

A Report on Economic Development Options
for
Bakersville, North Carolina

**Prepared for HandMade in America and the
Bakersville Improvement Group**

by
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I. Introduction

In 2009 and 2010, research was conducted by Smithson Mills, Inc. for HandMade In America's Mitchell County Economic Development Assistance Initiative. Contracted deliverables for this research included the following:

- Review and analyze existing data on Mitchell County economic activity, including NAICS data, previously conducted surveys, strategic plans, and existing economic development activities.
- Conduct research into viable economic development strategies employed by rural communities with similar economic characteristics, i.e., mining industries, tourism and outdoor activities, and/or distance to major population centers.
- Attend community meetings with concerned citizens, elected officials, business and industry leaders, and artists to solicit input on economic development strategies appropriate to the County and the region.
- Research and document prime physical, business, and human capital assets to support outdoor recreation tourism, including lodging, meals, guides, and other services available or needed in the County and surrounding counties. Investigate opportunities for increased fishing, hiking, hunting, and related tourism activities.
- In consultation with community leaders and the county's economic developer, define specific goals and objectives to increase income opportunities for area businesses and individuals, capitalizing on natural assets to increase outdoor tourism, arts and crafts, and visitor services.
- Assist county leaders in identifying funding sources and developing funding requests to help achieve goals and objectives.
- Compile all data and recommendations into a report to be submitted to HandMade In America for review and approval. Print and bind ten hardcopies and provide electronic versions as needed.

The research process encompassed a variety of disparate interests and data sets. Requests for specific subjects for research were received from HandMade in America, the Bakersville Improvement Group, and the Mitchell County economic developer. While the original scope of services for this research was focused on Mitchell County as a whole, staff at HandMade in America and community leaders in Bakersville subsequently asked researchers to make a concerted effort to focus this report on the economic conditions in Bakersville and the northern half of the county, and to make recommendations that the Town of Bakersville might implement within the geographical context of Mitchell County and the Toe River Valley region of Mitchell, Yancey and Avery counties. The researchers have made an effort to do so within the parameters of time and resources allowed to this effort.

The following report touches on all aspects of contracted services. This has resulted in several stand-alone research pieces, including an analysis of trout fishing as an economic engine, results of mailed surveys to resident and nonresident landowners in Bakersville and the surrounding region, and an asset map of visitor amenities found throughout the county. Taken together, these research activities highlight and explain a broad set of issues, challenges and opportunities that should be contemplated under the rubric of comprehensive community economic development.

Demographics

Mitchell County is a predominantly rural and mountainous county with a population of just under 16,000 individuals (15,784). It is one of few counties in the state where the estimated 2009 population decreased (by 0.3%) from Census 2000 data. Statewide, population increased by 16.6% during this time.¹

With a per capita income of \$15,933, 13.8% of residents are living below the poverty line. This poverty rate is higher than the North Carolina average of 12.3%, and per capita income is \$4,374 below the state average. Median household income stands at just above \$30,000 (\$30,508), which is \$8,640 below the North Carolina state average. Most of the county's residents, 80.9%, own their homes but 13.8% of housing in the county is considered unaffordable for residents. Home ownership is well above the state average of 69.4%, while unaffordable housing is below the state average of 20.7%.

Mitchell County is ranked as a Tier One county in economic vitality by the North Carolina Department of Commerce, and as such enjoys several preferences for economic development support.

Unemployment in Mitchell County, which has been on a steady increase for many years, has been slowly recovering over the first half of 2010, with county unemployment rates starting off at 14.4% in January and improving almost two percent per month in both March and April, ending at a still substantial, yet better, 10.3% as of May. This is congruent to seasonally adjusted statewide unemployment figures, but slightly worse than the national seasonally adjusted figure of 9.7% as of May 2010. Exacerbating unemployment and poverty levels in Mitchell County is the fact that more than 39% of high school students fail to graduate. Nearly half of all students do not pass their end of grade exams.

A review of 2007 employment data shows 4,491 jobs in the county. Leading job categories for employment were Health Care and Social Assistance (1046), Retail Trade (843), Manufacturing (674), and Construction (476). It is important to note this

¹ US Census Bureau statistics

data was acquired before the Great Recession hit in full force, and as such employment trends may have changed dramatically. This is especially true for the construction trades, which anecdotal evidence suggests has slowed dramatically in the past two years.

Mitchell County Employment, North American Industrial Classification System, 2007				
Industry code description	Paid employees	First-quarter payroll (\$1,000)	Annual payroll (\$1,000)	Total establishments
Health Care and Social Assistance	1046	7342	29589	34
Retail Trade	843	3732	16141	64
Manufacturing	674	4031	18443	28
Construction	467	2439	11902	59
Accommodation and Food Services	299	851	3590	34
Transportation and Warehousing	222	1745	7207	16
Mining	155	2008	8296	4
Finance and Insurance	124	997	3537	27
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	80	423	2100	24
Wholesale Trade	69	469	2196	16
Utilities	25	369	1479	4
Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Agriculture Support	NA	NA	NA	2
Educational Services	C	D	D	4
Total	4491	26381	113305	415

History

Named in honor of Elisha Mitchell, a former University of North Carolina professor of mathematics, chemistry, geology and mineralogy during the early to middle 19th century, Mitchell County was formed in 1861 from parts of Burke, Caldwell, McDowell, Watauga and Yancey Counties. The movement for the formation of Mitchell County began in the Town of Bakersville, the seat of Mitchell County government and its center of politics since 1868. Living could be tough in the isolated Appalachian Mountains, and Bakersville has experienced its share of devastation in the region. In January 1998, floods destroyed much of Bakersville's infrastructure, and the town was declared a disaster area. This catastrophe was, however, also a catalyst of renovation of the downtown area and directly led to the Bakersville Creek Walk, a meandering creekside park that provides a scenic natural environment in the middle of town.

Natural Wonders

Mitchell County is blessed with extraordinary natural wonders throughout, and it is precisely these assets that can help serve as an economic engine in the county. Roan Mountain, rising to 6,327 feet on the Tennessee-North Carolina border, is a huge draw for tourists and locals alike, especially when the rhododendrons are in bloom. From the valley to the surrounding ridges, Roan Mountain State Park provides opportunities to hike along creeks and ridges, fish for trout, play tennis, swim, tour a century old farmhouse, join rangers and naturalists for educational programs, and enjoy mountain music concerts. These activities and the Rhododendron Festival make Roan Mountain an important economic draw for the County.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is a heritage resource that allows visitors to explore ecosystems, natural and cultural history, and local communities. A short drive from Bakersville, the Parkway is a major conservator of the natural and historical treasures of the Blue Ridge. Today, it is the most visited site in the National Park system, a fact that can be utilized to the economic benefit of Bakersville and Mitchell County.

Western North Carolina is one of the most unique and interesting geological regions in North America. The geology of Mitchell County is extraordinarily diverse, and one can discover this simply by observing the abundance of amazing geological features or the many professional and amateur mining opportunities in the region. There are six commercial gem mining establishments where one can find over sixty unique and potentially valuable gemstones, an exciting find for adventurous individuals and families.

Trout fishing is a recognized draw for both residents of and visitors to Mitchell County, and fishing is a potent economic force in the state. Mitchell County accounts for 3% of mountain trout fishing revenue and ranks far behind other western counties in trout-related economic activity. Researchers believe the natural assets of trout waters in the

county can be further commercialized to substantially increase revenues to the county. The area is also host to Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc., an organization dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active military service personnel and veterans through fly fishing and fly tying education and outings.

Bakersville is enrolled in The Mountain Heritage Trout Waters program, a cooperative effort between the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and local governments to encourage trout fishing as a heritage tourism activity in western North Carolina cities that are designated as a “Mountain Heritage Trout Water City.” Each of these cities provides public access to a trout stream that runs through or is adjacent to the city, and Cane Creek is a picturesque example of this program.

Festivals

Today, Bakersville’s quaint downtown is home to galleries and working artists’ studios. Each September the town hosts the Bakersville Creek Walk Arts Festival, which is open to the public and free of charge and takes place along the banks of Cane Creek, which winds through the center of this beautiful and historic small town. It has become a local favorite with locals and visitors alike, many returning year after year. Proceeds from past festivals have addressed local needs such as stocking food banks, providing heating subsidies for the elderly and town beautification projects. Another important festival that takes place in Mitchell County is Troutacular, a summer festival combining fishing, arts & crafts, outdoor education, music, games and food. As Mountain Heritage Trout Cities, both Bakersville and Spruce Pine participate in this yearly event. In addition, the North Carolina Rhododendron Festival takes place each June and draws visitors from all over the country to witness the spectacular beauty of the world’s largest naturally growing rhododendron gardens atop nearby Roan Mountain. The continued involvement and efforts of Bakersville, the Rhododendron Festival, Inc. and HandMade In America have lead to \$750,000 in grants that have brought new businesses, new jobs, a clean-up campaign, and a renewed sense of pride to the town.

HandMade In America envisions a thriving region that leverages the distinctive cultural assets of its people and the spirit of community, and through its consulting program, it offers custom consultations, conferences, and instructional programs on the HandMade Model of creative community development. They offer the expertise of those involved in agricultural tourism, craft development and marketing, cultural heritage tourism, small town revitalization, creative economic development practices, and more.

A Growing Artist’s Haven

The arts industry in Mitchell County is supported by a growing cast of artists, as well as by numerous craft support organizations and educational institutions. This sustainable industry reflects the cultural heritage of Western North Carolina and is one segment of a

growing and varied tourist economy. The arts produced in the region are also quite varied; from historically traditional ceramics and pottery, blacksmithing, soap making, poetry, and bluegrass, to glass blowing, basket-making, and photography, Western North Carolina is blessed with many genres of arts. The many festivals, galleries, classes and tours focused on art and art education in the region are also indicative of the arts' importance to Bakersville and Mitchell County, as are the number of schools dedicated to the arts in the region, such as Penland School of Crafts, John C. Campbell School, and the Haywood Community College Professional Craft Program.

The Toe River Arts Council promotes the arts and tourism, while enhancing communication and education about the arts and artists in Mitchell and Yancey Counties. It produces community programs, studio tours, and festivals, as well as children's art education classes to celebrate the cultural and artistic heritage of the county. Handmade in America also celebrates the rich tradition and cultural heritage of regional craft artists, as well as the preservation and enrichment of the community assets. This non-profit organization recognizes the value of community collaboration and the value of each region's distinct and unique assets that it can contribute to the overall promotion of the arts in Western North Carolina.

Western North Carolina is one of the leading centers for craft production and education in the United States. Economically, the arts are a powerful economic engine, as well as a clean and sustainable industry that will remain in the region. According to the *Economic Assessment of Toe River Arts Council Spring 2008 Studio Tour*, the average number of visits per studio during this tour was 95 people, resulting in average sales per studio of \$1,375. Total sales for the weekend were estimated at \$103,250, while total economic impact of the weekend was \$202,986. It is estimated that 56% of visitors that came for the tour stayed up to two nights in Western North Carolina, contributing an additional \$100 per person per day to the regional economy. According to the *Economic Impact of the Professional Craft Industry in Western North Carolina*, on a normal visit to the area, craft consumers spend an average of \$642. The total annual economic impact of the professional craft industry in Western North Carolina is approximately \$206,500,000. The largest portion of this, \$86,200,000, comes from the craft artists themselves: 56% operate a full time business and 33% employ people either full- or part-time, while many also teach the arts in local schools, thus contributing to local education about the arts as well as to the regional art economy.

II. Economic Development Efforts Impacting Bakersville

The Historic Courthouse

Probably the most important community economic development success in Bakersville in the past five years has been the renovation and re-opening of the Historic Mitchell County Courthouse (www.mitchellcountyhistoriccourthouse.org). Built in 1907, the courthouse was added to the National Register of Historic Places on May 10, 1979. It was abandoned in 1993 when the new courthouse was built. Through dedicated efforts of community leaders, the Courthouse is reopening in 2010 as a center for educational, economic, and cultural activities.



