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CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS:
A SURVEY OF POCONO MOUNTAIN RESIDENTS

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains' tourism industry has been growing exponentially. In order to ensure sustainable long-term growth, tourism developers must align their business strategies with residents' needs in mind. Using a case study approach and a survey conducted with Monroe County residents, this thesis explores Monroe County residents' attitudes toward tourism development in the Pocono Mountains, specifically focusing on the new Kalahari Resort & Convention Center. Understanding residents' attitudes will allow businesses in the area to market these attractions more effectively. The results of this thesis highlight which demographic groups are more pro-tourism and the factors developers must keep in mind when building in the Pocono Mountains. Based on the results, I provide some specific recommendations for Kalahari Resort to consider in strengthening their relationships with surrounding residents. Developing strategies that meet the needs of both residents and tourists can be a major win-win not only for Kalahari Resort, but also for the entire tourism industry of the region.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

According to the World Travel & Tourism Report of 2012, tourism is one of the largest industries in the world, contributing trillions of dollars annually to the global economy. Tourism creates jobs and wealth, generates exports, boosts taxes, and stimulates capital investments. Travel and tourism contributes 9.3 percent to the global gross domestic product (Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2013). Even more remarkable, travel and tourism are expected to grow at an estimated rate of four percent per year, every year until 2021. By 2021, it is predicted that the tourism industry and its supply chain will contribute nearly ten percent of the global gross domestic product and ten percent of global employment, consisting of 325 million jobs ("The Review" 2011).

At the state level, the statistics specifically related to growth of the tourism industry in Pennsylvania are equally impressive. Each year, Pennsylvania's economy expands due to the tourism industry. Businesses throughout Pennsylvania benefit from tourism through job creation, increased revenue, expansion, and growth. According to the official tourism website of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, travel and tourism industry sales rose 3.8 percent to $38.4 billion in 2012 (Tourism Economics 2013). With the state hosting approximately 192.3 million domestic and international travelers in 2012, Pennsylvania posted the highest number of travelers since the 2008 recession. Traveler spending generated $67 billion in total economic activity throughout all industries in Pennsylvania that year (Tourism Economics 2013). Furthermore, 291,480 Pennsylvania jobs were directly attributable to travel and tourism, and 461,250 jobs were supported in some form by the tourism industry in 2013 ("Pennsylvania Travel &

Tourism Industry: An Economic Driver 2013). Pennsylvania is well positioned to capitalize on this tourism market. To do so, however, it must make necessary investments in tourism development and tourism marketing.

Though Pennsylvania is primarily a rural state, its tourism industry is prevalent in both urban and rural areas. As might be expected, there are variations between how tourism is marketed in cities (i.e., "urban tourism") and how tourism is marketed in rural areas (i.e., "rural tourism"). Urban tourism usually takes place in older industrial cities, capital cities, and historic sites. These locations tend to be more crowded in population. Typically, tourists are attracted to these areas because of trendy business activity, retail, cultural and sports facilities, other attractions, or to visit friends and relatives (Law 1992). Rural tourism, on the other hand, takes place in less developed areas such as the countryside. It is typically motivated by the tourists' desire to enjoy aspects of the rural landscape and lifestyle.

Tourists visiting rural areas come from a variety of geographic backgrounds, including cities. Over the last decade, as economic conditions have deteriorated, population growth has occurred more rapidly in major cities relative to rural areas, making a vacation escape to a rural area for rural recreation and vacation experiences relatively more attractive. According to Kastenholz, Carneiro, and Marques (2012), rural tourism experiences are increasingly sought for a variety of reasons: closeness with nature, relaxation, recreational outdoor activities, and a genuine nature experience.

In general, attitudes toward rural tourism development differ based on the knowledge individuals have about the subject. Some individuals see more positive factors associated with tourism in rural areas, while others see more negative factors.

These advantages and disadvantages must be compared because they are a source of contention when rural areas are developed for tourism.

Advantages of Tourism in Rural Communities

There are two primary advantages of tourism in rural communities: a) economic benefits in the form of an increase in local revenue, tourist taxes, and job creation, and b) recreational opportunities. As tourism becomes popular in an area, community leaders often rush to develop tourist attractions to boost their economy. Tourist spending generates revenue and taxes in the area because they inject money into the local economy through purchases at hotels, restaurants, shops, and any other businesses and/or attractions. Though there are resident taxes associated with tourism development, tourists contribute to the tax base as well (Lewis 1998). Special taxes are often applied to tourist services like hotel rooms, car rentals, and admission tickets. In the case of hotel rooms, taxes can be as much as 25 to 30 percent of the total bill, as either a percentage tax added or a flat rate per night. Car rental taxes are often also substantial, and can be charged as a percentage or a fixed amount added to the daily rate. There are also a variety of other taxes generated by tourists: food and beverage taxes at hotels and restaurants, for example, and other special licensing taxes ("United States: Sales Tax" 2014).

Tourism contributes to job creation in two ways: directly, within the tourism industry itself, and indirectly, in sectors such as retail and transportation. A multiplier effect may occur as employment grows in other tourism-related businesses. This also contributes to the overall economy in an area. As long as tourism is sustainable,

individuals' jobs will be secure as well. According to USA Today, "the tourism industry also provides opportunities for small-scale business enterprises, which is especially important in rural communities, and generates extra tax revenues, [such as the ones explained above], which can be used for schools, housing, and hospitals (Simm)." In January 2012, President Barack Obama made steps toward boosting tourism in America in order to increase job opportunities. More tourists visiting America means that more local business' economies will grow, which results in more needed jobs ("Creating Jobs by Boosting Tourism" 2012).

Tourism development in rural areas not only improves the local economy, but may also enhance the recreational opportunities in a community (Lewis 1998). For instance, in the Pocono Mountains area of Pennsylvania, hotels, water parks, casinos, and ski mountains have all been built for tourists. That said, they are also used by residents in the local community. In addition, tourism has resulted in improvements to parks and other public spaces. Balancing the need for rural tourism against the needs and wishes of the local community for development is critical. Note that the relationship between developers and residents in collaboratively defining the optimal rural tourism options will be further discussed in Chapters Two and Six.

Disadvantages of Tourism in Rural Communities

While tourism in rural areas has its benefits, there are also disadvantages. These include: cultural erosion, crowding, infrastructure strains, and environmental problems. According to Lewis (1998), many rural leaders and residents have surprisingly discovered that encouraging large numbers of visitors to a small area creates problems.

When the ratio of tourists to residents becomes more equal, the area's culture and way of life change. People tend to think that rural areas are beautiful, friendly, and safe. "The hidden side of rural tourism includes more crime and other serious societal problems that are imported to a rural community, problems that can radically alter a community's culture (Lewis 1998)."

The state of Hawaii is an example of a region that has experienced such cultural erosion. Hawaii is marketed as a beautiful getaway destination and people perceive Hawaii to be a relaxing place, where anxiety, chaos, and violence are out of the picture. The construction of resorts and other tourist attractions, however, have impacted the land and eroded the natural culture. Nearly 54 years ago, Hawaii residents outnumbered tourists by more than two to one. By 2000, tourists outnumbered residents by six to one (Trask 2000). In the article, Trask (2000) states, "Beautiful areas, once sacred to our people, are now the sites of expensive resorts. Shorelines where net fishing, seaweed gathering, and crabbing occurred are more and more the exclusive domain of recreational activities such a sunbathing, windsurfing, and jet skiing. Even access to beaches near hotels is strictly regulated or denied to the local public altogether."

