

in their purchases. Shorter but more frequent trips nearer to home are likely to be the rule. The quality of the recreational experience, including the aesthetics and natural features as well as the condition of the facilities and safety, will increase in importance.

In rural areas, farm and forestlands contain a variety of natural resources that, if properly managed, can attract clients interested in enjoying the natural beauty of the land. Recreational use of forestland has the potential to benefit both landowners seeking to pay their management expenses as well as citizens seeking a quality recreational experience close to home.

STARTUP TIPS

- Check local regulations. The local planning and zoning board should be consulted during the planning phase of any potential enterprise.
- Review your insurance coverage. Determine the amount of liability insurance coverage needed.



- Develop a lease/contract that will address liability concerns.
- Narrow your marketing focus. Think about the type of client you want to attract; advertise in newspapers and magazines that they read.
- Develop a brochure/flyer and distribute it at locations frequented by outdoor enthusiasts.

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- *Emerging Markets for Outdoor Recreation in the United States. Based on the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment. Cordell H. Ken et. al. Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association and USDA Forest Service. April 1997. <http://www.outdoorlink.com/infosource/nsre/>*
- *Outdoor Recreation in the United States. Results from the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment. H. Ken Cordell, et. al. November 1997. <http://www.fs.fed.us/research/rvur/recreation/>*
- *Recreational Trail Design and Construction. David M. Rathke and Melvin J. Baughman. University of Minnesota Extension Service. 1997.*
- *Landowners Guide To Working With Sportspersons*

In Mississippi. Dean Stewart. Mississippi State Extension Service, Publication 1538, 1998.

• *A Landowners Guide To Working With Sportsman in Virginia. Peter T. Broley. Virginia Cooperative Extension. Publication Number 420-035. November 1997.*

• *Natural Resources Income Opportunities for Private Lands Conference. University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service. April 1998.*

• *Income Opportunities in Special Forest Products: Self-Help Suggestions for Rural Entrepreneurs. USDA Forest Service. Agriculture Information Bulletin 666. May 1993.*

• *Proceedings from the Conference on: Income Opportunities for the Private Landowner through Management of Natural Resources and Recreational Access. West Virginia University Extension Service. R.D. No. 740. 1990.*

RI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT & THE RURAL LANDS COALITION SUBCOMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE:

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Office of Strategic Planning & Policy
Division of Forest Environment
Division of Agriculture

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How can I generate income on my forestland?



FOREST RECREATION

as a sustainable land-based business

Sponsored by Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, in cooperation with the Rhode Island Rural Lands Coalition

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Programs and activities are available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, or national origin.



OVERVIEW

According to the government study, *Emerging Markets for Outdoor Recreation in the United States*, almost 95 percent of Americans participate in some form of outdoor recreation. Demand for recreational opportunities, such as hiking, biking, and horseback riding, has increased while land available has decreased due to urban sprawl. As public recreation areas in Rhode Island become more crowded, the use of private land for recreational enjoyment is becoming more enticing to individuals who seek solitude and a true “nature” experience. People may be willing to pay to enjoy outdoor recreation within a relatively short drive of their home.

Recreational use of your land could prove to be an avenue for generating income, at least enough to pay property taxes, while allowing you to retain ownership of the land. The purpose of this publication is to provide an overview of recreational use of forestland as a forest based business and direct interested individuals to other sources of information.



EVALUATING YOUR PROPERTY

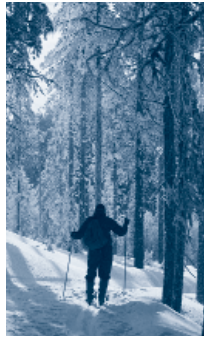
Prior to offering your land for recreation, you obviously need to take inventory of the land and the features it possesses, as well as those that you can easily create/maintain.

A well developed trail system is essential for forms of recreation such as hiking, cross-country skiing, trail biking, or horseback riding. Some trails probably already exist on your land, and the biggest task would be to improve and mark them.

An alternative to a large acreage with an extensive trail system could be to form a partnership between several ownerships with shorter, connected trails. Guidelines

for trail construction are provided in *Recreational Trail Design and Construction*.

Other factors include the equipment and labor



needs of the operation. The operation must be as clean, neat, and attractive as possible. People who pay for recreational access are seeking high quality experiences and may expect special considerations.

REDUCE YOUR LIABILITY

The issue of liability may make landowners reluctant to permit recreational use of their property.

A lease may provide some legal protection for the landowner. Under the terms of a well-written lease, the landowner is released from liability for the safety and actions of the recreationists, although they remain liable for

failure to warn against hazardous conditions. Guidelines for lease agreements as well as a model agreement are provided in *Landowners Guide To Working with Sportsman in Virginia*. An attorney

REDUCE YOUR LIABILITY

- Eliminate obvious hazards
- Identify with warning signs, and if possible fence off, hazards that can't be eliminated
- Obtain comprehensive liability insurance
- Consider liability waivers to limit your liability
- Establish safety policies and guidelines that are shared by both employees and guests.

should be consulted for legal advice relating to this issue during the planning phase of the project.

The types of recreational activities offered and likelihood that injuries will occur will determine the amount of liability coverage needed. There are various types of insurance that can be added under “umbrella” liability coverage for your standard insurance policy.

ECONOMICS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Profitability varies and depends on the quality of the land, as well as the recreational activity being offered. A recreation enterprise may require investing in property improvements as well as specialized management skills. Labor needs vary according to the type of enterprise being considered.

The table below was compiled by surveying ski areas throughout New England. There is a well developed industry charging for recreational use of ski areas during the summer months.

	HOURLY	DAILY
CROSS COUNTRY		\$6 - \$15
MOUNTAIN BIKING	\$10 - \$15	\$40 - \$50
HORSEBACK RIDING	\$27 - \$37	
GUIDED HIKING TOURS.		\$10

In the future, recreational activities are likely to become more planned and deliberate because an older, educated public will become more selective

“In 1962, the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission projected that by the year 2000 there would be a tripling of recreational land demand. However, that mark was surpassed in 1983”

- NATIONAL SURVEY ON RECREATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT