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Comments: RE: Draft Assessment pages 68-82

Economic Development through Recreation and History

Outdoor Recreation

This part of the DA reflects a new priority on the part of the USFS, and as such, reflective of changes that could not have been anticipated in the 2006 plan. One of the main problems that the DA consistently exhibits, is avoiding considering the interstate components of the audience for these services. When dealing with mobile human populations state lines mean as little as they do to birds. The critters go where they want to go. Thus, from motorized trails to mounds the resource users are not state limited.

Page 69. The utilization of resources on the Wayne is hampered by poor access, given that roads are not optimally placed for recreational use and are often in poor condition. When this is combined with a lack of signage and directional aids, further aggravated by unreliable or non existent GPS and/or cell phone service, it can, and does, lead to visitor annoyance followed by avoidance.

Over all Page 69-77 I am not sure if the references to funding reductions are inflation adjusted or not.

Page 70. Given the material in the socioeconomic supplement, the Athens-centric discussions are not surprising, which presents an unbalanced view of the opportunities for travel and tourism.

Overall There is no discussion of the problems created by fragmented ownership and lack of boundary markings, both of which make construction of trail systems difficult.

Pages 71 -2 Given the citations about the trend toward water-based recreation, the minimal recognition of the opportunities presented by Lake Vesuvius and Timbre Ridge Lake could be further expanded. The suggestion that recreation funds will be concentrated on the Bailey bicycle trail for the foreseeable future seems to foreclose any additional water-based recreation or other trail types. I am assuming that the urgent need to replace the water line serving the camp grounds around Lake Vesuvius will not be delayed by the recreation funding being dedicated to the Bailey Trail system, or will be funded through other budget lines or sources.

Page 73. There are horse trails and stables at Carter Caves State Park and adjacent Tygart State Forest and natural area near by in Ky.

Page 74. There may be an opportunity to connect Ironton to the Hanging Rock Trails. The addition of new hotel facilities makes this much more likely to boost tourism.

Major off-highway opportunities exist at Rush Ky. and in the Hatfield-McCoy system n WV, providing both opportunities and competition.

Pages 75-6. There is considerable co-mingling of trail types on these pages, which results in making ODNR 2018b appear to pertain only to motorized trails, when the report concerns all types of recreation trails.

Page 76 Unauthorized trail use and user-defined trails are clearly a problem but there is little suggestion as to what may be contributing to this problem. I would suggest that lack of clear boundaries, short cuts, and a cheaper way to travel, should be considered, along with just plain bad personal behavior.

Page 77. Was the lack of transition to semiprimitive settings due to lack of funding, lack of interest, or lack of staff to implement?

Cultural and Heritage Resources

The issues with the Native American community are beyond my level of comfort, so I am not commenting on that aspect of the report.

I am constructing a list of groups or organizations that might be of assistance in this area:

\$ Archeological Conservancy-there is an Ohio presence www.archeologicalconservancy.org

\$ National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center, Wilberforce Ohio. There was a significant early black

settlement in Ohio (early 1800 released slaves) some centered around Poke Patch and Black Fork in the IRD, and others centered around Burlington (not within proclamation boundary but in Lawrence County). While the underground railroad is very significant, it is also important not to overlook the contributions of freed blacks to Ohio in this region s

\$ Ohio History Connection, (formerly Ohio Historical Society)

\$ Iron Furnace interest groups(could help in interpretation)

\$ County Historical Societies (often with good libraries and genealogical groups)

\$ Historic Railroad Communities, DT&I among others

\$ River Men associations, which are concerned with early commercial boating on the Muskingum and Ohio Rivers. Marietta has the Ohio River Museum, which includes the Muskingum, which might be a good source of partnership on interpretation.

Additional Attractions might

i Museums of all types: history, art, natural history,

i Botanical Gardens and Native Plant Nurseries

i Welsh Scenic ByWay

i CCC and WPA, including the remaining structures and landscaping, which were so important to the early years of the Wayne. (On the forest it might merit additional interpretative material.)

Potential features to be explored, if found

Salt Works

Heritage varieties of plants, such as apples, nuts, and occasional ornamentals which may remain in parts of the forest.

Ceramics and Clay industry remnants.

Ethnic background of immigrants recruited for the iron, mining and clay industries. The Welsh museum in Oak Hill might be a starting point.

Overall there are many opportunities which are currently unexploited in the area. Much of the coordination might be possible through the CVB's in the region.

Which brings me to another gap which may need to be addressed, that of raising awareness of the resources and opportunities available in the WNF territory. Yes, there is some material now, but there may be a need for a more targeted approach. The Allegheny NF has a very nice travel guide, publication clearly supported by advertisements, for destinations in the area of the forest.