

## A New Approach to Rural Appalachian Ohio Development

**OUR APPROACH:** The Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia (ORCA), a Council of Governments, was created to utilize outdoor recreation assets in Appalachian Ohio to provide social, environmental, health benefits and economic benefits to communities and their residents. Our work builds upon existing assets to intentionally catalyze sustainable economic growth and diversification and equip communities to thrive.

**PILOT PROJECT:** ORCA manages and develops the Baileys Trail System in partnership with the Wayne National Forest. When complete, the Baileys Trail System will be an 88-mile mountain bike optimized trail system, open to all forms of human-powered use. Upon completion this world-class trail system will be among the largest east of the Mississippi. Our nonprofit partner, the AWOADC, sustainably plans, develops, manages, and promotes outdoor recreation assets throughout Appalachian Ohio.

**IMPACTS & SUCCESS:** Since September of 2020 ORCA and the AWOADC secured more than \$10.8 MM in public and private investment to support infrastructure and programmatic development efforts surrounding development of the outdoor recreation economy in Southeast Ohio. 58 of the planned 88-miles of Baileys Trail System are complete and we offer MTB rental, bike gear, and merchandise featuring original, local art. Future projects include development of a ~5,000 square foot visitor hub, and a third trailhead.



*ORCA's Sustainable Model*



### Mission

*To develop outdoor recreation opportunities across governmental boundaries that create sustainable and equitable economic development, inspiring communities throughout Appalachian Ohio.*



### Vision

*Form a collaborative entity that expands recreational opportunities within Appalachian Ohio while cultivating a diverse, resilient, and prosperous rural economy to sustain inclusive growth.*



### Values

*Community  
Quality of Life  
Sustainability  
Innovation  
Inclusivity  
Shared Stewardship*



## Growing Rural Ohio's Outdoor Recreation Economy

ORCA was awarded a **2021 Appalachian Regional Commission POWER grant** to support *Gateway Communities and Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Economy Development* in southeastern Ohio. This collaborative grant concentrates investments in natural and cultural assets, fostering small business expansion, as well as jobs creation and retention.

With our regional partners, ORCA is advancing the development of a **regional destination that draws visitors from Columbus, Cincinnati, and Parkersburg, WV**. Successes associated with sustainable development of outdoor recreation assets, like the Buckeye Trail and Baileys Trail System, equip rural Ohio with opportunities to build local wealth and secure additional infrastructure investment to enhance quality of life.

In 2023 ORCA invited officials representing 18 neighboring counties to join ORCA as a Partners. Seventeen counties resolved to join, including: **Adams, Brown, Clermont, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Vinton, and Washington**, as well as the Cities of Jackson and Wellston, and the Vinton County Parks District.



**ORCA's Member & Partner Counties**

ORCA Partners are **advancing development of a regional brand** and regional Recreation Asset Assessment and Development Plan. These strategic efforts are led by ORCA's regional Advisory Committee, a working group of multi-disciplined appointed professionals representing all partner jurisdictions.

**ORCA ARC POWER**  
Grant Project Partners



## A Multi-State Partnership: Ohio & Pennsylvania

ORCA and The Pennsylvania Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship (PA Wilds) are partnering on an ARC ARISE planning grant to **collaboratively investigate utilization of technology to enhance outdoor recreation economy development in rural areas**. This project will include research, planning, and market analysis for mobile platform development to accelerate growth and value capture of rural place based tourism sectors and their related supply chains.

This ARISE project catalyzed an 18 county partnership in Ohio, which already indicates the transformational impacts and future successes. The project provides ORCA and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources a chance to learn from peers PA Wilds and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources decade's long partnership.



The project will analyze six areas:

- **Visitation and Business-to-Consumer Sales**
- **Supply Chains and Business-to-Business Sales**

- **Harnessing Impact Data**
- **Access to Capital**
- **Stewardship**
- **Workforce**





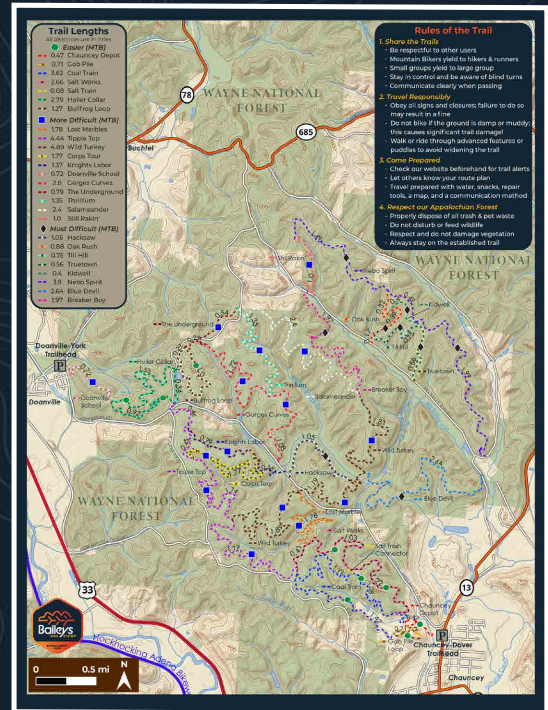
# Baileys Trail System

**CATALYZING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH OUTDOOR RECREATION**

## A Regional Vision for Revitalization

The mission of the Baileys Trail System is to integrate conservation, outdoor recreation, and economic development to strengthen and inspire communities in Southeast Ohio. This system, located in Ohio's only National Forest in Athens County, currently has direct community connections to Chauncey and Doanville, and a future connection to the Village of Buchtel is soon to be under construction.

