

Economic Impacts Of Scenic Byways



Client

Facts

Period

2001

Project Country

"Scenic Byways" - roads off the beaten path that have visual appeal, beautiful scenery and often the relaxed experience of a slower-paced bygone era - were once closely held secret gems known mostly to locals.

In recent years, many regions and states have recognized that these routes have value not only for aesthetics and preservation, but also as a way to promote ecologically desirable forms of tourism and increase income in economically depressed regions. This motivation has led to the development of state scenic byway programs and a national system of designated scenic byways. The growth of scenic byways has also led to a proliferation of a wide range of claims regarding the local economic benefits from existing scenic byways, as well as claims for potential economic windfalls that can come from designation of new scenic byways.

The National Scenic Byways Resource Center, which works directly with representatives of state scenic byway agencies, thus selected Economic Development Research Group (EDR Group), working with the Survey Center of PA Consulting Group, to critique existing studies and develop methods for improvement of future economic impact studies for scenic byways. The work by EDR Group included specific reviews of studies around the US, plus a series of discussions with state representatives regarding their perceived needs, and development and testing of model survey forms for visitors and tourism-serving businesses, along with calculation spreadsheets.

The resulting guidebook is designed provide: (1) a classification of the ways in which scenic byways lead to economic impacts; (2) guidelines for baseline and follow-up survey data collection; (3) standards for the analysis process which recognize adjustments needed to distinguish gross/net and local/state impacts; and (4) consistent measures of impact.

Scenic Byways Web Site Report: Review of Impact Studies Related to Scenic Byway Designation (pdf, 489k)

Report: Toolkit for Building a Scenic Byway Economic Impact Study (pdf file, 286k)

Spreadsheet: Scenic Byway Economic Impact Estimator

Contact Persons