The building has the potential serve the community at large in a variety of capacities. The entire building will feature free high speed wireless internet access as well as free public access to computers, which is being developed in collaboration with the Mitchell Yancey Avery Public Library system through a federal grant to establish a public computer center within the building. Public displays of local artists' works are being established throughout the building, with special displays directing visitors to the studios and galleries of those artists. In addition, the building will serve as a part of a Welcome Center to direct visitors to area attractions. This renovated building with all of its contemporary attributes will also archive family and historic documents and feature events from Mitchell County's rich history. It will provide a unique and important view of history through the exhibits and archives displayed.

Lastly, the courthouse's successful renovation can also serve as a model and inspiration to beautify the downtown area and renovate other vacant or under-utilized buildings. This project shows leadership in "green" renovation, and upon completion it will apply to become certified under the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

As a fully functional center for educational, cultural, and economic activity, the Historic Courthouse can provide a foundation and infrastructure to address many of the problems faced by the people of Mitchell County, with an emphasis on stimulating the current business climate.

NC STEP

In 2007, Bakersville was chosen to participate in the N.C. Rural Center's Small Towns Economic Prosperity Program (NC STEP). NC STEP focuses in on how to help individual small towns reinvigorate their economies.

It has three primary goals:

- Support economic development in small towns adversely affected by structural changes in the economy or recent natural disasters.
- Implement a comprehensive model of technical assistance and grantmaking to aid in revitalization efforts.
- Provide information vital to the development of public policies that support long-term investment in the economic vitality of North Carolina's small towns.

The planning process seeks the active participation of all elements of the community in developing an economic development strategy. This promotes widespread buy-in and builds teams for project implementation.

Bakersville STEP Plan Goals were developed by the steering committee that was formed as the Bakersville Improvement Group (BIG). These goals were as follows:

1. Restoration and Adaptive Reuse of the Mitchell County Courthouse as a multi-use, community facility
2. Establish a staff position and an organizational arrangement to support the management and coordination of the programs and activities at the Mitchell County Historic Courthouse facility, and support for the partner organizations
3. Provide for the expansion and maintenance of the Bakersville Creek Walk project
4. Support and continue ongoing promotional events and activities
5. Develop and implement additional promotional materials, activities and support
6. Initiate study and consideration of the transportation issues
7. Plan and develop a new Post Office in Bakersville

8. Consideration of ABC status in Bakersville

Bakersville has succeeded in the redeployment of the Courthouse, and has secured support for a staff position on a grant-funded basis. It has made improvements to the town's Creek Walk project, and continues to support promotional events and festivals.

Goals 6, 7, and 8 of the STEP plan have yet to be realized. While they remain agenda items worthy of investigation, they do not seem to be top priority economic development issues, with the possible exception of the town's dry status and the unavailability of alcohol. This issue is well reflected in survey results from residents and nonresidents alike, and it remains an issue of controversy.

Fly Rod Chronicles

The towns of Bakersville and Spruce Pine, in conjunction with the Mitchell County Economic Development Corporation, have contributed funding for the filming of a television episode of Fly Rod Chronicles with Curtis Fleming. This award winning Sportsman's Channel show highlighting travel and fly fishing adventures will serve to advertise the virtues of local trout fishing in the region and will reach over 24,000,000 viewers through its distribution on the Dish Network. Through this and additional promotional materials the Town of Bakersville intends to bring more anglers, more backcountry guided trips, more adventures in the mountains, and more economic development to the area. Such advertising activities are just a few of the innovative and exciting ways that more attention, and hence more visitors and dollars, can make their way into Bakersville. Additional benefits include a thirty second commercial to air each of the two times the episode runs, closing credits with Bakersville contact information, a banner ad and hotlink on the Fly Rod Chronicle website, 500 DVD's ready for sale (potentially at the Courthouse and other community information clearinghouses), and a thirty second promotional web clip of the episode.

Toe River Journal

Another resource relevant to the current economic development of the region is The Toe River Journal, a publication designed to be a season-by-season portrait of life in the Toe River Valley. Its issues report on the arts, heritage, outdoor activities, events, and hospitality, as well as environmental and economic subjects of interest to both visitors and residents. Its vision is to illuminate the region in a way that supports sustained and environmentally positive economic growth. The Journal is available for free online and at newsstands and distribution points throughout the county, it is a valuable resource to attract and direct people to the wonders of the region.

The Case for Tourism

In 2008, High Country Council of Government's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy identified tourism as an important economic sector for the entire region, now surpassing manufacturing in economic value. However, among the seven counties within the COG, in 2006 Mitchell County ranked last in tourism expenditures at \$18.62 million.

For at least the last decade, there has been reluctance among many residents to embrace tourism as a strategy for economic growth. There is a perception (justified in many national economic studies) that tourism pays less than traditional manufacturing jobs, that such employment is only seasonal, and that tourism dollars flow to the few rather than the many.

The economic reality of the present time calls these arguments into question. It is a fact that manufacturing jobs have been steadily leaving the county for years. Agriculture, once a mainstay of rural family economies, has also dwindled, with an attendant loss of farmland for conversion to real estate. The construction trades benefitted greatly from second home construction in the county, but this too has dried up as the national economy has slumped into the worst recession in generations.

Mitchell County's economy has been hollowed out by the elimination or reduction of jobs in manufacturing, agriculture, and construction. While all three of these sectors can still play important roles in the future, the argument of whether tourism pays more than manufacturing is now largely academic; today, any job is often considered a good job.

In 2009 and 2010, researchers assisted in the preparation of an Economic Innovation Grant application through the North Carolina Rural Center to implement a multi-county strategy to capitalize on natural assets for recreational tourism in Mitchell, Yancey, and Avery Counties and to establish the Toe River Valley region as a major destination for outdoor recreational tourism. The overall goal of this project is to increase revenues from outdoor recreational tourism for local businesses and create good-paying jobs for local residents.

The innovative component of this project is the development of a multi-jurisdictional strategy that crosses municipal and county boundaries and which involves governments without a strong history of collaboration. Natural assets including rivers, ridge lines, and trails, are not confined to a single county or town; likewise, this project recognizes that promotional efforts don't need to be constricted by political boundaries. This project demonstrates how multiple jurisdictions can band together for a common regional economic development strategy that benefits all parties involved, including private businesses that create jobs.

This project recognizes the tremendous opportunity to increase the number of visitors to the Town of Bakersville, Mitchell County, and the region as a whole. While it has yet to be funded, the project remains viable and local leaders are encouraged to continue to pursue grant resources to implement the program of action.

III. Surveys and Questionnaires: Residents and Nonresidents

Bakersville Improvement Group Questionnaire

To get an idea of the hopes and aspirations of community leaders, researchers asked each member of the Bakersville Improvement Group to individually fill out a short questionnaire. The BIG questionnaire asked respondents to consider among other things community assets, amenities, tourism, and their positives and negatives.

When asked what the area needed for them to improve their own quality of life, almost every respondent thought that some improvement in the overall quality of food available in the area would contribute to quality of life, especially restaurants, grocery stores, and higher instances of natural and healthy foods. Increased tourism, more entertainment options, public bathrooms, and a reform of ABC laws also turn up in this and other surveys conducted in Bakersville and Mitchell County.

When asked to discuss their “most loved” aspects of their community, nearly everyone expressed appreciation for the gorgeous natural environment and its attendant adventure opportunities. The small size and isolation of the area also helps to contribute to a close-knit sense of community and feelings that one really can make a difference here. Unfortunately, this size and isolation contributes to some of the most often cited “least liked” aspects of the community, which are the poverty, unemployment and low education levels, people who are categorically resistant to change, petty disagreements between people born and raised in different parts of the county, and between natives and those who move to or visit the region. These opinions can become a hindrance to positive economic growth, especially if tourism is expected to grow.

The next series of responses reinforces the idea of small community appreciation evident from the very first question: *Where are the good restaurants? Where do you spend a romantic evening? While many continue to bemoan the lack of good dining opportunities, especially romantic ones, people like to spend quality time in the home with one another personally here, which is a positive close-knit quality that many larger communities lack.*

Respondents were asked what types of things they hear tourists say about Bakersville and the region. The attitudes that local respondents often hear in conversation with tourists are overwhelmingly positive, especially with respect to the local charm and character, the friendliness and festivals. Criticisms heard echo those of many locals as well: the lack of public restrooms, few entertainment and dining options, and inability to purchase alcohol. These amenities are also desired by the respondents to become a more attractive community for locals and tourists alike. Reinforcing further the notion of community is the respondents’ ardent appreciation for their environment, as evidenced by their enthusiasm to take out of town guests for adventures.

When asked what they would most like to change if they had the power to do so, respondents reported a desire to beautify and clean up the town and region, especially eyesore buildings and parking lots, with better infrastructure all around. Many people would create jobs and prosperity, yet retain the identity and charm of the town. According to BIG members, local identity is something that Bakersville should strive to retain. If in charge of the economic development for Bakersville, some respondents said they would work to create jobs and prosperity, especially linked to computer literacy. Preservation of identity, promotion of the area and small businesses are other areas identified for improvement.

Resident Surveys

Researchers developed a survey instrument for local residents to gauge their attitudes and habits concerning shopping and businesses in downtown Bakersville. A total of 750 surveys were mailed at random to registered voters in the northern half of the County, and 196 responses were returned using the pre-stamped envelopes provided. Compared to the estimated total number of registered voters in this area, the response rate gives this survey an 84% confidence level with a 5% margin of error. A larger sample size would be required for an improved confidence level and margin of error. As a result, the statistical validity of the survey responses is weak. However, responses can serve as a guideline to the wants and needs of Bakersville and Mitchell County residents.

Respondents were asked what type of businesses and services they would like to have in downtown Bakersville. Choosing from a list of possible activities, results indicate the three main categories of desired establishments are shopping, dining and entertainment. Among listed options, the top four businesses desired were a clothing store, an ice cream/sweets shop, first run movies, and a natural/specialty food store:

What types of businesses/services would you like to have in downtown Bakersville?		
Rank+percentage	Frequency	Establishment
1. 45.4%	89	Clothing Store
2. 42.3%	83	Other – see following table
3. 30.6%	60	Ice Cream/Sweets Shop
4. 30.1%	59	First Run Movies
5. 29.1%	57	Natural/Specialty Food Store

6.	19.4%	38	EBay Store
7.	18.9%	37	Bookstore
8.	18.9%	37	Family Game Room
9.	17.3%	34	Outdoor/Fishing/Hunting Supplies
10.	10.2%	20	Musical Instrument Supplies and Instruction
11.	7.7%	15	Old Movies
12.	5.6%	11	Motorcycle Supplies and Repair

Forty-two percent of respondents wrote in other desired options for downtown businesses and services. Note again the predominance of food and entertainment in these responses, with the top recommendations being a grocery store and restaurants:

Businesses and Services, Other	
Establishment	Frequency
Grocery store	15
Restaurants	14
Bakery	4
Swimming pool	4
Discount stores	4
Movies	4
ABC store	3
Bowling Alley	3
Car wash	3
Fitness center	3
Fabric store	3
Coffee Shop	2
Laundromat	2
Motel/Hotel	2
Game room	1
Plant nursery	1
Mini mall	1
Tanning bed	1

Respondents were also asked where they go for various kinds of shopping. For purchase of groceries, 80.1% of respondents indicated that they would first travel to Spruce Pine to shop, followed distantly by Johnson City and the nebulous “Somewhere Else” taking the two and three spots with 10.7% and 6.1%, respectively. Bakersville ties Asheville for a distant last place, both receiving a mere 1.5% of respondents’ grocery

budgets with three votes each. This result is consistent with open-ended responses for suggested new businesses that place the desire for better local grocery options in a tie for second place with job and industry expansion.

When shopping for clothes, Bakersville is not even an option: 38.8% of respondents will travel to Johnson City, followed by 22.4% in Spruce Pine, 20.9% in Asheville, 11.7% “Somewhere Else”, and 4.1% online. Only 5.1% of respondents shop for clothes weekly, while 26.7% shop less than every three months. However, 68.2% shop for clothes between once a month and once every three months, and all of these shopping trips are taking locals, visitors, and their dollars somewhere outside of the community between four and twelve times per year. These facts are also corroborated by the open-ended survey responses for suggested new businesses that place better shoe and clothing shopping options in a tie for first place with better restaurants.

A total of 43.5% of respondents have someone in their family who plays a musical instrument. Of that number 51.8% list playing guitar, and 34.1% list playing the piano. A much smaller number of respondents (fewer than 10 each) report playing banjo or other instruments. Among musicians, 35.4% shop for their musical supplies in Johnson City, again taking their dollars and spending them not only out of town or county, but out of state. Almost one quarter, 24.6%, will spend their money in Spruce Pine for musical supplies, and more people will purchase these supplies online, 12.3%, rather than drive to Asheville, 7.7%.

While the percentage of musicians who shop for musical supplies in Bakersville is currently zero, these same musicians attest to shopping very rarely for them: 52.3% state that they never or rarely shop for musical supplies while another 29.5% only shop yearly. This leaves a mere 17% of monthly musical supply shoppers and 1.1% of weekly shoppers. It would seem that there are many musicians in the area, but not a significant demand for supply services locally.

Only 23% of homes surveyed have children under the age of 18 within them, and yet 41.3% of respondents are interested in having kid-friendly activities in town. When asked what types of activities specifically are desired, 38.9% selected movies, 32.9% selected a family game room, and 20.8% chose arts and crafts activities for kids.

This correlates to the large number of open-ended responses for suggested new businesses in Bakersville that reference the need for kid-friendly activities and businesses, especially in order to counteract the need to keep kids away from growing substance abuse problems some recognize in the younger generations. It is interesting

to note that in the open-ended responses to this question, the largest suggested activities were arts & crafts and movies.

Table 5 -- Open-ended Response Q#12	
<u>Response</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
<i>Arts & Crafts</i>	16
<i>Movies</i>	15
Bowling	6
Fitness Center	5
Music	4
Playground	3
Swimming Pool	3
Reading Activities	2
Basketball	1
Golf	1

Among respondents, 29.9% have someone in their family who fly fishes. Unfortunately for Bakersville, when this significant population decides to spend their money on fly fishing supplies, 46.2% of respondents head to Spruce Pine, 18.5% each go out of state to Johnson City or to “Somewhere Else”, 7.7% each go either online or to Asheville. This leaves a paltry 1.5% of fly fishing supply money spent by resident respondents actually remaining in the Bakersville economy.

Over one-third (34.8%) of respondents have someone in the family who hunts, and the economic trend should be recognizable at this point: 43.7% of respondents travel to Spruce Pine when shopping for general outdoor supplies, 23.9% travel out of state to Johnson City, 10.6% to Asheville, 9.9% “Somewhere Else”, 7.7% online, and a mere 4.5% spent at home in Bakersville.

Additional responses include the following: 25.1% of families have at least one motorcycle rider in them, 70.6% of families have at least one person that enjoys reading new fiction, 32.8% have one woodworker, and 22% have one person who creates pottery or other arts & crafts.

Respondents were asked to select educational opportunities that could be offered to the community. Respondents selected the range of options, with music lessons a first choice, followed by pottery and other crafts and online community college courses:

Activity	Percent of respondents interested
Music lessons	30.2%
Pottery and other crafts	26.2%
Online community college courses	11.9%
Computer literacy courses	8.7%
Fly tying and fly fishing	8.7%
Obtain a GED	4.8%

Respondents were also given the opportunity to write in educational opportunities, and a total of 16 did so. Open-ended responses for desired educational or instructional opportunities are as follows:

Table 6 -- Open-ended Responses Q#21	
Response	Frequency
Aerobic	5
Water sports	2
Basket Weaving	1
Clogging	1
Glass blowing	1
Knitting	1
Scuba Diving	1
Swimming lessons	1
Tutoring	1
Woodworking	1
Spanish/Second Language classes	1

Respondents were asked how often they visit or drive through Bakersville. Of the residents surveyed, 43.4% drive through downtown Bakersville every day and 34.3% drive through once or twice per week. Only 13.1% drive through once or twice a month, and only 9.1% less than that. Perhaps even more significant is the rate at which people stop in downtown Bakersville in any given period. Just over 20% of respondents said they stopped in downtown Bakersville every day, just under half of the total who drive through each day. Another 40.1% said they stopped in Bakersville once or twice per week, 12.9% stopped once or twice a month, and only 8.2% stopped less than that.

This is especially relevant given the numbers of vehicles that pass through Bakersville according to the 2008 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) count data for North Carolina Highways 261 and 226. AADT is the volume for all lanes in both directions passing a point on the highway system. It represents the average of all days during the year with typical traffic conditions. The AADT for Highway 261 at a point slightly north of

its intersection with Highway 226 in Bakersville is 2,200 vehicles. The AADT for Highway 226 at a point slightly west of Bakersville is 2,100 vehicles. The AADT for Highway 226 at a point due south of Bakersville is 3,900 vehicles. See attached AADT map for more detail.

Clearly, one goal of community leaders should be to devise availability of goods, services, and community events that will increase the number of cars stopping in Bakersville each day.

Common concerns are voiced in survey responses about the conditions of roads and especially road signs in the region, and it has been suggested that some form of Bakersville-specific signage be created to help ease access to recreational destinations, alleviate confusion and encourage more to stop downtown. There is the need to encourage both residents and visitors to stop, of course, and while unified signage might be one aspect of that solution, it is clear that having more amenities suitable for both groups is paramount to making that happen.

Finally, residents were asked if they had any advice or suggestions for new businesses that can be successful in Bakersville or surrounding areas. A large number of the responses fell under the categories of shopping, dining, entertainment, and job creation. For a complete frequency breakdown of resident responses, see the following table:

Do you have any advice or suggestions for new businesses in Bakersville?		
<u>Establishment</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Category</u>
Better or More Restaurants	13	Dining
Shoe or Clothing Store	13	Shopping/General
Job and Industry Expansion	12	Economic Development
Better Grocery Store	12	Shopping/Dining
Fast Food	8	Dining
Music and Dance, classes and supplies	8	Entertainment
Youth Friendly Activities	8	Entertainment
Local Development, tourism and arts & crafts	7	Economic Development
Movies	6	Entertainment
Parking Improvements	5	Civic
Local Development, <u>NOT</u> tourism or arts & crafts	5	Economic Development
Big Box Retailer	5	Shopping/General
Laundromat Improvement	4	Civic/Eyesore
Dance Venue or Club	4	Entertainment
Pool	4	Exercise/Entertainment
Natural Food Store	4	Shopping/Dining

Sweet Shop	4	Shopping/Dining
Coffeeshop	4	Shopping/Dining
Outdoor Recreational Supply Store	4	Shopping/Recreation
Hotels	3	Amenity/Travel
Car Wash	3	Business
Cleanup Downtown	3	Civic
YMCA/Gymnasium	3	Exercise
Hardware Store	3	Shopping/Home Repair
Welcome Center	2	Civic
Bowling Alley	2	Entertainment
Discount or Dollar Store	2	Shopping/General
Antiques	2	Shopping/Specialty
24 Hour Gas Station	1	Amenity/Travel
Pro ABC	1	Economic Development
Anti ABC	1	Economic Development
24 Hour Veterinarian	1	Healthcare
Farmers Market	1	Shopping/Dining
Garden Store	1	Shopping/Hobby

There exist some interesting conflicts in the survey responses. Several respondents expressed a desire to limit growth of the arts & crafts and tourism industries, as well as opposition to introducing alcohol sales into the county. Many others, however, expressed opinions that further development of arts and crafts could help improve the Town of Bakersville and Mitchell as a whole. Common arguments for moving away from or limiting arts & crafts and tourism favor the desire for local industrial job opportunity development rather than relying on the seasonal influx of tourists. This is to be expected in a county that has relied so heavily in the past on manufacturing. However, while seasonality is one concern, others believe that Bakersville has quite enough tourist driven businesses already, and they do not want more arts & crafts because they are viewed as “for rich people,” not locals. Others “don’t want to live in an arts & crafts town.” Many would simply like to be able to shop locally for necessities rather than drive to better equipped towns nearby such as Spruce Pine, Johnson City, or Asheville.

In contrast, others feel that it is critical that the Town “seek other activities to bring in outside money” through tourism and to “convince local residents that this would be a positive thing that would encourage the community’s survival.” This is surely a difficult and contradictory position for the continued economic development of Bakersville, and one that needs to be resolved if the expansion that most seem to want is to become a reality.

Non-Resident Surveys

Using data supplied by the Mitchell County Tax Office, researchers mailed 250 surveys to non-permanent residents and non-resident landowners in the county; of these, 66 completed surveys were returned. The total number of non-resident landowners in Mitchell is in the thousands, and as such, the statistical validity of the responses is weak. However, the rating of the responses can provide some guidance to the town as to things that are desired by non-permanent residents and non-resident landowners, especially given their congruence with other surveys.

Part-time Residents were asked to check all seasons during which they were most likely to reside in the Bakersville area and Mitchell County. Respondent were most likely to reside in Mitchell County in the depths of summer from July to September, and least likely to reside in Mitchell County from January to March, roughly the hardest part of winter.

Respondents were asked to select from a list of goods, services and other amenities they would patronize in Bakersville if they were available. Consistent with results from the residential surveys, more than 50% of respondents desired shopping and dining amenities. Shopping and other educational and adventure opportunities also receive a significant portion of responses within these rankings.

Among all choices, the top selections by nonresident respondents were to have a nice consignment shop, a sweetshop, an international cuisine restaurant, and a place to purchase organic or natural foods.

The following table shows response rates and highest popularity among respondents:

Table 8 – Non-resident Business Interest Responses			
Rank + Percentage	Frequency	Establishment	Category
1. 62.1%	41	Nice Consignment Shop	Shopping/Specialty
2. 59.1%	39	Doughnut, pastry or sweet shop	Dining
3. 54.5%	36	International cuisine restaurant	Dining
4. 54.5%	36	A place to purchase organic and natural foods	Shopping/Dining
5. 43.9%	29	A place with live music and dancing	Food/Entertainment
6. 30.3%	20	A place to purchase hiking equipment	Shopping/Activity
7. 22.7%	15	Exercise, dance, or yoga classes	Activity/Health
8. 21.2%	14	Trout Fishing Fly Tying Classes	Activity/Entertainment
9. 19.7%	13	A book club	Activity/Entertainment
10. 16.7%	11	A handcrafted toy store	Shopping/Specialty
11. 16.7%	11	A stringed music store	Shopping/Specialty
12. 12.1%	8	A dog care service	Service
13. 10.6%	7	A bridge club	Activity/Entertainment
14. 7.6%	5	An in-home professional masseuse	Service
15. 4.5%	3	A local “Dancing with the Stars” competition	Entertainment
16. 3.0%	2	A motorcycle mechanic	Service
17. 1.5%	1	A boat mechanic	Service

Non-permanent residents were also given an open-ended opportunity to list any other business or service that they could think of that they would use while in Mitchell County. Of the 66 respondents, 36 answered this question, and many respondents listed more than one business or service. The number one request, not surprisingly, wound up being for better dining options, for both restaurants and grocery stores, with one person

requesting more fast food. Second to better dining was general entertainment options, including but not limited to crafts, bike races, corn mazes, and a movie theatre. In third place, but immediately on the heels of entertainment was (again not surprisingly given other survey responses) the desire for beer, wine, and liquor sales in the county. The frequency breakdown for those responses is as follows:

Table 9 – Non-resident Open-ended Business Interest Responses		
Business or Service	Frequency	Category
1. Better dining/ grocery options	12	Shopping/Dining
2. Entertainment/Culture/Arts	7	Entertainment
3. Beer/Wine/Liquor	6	Shopping/Entertainment
4. Antiques/Auctions/Flea Market	3	Shopping/Specialty
5. Farmers Market	3	Shopping/Dining
6. Coffeehouse	2	Dining
7. Bookstore	2	Entertainment
8. Pub	1	Dining/Entertainment
9. Increase tourism	1	Civic
10. Better parking	1	Civic
11. “Green” classes	1	Environmental
12. Better, clearer roads	1	Civic
13. High-speed internet	1	Infrastructure/Entertainment
14. Off road rentals and trails	1	Outdoor Recreation
15. Fishing store with bait	1	Outdoor Recreation
16. Bed & Breakfast	1	Amenity
17. Chamber of Commerce	1	Civic

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

Wants and Needs

Obviously, full-time and part-time residents of the community will want some things that are similar and others that are different. Still, there are several items that varied interests can agree upon: In both resident and nonresident surveys, a strong desire was measured for better shopping and dining options. Local and nonresidents alike wish for a place to buy sweets, have a good meal, and buy natural foods. Nonresidents would like a nice consignment shop, while locals would like to have a place to buy clothes and shoes. Clearly, some level of opportunity exists for businesses of this type. More research needs to be conducted to determine the size, scope and anticipated cash flow of such businesses.

Other areas exist where a majority can agree: Transportation infrastructure needs work to make travel in the region easier for everyone; the visual environment of downtown needs to be improved to enhance locals' sense of pride and encourage visitors to return; the natural environment should be utilized as an economic engine in the most non-exploitive way for tourism development; trout stream designations need to serve the needs of both fishermen and the industries that require water and that create important job opportunities for the people; the marketing of outdoor recreational resources for the economic benefit of Bakersville should continue and increase so that the economic base of the town may improve; and high-quality amenities are needed to meet the needs of visitors with higher levels of disposable income, as well as their spouses and children.

One of the most important desires, and also one that almost everyone can agree upon, is that the integral local character of Bakersville should not change drastically. The local character and natural beauty are prime reasons why residents love their community, and are also the reasons that many have chosen to move to this beautiful region, and still more the reason that many visitors choose to come here and spend their free time and hard earned money. Too many other communities have gone the "cookie-cutter" route in their bids at expansion or attempted too much too soon, but the preservation of community character can be a key factor for success in avoiding the growing pains other communities face.

Above all, the preservation of heritage, culture, and natural resources of Bakersville will help attract visitors, and the more Bakersville does to enhance its primary assets, the more visitors will choose it as a vacation destination, bringing their money into the local economy. As Bakersville becomes more appealing to these visitors based on its improvements, they will end up staying longer and spending more.

It is important for local leaders to understand what assets they have now, and what assets are needed to improve economic conditions. The appendices of this report include a comprehensive asset map for Mitchell County with an emphasis on Bakersville. Those establishments that are local to Bakersville and the northern portion of Mitchell County will appear in bold. The researchers felt it important and useful to include those establishments outside of Bakersville proper, while placing emphasis on Bakersville itself, specifically because the region's assets do not generally conform to municipal boundaries.

Challenges Moving Forward

Community leaders have expressed a desire to continue improvements to the physical infrastructure of Bakersville, including removing power lines to below ground, restoring retail property and recruiting new businesses to occupy storefronts, improving parking, and identifying services that can improve the quality of life for residents and attract tourist dollars. These aspirations require close cooperation among various organizations and interests: economic developers in the county and region, private landowners of business properties, young entrepreneurs, and a committed citizenry. Beyond the confines of downtown Bakersville, an effort to improve visitor access to natural resources including trails, waterways, and scenic viewsheds all require consent and collaboration among disparate interests.

The contributions of the Bakersville Improvement Group's and its success in developing a core of committed citizens with organizational capacity cannot be overstated. These leaders understand the importance of sensible development in the region for the town and its visitors alike. Other important civic collaborators include, but are not limited to, local government leaders and the county economic developer. Private businesses that serve the needs of the regions and its visitors are also critical collaborators for developing viable economic strategies for Bakersville and the county as a whole.

For development of tourist amenities and to capitalize on natural assets, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will be important in working with the county and town in order to maintain trailheads and areas of public access to trout streams. Similarly, private landowners will be extremely important collaborators because they control increasing tourist access to local trout streams and other natural habitats for increased recreational tourism opportunities. In collaboration, entities will be better enabled to support infrastructure improvements such as improved signage to recreational destinations, improvements to trail heads for increased visibility and parking, development of loop trails that afford single-day hiking experiences, and increased public access to trout streams.

The local mining industry, which has permission to pull water out of local sources, will be an important group to bring to the table as well. Since trout fishing tourism is one aspect of development, these collaborators will naturally be concerned about any stream designation changes that have the potential to change their environmental footprint. Future development of waterways for recreational tourism must strike a careful balance between the needs of the mining industry and those of tourism.

Additional collaborative resources outside of Bakersville include the Town of Spruce Pine, while regional collaborators include HandMade in America, the Toe River Arts Council and the Toe River Economic Alliance, a collaboration among economic developers in Mitchell, Yancey and Avery counties. Important resources for any economic development activities should include support from the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center and the NC Department of Commerce's Division of Community Assistance.

Ultimately, Bakersville will require unity of purpose and can succeed by asserting its cultural heritage as a place where people are welcome. Along the road to this and other economic development goals are issues of job creation and adapting from reliance on industries that are in steep decline to ones that have potential for growth as well as the potential to supplement current incomes and create new income streams for the people of Bakersville.

Some concrete action steps are offered below for consideration:

Coordinated Marketing and Increased Media Exposure

One of the most important considerations for marketing and increasing Bakersville's exposure in the media is to harmonize the economic development concerns with the existing natural and municipal environments. Other concerns include combating the seasonality of tourism for recreational opportunities in the region and preserving public access to outdoor recreation while keeping landowners and the mining industry happy. One means of addressing aggregate public concerns is to form an action committee charged with the responsibility of implementing solutions.

Continued advertising in recreational tourism media, such as future rounds of airtime for the Fly Rod Chronicles, result in more and better asset promotion towards sportsmen.

There are many magazines that rank tourist destinations, and fishing and trout fishing destinations in particular are ranked by many as well; it would be of great future benefit to the local trout tourism industry and to Bakersville as a whole to be on those rankings. Some of the more prestigious rankings are as follows:

Outdoor Life's Top 200 Towns for Sportsmen
Forbes' Top 10 Towns for Sportsmen
Forbes' Top 10 Trout-fishing Towns
Field and Stream's Top 10 Fishing Towns

The fact that a high end business magazine like Forbes has two fishing top 10 lists should highlight the fact that people with high incomes fish too, and marketing to that demographic can bring more money into a community per visitor. If a community wants to limit the number of visitors yet simultaneously maximize the amount of money that can be made from them, it would do well to advertise to this demographic. Contacts should be made with editorial staff at these magazines about advertising and to determine what criteria a town must meet in order to be on the radar for nomination to these honorable and potentially profitable top tier rankings. It may also be wise to appropriate funding for editorial staff familiarity tours in order to facilitate this.

One town that has utilized its media and local recreational resources in this way to its best advantage is Mountain Home, Arkansas. Mountain Home has many characteristics that are similar to Bakersville. For instance, both are centrally located destinations that have a variety of larger cities nearby, but not TOO nearby. They are both mountain towns that are the seat of their respective counties, and both have frequent festivals that celebrate local color as well as fishing. The local rivers, streams and lakes contain a wide variety of game fish. Each town has an historical economic base in manufacturing and industry and is surrounded by abundant wildlife, forests, trails, and state and national parks where one can experience four distinct seasons.

And yet, Mountain Home has been ranked among Forbes' 2007 Top 10 Trout Fishing Towns, Outdoor Life's #1 Hunting and Fishing Town in 2008, Field and Stream's #2 Fishing Destination for 2008, and 2010's #7 in Outdoor Life's Top 200 Towns for Sportsmen. In addition, Mountain Home was ranked in Forbes' 2009 Top 10 Towns for Sportsmen, a list that also included Asheville, NC, mainly as a Southern Appalachian hub for great regional fishing. If Asheville can make it onto this list by virtue of its proximity to great fishing, there is no reason that Bakersville, with great fishing directly in its heart, cannot do so as well.

What then, are some factors that Mountain Home attributes its success to?

- High Quality Public Education and Healthcare
- Telecommunications Services
- Managed, Planned Growth and Infrastructure Maintenance

- High Quality and Varied Amenities for Visitors

As a result of attention to these attributes and national attention from media exposure and magazine rankings, Mountain Home has reaped the following economic benefits:

- Tourist travel expenditures increased 22%
- Tax receipts generated increased 32%
- Jobs generated from tourism increased 28%

Other magazines that should be contacted about potentials advertising and national rankings include, but should not be limited to, the following:

- American Angler
- Backpacker
- Blue Ridge Country
- Fly Fisherman
- Fly Rod and Reel
- Fly Tyer
- Sport Fishing
- North Carolina Sportsman

Another development that will bolster media-related advertising efforts is the development of unified signage that contains within it a unique branding of the region, including unique local imagery and slogan; this should be done in order to give Bakersville a regional brand identity that can then be further marketed. Improved signage indicating events such as The Rhododendron Festival, Creek Walk Arts Festival, and Troutacular will draw in visitors and should help point them and locals alike in the right direction for parking, lodging, dining, shopping, outdoor recreation, and other amenities during festival time and throughout the year. Improved road signs and trail signs (biking, hiking, horseback riding) will also serve to help orient and direct people to their destinations. Continued marketing of the region as a Christmas tree destination in combination with highlighting the region's skiing could help to offset the seasonality of most recreational tourism that occurs in the warmer months, especially if tourism infrastructure improves and is properly marketed.

Continued involvement of the mining industry with respect to trout stream designations as fishing-based tourism increases will help maintain friendly relations between the industry and the municipality. While industry and manufacturing have been on the decline in Mitchell County over the years, these remain important in the county.

Amenity Improvements

Ultimately, someone will have to be the first mover when it comes to investment in higher quality amenities for Bakersville, but if survey responses have shown anything, they have shown the need to respond to demand for amenity improvements for visitors and locals alike. Both seem to agree on the basic elements of amenity improvement in Bakersville:

- More and varied restaurants, including an increase in vegetarian options as well as international and upscale options. This same trend applies to grocery stores, coffee shops, sweet shops, chain restaurants, and fast food. This contributes to job growth as well.
- More local entertainment options, including movies, nightlife, bowling, swimming, and dancing. This is also to give locals, especially teens, something to do in town to ensure that they and their dollars stay local too, helping retain the youth and ensuring the longevity of Bakersville. Developing more stable economics will also help ensure that these youth have jobs to fulfill them after their education.
- More “upscale” lodging. Visitors are apt to psychologically gauge the value of something based on its price. If available amenities are inexpensive, cheap, old, run-down or any number of perceived negatives, a visitor may associate that same opinion with other aspects of his or her vacation. Conversely, fancier amenities with value-added aspects such as spa and massage, shuttles and daycare, color the experience more positively for visitors accustomed to more. As mentioned earlier, if one wants to minimize the number of tourists while maximizing their economic impact, this is an important demographic to cater to.
- General downtown beautification, including renovating eyesore parking lots and buildings, burying utility lines, installing public restrooms, and improving road signage, especially for recreation destinations. These renovations can be accomplished “greenly” by constructing and renovating in ways that reduce natural resources and energy consumption and promote healthier environments. And since “green” energy and technology is a heavy criterion for many grant opportunities, this approach can help leverage funds for renovation if local investment of time, resources and cash are committed.

Additionally, marketing efforts should be made to ensure that local lodging opportunities are available for booking online, especially since many travelers will utilize the internet in order to make reservations and given that no lodgings appear for Bakersville in five of

the leading travel search engines. Recruitment of a major recognizable hotel chain would also help increase Bakersville's online profile.

Vacation Packages, Tours, and Services

Effort should be made to coordinate the packaging of lodging, dining, outdoor recreation and other amenities to simplify travel planning for potential visitors, especially those with higher levels of disposable income. Coordinated booking is essential here, and bundled services can offer appealing discounts in agreement with all amenity providers; while per amenity pricing might go down slightly, when the volume of bookings increases because of these efforts, overall profits increase too. Concentrated marketing efforts around the three major Bakersville festivals, fishing and outdoor recreational tourism, arts tours, cultural tours and agro-tourism will help this succeed. In addition, rental and/or purchase of fishing or recreation equipment should be coordinated with respective packages to maximize the economic benefit to Bakersville businesses. As the number of visitors rises, visiting fisherman catching their quota will increase, and as a result, trout stocking levels will need to be reevaluated and adjusted accordingly in consultation with Wildlife Resources and local hatcheries.

Consultations with local landowners with trout streams running through their property should be held in order to identify those amenable to increased fishing access on their land. In order to restrict degradation of the land and its resources, access should be considered limited to those paid groups taken by a certified guide with a package group, not simply open to the public. Reciprocal compensation to landowners should be considered.

Not only should vacation package options be investigated, but amenities for the children and spouses of vacationers taking advantage of local recreation and shopping should be provided as well. Options include a variety of arts & crafts classes such as pottery and basket weaving, antiques, daycare, health and beauty such as massage and spa treatment, as well as additional recreational opportunities like exploring one of the many gem mines in this geologically rich region.

Brochures, maps and guides to local parks, fishing, recreational activities and cultural opportunities should be available in lodgings and recreation centers. The Courthouse should also be a clearinghouse for information regarding visitor amenities and attractions.

Alcohol

To put it plainly, vacationers like to have the option to drink on their vacations, and people are generally less likely to book a vacation where that is not possible. Of course

there are many problems that the sale of alcohol can bring such as potentially increased abuse among young people and an increase in DUI, accident and highway death rates. These fears are well founded and rational. So are the economic benefits that alcohol sales can contribute to an economy. Besides the obvious economic benefits from increased tourism and taxes, the development of a local brewery or winery with tours, demonstrations and tastings can add another aspect of regional agricultural tourism, as well as another amenity for marketing packaged services, not to mention increased jobs and income for local residents.

Kicking Municipal Rivalries

In-county municipal rivalries are ultimately counterproductive to the success of every town. Collaboration, especially between entities with a negative collaborative history, is difficult at best. Leaving preconceived notions of roles, rights and responsibilities behind, allowing others to make decisions that one is accustomed to making, and sharing economic benefits are difficult strategies to cultivate, but they are critical to successful economic development. Solutions cost money, and leveraging grants and loans increasingly requires tangible collaboration. In a sense, Bakersville and Mitchell County will be successful to the extent that people can work together.

Growth without Losing Character

Bakersville needs an attractive and vibrant downtown, but growth at the expense of local color and character or the natural environment is undesirable. While renovation and construction should strive to be as environmentally friendly as possible, it should also avoid the “cookie-cutter” construction that has made so many other tourist destinations look so uniform. This urban ugliness need not be synonymous with progress. For instance, many people in Bakersville want fast-food, but a good many do not want the architectural blight on a historic downtown; communities such as Freeport, Maine, and Independence, Ohio, have solved this problem by requiring permits and planning aimed at controlling the design of buildings in their communities.

Freeport makes fast-food restaurants adhere to a “conditional use” or “special use” permit. This allows the community to consider the size of the building, landscaping, lighting and other issues before a permit is issued. This worked to their advantage when in 1982 McDonald’s intended to tear down the then 130 year old Federal-style Gore House. Community objections to demolition forced the company to utilize the existing historical structure, and the restaurant now fits seamlessly within the local architectural style.

In 1987, the Independence town planning board approved the construction of a brand new McDonald’s location, but negotiations with the company kept the design relevant to

local architecture as well. Independence now has a McDonald's in a two-story Greek Revival building.

Many chain and franchise operations have alternative architectural plans to secure approval, so any efforts to recruit these businesses to Bakersville should consider unity of design as well as a review process to ensure suitable design practices.

Appendix A Bakersville Area RESIDENTIAL SURVEY RESULTS

1. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	71	36.2	36.6	36.6
	Female	123	62.8	63.4	100.0
	Total	194	99.0	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.0		
Total		196	100.0		

2. What type of businesses and services would you like to have in downtown Bakersville?

2. a. Natural/Specialty Food Store

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	57	29.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	139	70.9		
Total		196	100.0		

2. b. Clothing Store

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	89	45.4	97.8	97.8
	No	1	.5	1.1	98.9
	11	1	.5	1.1	100.0
	Total	91	46.4	100.0	
Missing	System	105	53.6		
Total		196	100.0		

2. c. Musical Instrument supplies and instruction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	20	10.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	176	89.8		
Total		196	100.0		

2. d. Family game room

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	37	18.9	100.0	100.0
Missing System	159	81.1		
Total	196	100.0		

2. e. First run movies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	59	30.1	100.0	100.0
Missing System	137	69.9		
Total	196	100.0		

2. f. Old movies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	15	7.7	100.0	100.0
Missing System	181	92.3		
Total	196	100.0		

2. g. Ebay store to auction used items on commission

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	38	19.4	100.0	100.0
Missing System	158	80.6		
Total	196	100.0		

2. h. Bookstore

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	37	18.9	97.4	97.4
	No	1	.5	2.6	100.0
	Total	38	19.4	100.0	
Missing	System	158	80.6		
Total		196	100.0		

2. i. Outdoor fishing/hunting supplies store

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	34	17.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	162	82.7		
Total		196	100.0		

2. j. Ice Cream/Sweets store

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	60	30.6	98.4	98.4
	No	1	.5	1.6	100.0
	Total	61	31.1	100.0	
Missing	System	135	68.9		
Total		196	100.0		

2. k. Motorcycle supplies and repair

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	11	5.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	185	94.4		
Total		196	100.0		

2. l,m,n Other

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

				t	
Valid	Yes	83	42.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	113	57.7		
Total		196	100.0		

3. Where do you buy most of your groceries

3. Groceries

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Spruce Pine	157	80.1	80.1	80.1
	Johnson City	21	10.7	10.7	90.8
	Asheville	3	1.5	1.5	92.3
	Bakersville	3	1.5	1.5	93.9
	Somewhere else	12	6.1	6.1	100.0
Total		196	100.0	100.0	

4. How often do you shop for clothing?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Once a week	10	5.1	5.1	5.1
	Once a month	66	33.7	33.8	39.0
	Once every 3 months	67	34.2	34.4	73.3
	Less than once every three months	52	26.5	26.7	100.0
Total		195	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		196	100.0		

5. Where do you buy most of your clothes?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Spruce Pine	44	22.4	22.9	22.9
	Johnson City	76	38.8	39.6	62.5
	Asheville	41	20.9	21.4	83.9
	Online	8	4.1	4.2	88.0
	Somewhere else	23	11.7	12.0	100.0
	Total	192	98.0	100.0	
Missing	System	4	2.0		
Total		196	100.0		

6. Does anyone in family play musical instrument?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	83	42.3	43.5	43.5
	No	108	55.1	56.5	100.0
	Total	191	97.4	100.0	
Missing	System	5	2.6		
Total		196	100.0		

7. What is the name of instrument?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Guitar	44	22.4	51.8	51.8
	Banjo	5	2.6	5.9	57.6
	Mandolin	1	.5	1.2	58.8
	Piano	29	14.8	34.1	92.9
	Other	6	3.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	85	43.4	100.0	
Missing	System	111	56.6		
Total		196	100.0		

8. How often do they purchase materials?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Weekly	1	.6	1.1	1.1
	Monthly	15	8.5	17.0	18.2
	Once a year	26	14.7	29.5	47.7
	Never/not often	46	26.0	52.3	100.0
	Total	88	49.7	100.0	
Missing	System	89	50.3		
Total		177	100.0		

9. Where do you buy most of your music supplies?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Spruce Pine	16	8.2	24.6	24.6
	Johnson City	23	11.7	35.4	60.0
	Asheville	5	2.6	7.7	67.7
	Online	8	4.1	12.3	80.0
	Somewhere else	13	6.6	20.0	100.0
	Total	65	33.2	100.0	
Missing	System	131	66.8		
Total		196	100.0		

10. Does anyone under age 18 live in your home?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	44	22.4	23.0	23.0
	No	147	75.0	77.0	100.0
	Total	191	97.4	100.0	
Missing	System	5	2.6		
Total		196	100.0		

11. Are you interested in kid friendly activities?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	Yes	81	41.3	87.1	87.1
	No	12	6.1	12.9	100.0
	Total	93	47.4	100.0	
Missing	System	103	52.6		
Total		196	100.0		

12. What types of activities are you interested in?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Family game room	49	25.0	32.9	32.9
	Movies	58	29.6	38.9	71.8
	Arts and Crafts	31	15.8	20.8	92.6
	Other	11	5.6	7.4	100.0
	Total	149	76.0	100.0	
Missing	System	47	24.0		
Total		196	100.0		

12. For other types of activities, see attached

13. Does anyone in your family fly fish?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	55	28.1	29.9	29.9
	No	129	65.8	70.1	100.0
	Total	184	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	12	6.1		
Total		196	100.0		

14. Where do you shop for fly fishing materials?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Spruce Pine	30	15.3	46.2	46.2

	Johnson City	12	6.1	18.5	64.6
	Asheville	5	2.6	7.7	72.3
	Bakersville	1	.5	1.5	73.8
	Online	5	2.6	7.7	81.5
	Somewhere else	12	6.1	18.5	100.0
	Total	65	33.2	100.0	
Missing	System	131	66.8		
Total		196	100.0		

15, Does anyone in your family hunt?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	63	32.1	34.8	34.8
	No	117	59.7	64.6	99.4
	22	1	.5	.6	100.0
	Total	181	92.3	100.0	
Missing	System	15	7.7		
Total		196	100.0		

16. Where do you purchase general outdoor supplies?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Spruce Pine	62	31.6	43.7	43.7
	Johnson City	34	17.3	23.9	67.6
	Asheville	15	7.7	10.6	78.2
	Bakersville	6	3.1	4.2	82.4
	Online	11	5.6	7.7	90.1
	Somewhere else	14	7.1	9.9	100.0
	Total	142	72.4	100.0	
Missing	System	54	27.6		
Total		196	100.0		

17. Does anyone in family ride a motorcycle?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	46	23.5	25.1	25.1
	No	137	69.9	74.9	100.0
	Total	183	93.4	100.0	
Missing	System	13	6.6		
Total		196	100.0		

18. Does anyone in your family enjoy reading new fiction?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	132	67.3	70.6	70.6
	No	55	28.1	29.4	100.0
	Total	187	95.4	100.0	
Missing	System	9	4.6		
Total		196	100.0		

19. Does anyone in your family do woodworking?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	62	31.6	32.8	32.8
	No	127	64.8	67.2	100.0
	Total	189	96.4	100.0	
Missing	System	7	3.6		
Total		196	100.0		

20. Does anyone in your family produce pottery or other arts and crafts?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	42	21.4	22.1	22.1
	No	148	75.5	77.9	100.0
	Total	190	96.9	100.0	
Missing	System	6	3.1		
Total		196	100.0		

21. Interested in receiving classes or instruction in the following activities?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	How to play musical instruments	38	19.4	30.2	30.2
	How to make pottery or other arts and crafts	33	16.8	26.2	56.3
	How to fly fish and make fly ies	11	5.6	8.7	65.1
	GED (high school equivalency degree)	6	3.1	4.8	69.8
	Online Community College classes	15	7.7	11.9	81.7
	Computer literacy classes	11	5.6	8.7	90.5
	Other classes	12	6.1	9.5	100.0
	Total	126	64.3	100.0	
Missing	System	70	35.7		
Total		196	100.0		

22. How often do you drive through downtown Bakersville each week.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Every day	76	42.9	43.4	43.4
	Once or twice per week	60	33.9	34.3	77.7
	Once or twice per month	23	13.0	13.1	90.9
	Less than once per month	16	9.0	9.1	100.0
	Total	175	98.9	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.1		
Total		177	100.0		

23. How often do you stop in downtown Bakersville each week/month/year?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Every day	87	44.4	44.8	44.8
	Once or twice per week	66	33.7	34.0	78.9
	Once or twice per month	25	12.8	12.9	91.8
	Less than once per month	16	8.2	8.2	100.0
	Total	194	99.0	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.0		
Total		196	100.0		

Appendix B: NON-RESIDENTIAL SURVEY RESULTS

1. What time of the year are you most likely to be living in Mitchell County?

1. a. January to March

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	January to March	21	31.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	45	68.2		
Total		66	100.0		

1. b. April to June

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	April to June	41	62.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	25	37.9		
Total		66	100.0		

1. c. July to September

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	July to September	56	84.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	10	15.2		
Total		66	100.0		

1. d. October to December

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	October to December	35	53.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	31	47.0		
Total		66	100.0		

2. Would you be interested in any of the following while in Mitchell County?

2. a. Exercise, dance, or yoga classes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Exercise, dance, yoga	15	22.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	51	77.3		
Total		66	100.0		

2. b. A doughnut, pastry, and sweet shop

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	doughnut, pastry shop	39	59.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	27	40.9		
Total		66	100.0		

2. c. A handcrafted toy store

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	handcrafted toy store	11	16.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	55	83.3		
Total		66	100.0		

2. d. A stringed music store offering instruments, supplies, & lessons

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	stringed music store	11	16.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	55	83.3		
Total		66	100.0		

2. e. Trout fishing fly tie classes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	trout fishing fly tie class	14	21.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	52	78.8		
Total		66	100.0		

2. f. A boat mechanic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	boat mechanic	1	1.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	65	98.5		
Total		66	100.0		

2. g. A motorcycle mechanic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	motorcycle mechanic	2	3.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	64	97.0		
Total		66	100.0		

2. h. A professional masseuse service that comes into your home

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	masseuse service	5	7.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	61	92.4		
Total		66	100.0		

2. i. A nice consignment shop

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nice consignment shop	41	62.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	25	37.9		
Total		66	100.0		

2. j. An international cuisine restaurant

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	international cuisine	36	54.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	30	45.5		
Total		66	100.0		

2. k. A place with live music and dancing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	live music and dancing	29	43.9	96.7	96.7
	2	1	1.5	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	45.5	100.0	
Missing	System	36	54.5		
Total		66	100.0		

2. l. A place to purchase organic and natural food products

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	organic and natural foods	36	54.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	30	45.5		
Total		66	100.0		

2. m. A place to purchase hiking equipment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	hiking equipment	20	30.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	46	69.7		
Total		66	100.0		

2. n. A dog care service, including dog walking & kennel services

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	dog care service	8	12.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	58	87.9		
Total		66	100.0		

2. o. A book club

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	book club	13	19.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	53	80.3		
Total		66	100.0		

2. p. A bridge club

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	bridge club	7	10.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	59	89.4		
Total		66	100.0		

2. q. A local "dancing with the Stars" competition

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	local "dancing with the stars"	3	4.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	63	95.5		
Total		66	100.0		

Appendix C: Asset List – Dining

Eateries:	Location and Contact Information:
Big Lynn Lodge	Box 459 Hwy 226a Little Switzerland, NC 28749 828-765-2163
Bonnie and Clyde's	2260 Hwy 226 N Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-2233
<i>Burger King</i>	<i>14109 Hwy 226 S, Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-766-5589</i>
Candlelite Café	57 Hwy 226 N Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-3400
Chalet Restaurant at the Switzerland Inn	86 High Ridge Rd Little Switzerland, NC 28749 828-765-2153
<i>China Wok</i>	<i>12105 Hwy 226 S, Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-766-8811</i>
<i>City Drive-In</i>	<i>670 Oak Ave Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-4480</i>
Creekside Restaurant	215 Crimson Laurel Way Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-9520
Dot's Coffee and Tea Shoppe	24 N Mitchell Avenue Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-3789
<i>DT's Blue Ridge Java</i>	<i>169 Locust Avenue Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-766-8008</i>
<i>El Rancho Mexican Restaurant</i>	<i>202 Locust Ave Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-6222</i>
<i>Fifty's Classic Diner</i>	<i>1121 Oak Ave Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-0647</i>
<i>Grassy Creek Golf & Country Club</i>	<i>2360 Swiss Pine Lake Drive Spruce Pine, NC 28777</i>

	828-765-6589
Helen's Restaurant	99 Hwy 226 N Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-9999
<i>KB's Barbecue and Grill</i>	<i>143 Old Marion Way Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-2106</i>
<i>Kentucky Fried Chicken & Taco Bell</i>	<i>1110 Hwy 226 S Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-1532</i>
<i>Knife & Fork</i>	<i>61 Locust Street Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-1511</i>
Lee's Country Café	624 Hwy 226 Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-7272
<i>McDonalds Restaurant</i>	<i>12063 Hwy 226 S Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-0309</i>
Mountain Grill	12263 Hwy 226 N Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-9061
<i>Pizza Hut</i>	<i>11911 Hwy 226 S Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-1044</i>
<i>Richmond Inn</i>	<i>51 Pine Ave Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-6993</i>
Sallie's Mountain View Family Restaurant	5253 Hwy 226 S Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-4770
<i>Sisters 5 Bistro & Gelateria</i>	<i>12350 Hwy 226 S Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-766-5822</i>
<i>Subway</i>	<i>671 Commons Shopping Ctr Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-0028</i>
<i>Subway</i>	<i>2514 Halltown Road Spruce Pine, NC 828-765-3467</i>
<i>Tokyo Japanese Restaurant</i>	<i>288 Oak Avenue Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-5514</i>

<i>Upper Street Café</i>	<i>198 Oak Avenue Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-0622</i>
<i>Western Sizzlin' Steakhouse</i>	<i>11961 Hwy 226 S Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-9151</i>
<i>The Yellow Rose Restaurant</i>	<i>61 Locust Street Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-4266</i>

Groceries:	Location and Contact Information:
Dollar General	395 Crimson Laurel Way Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-4473
Gateway Market	441 Crimson Laurel Way Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-4774
Grocery Outlet	631 Byrd Road Bakersville, NC 28705 828-682-3315
Ingles Supermarket	145 Greenwood Road Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-7997
Red Hill Grocery	5533 N Hwy 226 Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-2801
Thomas Grocery	29 Green Creek Road Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-2389

Appendix D: Asset List – Lodging

Lodging:	Location and Contact Information:
Alpine Inn	PO Box 477 Little Switzerland, NC 28749 828-765-5380 info@alpineinn.com http://alpineinnnc.com
<i>Bakers Motel</i>	423 Oak Avenue, Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-9344
Bakersville Bed and Breakfast	79 North Mitchell Avenue Bakersville, NC 28705 Jann and Steve Welch 828-688-6012 http://www.bakersvillebedandbreakfast.com <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birdwatching
<i>Bear Den Campground</i>	600 Bear Den Mountain Road Spruce Pine, NC 28777 P: 828-765-2888 F: 828-765-2864 Email: info@bear-den.com
Big Lynn Lodge	Box 459 Hwy 226-A Little Switzerland, NC 28749 Reservations: 800-654-5232 Business Office: 828-765-4257 F: 828-765-0301 info@biglynnlodge.com http://www.biglynnlodge.com/
BirdTown Guest Houses	Cane Creek Road Bakersville, NC 28705 Mary Vogel

	828-467 2094 http://www.homeaway.com/vacation-rental/p130348	
<i>Celtic Spirit Resort</i>	<i>PO Box 747, Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-766-2766 828-766-6379 http://www.celticspiritresort.com</i>	
Chinquapin Inn	2249 Conley Ridge Road, Penland, NC 28765 828-765-0064	
Clearview Cabin	78 Clearview Road Bakersville, NC 28705 P: 828-688-3831 F: 828-688-3831 http://www.clearview-cabin.com/	
Doanie Mama's Big House and Guest House	309 Mitchell Avenue Bakersville, NC 28705 Lee Roy and Sue Ledford P: 828-688-3456 F: 828-688-4755 Email: lr@mtnpro.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heated Pool
Hawk's Perch Cabin	4231 Cane Creek Road Bakersville, NC 28705 704-996-2481 http://www.vrbo.com/259718#ownerprofile	
<i>Inn at Plumtree</i>	<i>4718 US-19 Spruce Pine, NC 28777 Gail McNeil 828-765-8364</i>	
Laurel Creek Cottage	277 Chet Burleson Road Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-9699 828-688-5855	

	800-804-4806 http://www.laurelcreekcottage.com	
Laurel Oaks Farm	7334 NC 80 Bakersville, NC 28705 Al & Yvonne Bessin 828-688-2652 800-LAUREL OAK (528-7356) Email: laureloaks@main.nc.us	
<i>Lemon Tree Inn</i>	<i>872 Greenwood Road</i> <i>Spruce Pine, NC 28777</i> <i>828-765-6161</i>	
Living Waters Campground and RV Park	218 Trout Pond Lane Bakersville, NC 28705 Office: 828-688-2000 Home: 828-675-5685 Email: lwcampground@gmail.com www.livingwaterscampground.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch and Release fishing • Trout fee fishing
Loafer's Glory Campground	3675 Hwy 226 North Bakersville, NC 28705 Jeff Freund Local: 828-537-4586 Winter: 704-577-5341 http://www.loafersglorycamping.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Sports • Fishing • Clinchfield Railroad
Mountain View Motel and Restaurant	Hwy 226 and Blue Ridge Pkwy Little Switzerland, NC 28749 828-765-4233	
<i>Peak Mountain Cottages and Retreat</i>	<i>Rabbit Hop Road</i> <i>Spruce Pine, NC 28777</i> <i>828-765-9559</i> <i>Email: pscpeakmtn@aol.com</i>	
<i>Pinebridge Inn</i>	<i>207 Pinebridge Avenue</i> <i>Spruce Pine, NC 28777</i> <i>828-765-5543</i> <i>http://pinebridgeinn.com</i>	

<i>Pine Valley Motel</i>	11827 Hwy 226 South Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-6276 http://pinevalleymotel.com/	
Prior's Creek Homeplace	41 Skye Way Bakersville, NC 28705 Paulette 828-688-9333 Email: priorscreekhomeplace@gmail.com	
<i>Richmond Inn Bed and Breakfast</i>	51 Pine Avenue Spruce Pine, NC 28777 Maggie Haskell 828-765-6993	
River Cabin Rental	Bakersville, NC Bob and Susan Office: 954-752-5777 Bob Cell: 954-729-8098 Susan Cell: 954-325-5430 Email: Bob@rivercabinrentals http://www.rivercabinrentals.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitewater Rafting
River View Guest House	427 Johnson Cemetery Road Bakersville, NC 28705 828-385-9858 http://www.riverview-rental.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Sports
<i>Skyline Village Inn</i>	12255 Hwy 226A South Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-9394 http://the-skyline.com	
<i>Springmaid Mountain</i>	2171 Henredon Road Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-2353 Email: smm2@earthlink.net http://www.springmaidmountain.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing • River Sports • Horseback Riding
<i>Spruce Pine Motel</i>	379 Oak Avenue	

	<i>Spruce Pine, NC 28777</i> <i>828-765-9344</i>
Switzerland Inn	86 High Ridge Road Little Switzerland, NC 28749 828-765-2153 http://www.switzerlandinn.com
<i>Woody's Cottages</i>	<i>100 Woody Lane</i> <i>Spruce Pine, NC 28777</i> <i>828-765-2418</i> <i>http://www.woodycottages.com/index.html</i>

Appendix E: Asset List - Recreation

Parks/Nature/Trails

Attraction:	Location and Contact Information:	
Appalachian Trail	Appalachian Trail Conservancy 799 Washington Street P.O. Box 807 Harpers Ferry, WV 25425-0807 P: 304-535-6331 F: 304-535-2667	ATC Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee Regional Office 160A Zillicoa Street Asheville, NC 28801 P: 828-254-3708 F: 828-254-3754 Email: atc-gntro@appalachiantrail.org
Blue Ridge Parkway	P. O. Box 2136 Asheville, NC 28802-2136 Parkway Headquarters: 828-271-4779 Email: webmaster@blueridgeparkway.org	
<i>Brad Ragan Park</i>	<i>293 Laurel Creek Court Spruce Pine, NC 28777</i>	
Cloudland Trail/Roan Mountain Garden Trail	For more information: Appalachian/Toecane Ranger District P.O. Box 128 Burnsville, NC 28714 828-682-6146	
Crabtree Meadows Recreation Area	Milepost 339 Blue Ridge Parkway	
Loafer's Glory Rafting and Tubing	2637 Highway 226 North Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-9290	Rafting: \$35-60/person Tubing: \$14/tube Fishing: Call for availability and pricing
Little Switzerland Loop Motorcycle Ride	Maps and Directions: http://www.trails.com/tcatalog_trail.aspx?trailid=XMP002-016	
Mount Mitchell	2388 State Highway 128, Burnsville, NC 28714 P: 828-675-4611 Email: mount.mitchell@ncmail.net	
Murder Mountain Motorcycle Ride	Maps and Directions: http://www.trails.com/tcatalog_trail.aspx?trailid=XMP002-018	
Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail	Maps and Directions: http://www.nps.gov/ovvi/planyourvisit/upload/OVMT.PDF	
Pisgah National Forest	Visitor information center: U.S. Forest Service 160 A Zillicoa Street Asheville, NC 28801 828-257-4200	Terry Seyden Public Affairs Officer National Forests in North Carolina Email: tseyden@fs.fed.us

Quilt Trails of Western North Carolina	PO Box 986 Burnsville, NC 2871 828-682-7331 info@quilttrailswnc.org http://www.quilttrailswnc.org/index.html	
<i>Riverside Park</i>	<i>305 Tappan Street Spruce Pine, NC 28777</i>	
Roan Mountain "Gateway"	Roan Mountain State Park Hwy 143 Roan Mountain, Tennessee 37687. Located Between Elk Park, NC, and Elizabethton, TN, off US HWY 19-E.	Best bloom usually from June 18 - July 4. For up-to-the-minute report, call USDA Forest Service at 1-828-628-6146.
Watauga Loop Motorcycle Ride	Maps and Directions: http://www.trails.com/tcatalog_trail.aspx?trailid=XMP002-022	

Fishing and Outfitters

Attraction:	Information:	
Blue Ridge Fishing Adventures	jesse@fishwnc.com 828-688-2178 www.fishwnc.com	\$150 half day trips to \$700 overnight trips
Falls Creek Farm	***by appointment only*** Ken Wilson Gouge Cove Rd. Bakersville, NC 28705 P: 828-688-1946 C: 828-208-1946 Email: FallsCreekFarm@wmconnect.com	Fee Fishing
<i>Fishing License -- Petersons Store</i>	42 Peterson Lane Green Mountain, NC 28740	
<i>Fishing License -- WAL-MART #2749</i>	2514 Halltown dD Spruce Pine, NC 28777	
Mountain Heritage Trout Fishing License	www.ncwildlife.org 888-248-6834	Important note: The Mountain Heritage Trout Water license can only be purchased online or by calling the toll-free number. Wildlife Service Agents do not sell this license. North Carolina residents and non-residents who want to fish in a stream that is designated as a Mountain Heritage Trout Water may purchase a 3-day license for \$5. The license is valid only for waters that are designated as Mountain Heritage Trout Waters.
NC Department of Transportation	Map Section P. O. Box 25201 Raleigh, North Carolina 27611 919-733-7600	One of the bigger problems for persons not familiar with an area is determining the exact location of streams or lakes they wish to fish. Ordinary road maps do not show enough detail to help much. County maps, which show state secondary roads (SR), are useful for locating streams.

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission	Division of Inland Fisheries 1721 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-1721 919-707-0220	Trout Fishing Information for North Carolina
Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc.	Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc. is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active military service personnel and veterans through fly fishing and fly tying education and outings.	
<i>Rivers Edge Outfitters</i>	<i>280 Oak Ave Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-3474</i>	
<i>Tarheel Angler</i>	<i>12462 S. 226 Hwy Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-766-9515</i>	
Toe River Valley Outfitters	5233 S 226 Hwy Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-1708	
Troutacular: Spruce Pine, NC Trout Festival/Bakersville, NC Trout Festival	For more info: 828-688-2113 troutacular@mitchell-county.com	
U.S. Geological Survey	Map Distribution Federal Center Bldg. 41 Denver, CO 80225 Phone (800) USA-MAPS	For Topographical Maps
OR		
DEHNR Geographical Survey	P.O. Box 27687, Room 523 Raleigh, NC 27611-7687	
Wilson Trout Farm	Hwy 261 N. Bakersville, NC 28705; 828-688-3039	

Waterways

Waterways:	Information:
Big Crabtree Creek	
Big Rock Creek	Hatchery Supported Waters
Brummet Creek	
Brushy Creek	
Buckner Lake	
Cane Creek	Hatchery Supported Waters
Cub Creek	
Deer Park Lake	
Emerald Lake	
Glen Creek	
Grassy Creek	
Graveyard Creek	
Green Creek	Wild Trout Waters
Hollow Poplar Creek	
Laurel Lake	
Little Rock Creek	Hatchery Supported Waters Wild Trout Waters
Nolichucky River	Wild Trout Waters
Pigeonroost Creek	
Right Fork Beams Creek	
Saylor Lake	
Shafords Lake	
Shinbone Creek	
Spring Creek	
Spruce Pine Reservoir	
Swiss Pine Lake	
Toe River	
Wiles Creek	Wild Trout Waters

Entertainment, Arts, and Culture

Attraction:	Information:
Anita's Atelier	7 North Mitchell Avenue Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-1717
<u>ARTsCENTERed</u>	79 North Mitchell Avenue Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-9192
Bakersville Art Galleria	37 North Mitchell Avenue Bakersville, NC 28705 828-467-3808
Bakersville Creek Walk Arts Festival	828-688-1717 PO Box 365, Bakersville NC 28705 Festival Coordinator: anita@anitasatelier.com
Blue-Ridge Brass & Montreat Scottish Pipes and Drums Band	PO Box 414, Montreat, NC 28757 http://www.montreatscottish.org/index.htm
<i>The Blue Ridge Soap Shed</i>	179 Meadow View Road Spruce Pine, NC 28777
<i>Blue Otter Gallery</i>	286 Oak Ave, Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-766-9509
<i>Carolina Theater Preservation Association</i>	129 Locust Avenue Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Crabtree Meadows Recreation Area	Milepost 339 on Blue Ridge Parkway. Though only 253 acres, Crabtree Meadows Recreation Area, flanking Milepost 339, is a small but compelling scenic enclave on the Parkway.
Crimson Laurel Gallery	23 Crimson Laurel Way Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-3599
Cynthia Bringle's Gallery	Penland School Road Penland, NC 28765 828-765-0240
Dellinger Grist Mill	On Cane Creek in Hawk, NC Four miles east of Bakersville on State Road 1211 (Cane Creek Road) 828-688-1009 NC or 850-476-0103 FL Cell: 404-431-3999 http://pages.prodigy.net/jackandlesie/index.html
<i>Emerald Village Gem Mines</i>	331 McKinney Mine Road Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Fire on the Mountain Blacksmith Festival	<i>Kay Goins, Director Spruce Pine Main Street Blacksmith Festival 828-765-3008 http://www.sprucepinefestivals.com/blacksmith.html</i>

<i>Gem Mountain Gemstone Mine</i>	13780 Hwy 226 South PO Box 488 Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-6130 or 828-765-0866
Guerard Studios	5 Richmond Road, Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-2149
<i>Grassy Creek Golf and Country Club</i>	101 Golf Course Rd Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-7436
Hedgerow Arts	147 Pine Drive Bakersville, NC 28705 828-284-1913
High Country Antiques	31 Crimson Laurel Way Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-3599
<i>The Home of the Perfect Christmas Tree</i>	262 Oak Street, Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-0571
Joslin Reflections	pjoslin@mitchell.main.nc.us
Local Color Weaving	Mitchell Avenue at Crimson Laurel Way, Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-3186
<i>Mayland Community College</i>	<i>www.mayland.edu</i> PO Box 547 200 Mayland Drive, Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-7351
<i>Melawills Gallery</i>	201 B Locust Avenue Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-6499
<i>Mineral City Heritage Festival</i>	<i>http://www.sprucepinefestivals.com/mineralcity.html</i>
Mitchell Co Historical Society	8 S Mitchell Ave, Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-4371
Mountain Hill Country Gallery	PO Box 105 Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-4341
<i>Museum of N.C. Minerals</i>	<i>Blue Ridge Parkway and HWY 226 S Spruce Pine, NC 28777</i>
NC Rhododendron Festival	PO Box 407, Bakersville, NC 28705. http://www.bakersville.com/rhod.html Master of Ceremonies: hensley.bob@gmail.com

The Orchard at Altapass	On the Blue Ridge Parkway at Altapass, NC (888) 765-9531 http://www.altapassorchard.com/	
Penland School of Crafts	Post Office Box 37 Penland NC 28765-0037 828-765-2359	PENLAND GALLERY Call for reservations at 828-765-6211, Penland School Road, Penland, NC.
<i>Pine Crossings</i>	<i>Hwy 226 just off the Blue Ridge Parkway Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-8400</i>	
Pine Root Pottery	1108 Pine Root Branch Road Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-1332	
Ritter Glass	975 Young Cove Road Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-4437 richard@ritterglass.com	
Sedberry Pottery Gallery and Studio	Box 47 Mine Creek Road Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-3386 sedberry@mitchell.main.nc.us	
Soda Fired Pottery	1229 Bad Creek Road Bakersville, NC 28705 828-230-0676	
<i>Springmaid Mountain Horseback Riding</i>	<i>2171 Henredon Rd Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-2353</i>	
<i>Spruce Pine Gemstone Mine</i>	<i>15090 Hwy. 226 S. Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-7981</i>	
Stone Crossing Studio and Gallery	147 Stone Crossing Lane Bakersville, NC 28705 828-688-2827	
<i>Taylor and Lively Gallery and Frame Shop</i>	<i>109 Balsam Ave Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-8755</i>	
Toe River Arts Council	PO Box 882 Burnsville, NC 28714 828-682-7215 trac@toeriverarts.org	
<i>Toe River Storytelling Festival</i>	<i>Riverside Park 305 Tappan Street Spruce Pine, NC 28777 http://www.sprucepinefestivals.com/storytelling.html</i>	

Trillium Gallery	Located off the Blue Ridge Parkway across from the Switzerland Inn; 828-765-0024
Troutacular: Spruce Pine, NC Trout Festival/ Bakersville, NC Trout Festival	For more info: 828-688-2113 troutacular@mitchell-county.com
<i>The Twisted Laurel Gallery</i>	<i>221 Locust Ave Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-1562</i>
Two Trees Pottery	Located in downtown Bakersville on Mitchell Avenue 828-688-9139 twotreespottery@hotmail.com
Young's Mountain Music	http://www.youngsmtmusic.com/ 828-657-4365 bsyoungs@fastmail.fm

Appendix F: Trout Fishing – Economic Analysis

Trout Fishing

Of the total number of resident and non-resident freshwater anglers in the state of North Carolina, trout account for 29% of their total take, second only to Black Bass when it comes to sport fish.¹ Of this, 73% are taken by resident anglers, while 27% are taken by non-resident anglers. Obviously, trout are an important species to the sport fishing industry in North Carolina and should be preserved and enhanced to continue their economic benefits to the town of Bakersville as well as the region as a whole.

The 395,000 non-resident and 868,000 resident anglers spent a combined total of 17,221,000 days fishing, averaging 14 days per angler for residents and 6 days per angler for non-residents. The yearly average spent per angler comes to \$849, with non-residents spending more money per day on shorter trips, and they will likely be the ones spending more money on lodging, food, and supplies. Non-residents spend a per day average in excess of 5 times the amount spent by resident anglers, but resident anglers spend their money on trips averaging three times as long per year as non-residents. This is understandable given that they reside in such closer proximity to the streams and thus have more immediate opportunities to fish here. Non-resident anglers typically spend \$135 per day for an average of 6 days per year, while residents typically spend an average of \$26 per day for an average of 17 days per year. Freshwater resident and non-resident anglers accounted for \$515, 601,000 in related trip and equipment expenditures in the state, while fishing as a whole brought in \$1,124,274,000 (including items such as food, lodging, equipment, etc). See percentage figures below:

¹ Except where noted, data in this section is derived from the 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation for North Carolina, U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau

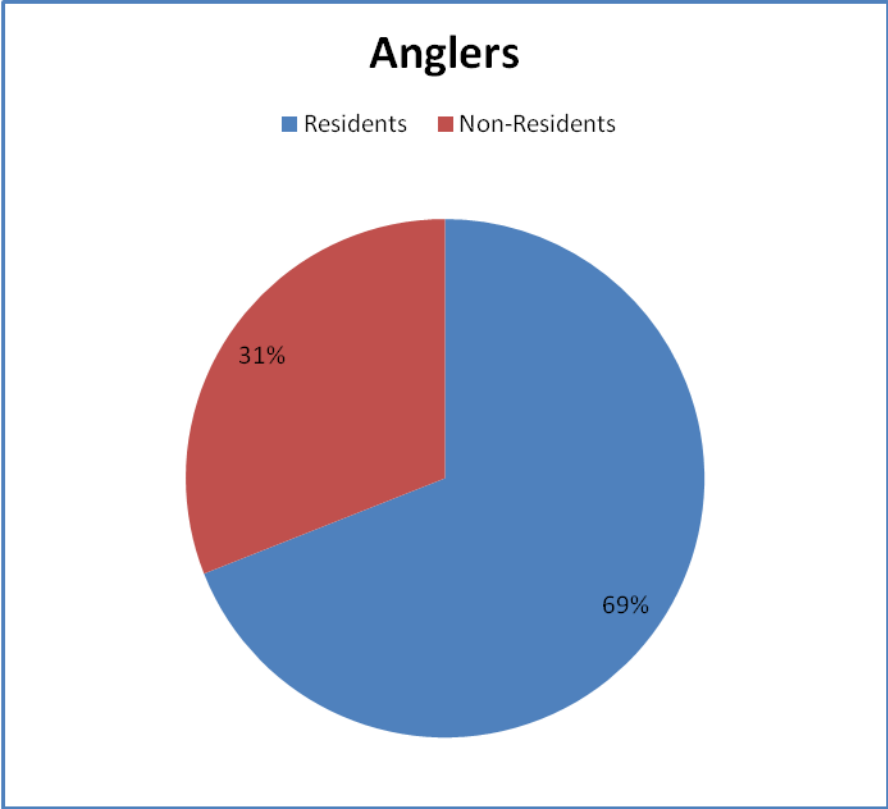


Figure 1

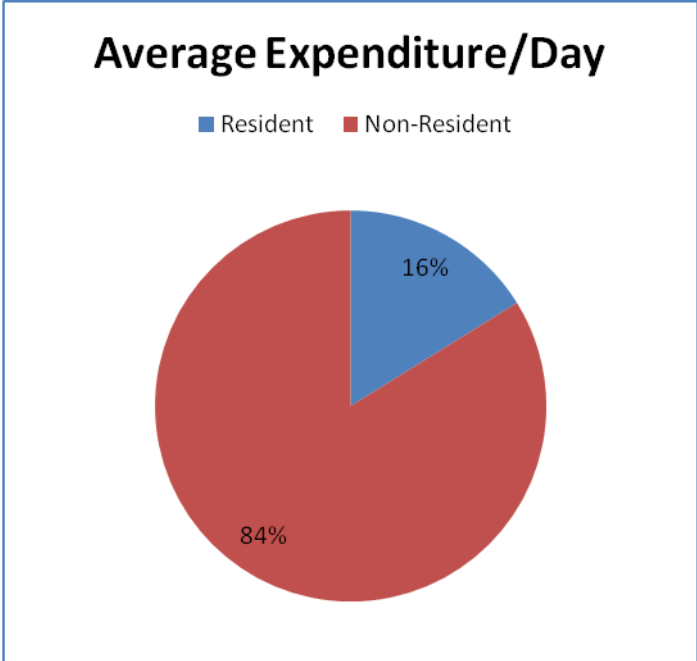


Figure 2

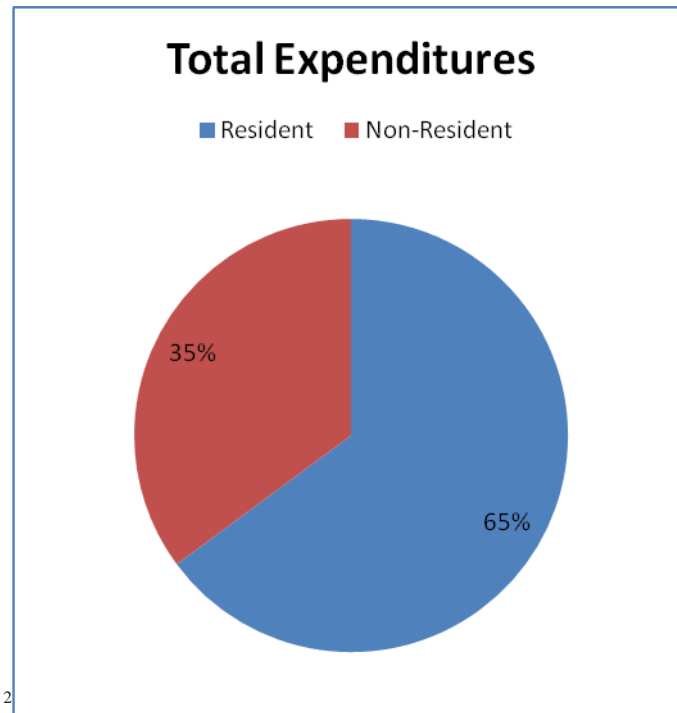


Figure 3

Economically, mountain trout comprise three of the most important freshwater sport fishing species in the state, and these three species (brown, brook, and rainbow trout) account for over \$146,000,000 in revenue, almost 13% of the total brought into the state by fishing as a whole.³ Hatchery supported mountain trout fishing accounts for almost half of that total, meaning that this industry is of critical importance to the success of the regional fishing economy and must be preserved if this revenue is expected to maintain or increase its relevance. Mitchell County accounts for 3% of the state total for mountain fishing, or \$4,380,000.⁴

² All statistics above are from the 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

³ Statistics for Trout Fishing According to 2009's The Economic Impact Of Mountain Trout Fishing in North Carolina – conducted by Responsive Management and Southwick Associates for the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

⁴2009's The Economic Impact of Mountain Trout Fishing in North Carolina prepared by Responsive Management and Southwick Associates for the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.

Typically, a resident mountain trout angler will spend about \$65 per day on trip expenditures for an average of 10 days, while a non-resident will average about \$158 per day for an average of 5 days. These are above the average expenditures that one can expect from resident and non-residents anglers as a whole. A typical resident mountain trout angler can be expected to spend slightly more than \$500 in a year on equipment in North Carolina annually. Most trips taken by resident mountain anglers will only last one day, which makes sense given that they are local. This also means that non-residents will require amenities while they are in the region, and it is precisely these amenities that will have to be enhanced in order to keep people and their money in the local economy when they visit.

The estimates for angling in mountain trout waters are as follows:

625,147 days in Hatchery Supported Waters
 374,611 days in Delayed Harvest Waters
 422,671 days in Wild Trout Waters.

Over 75% of mountain trout anglers are residents who are typically approximately 50 years old. Mountain trout anglers are also predominantly male, at 92% of residents and 96% of non-residents. Consequently, anyone traveling with said anglers will also require amenities, likely above and beyond those categorized for fishing, such as entertainment, shopping, dining, and daycare. This is an important market that can influence, for good or ill, the likelihood of repeat visitors. Therefore, the comfort and enjoyment of these companions must be taken into account when considering local economic development initiatives. Clearly fishing, and trout fishing in particular, have a tremendous economic impact on the state as well as the region. Its influence and potential for growth are important engines for the economic success and vitality of the region. Therefore, collaboration amongst town and county governments, the mining industry, private landowners, hatcheries, as well as economic development agencies is paramount to this success.

Table 1 - 2009 ECONOMIC SUMMARY FOR ALL MOUNTAIN TROUT FISHING IN THE MOUNTAIN REGION ⁵			
	Resident Anglers	Nonresident Anglers	All Anglers
MOUNTAIN TROUT ANGLERS	61,202	8,401	69,602
DAYS FISHED FOR MOUNTAIN TROUT	1,261,681	140,653	1,402,334

⁵ All statistics are from 2009's [The Economic Impact of Mountain Trout Fishing in North Carolina](#) prepared by Responsive Management and Southwick Associates for the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.

ANGLER PURCHASES			
LICENSES AND FEES	\$1,362,020	\$232,979	\$1,595,000
TRIP EXPENDITURES	\$80,060,421	\$22,607,527	\$102,667,948
EQUIPMENT EXPENDITURES	\$29,139,048	*	\$29,139,048
TOTAL DOLLARS SPENT	\$110,561,490	\$22,840,506	\$133,401,996
IMPACTS FROM TRIP SPENDING			
TOTAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT	\$113,902,192	\$29,611,865	\$143,514,057
INCOME PROVIDED	\$35,568,637	\$9,453,759	\$45,022,396
JOBS SUPPORTED	1,250	333	1,583
IMPACTS FROM EQUIPMENT SPENDING			
TOTAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT	\$19,358,768	*	\$19,358,768
INCOME PROVIDED	\$7,131,432	*	\$7,131,432
JOBS SUPPORTED	245	*	245
IMPACTS FROM ALL SPENDING			
TOTAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT	\$133,260,960	\$29,611,865	\$162,872,825
INCOME PROVIDED	\$42,700,069	\$9,453,759	\$52,153,828
JOBS SUPPORTED	1,495	333	1,828
TAX REVENUES FROM ALL SPENDING			
STATE AND LOCAL	\$10,297,596	\$2,127,932	\$12,425,529
FEDERAL	\$10,431,106	\$2,304,018	\$12,735,124

*Most equipment spending occurs nearer the home.