

# Katy Trail Economic Impact Report

## Visitors and MGM2 Economic Impact Analysis

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July 30, 2012

## Executive Summary

The Katy Trail State Park is an approximately 240-mile-long, 12-foot-wide (on average) linear park that meanders across the state of Missouri, touching dozens of small and large communities along the way. This 22-year-old scenic rail-to-trail route was built for bicycling, hiking, walking and running, and attracts an estimated 400,000 visitors a year.

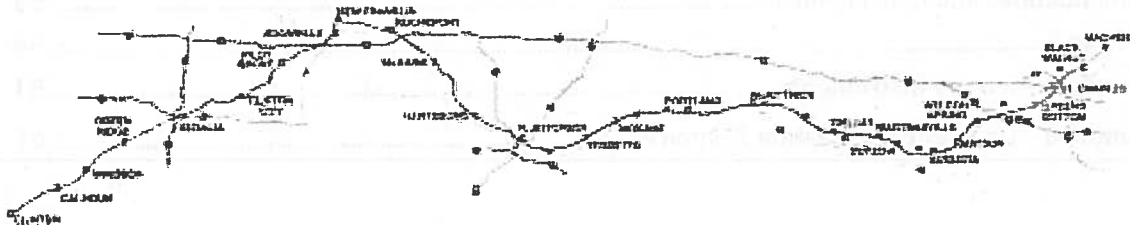


Figure 1 - Katy Trail State Park

Hundreds of businesses along the Katy Trail provide a variety of tourism-related services, from wineries, restaurants and shops to bed and breakfast (B&B) inns, motels and campgrounds. The Katy Trail has been a catalyst for tourism development, and many small businesses depend on the trail for an ongoing stream of customers.

Missouri State Parks conducted this study to determine the economic impact of Katy Trail State Park and its visitors on the Missouri economy. Trail user surveys – both on-site intercepts and longer user surveys returned by mail – were used to collect data on the types of users, visitor party size and demographics, the frequency and length of visits, and related spending. Visitor counts were derived from automatic counters located along the length of the trail, which were calibrated through on-site physical counts of Katy Trail users. The data were analyzed using the MGM2 economic impact modeling software.

### Economic Impact

According to analysis using Money Generation Model Version 2 (MGM2) economic impact software,<sup>1</sup> the 400,000 annual visitors to Katy Trail State Park have a total economic impact of \$18,491,000 a year, which supports 367 jobs with a total payroll of \$5,128,000. The total value added to the local community from visitor spending is \$8,204,000.

Visitors to the Katy Trail spent, on average, \$45 per person per day/night of their trip. They also spent, on average, \$56.82 per person per day/night of their trip on Katy Trail-related expenses such as bicycles clothing and other trail-related expenses during the past year.

The average party of 3.21 visitors spent \$182.50 total during their visit and \$147.14 per party day.

Although nearly three-fourths of Katy Trail visitors were day users, one in four spent the night on or near the trail. On average, visitors traveled 83 miles to reach the Katy Trail – from an average of nine miles for local visitors<sup>2</sup> and 32 miles for nonlocal day visitors to 272 miles for bed and breakfast, hotel and motel visitors.

<sup>1</sup>MGM2 employs four visitor segments, and uses aggregate spending averages and multipliers to estimate the economic impact of all visitor spending.

<sup>2</sup> Local visitors are defined as those who live in a ZIP code adjoining the trail and travel less than 30 miles to reach the trailhead.

Day visitors spent an average two hours and 49 minutes in and around the Katy Trail while overnight visitors stayed an average two and a half nights.

Local day user parties (2.07 people per party) spent an average \$18 per trip and \$309 in the past year on bicycles, bicycle supplies, clothing, shoes, and other trail-related expenses. Nonlocal day user parties (2.82 people) spent an average \$56 per trip and \$355 in annual trail-related expenses.

Overnight hotel, motel and B&B visitor parties (3.90 people) spent an average \$700 per trip and \$504 in annual trail-related expenses. Overnight campground visitor parties (7.85 people) spent an average \$231 per trip and \$376 in annual trail-related expenses.

### **Visitors**

For this study, we identified local users as those who live in ZIP codes that adjoin the Katy Trail and traveled 30 miles or less to reach the trailhead. All other visitors are considered nonlocal.

About 33% of Katy Trail visitors surveyed were local and about 67% were nonlocal. About 73% were day visitors and 27% spent the night near the Katy Trail.

About 93% of visitors were from Missouri, 6% from out-of-state.

More than one in five was visiting the Katy Trail for the first-time, and those first-timers spent significantly more than returning visitors.

Nearly 85% of visitors bicycled the Katy Trail, riding an average distance of 45 miles per trip. One in five Katy Trail visitors stopped at a small town along the trail; nonlocal visitors were significantly more likely to visit a nearby town. Thirteen percent overall visited a local winery, 12% visited a historic attraction and 10% went shopping or antiques during their Katy Trail visit.

The Katy Trail attracts many return visitors. About 90% visit at least once every two to three months and 60% visit two to three times per week during the spring, summer and fall. In the winter, 50% visit the trail at least every two to three months, while one in five visits two to three times per month.

### **Satisfaction**

Two thirds of visitors were very satisfied overall with the trail, and more than half of visitors were very satisfied with trail cleanliness, directional signs, safety, exhibits/interpretive panels and information about local community services. Less than 45% were very satisfied with the maintenance/upkeep of trail facilities, the condition of the trail surface, restroom cleanliness, drinking water availability, restaurant dining options, overnight lodging and restroom availability in the communities.

Only 25% were very satisfied with food/grocery options and only 22% were very satisfied with bicycle repair/maintenance services, two issues that are of high relative importance to visitors. Only one in five was satisfied with campgrounds and shuttle services, but those issues were of lower relative importance to visitors.