



ENERGIZING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES

A Pathway to Prosperity



Source: *Entrepreneurs in Action* newsletter, provided by [Rural Action](#)

Bikes, Brews, & Blues Brings Together Outdoor Trail Enthusiasts

On October 2nd, more than 70 people gathered at the Eclipse Company Store to learn about progress on the Baileys Trail, an 88-mile recreation trail in the Wayne National Forest. The Baileys will be the longest continuous trail east of the Mississippi River, and is expected to become a destination for over 180,000 mountain bikers, hikers, and other outdoor enthusiasts annually. The first 13-mile section is now under construction, with more projects



planned in 2020 to complete the Chauncey trailhead and connect the Baileys to the Hocking-Adena bike path. The event was organized by the Athens Bike Club and the Q&A speaker panel was moderated by Rural Action.

Attendees were provided with a project update from Dawn McCarthy (Wayne National Forest). A panel made up of key organizations involved in the Baileys project, including Jason Reed (Wayne National Forest), Jesse Stock (Athens County Foundation), R.J. Shostak (Village of Chauncey), Jeremy Wimpey (Applied Trails Research), Danny Twilley (Ohio University), and Paige Alost (Athens County Visitors Bureau). The panel answered questions from the audience related to economic development, trail maintenance, financing, and benefits for the Chauncey community. A theme of the discussion was that the benefits expected from the trail have been witnessed in other rural areas with similar outdoor assets. For example, visitors to the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forest mountain bike trails in North Carolina spend \$30.2 million each year in the area with an additional \$18 million in spending by Western Carolina residents. Also, 366 direct full-time jobs have been created as a result of the Pisgah - Nantahala trail system.

The Appalachian Regional Commission recently announced a \$1.2m grant that will enable Rural Action and a team of local partners to develop economic opportunities around the Baileys Trail System. "Our goal, together with many community partners, is to make sure that local people, businesses and communities benefit so that these dollars stay local," said Rural Action CEO Debbie Phillips. Read the full press release here. For information on future networking events and how Entrepreneurial Communities is involved with the Bailey Trail Project contact dan@ruralaction.org.