When complete, the Baileys Trail System will be an 88-mile mountain bike optimized trail system, open to all forms of human-powered use. The trail system's development continues to be guided by some of the industry's best designers and is professionally built utilizing machines. Within 250 miles of over 1 million mountain bikers, this world-class trail system will be the longest purpose-built mountain bike trail system east of the Mississippi.



Managed by the Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia (ORCA) in partnership with the Wayne National Forest, the Baileys Trail System is just one example of the abundant outdoor recreation opportunities in Appalachian Ohio. With

sustained regional collaboration, ORCA will continue to provide development services to holistically employ its sustainable development model to secure public and private investments in the region's assets, and transform the region's once coal based economy and improve quality of life.

## A Multitude of Benefits



**ECONOMIC:** The world class Baileys Trail System will increase visitation and spending in the region, which will expand employment opportunities, grow local businesses, and increase government revenue.



**HEALTH:** Trails with bike and pedestrian community connectors create access to outdoor recreation, which is proven to improve physical and mental health.



**ENVIRONMENTAL:** Development has included the remediation of Abandoned Mine Land features, and also creates opportunities to introduce the next generation of conservationists to the state's natural beauty and biodiversity.



**SOCIAL:** Sustainable recreation tourism provides opportunities for events and programming in rural areas, adding vibrancy to Appalachian Ohio.



# Baileys Trail System Timeline & Impacts



## 1994

- Recreation stakeholders & national forest staff recommend developing the 16 mile “Bailey Run” mountain bike trail on The Wayne

## 2017

- *Baileys Trail System Master Plan* completed
- Baileys selected as the U.S. Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Conservation Finance Pilot Project
- The Wayne approves the development of an 88-mile single-track trail system
- Athens County Awarded ODOT TAP Grant for Phase 1 Extension of Hockhocking Adena Bikeway to Village of Chauncey’s Park

## 2019

- ORCA council of governments established by Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville, York Township, & Village of Chauncey
- ORCA multi-disciplinary Advisory Board created
- *Baileys Trail System Feasibility Visitation Impact Analysis* completed; Initial 10-year cumulative economic impact of \$52.9MM projected, with over 78 new jobs in Athens CTY
- The Athens-Wayne Outdoor Asset Development Corporation (AWOADC), ORCA’s nonprofit partner formed
- Athens County Foundation receives National Forest Foundation grant from REI for Phase 1 trail construction

## 2021

- AWOADC receives first impact investment from the Athens County Foundation
- Baileys Trail System’s second mountain bike season begins with 26 trail miles complete
- Doanville-York Trailhead completed
- OHIO *Economic Analysis of the Baileys Trail System* completed (2021 total economic impact on of \$5.3MM with \$3.6 MM attributed to trails and over 54K visitors)
- ORCA secures \$2MM State of Ohio investment for Baileys construction

## 2022

- ORCA staff works with volunteers for 1,793 hours (an estimated value of \$53K)
- AWOADC received OHIO Economics of Altruism Grant to purchase tools and trailer
- \$3MM ODNR Abandoned Mine Land Grant secured for a ~5,000 sq.ft. multi-purpose Baileys Visitor Center
- New Sponsors: Ohio Health & Athens Ohio Roller Derby
- Expanded service area to Monroe, Nobel, and Ross Counties with support from Buckeye Hills Regional Council, & initiated the 10 County Recreation Asset Assessment & Development Plan Project
- Launch of Baileys Trail System MTB Rental

## 2016

- Stakeholder engagement & planning development begins with The Wayne, Athens Bicycle Club, & local communities
- Fundraising for development of the Baileys Trail System Master Plan begins

## 2018

- The Wayne is awarded ODNR RTP Grant for Baileys Phase 1 Construction
- Completion of U.S. Forest Service *Sustainable Recreation Infrastructure Pay For Success* Feasibility Report for the Baileys
- Athens County CDBG Grant improves Chauncey-Dover Community Park

## 2020

- Baileys Trail System receives Chief’s Award, the Forest Services’ highest honor
- Trails open with 14 miles complete & Chauncey-Dover Park Trailhead operational
- ORCA Board receives 2020 COVID support from U.S. Forest Service for Baileys construction, match provided by City of Athens & Athens County
- Village of Buchtel joins ORCA
- Jessie Powers named ORCA Executive Director

- ORCA & project partners awarded \$1.49MM *Gateway Communities & Sustainable Recreation Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) POWER* grant
- 3,146 volunteer hours of trail maintenance secured at the Baileys between 2017-2021
- NICA race at Chauncey-Dover Trailhead, 150 riders
- First annual SEOH Trail Runners Run Baileys race, with 250+ runners
- AWOADC utilizes Impact Investment to offer Baileys merchandise online

- The Wayne receives ODNR RTP Grant to construct 18 miles of trails
- \$17.9MM Appalachian Community Grant submitted: *Southeast Ohio Nature, Heritage, & Art; Sustainable Tourism Anchor Development to Transform the Appalachian Ohio Economy* (~\$4.1MM awarded)
- Elle Dickerman hired as Sustainable Recreation Director
- Lucas Blankenship starts Americorps Service term as ORCA Trail Maintenance & Programs Manager AmeriCorps Member
- Delia Palmisano hired as Communication & Philanthropy Director