According to an article published in USA Today, Native Hawaiians agree that the tourism industry has distorted their culture (Sample 2010). A random telephone survey with residents of Hawaii indicated that over 60 percent of 401 native Hawaiians surveyed disagreed with the statement "the tourism industry helps preserve native Hawaiian language and culture." Tourists only experience "tourist-oriented" culture, and not the authentic Hawaiian culture. In 2010, the Hawaiian Tourism Authority had to spend over $600,000 to support Native Hawaiian cultural programs, including music festivals and

the restoration of a cultural site on the Big Island, Puukohola Heiau (Sample 2010).

Finally, tourism in Hawaii has been the single most powerful factor in increasing the

crime rate in Hawaii, including crimes against people and property (Trask 2000).

Crowding may also become an issue when rural areas develop their tourism

industry. Traffic congestion, jam-packed parking lots, and busy tourist attractions are all

types of crowding that can occur. Local residents who might be able to run to the post

office or grocery store in five minutes during the "off season" often find that the trip has

become a much more time-intensive ordeal in the height of tourist season.

Research also shows that tourism development in rural areas creates

environmental problems. Rural places are often thought of as quiet, peaceful places, with

plenty of wide-open space and natural beauty. When tourism development takes place,

infrastructure is required. This infrastructure includes roads, airports, and tourism

facilities such as resorts, hotels, restaurants, shops, golf courses, and the like.

Construction often creates noise and litter in the area (Lewis 1998) and may cause land

degradation. Depletion of natural resources, natural habitat loss, and pollution can pose

significant problems. Water resources are often over-used for hotels, swimming pools,

and water parks, resulting in a lowering of the water table for everyone. Energy and

transportation-related emissions from air, road, and rail travel increase in response to the

rising number of tourists. This is linked to acid rain, global warming, and photochemical

pollution. Noise pollution is created from planes, cars, and buses, as well as recreational

vehicles such as snowmobiles, jet skis, and ATVs ("Tourism's Three Main Impact

Areas" 2013).

Finally, the physical impacts of tourism development must also be considered when discussing the disadvantages of rural tourism. These physical impacts relate to trampling – the use of a trail over and over again – which causes vegetation breakage and bruising of stems, reduced plant vigor, reduced regeneration, loss of ground cover, and change in species composition ("Tourism's Three Main Impact Areas" 2013). Trampling of soil causes loss of organic matter, reduction in soil macro porosity, decrease in air and water permeability, increase in run off, and accelerated erosion. This trampling and loss of natural habitat often stems from construction activities, infrastructure development, deforestation, and non-sustainable land use. Hiking, biking, and ATV trails all contribute to "trampling."

When tourists use trails, the behavior of natural wildlife can also alter. People and noise disturb animals in their natural habitat. Additionally, hikers in mountain areas generate litter by leaving garbage and equipment behind on the trails ("Tourism's Three Main Impact Areas" 2013).

Overall, it is important for developers and community members to understand the potential disadvantages linked to tourism development. Mitigating these issues in the tourism industry is necessary to prevent the local rural area from losing its inherent character. This loss of character may reduce the attractiveness of the rural area to urban dwellers who are interested in escaping to the great outdoors.

The Issue

Tourism has both positive and negative effects on a rural community, and it is in the best interest of both tourism developers and local residents to figure out how to

minimize the negative effects and maximize the positive effects. To understand how to align the needs and wants of various parties affected by rural tourism development, this thesis focuses on one of the most popular rural tourist spots in Pennsylvania – the Pocono Mountains – in a case study. Today, tourism in the Pocono Mountains is growing exponentially, yet little is understood about local residents' attitudes towards and perceptions of tourism development in the Pocono Mountains area. Specifically, development of the Kalahari Resort has met with resistance from some local community members. Thus, it is important for developers to understand residents' attitudes in order to come to a mutually beneficial solution and better accommodate the needs of the specific local community. How can resorts market themselves to locals? How can they build a strong brand image to residents in the area? How can they quickly turn negative feelings into positive ones?

This research seeks to understand how tourism affects the Pocono Mountains socially and environmentally and understand the attitudes of Monroe County residents toward rural tourism and the development of the Kalahari Resort. This can assist tourism developers in creating a well-rounded, community-inclusive marketing strategy. By determining the attitudes of local residents, the tourism industry will gain better insights into how to optimally meet tourist and local needs.

Summary

The results of this thesis will be beneficial to developers of rural tourism in the Pocono Mountains. Through a survey, it was possible to identify specific demographic segments as more pro-tourism than others. The survey results also reveal which factors

are most important to community members in building new resorts. Information gaps that were found between Kalahari's initiatives and Monroe County residents' understanding of these new initiatives suggests that resort developers must engage with the local community. Essentially, with these recommendations, businesses will be able to market a destination in a way that appeals to tourists, while at the same time making residents in the area proud so they will welcome the resort customers.

This research will assist future tourist attractions when they develop business plans with goals to ensure sustainability and long-term growth in the community. It is my belief that it is just as important for businesses to align future growth with residents' needs as it is with tourists' needs. By augmenting positive perceptions and eliminating negative perceptions of a destination, companies will have more success with tourism development in rural areas. The findings of the research will also be useful in developing future research projects in the tourism industry.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This thesis explores the anticipated sociological and economic impacts of rural tourism on residents of Monroe County, PA by examining residents' attitudes toward tourism development in their community. It also explores the marketing implications of tourism development. Specifically, this research focuses on local community members' attitudes toward rural tourism and its anticipated impact on the local economy, environmental preservation, and social/cultural permanence. It also considers how these attitudes may affect the community's ability to sustain successful tourism practices in the Pocono Mountain area.

To develop my hypotheses, I conducted a review of the literature on rural tourism in general and community members' attitudes towards the outcomes of such development specifically. The literature reveals that perceptions of and attitudes toward rural tourism-based communities are unclear. The following mini-cases provide information on residents' attitudes toward rural tourism. We start with research that examines pro-tourism and move onto research that compares both positive and negative aspects of tourism.

West Virginia

A study conducted by Maureen Y. Bender from West Virginia University, researched residents' attitudes toward tourism development in Ansted, West Virginia, using self-administered surveys. At the time, West Virginia was the second most rural state in the United States (West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources 2007). With the help of research colleagues, the researcher found that overall attitudes

toward tourism were very positive. Residents were in complete support of boosting the community's economy and were not concerned about crowding, increased prices, or pollution. Bender obtained 85 completed questionnaires, answering questions about perceptions of Ansted as a tourism destination and attitudes toward the impact of tourism development.

Bender's research participants were 50.6 percent male and 49.4 percent female; 53.6 percent participants were over the age 55; 59.8 percent of the participants had lived in Ansted for at least 15 years, and more than a quarter had lived in Ansted for 35 years. The researcher found that 89 percent of participants favored tourism in and around Ansted, WV and 86.6 percent believed that Ansted could serve as a gateway to the surrounding parks and attractions.

When responding to questions about the economic impact of tourist development, 90.6 percent believed that tourism would provide more jobs for local people, and 87.1 percent felt the tourism industry would play a major role in the economic community. In reference to social impacts, 89.3 percent of participants agreed that tourism would produce more cultural events in the town, and 58.8 percent agreed that there would be an increase in the quality of public services. As for environmental impacts, 87.1 percent of participants believed that long-term planning by the town and region could control the negative impacts of tourism on the environment and 77.4 percent believed that the benefits of tourism outweighed the negative consequences of tourism development (Bender et al. 2008).

Responses varied by participant age. Those 55 years old and over were more likely than those who were under 55 years of age to believe that the community should

encourage more intensive development of tourism facilities. They believed that the benefits of tourism would outweigh the negative consequences of tourism development, and that tourism would produce more cultural events in the community. In addition, those 55 and over more strongly agreed that long-term planning by the town and region could control negative impacts and that tourists would contribute to conservation efforts in the region (Bender et al. 2008).

Though residents of Ansted, WV generally held positive views for tourism development, there was one tourist attraction toward which residents held negative views: casino development. Gambling and casinos were regarded as inappropriate and were unwanted in the Ansted area (Bender et al. 2008). Residents also expressed a desire to maintain their small-town atmosphere in open-ended comments. With the increasing scarcity of small towns due to urban sprawl, Ansted residents believed they could benefit from the value of their small town. Residents' attitudes toward casino development were interesting to note because it was consistent, even among those residents who were pro-tourism.

Florida

A study conducted by Duane Davis, Jeff Allen, and Robert M. Cosenza (1988) determined Florida residents' perceptions and attitudes toward tourism in Florida and tourism in general. The researchers identified the extent of negative and positive perceptions toward tourism. Negative aspects of tourism identified in the research were environmental concerns, noise, traffic congestion, overcrowding of facilities, inflationary pressures, and accelerated crime.

A questionnaire was mailed to a sample of approximately 2000 Florida residents, with 415 residents responding (a 21 percent response rate). In order to develop the questionnaire, a focus group was conducted in which participants were encouraged to freely share their concerns and views on the benefits and disadvantages of the tourism industry in Florida. The questionnaire assessed residents on their knowledge of the tourism industry and their perceptions toward components of tourism (employment opportunities, taxes, etc.).

Based on their responses, the study segmented respondents into five groups: *Haters, Lovers, Cautious Romantics, In-Betweeners,* and *Love 'Em for a Reason*. The most varied segments were the *Haters* and the *Lovers*. The *Haters* segment represented 16 percent (64 respondents) of the sample. This segment possessed extremely negative opinions toward tourists and tourism. Seventy nine percent of the *Haters* agreed that Florida tourists were inconsiderate of the state's resources, and 86 percent believed that tourism in Florida caused taxes to increase because extra police and more roads were needed. Fifty seven percent believed that the state would be better off without tourists, and 81 percent believed that the tourism industry had too much political pull in the state. *Haters* also believed that tourist-related marketing efforts were useless and ineffective. For example, only 8 percent agreed that advertising monies spent by the State's Division of Tourism to attract tourists to the state was a good investment. Ninety two percent agreed that the state legislature should put limits on population growth, and 82 percent agreed that tourists should be taxed to a greater extent than local citizens to pay for the services they use (Davis et al. 1988).

The *Lovers* on the other hand differed from the Haters on almost every dimension. *Lovers* were identified as being pro-tourism and pro-growth in Florida. They supported expansion of tourism in Florida and had very few negative feelings toward tourism. Ninety-two percent of the *Lovers* agreed that the tourism industry had improved the quality of life in Florida, whereas only 9 percent of the *Haters* agreed. In addition, 99 percent of the *Lovers* agreed that Florida legislatures should support tourism efforts in the state and that the tourism industry was good for Florida's economy.

The authors further segmented the Lovers and Haters groups. Responses were significantly different on two variables: whether respondents were natives (born in Florida) or not, and the respondents' score (high versus low) on five questions measuring knowledge of tourism's impact on the state of Florida. Researchers found the highest percentage of natives (40 percent) were categorized into the *Haters* segment. The lowest number of natives (16 percent) was found to be in the *Lovers* segment. As for the knowledge of tourism in Florida, the *Haters* had the lowest scores (12 percent) and the *Lovers* had the highest scores (34 percent). This information tells us that there is a strong positive relationship between knowledge of tourism's impact in Florida and appreciation of the tourism industry (Davis et al. 1988). In summary, the more residents knew about the tourism industry in their area, the less negative they seemed towards it.

The diversity of the segments identified suggests that there were very mixed feelings among respondents toward tourism in Florida. According to Davis et al., it is important to understand the negative feelings associated with tourism. Understanding the *Haters'* attitudes will allow the tourism industry to fix the gap created with that particular

segment. Encouraging tourism does little good if the local residents give tourists an off-putting experience.

The findings from this study indicate that there seems to be a substantial need to educate local residents (both anti-tourism and pro-tourism) about the effects of the tourism industry on them. More emphasis should be placed on educating the public about tourism in the state. The study suggests "education could take the form of various local promotions and contests which emphasize the influence of tourism on the local economy by the various state and local planners and trade associations." Also, since native residents expressed the most negative feelings, the authors suggested holding attraction-sponsored special events such as "Native Day" to emphasize the benefits the residents could expect to directly receive from tourism (Davis et al. 1988). Branding and marketing campaigns of a tourist attraction were just as important to residents.

Brazil

In the study "Local Stakeholders' Image of Tourism Destinations: Outlooks for Destination Branding," Tsiotsou and Goldsmith (2012) analyzed the image of a tourist destination based on the perceptions of the host community, visitors, and public administrators. The study took place in Diamantina, Brazil. The authors describe that there are various stakeholders in a tourist environment including the tourists, locals, and workers in the industry. "Perceptions of destination image involve a universe of relations, where there are spaces with subjective and diverse meanings to groups that interact with it" (Tsiotsou et al. 2012). Therefore, understanding the perceptions of various stakeholders becomes critical so that collaborative solutions can be identified.

An important finding from this work is that it is critical not only to focus on perceptions from the tourist's perspective, but to also include the perceptions of other stakeholders involved with the destination's branding. For example, the image that local residents portray about their community and how people interact will affect the character of a marketing campaign in that area.

The predominant methodology used in the Brazil study involved one-on-one interviews, including interviews with 12 visitors of Diamantina, four public sector representatives (managers of public departments related to tourism), and 11 residents of the destination. Open-ended questions such as word association and sentence completion were used in the interviews. In addition, secondary data such as analyses of promotional materials (brochures) and websites were collected.

The researchers concluded that building a strong destination image works best when perspectives from different stakeholders are jointly taken into consideration. The researchers also found that there can be gaps in tourism promotion, due to the "lack of guidance from public managers to destination marketing that is still very little explored by the destination" (Tsiotsou et al. 2012) and by neglecting the local residents' perception of the place. The authors also identified a gap between the perceptions of the visitors in Diamantina and the destination promotions addressed to them. The researchers emphasized that the use of projective techniques and photo-ethnography were especially useful in obtaining authentic destination brand images. How local residents perceive their community's brand can affect the tourism industry in that area.

North Dakota

A study by Schroeder in 1996 explored residents' image of North Dakota as a tourist destination and how it related to their support of tourism development. Residents (n=1,374) rated 20 attributes of the destination. The image ratings fell into three segments: most positive, average, and least positive. Schroeder found that the overall image rating was directly related to how likely the subjects were to recommend North Dakota as a tourist destination to others. Those with positive images took more vacation trips inside North Dakota within the past year and those with negative images took more vacation trips outside of North Dakota within the past year (Schroeder 1996).

This research concluded, "residents' support for tourism development and the likelihood of their recommending North Dakota to others is related to image" (Schroeder 1996). Those with a more positive image were more likely to recommend it to others and more likely to support promotional funding and tourism in the state. Schroeder also reported that the state residents' image impacted the "induced" image and "organic" image of North Dakota. In general, an organic image is impacted by communication with tourists and the outside world, whereas an induced image is impacted by political and financial support of tourism projects and development in the state. Residents' destination image affected both their own travel habits as well as the travel habits of tourists. Thus, an improvement in residents' image perceptions was expected to not only increase the amount of travelling done in that area by residents themselves, but to also increase recommendations to tourists toward travelling in that area. This could help develop economic support for increased tourism spending in an area (Shroeder 1996). It is easy to see that the brand image of tourist destinations is important from the residents'

perspective. In order to effectively determine what these destination images are, it is important to understand how to measure them.

Measuring Residents' Attitudes toward Tourism

Researchers Echtner and Ritchie (2003) have found that in order to capture the most accurate attitudes of a place, a combination of both structured and unstructured research methodologies should be used. Using standardized scales can help in analyzing the functional and psychological attitudes of a place, but using open-ended questions can help determine more unique perceptions of a place. Echtner and Ritchie found that in many studies in the past, the findings did not reflect true perceptions of a destination because only structured methods were used. The authors concluded that it is important to include unstructured methods as well as structured methods in order to get more holistic perceptions of a destination (Echtner and Ritchie 2003). The results of this study provided the basis for determining the methodology in this research.

Conclusion from Literature Review

The literature review highlights why attitudes toward tourism development are important from residents' perspectives. The findings reveal that local residents have been found to have both positive and negative feelings about rural tourism development. Most positive perceptions were associated with job opportunities and economic benefits. Most negative perceptions were associated with eroded culture and environmental issues. Furthermore, the tourism industry plays an important role in creating a brand image to attract tourists without misrepresenting the image of the residents' community.

All of the literature together suggests that it is not clear what Monroe County residents' perceptions of tourism are for the Pocono Mountains nor what their attitudes will be toward the development of the Kalahari Resort & Convention Center. This ambiguity motivated my research. Further, each of the studies in the literature review focuses on attitudes toward tourism in general – not toward a specific resort or tourist attraction. I was inspired to focus my research on a specific resort as opposed to general tourism in order to examine more precise and defined feelings about rural tourism development in real time.

Chapter 3: Pocono Mountain Tourism

Located in Northeast Pennsylvania, the Pocono Mountains is a rural tourist destination known for its natural beauty and abundance of outdoor recreational activities. Long before the Pocono Mountains became the popular tourist destination it is today, the area was famous for summer vacationing and honeymoon retreats. The following timeline lays out a sequence of events leading to today's thriving tourism industry.

Table 1: Historic Timeline of Pocono Mountain Tourism

1829	Anthony Dutot built the first hotel in the Delaware Water Gap, which initiated the resort industry in the Pocono Mountains.
1900	Visitors from Philadelphia and New York spent time in the Pocono Mountains for summer vacations. Pennsylvania Power and Light Company (now PPL Electric Utilities, Inc.) constructed Lake Wallenpaupack, the third largest man-made lake in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
1940	During World War II, numerous soldiers brought their girlfriends and families to the Pocono Mountains for getaways. Post-war, a lot of these couples returned for their honeymoons. At this time, the Pocono Mountains started to develop a more romantic image and appeal. Honeymoon resorts sprang up in the 1940s and 1950s, which spurred the growth of today's prosperous "couples resort" business.
1946	Big Boulder ski area opened, which was the first commercialized ski area in Pennsylvania.
1960	In the late 1950s to early 1960s, Interstates 80 and 81 opened, allowing the Pocono Mountain region to be easily accessible to motor vehicles. Family operated resorts became very popular during this time.
1963	The heart-shaped tub was introduced at Caesars Cove Haven Resort, one of the biggest couples resorts still in business today. At this point in time, the Pocono Mountains were known as the "Honeymoon Capital of the World." Camelback's ski mountain also opened during this year.
1971	Pocono International Raceway (now Pocono Raceway) opened for Indy car and NASCAR races during summers.
1990	During the 1990s, several honeymoon resorts closed, while other tourist attractions made huge improvements to their properties and attracted more business.
2005	Great Wolf Lodge opened, the northeast's largest indoor waterpark and family resort.

2007	Mount Airy Casino Resort was built at the prior site of Mount Airy Lodge.
2008	Split Rock Resort added an indoor water park named "H2Oooohh!!" to its facilities.

Source: Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau

Today, Pocono Mountain developers and property owners are investing millions of dollars to renovate golf courses, resorts, bed and breakfast inns, and rental properties. There are more than 35 golf courses in the area; most of them have accommodations, on-site spas, and scenic views ("Pocono Mountains History" 2014). The Pocono Mountains is also recognized for its outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, biking, fishing, canoeing, camping, and whitewater rafting. The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and nine state parks are just a sample of the opportunities for those seeking outdoor recreational opportunities. The area encompasses roughly 2,394 square miles of land and borders New York and New Jersey. It is comprised of four counties: Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne ("Pocono Mountains Counties" 2014). This research focuses on residents of Monroe County.

According to the Pocono Mountains Visitor Bureau, tourism is the largest single industry in Monroe County. Monroe Country is also the most populated county in the region, containing the majority of popular resorts and tourist attractions ("Pocono Mountains Counties" 2014). Pocono Raceway, Camelback Ski Mountain, Jack Frost Mountain, Big Boulder Mountain, the Delaware Water Gap, Great Wolf Lodge, the Crossings Premium Outlets, and Mount Airy Casino Resort are some of the most recognized tourist attractions in the Pocono Mountains, and they are all located in Monroe County. Below, Figure 1 highlights the Pocono Mountain area and Figure 2
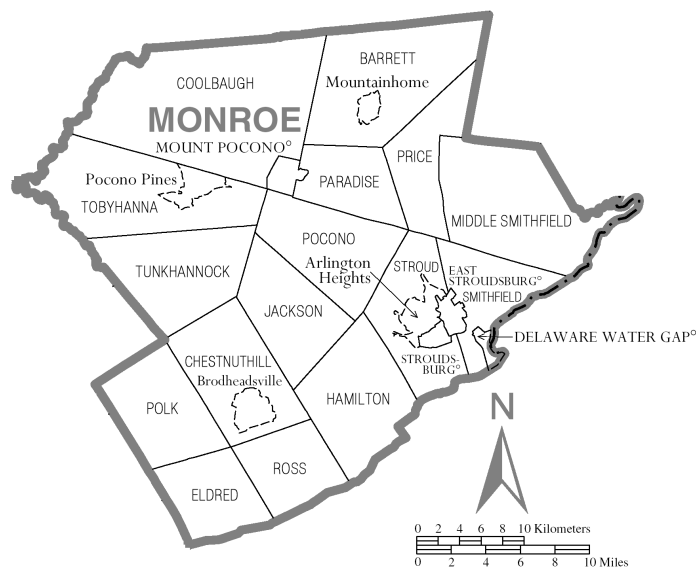
highlights the Monroe County area. The pinpoint near the center of Figure 1 is where

Mount Airy Casino Resort is located, approximately in the center of Monroe County.

Figure 1: Pocono Mountains Area Map

Source: Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau

Figure 2: Monroe County Area Map

Source: Wikimedia.org

In addition to the popular outdoor recreational opportunities in the area, the resort industry – particularly the indoor waterpark industry – is booming. Once known as the "Honeymoon Capital of the World," the Pocono Mountains is on its way to re-branding itself as the "Indoor Waterpark Capital of the East." Currently, there are two indoor water parks (Split Rock and Great Wolf Lodge) and one outdoor waterpark (Camelbeach (Camelback Mountain's summer park)) in the Pocono Mountains.

Camelback's management is in the process of constructing Camelback Lodge and Indoor Waterpark near the bottom of the ski mountain that will open in spring 2015. It will be a mountain-side resort with modern style architecture, consisting of 453 suites, a 125,000 square-foot indoor waterpark, dining facilities, a luxury spa, and a conference space. Adding this facility to Camelback's existing ski mountain, snow-tubing hill, summer outdoor waterpark, and treetop adventure center (zip-lining) will permit the resort to have activities available during all four seasons. The resort will soon be "the most interactive resort in the U.S.A. ('Camelback Lodge & Indoor Waterpark: Fact and Features' 2013)." The details and features of the resort are listed in Table 2.

Camelback is not the only resort engaged in new rural tourism development in the Pocono Mountains. By early 2015, Kalahari Resorts will be opening the third largest safari-themed resort and convention center in the United States in the heart of Monroe County. The $230 million, 150-acre complex will be built in Pocono Manor, just off Interstate 380. The first phase of construction will include 457 guest rooms, 18 meeting rooms, a 300,000 square foot convention center, luxury spa, salon, kids camp, 18-hole golf course, 100,000 square foot indoor waterpark, entertainment center (including mini-

golf, bowling, and arcade), seven dining facilities, and an outdoor waterpark. Excavation

started on October 1st, 2013 ("Kalahari Resorts & Conventions").

Pocono Manor is a small community surrounding the Pocono Manor Inn and Golf

Course, a resort that has been in business since 1902. The Pocono Manor East golf

course is where Kalahari Resort is currently being constructed. The details and features

of Kalahari Resort & Convention Center are listed in Table 3.

Table 2: Camelback Lodge Features

Scale	Lodge Features	Indoor Entertainment
▪ Largest capital improvement in the history of Camelback Mountain Resort ▪ Largest indoor waterpark resort ever constructed in the U.S. in a single phase ▪ 25-acre development site ▪ 533,000 square feet of construction ▪ Scheduled to open February 2015	▪ Eight-story, mountain-modern style architecture ▪ Two-story grand lobby ▪ 453 guest suites offering 20 configurations ▪ Nearly 170,000 square-foot indoor family entertainment center ▪ Four restaurants, including ski-in ski-out bar and outdoor patio at mountain base ▪ 25,000 square feet of meeting and conference space	▪ 125,000 square-foot, indoor adventure waterpark – *the largest Entertainment in the eastern U.S.* ▪ Innovative Texlon transparent roof allowing natural daylight year-round ▪ 30,000 square-foot indoor dry park ▪ Two levels of water features ▪ Seven pools including recreation, adventure river, kids' and wavepool ▪ 19 slides and rides of various thrill levels ▪ FlowRider indoor surfing experience ▪ Interactive water play centers ▪ Private cabanas ▪ Swim up bar ▪ Food & beverage service ▪ Family arcade and game center ▪ Indoor ropes course, nine-hole mini-golf, two-story lazer tag arena, bowling center ▪ Kids' club activity center ▪ Private birthday party rooms

Source: Camelback Mountain Resort

Table 3: Kalahari Resort & Convention Center Features

Guest Rooms (Phase I)	Meeting & Exhibit Facilities (Phase I)	Recreation & Entertainment	Water and Family Entertainment Center	Phase II
▪ 457 guest rooms & suites ▪ 1, 2 and 3 bedroom suites including Penthouse suites ▪ All rooms include: Microwave, coffee maker, refrigerator, iron, ironing board, in-room safe, complimentary Wi-Fi, remote control television with cable and pay-per-view movies, alarm clock, voicemail system, hair dryer, luxurious bath amenities and admission to Pennsylvania's Largest Indoor Waterpark	▪ 65,000 sq ft of flexible space ▪ 25,000 and 9,000 sq ft ballrooms ▪ 18 meeting rooms & multiple hospitality suites ▪ Dedicated convention center loading dock ▪ Large grade level access to main exhibit facility ▪ Full service business center ▪ Exceptional pre-function space ▪ Complimentary Wi-Fi throughout ▪ 10 hour ergonomic convention chairs ▪ Extraordinary function areas throughout indoor & outdoor waterparks and Family Entertainment Center	▪ Spa Kalahari and Salon ▪ Kamp Kalahari activity programs ▪ 18 hole Donald Ross designed golf course ▪ Multiple and varied retail shops ▪ Authentic African artifacts, furniture and artwork ▪ Horseback riding, archery, fishing, skiing, sledding, snow shoeing and more nearby	▪ Admission to Pennsylvania's largest indoor waterpark and outdoor pool and deck (seasonal) included for all registered guests ▪ 100,000 square foot indoor waterpark ▪ Exclusive group pricing available ▪ 30,000 square foot Family Entertainment Center featuring black light mini golf, XD Dark Ride, bowling, arcade games and more	▪ 400 additional guest rooms and suites (total of 857) ▪ 100,000 square foot of additional indoor waterpark space ▪ Expand outdoor waterpark by 2 - 3 acres ▪ Safari Outdoor Adventure Park with dry play features, hiking trails and more

Source: Kalahari Resort & Convention Center

The current work examines local residents' attitudes about tourism in the Poconos region and specifically the development of the Kalahari Resort. Building the new resort was contentious for the community because it will create competition with existing resorts, contribute to congestion in the natural areas, and pose challenges in the community. Kalahari's opening will most immediately impact the Pocono Manor Inn, but also affect Camelback and other nearby resorts. Kalahari's opening was incorporated into this survey in order to assess how local community members view this expansion of rural tourism.

Because of the development of the Kalahari Resort, tensions are rising between community members and developers. There are stories from past development that are very salient for residents and that are making them particularly sensitive to fears about this current development effort. Specifically, in 2009, Lost Trails ATV Adventure opened a new ATV site in Pocono Manor. The business has been open for riders to bring their own ATVs and dirt bikes, or to rent ATVs for tours across 1,200 acres of Pocono Manor property. According to an article in the Pocono Record newspaper in 2009, residents of Pocono Manor were raising complaints about the noise and environmental impacts of dozens of ATVs being ridden near their homes. Inspectors from the State Department of Environmental Protection found two environmental violations during a resulting inspection: an ATV trail was illegally running through wetlands area and there was improper soil erosion control. Both were negatively impacting the natural habitat. According to McNaughton (2009), although Lost Trails provides a fun, recreational activity for tourists in the area, the environmental consequences to the local community were outweighing the benefits.

Based on the insights gleaned from the literature review and preliminary conversations with local residents of the Monroe County area, I developed the following hypotheses. These hypotheses will be tested in the current research by surveying residents of the area where the greatest rural tourism development is occurring in the Pocono Mountains.

Hypotheses

Tourism has the potential to bring economic resources to the Pocono Mountains, but marketers, developers, and other leaders must balance that against the potential disadvantages associated with rural tourism and what is most important to the residential base. The following hypotheses regarding residents' attitudes toward tourism development consist of the following:

H_{01}: Attitudes towards tourism development will differ between age groups.

