Rider Preferences and Values of Equestrian Trail Characteristics in Kentucky

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*Poster prepared for presentation at the Agricultural & Applied Economics Association’s 2011 AAEA & NAREA Joint Annual Meeting, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, July 24-26, 2011*

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Part I: Introduction and Background

Kentucky: The Horse Capital
320,173 Horses
96,000 Equine Related Jobs

Horses in Recreation:
31% (9,900 horses) involved
Over 1,000 miles of existing trails
Trails being constructed on both private and public property and under programs like Rails to Trails

Previous Studies Found:
High values of consumer surplus for trail riding in KY

Part II: Objectives

I: To identify important trail characteristics that influence a rider's choice of trail
II: To find how different trail attributes are valued
III: To provide valuable information to trail managers and policy officials who make decisions about maintaining, expanding/closing equine trails

Part III: Data and Variables

Survey Data:
Mixed-mode (online and mail-in)
Collected during Summer of 2009
275 Observations from Kentucky
Attributes used determined by previous studies and focus group discussions

Trail Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trail Length</td>
<td>Distance in miles of trails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levels: 5, 10, 15, 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Views</td>
<td>Does the trail have scenic overviews/keys?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levels: Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Land</td>
<td>Is the trail on open land?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levels: Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathroom/Shower</td>
<td>Are bathroom and/or shower facilities available on the trail (or at trail head)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levels: Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Use</td>
<td>Are the trails restricted to horses only?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levels: Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>Distance in miles from home of rider to trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levels: 10, 20, 40, 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance fee (Price)</td>
<td>Price in dollars of admission to trail (per vehicle per day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levels: 3, 8, 15, 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part IV: Results/Analysis

Significant variables:

Positive association with trail choice
- Trail Length (Longer trails)
- Presence of Scenic Views

Negative association with trail choice
- Entry fees
- Longer distance to and from trail

Conditional Logit Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Marginal Effect (WTP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.4523</td>
<td>.1266</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail Length</td>
<td>.0809*</td>
<td>.0077</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Views</td>
<td>.7865*</td>
<td>.0940</td>
<td>34.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Land</td>
<td>.1123</td>
<td>.0896</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath/Shower</td>
<td>.0527</td>
<td>.0936</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Use</td>
<td>.4836*</td>
<td>.0960</td>
<td>21.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from Home</td>
<td>-.0289*</td>
<td>.0018</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance Fee</td>
<td>-.0226*</td>
<td>.0057</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part V: Conclusions

Significant variables:
Positive association with trail choice
- Trail Length (Longer trails)
- Presence of Scenic Views

Negative association with trail choice
- Entry fees
- Longer distance to and from trail

As expected higher costs are seen as negatives when riders are choosing a trail to use.

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**Scenic views and restricted use are valued highly with WTP values above $20

**For each additional mile away from home, a rider is willing to pay $1.28 less

Location is of great value to riders
- Trails should be located close to the population they serve
- Trails need to be a suitable length (trail value rises with length)

Scenic views are of considerable value to the rider
- Trails that have such views may be used more often even if they cost more than similar trails with no scenic areas

Restricted use greatly improves value of equestrian trails

Amenities like bathrooms and showers are of little significance when riders decide to use a particular trail. This may be due to the fact that horse trailers can come equipped with these features.

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Funding provided in part by the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture