambers, local businesses, area attractions, events, retail centers, restaurants/bars & visitor center parking lots
  - Proportioned across month & weekday
  - June 2010 – Oct 2010
Methods - Data analysis

SPSS 17.0

- Descriptive & frequencies
  - Demographics
  - Visitation
  - Awareness
  - Important community attributes & byway contribution

- Comparisons:
  - Travelers vs. Residents
Results-overview

- **Respondent profile**
  - Demographics: Gender, Age, Income
  - Area experience
  - Byway awareness
  - Quality of life impact

- **Differences**
  - Awareness between residents & travellers

Source: paulbunyanscenicbyway.org
Results - Demographics

Gender (female)
- Residents: **59.8%**
- Travelers: **49.5%**

Age
- Residents: **56.63 years average**
  (SD **16.41**; range **18-87**)
- Travelers: **57.11 average**
  (SD **14.20**; range **23-92**)

Income
- Residents:
  - 32%: $50,000-$74,999
  - 24% $24,999-$49,999
- Travelers:
  - 25%: $50-$74,999
  - 17%: $100-$124,999
  - 16% $75-$99,999
## Results: Area experience & travel party

### Residents
- **Experience with MN & area**
  - Average years lived in area = 22.36 (SD= 18.68)
  - Average years lived in MN = 44.78 (SD = 22.77)
  - 23% employed in tourism
- **Most frequent travel party type**
  - 36% myself
  - 26% couple
  - 21% family
- **Average travel party size**
  - $M = 2.32$ (SD = 1.62)

### Travelers
- **Experience with area**
  - Average visits last 12 months = 3.42 (SD = 5.08)
  - Average visits last 5 years = 10.04 (SD = 18.72)
- **Most frequent travel party type**
  - 29% couple
  - 37% family
- **Average travel party size**
  - $M = 2.99$ (SD = 1.32)
- **Mode of travel:** 80% car, 14% bike
Results – Byway awareness

Figure 2. Byway awareness among residents (n= 121) & travelers (n = 107) in 2010 (total n = 228)
Source of byway information

- **Word of mouth**
  - Residents: 36%
  - Travelers: 22%

- **Map**
  - Residents: 25%
  - Travelers: 15%

- **Newspaper**
  - Residents: 31%
  - Travelers: 11%

- **Sign**
  - Residents: 31%
  - Travelers: 18%
### Results – Residents perceptions of tourism important community attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Community Attributes</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling safe</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural area preservation</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality rec opp</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation of cultural/historical sites</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good jobs for residents</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community beauty</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My property value</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism importance to local area &amp; byway contribution</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Byway contribution to tourism</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism importance</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Attributes, contribution & importance measured on a scale of 1 = Not at all important to 5 = Extremely Important
Implications
Limitations & future research

- **Limitations:**
  - Onsite visitors
  - Seasonal constraints

- **Future research**
  - Assesses non-visitors
  - Longitudinal studies to examine factors influencing awareness of byways & values associated with quality of life
Questions?

For more information contact: ingridss@umn.edu
Results: Traveler visit information

- With friends/relative: 16.7%
- Hotel/motel/Inn /B&B: 10.8%
- Resort: 16.7%
- Own vacation home/condo/cabin: 21.6%
- Private campground/RV park: 10.8%
- With friends/relative: 16.7%

Figure 3. Traveler lodging information; (n = 78)
Background – Scenic Byways

What are they?

- Types of scenic byways
  1. National Scenic Byways
  2. All-American Roads
  3. America's Byways
     - Hold scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational, and archeological character
     - Preserve the surroundings they traverse

(Title 23, Sec. 162. National Scenic Byways program & Federal Highway Administration).

How did they come about?

- Scenic Byways Act of 1989
- U.S. Congress mandated the Secretary of Transportation to develop goals (Sipes et. al., 1997):
  1. Guidelines to the NSB program
  2. Designation criteria
  3. Study the economic impact of scenic byways

Source: National Scenic Byways Program