H_{02}: Residents who have lived in the Pocono Mountains for a longer period of time will have more negative attitudes toward tourism development.

H_{03}: Residents who live closer to the Kalahari resort site will have more negative attitudes toward Kalahari than those who live further away from the resort site.

H_{04}: Residents that benefit financially from the tourism industry will have more positive attitudes toward tourism development.

Bender's study in Ansted, West Virginia motivated my first hypothesis. Bender discovered that older residents were more receptive to tourism in Ansted than younger residents. This study demonstrated that there can be differences in age groups relative to

tourism attitudes. In Ansted's case, older residents might have been more knowledgeable about tourism or might have been more exposed to the tourism industry, allowing them to have a better understanding of the advantages and disadvantages tourism development brings to the community.

With respect to residency tenure, the West Virginia and Florida studies make opposite predictions. Florida's "natives" (who are typically residents that have lived in an area for the longest period of time) were found to be the most negative toward tourism. Given that Davis, Allen, and Cosenza's study discovered that Floridian "natives" were more negative toward tourism, my second hypothesis was developed. I believe that the more time one spends in an area and the more attached he/she is to an area, the more likely he/she is to oppose change in that area. I especially believe that residents who were born in the Pocono Mountains will be most resistant to development and change in their community.

Most residents of Monroe County will be exposed to the benefits Kalahari will offer the Pocono Mountains, despite their physical distance from the resort. However, residents who live in close proximity to the resort, especially residents of Pocono Manor, are the ones who will most likely experience the negative effects such as traffic congestion, overcrowding, environmental concerns, noise, and crime. The complaints concerning Lost Trails ATV are an example of this, which motivated my third hypothesis.

Although the mini-cases in the literature review did not focus on individual financial benefits, my final hypothesis was developed solely on general knowledge. I

believe that residents who currently benefit from the tourism industry will look at tourism

development more opportunistically.

Chapter 4: Methodology

In order to determine residents' attitudes and perceptions of tourism in the Pocono Mountains, I designed a 19-question survey that was approved by Pennsylvania State University's Institutional Review Board. The survey consisted of three open-ended questions and 16 close-ended questions. Of the close-ended questions, three were Likert scales in which respondents rated several statements from "not very important" to "very important," or "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Five of the close-ended questions were demographic questions, pertaining to gender, ethnic background, age, education level, and total annual household income.

Survey Development

The survey was developed to examine residents' tourism attitudes, as well as clarify existing controversy between residents over tourism development in the Pocono Mountains. Specifically, development of the Kalahari Resort has met with resistance from some local community members. The first question on the survey asked respondents what they thought the three most recognized tourist attractions in the Pocono Mountains were, listing number one as the most recognized. This question intended to determine what types of tourist attractions were considered the most popular from the locals' perspectives.

Questions two through five asked the respondents about their length of residency in the Pocono Mountains and their reasons for moving to the area (if they were not natives). These questions were created to compare attitudes between newcomers and

long-time residents. I was also interested in determining the location from which the majority of residents moved, and what factors were most important to them when moving to the Pocono Mountains.

The following two questions were developed to test H_{04}. These questions asked the respondents whether they and/or a family member worked in the tourism industry. This would allow for attitude comparisons between individuals who financially benefit from the tourism industry and those who do not. Following those questions, residents were asked to rate 20 statements on a Likert scale in order to establish the extent they agreed or disagreed about general tourism in the area. Economic, financial, governmental, cultural, social, and environmental affects of tourism were included in the statements. Fracking and casino development were briefly mentioned in order to examine perceptions of other opportunities for Pocono Mountains economic development.

I then turned to examine respondents' feelings toward Kalahari Resort and Convention Center being built in the area, as well as what factors are important for tourism developers to consider when building in the Pocono Mountains. Kalahari was specifically targeted in the survey because local residents would be less likely to have a pre-existing attitude toward it, unlike Camelback Mountain, which has strong brand equity. Kalahari's brand is the newest property being introduced to the Pocono Mountains. This way, there are minimal pre-existing attitudes or experiences with the business among Pocono Mountain residents. These questions aimed at determining whether residents were either pro-Kalahari or anti-Kalahari. Lastly, demographic questions concluded the survey.

Survey Distribution

The survey was randomly distributed to individuals 18 years and older and residents of Monroe County. Each participant received a $1 lottery scratch-off card as an incentive for participating in the survey. Two hundred fifty surveys were collected in total. The surveys were distributed between November 9th, 2013 and January 31st, 2014. The majority of the data were collected in the Eastern Monroe Hughes Public Library, the Pocono Mountain Public Library, and the Stroud Mall. Ten surveys were distributed at the Crossings Premium Outlets and five were distributed at the local Nationwide Insurance Agency.

At the libraries, I randomly approached people entering the building and explained that I was conducting a research study for my undergraduate program at Penn State. I asked if they would like to participate in a survey. If they said yes, I first ensured they were older than 18 years of age and a resident of Monroe County. Then, I explained to them that completing the survey was completely voluntary and that they could end the survey at any time or leave questions blank if they did not feel comfortable answering them. I performed the same pitch to residents at the mall, primarily in the food court area. The following addresses are where the majority of the surveys were collected:

Hughes Library
1002 North 9th Street
Stroudsburg, PA 18360

Pocono Mountain Public Library
5500 Municipal Drive
Coolbaugh Township Municipal Center
Tobyhanna, PA 18466

The Stroud Mall
344 Stroud Mall Road
Stroudsburg, PA 18360

The data were then analyzed through SPSS software. Descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, sample t-tests, factor analysis, and ANOVA tests were used to analyze the data.

Chapter 5: Results

Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents

Each of the 250 respondents who completed the Pocono Mountain Tourism survey were asked to indicate their gender, race, age, education level, and annual household income. Survey respondents were 44.6 percent male. Ages were rather evenly distributed: 5.6 percent of respondents were less than 21 years old, 19.6 percent were between 21 to 30 years old, 13.2 percent were between 31 to 40 years old, 15.6 percent were between 41 and 50 years old, 26 percent were between 51 to 60 years old, and 20 percent were more than 60 years old. Thus, the survey results are representative of a wide range of ages.

With respect to ethnicity, 75.9 percent of respondents were Caucasian, 13.5 percent were African American, and the remainder were other various ethnicities. Respondents' education was also relatively evenly divided: 47.6 percent of respondents held less than a bachelor's degree and 52.4 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. With a response rate of 220 participants (i.e., 30 individuals chose not to respond to this question), the mean total annual household income fell between $40,000 and $59,999. Note that this mean income level is on par with the census level income reported for the area. Taken together, the sample respondents' demographic characteristics are representative of those in the area.

Kalahari Awareness

Overall, 35 percent of respondents want Kalahari Resort and Convention Center to be built, 20.4 percent do not want the resort to be built, and 44.6 percent have mixed feelings about the resort being built. This suggests that respondents are not unified in their opinions of this new rural tourism venture. This is also representative of the contentiousness reported in the local newspaper.

Going a bit deeper into awareness also highlighted this contentiousness. Surprisingly, 31.1 percent of respondents were not aware that Kalahari Resort and Convention Center was currently being built in the Pocono Mountains. Of the 165 respondents who were aware that the resort was being built (i.e., 68 percent), 32.7 percent wanted it to be built, 23.6 percent did not want it to be built, and 43.6 percent had mixed feelings. In summary, 67.2 percent of respondents were not convinced that they wanted the resort built, even though they were aware it was already being built. Of the 69 respondents who did not know that Kalahari was being built, 37.7 percent wanted it to be built, 11.6 percent did not want it to be built, and 50.7 percent had mixed feelings.

Taken together, 62.3 percent of residents are not entirely supportive of the Kalahari development effort at a community level. It is noted that the majority of residents were more likely to be opposed or indecisive to tourism in the Pocono Mountains area.

Tourism Familiarity

Respondents were asked to write down what they believed were the three most recognized tourist attractions in the Pocono Mountains, with number one being the most

recognized. Camelback Mountain had the highest percentage of votes (46.1 percent) as the number one tourist attraction. Furthermore, 83.3 percent of total respondents chose Camelback Mountain as either their first, second, or third choice for the most recognized tourist attraction in the Pocono Mountains. Other resorts were noted as follows: 49.6 percent of total respondents chose Mount Airy Casino Resort in their top three, 29.6 percent chose The Crossings Outlets, and 27.8 percent chose Great Wolf Lodge as either their first, second, or third choice for the most recognized tourist attraction in the Pocono Mountains. Other top choices included Pocono Raceway, Delaware Water Gap, Bushkill Falls, and Shawnee Resort. These answers do not take general responses such as "skiing," "hiking," or "shopping" into consideration, which could increase the tourist attraction percentages above those that are noted above.

Tourism Impacts

In response to environmental impacts caused by tourism, the majority (75.3 percent) of respondents agreed that tourism causes more land to be developed. This might imply that the respondents understand the various infrastructure strains associated with tourism development. That said, the majority of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (36 percent) that tourism in the Pocono Mountains is environmentally sustainable. Respondents also tended to choose "neither agree nor disagree" for a statement related to fracking being beneficial in the Pocono Mountains.

The neutrality of these responses seems likely due to a lack of knowledge in the categories. With respect to the effects of tourism on the natural beauty of the Pocono Mountains, 49 percent of respondents believe that tourism does not enhance the natural

beauty of the Pocono Mountains and only 21.3 percent agree or strongly agree that tourism does enhance its natural beauty. In terms of fracking, 20.3 percent strongly agreed or agreed that fracking would benefit the Pocono Mountains. Table 4 highlights some of the responses.

Table 4: Environmental Statistics

Statement	Results
Tourism causes more land to be developed.	75.3 percent "agree" or "strongly agree."
Tourism in the Poconos is environmentally sustainable.	36.1 percent "agree" or "strongly agree"; 26.4 percent "disagree" or "strongly disagree"
Fracking will benefit the Poconos area.	38.7 percent "disagree" or "strongly disagree."
The tourism industry enhances the Poconos' natural beauty.	49 percent "disagree" or "strongly disagree."

More than 77 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that tourists are important to the community. Furthermore, 50 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that tourism enhances the Pocono Mountain culture. Thus, though there is recognition that tourism is important, it isn't clear that tourism has positive impacts on the culture of the area. There could also be some confusion over what the Pocono Mountain culture is.

The average response to the statement "casinos are a good recreational activity for the Poconos" was below the scale midpoint (2.85). More respondents highly disagreed (20.2 percent) than highly agreed (7.7 percent). There seems to be resistance to the introduction of additional gaming and casinos in the area. The Kalahari project developers should be aware that they will encounter negative attitudes among local community members if a casino is included on the property.

More respondents strongly disagreed or agreed (37.1 percent) that tourism in their community has increased their standard of living. Over 83 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that tourism boosts the Pocono Mountains' economy, and 44.8 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the benefits of tourism outweighed the negative consequences of tourism development. Only 23.4 percent strongly disagreed or disagreed with the latter statement. Overall, it seems that respondents were aware that tourism could be beneficial to the economy in the Poconos Mountains, but they seemed uncertain as to whether the benefits would flow to them individually through increased standards of living.

Important Factors for Future Tourism Development

Respondents indicated which of eight factors they thought were important for resort/tourism developers to consider when building in the Pocono Mountains. Most important were job creation, preservation of the natural environment, development of resort to fit in with the Pocono landscape, and minimization of road congestion. Of note is that local residents would like tourist properties to be available to local residents. Of the 12 respondents that selected "other," written suggestions for developers to consider when building in the Pocono Mountains included giving back to the community, considering the effects on schools, crime management, and water and sewer management, and creating cultural programming and high-paying jobs. Table 5 summarizes the percent of respondents that agreed to factors that resort/tourism developers should consider when building in the Pocono Mountains.

Table 5: Important Factors for Developers to Consider

Factor of Importance	Percent Respondents Strongly Agree or Agree
Create jobs	86.8%
Preserve the natural environment	73.6%
Develop resort appearance to fit into the Pocono landscape	64.8%
Minimize traffic on local roads	64.8%
Open facility to community/public	55.6%
Provide outdoor recreational activities	45.2%
Provide indoor recreational activities	44.4%
Other	4.8%

Pro-Tourism Attitudes

The series of statements related to tourism were factor analyzed to reduce redundancy and reveal any underlying attitudinal constructs. Using principal components and Varimax rotation, five factors emerged. One factor in particular was of interest and explained 30.7 percent of the variance in the data. This factor was comprised of ten of the attitudinal statements listed in Table 6. I labeled this factor "pro-tourism."

Table 6: Pro-tourism Factor Analysis

Attitudinal Statements
Tourism enhances the Poconos' culture.
I am happy when tourists choose to vacation in the Poconos.
I believe there should be more tourist attractions in the Poconos.
I enjoy interacting with tourists.
Tourism in the Poconos is environmentally sustainable.
The tourism industry enhances the Poconos' natural beauty.
The benefits of tourism outweigh the negative consequences of tourism development.
Tourists are important to the community.
Tourism helps boost the Poconos' economy.
Tourism in my community has increased my standard of living.

Demographics were analyzed for pro-tourism and pro-Kalahari relationships using correlations and t-tests. A t-test showed there was a statistically significant difference between genders for both pro-tourism (p = .049) and pro-Kalahari (p = .019) groups. It is noted that males are more pro-tourism and pro-Kalahari than their female counterparts, with respective means of 3.3400 and 3.5515. Though women's attitudes were still above the midpoint of the scale, they were much less pro-tourism and pro-Kalahari than males, with respective means of 3.1637 and 3.2786.

A correlation test showed there was a marginally significant relationship (p = .056) between level of education and pro-Kalahari attitudes. With a Pearson correlation value of -.123, it is noted that as respondents' level of income increased, their attitudes toward Kalahari Resort decreased. Those with higher education levels have less favorable attitudes towards Kalahari's opening. There were no significant differences between total annual household income and pro-tourism or pro-Kalahari.

Another significant difference found in a t-test was between race and pro-tourism and pro-Kalahari attitudes. A major difference was found between Caucasians and non-Caucasians (all other races). Non-Caucasians were more pro-tourism (p = .006) and pro-Kalahari (p = .011), with respective attitude means of 3.4533 and 3.6508. The attitude means for Caucasians were 3.1753 for pro-tourism and 3.3185 for pro-Kalahari. It is noted that African-Americans and other various ethnicities have much more favorable attitudes toward Pocono Mountain tourism development and Kalahari Resort than their Caucasian counterparts.

Next, I examined the relationship between generalized pro-tourism attitudes and attitudes towards the Kalahari property. There was a significant positive correlation

between pro-tourism residents and residents who believed the area would benefit from Kalahari ($r = .582$, $N = 230$, $p < .01$, two-tailed) and residents who want to visit Kalahari when it's built ($r = .582$, $N = 229$, $p < .01$, two-tailed). There was also a significant negative correlation between pro-tourism residents and residents who believe that Kalahari will ruin the image of the Poconos Mountains ($r = -.510$, $N = 229$, $p < .01$, two-tailed). This further emphasizes that residents who are pro-tourism have positive attitudes toward the Kalahari resort.

Results of Specific Hypothesis Tests:

Independent samples t-tests and ANOVA significance tests were used to analyze data relevant to each of the hypothesis. Recall that H_{01} hypothesized that attitudes toward tourism would differ between age groups. An ANOVA showed that there were no significant differences in attitudes toward tourism or Kalahari Resort across age categories.

Do people who were born in the Poconos differ in their attitudes towards the Kalahari resort from those not born in the Poconos? An independent samples t-test showed no significant difference between these two variables. Whether residents were born in the Pocono Mountains or not, their attitudes toward Kalahari resort on the Likert scale did not differ.

H_{02} hypothesized that residents who have lived in the Pocono Mountains for a longer period of time would have more negative attitudes toward tourism development. More than half of the sample has lived in the Pocono Mountains for more than 18 years.

I conducted an ANOVA on attitudes towards Kalahari and found a significant difference based on residency in the Poconos (F (4, 234) = 2.461, p = .046). A LSD post-hoc test revealed that residents who have lived in the Pocono Mountains less than one year are significantly different than residents who have lived in the Pocono Mountains more than 18 years in wanting the Kalahari Resort to be built (p = .013). The highest percentage of residents (66.7 percent) that said "yes" to wanting Kalahari built in the Pocono Mountains were those who have lived in the area less than one year. Similarly, the lowest percentage of residents (24.3 percent) that said "yes" to wanting Kalahari built in the Poconos were those who have lived in the region more than 18 years. H_{02} is thus supported.

Recall that hypothesis H_{03} hypothesized that residents who live closer to the Kalahari resort site will have more negative attitudes than those who live further from the resort site. In order to determine the physical distance between each resident and the Kalahari Resort, each response to survey question 6, "what city/town do you currently live in?" was coded with a distance range from Pocono Manor, PA (where Kalahari Resort is located). The range of distances included the following: "0 to 2 miles," "2.1 to 5 miles," "5.1 to 10 miles," "10.1 to 15 miles," "15.1 to 20 miles," and "more than 20 miles." Using Google maps, the distance from Pocono Manor to the city stated by each respondent was determined and then allocated to one of the range of distances.

Though there was no statistically significant difference between distance from the resort and general pro-tourism attitudes, distance from the resort and pro-Kalahari attitudes were statistically significant (p = .030). Those residents living farther away from Kalahari Resort were more likely to be pro-Kalahari. The following increasing

trend in appeal of the resort as distance from the resort increases is noted: 15.8 percent of residents within two miles want the resort built in the Poconos, 27 percent of residents within 2.1 to 5 miles said "yes," 33.3 percent within 5.1 to 10 miles said "yes," 75 percent within 10.1 to 15 miles said "yes," 39.5 percent within 15.1 to 20 miles said "yes," and 34.2 percent more than 20 miles away said "yes" to wanting the resort built in the Poconos.

I also tested whether residents that benefit financially from the tourism industry will have more positive attitudes toward tourism development (H_{04}). Of all of the respondents, only 40 people (or 16 percent) either work in the tourism industry or have a household member that works in the tourism industry. Of these respondents, most work for hotels/resorts, shopping malls, ski/snowboard resorts, and outdoor recreational activities.

Surprisingly, there were no statistical differences in attitudes towards rural development between those who have versus have not worked in the tourism industry (e.g., pro-tourism attitudes ($p = .314$) or pro-Kalahari attitudes ($p = .130$)). Attitudes toward Kalahari were actually less positive than expected in a crosstabulation test. This is interesting because even those who benefit from the tourism industry are not as overwhelmingly enthusiastic toward Kalahari Resort. Those who financially benefit do not see big advantages to Kalahari opening over those who do not work in the tourism industry.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Implications

From a general marketing perspective, it is important for businesses to understand their market's needs and perceptions in order to successfully promote to them. As for any tourism-related business in the Pocono Mountains, understanding residents' attitudes is vital. Demographically speaking, the most prominent pro-tourism and pro-Kalahari groups in Monroe County are males, non-Caucasian ethnicities, and individuals with lower education levels. It is predicted that these types of individuals would have the highest positive attitudes toward Kalahari's opening. Not only should Kalahari strive to satisfy the needs of these customer segments, but also focus on creating particular marketing strategies geared toward women, Caucasians, and individuals with higher education levels. These are the groups that held the least favorable attitudes toward Kalahari.

The results of this research have a number of implications for the development of tourist attractions in the Pocono Mountains. First, there seems to be an information gap between resort developers and the community. Almost one third of the Pocono Mountains residents were not aware that the Kalahari Resort & Convention Center was being built in their area. Kalahari materials indicate that it will have the third largest indoor waterpark in the United States when the construction is complete, yet one third of the surrounding community is not aware of its existence. This could result from lack of information and marketing of the resort to the local community. Additionally, of the residents that knew that Kalahari Resort was being built, their responses suggested that they were not entirely convinced that they wanted it to be built. All together, residents were more likely to be indecisive or opposed to Kalahari Resort's opening.

The conclusion from this particular inquiry is that the majority of respondents are not entirely supportive of Kalahari Resort opening within the community. This suggests that Kalahari may be focusing too much of its marketing efforts on those outside of the local community. One marketing implication for Kalahari Resort is the importance of adhering to the community's needs and incorporating the community into its target market. In order for Kalahari Resort to reach full community engagement, they must prevent the creation of a tourism bubble.

Tourism Bubbles

A tourism bubble is a metaphorical bubble that can surround tourists, insulating them from all of the realities of a destination (Ros-Tonen and Werneck 2009). It relates to the tendency of tourists to be physically present in a foreign environment, but socially outside of what the environment has to offer, such as its culture. A tourism bubble is typically created by the tourism industry itself. It keeps tourists contained within an artificially positive rendition of the place being visited.

As previously mentioned, Hawaii's tourism industry in an example of a situation in which tourists may be in a tourism bubble. Tourists who visit Hawaii may be staying in a fancy resort, attending an organized luau, and wearing leis. But this "aloha spirit" is what the tourism industry is providing to the tourists. The tourists will not interact with Native Hawaiians or experience their true culture. This is relevant to marketers because it affects resident and tourist interactions.

For the Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, this tourism bubble is likely being promoted by an emphasis on the safari theme and the focus on an all-inclusive

resort. A family that travels from New York City to spend a long weekend at Kalahari can engage in enough activities at the resort to keep them occupied for the entire weekend. The parents might spend one day in the waterpark with their children and the next day golfing while their kids participate in an outdoor camp. With unlimited activities within Kalahari, the family is not likely to explore the surrounding area. They are not likely to interact with locals or explore the Pocono Mountains' natural environment. They could be anywhere in the world. Kalahari is creating an alternative reality that is different than NYC.

Recommendations for Kalahari

In order to build a positive presence in the Pocono Mountain community, Kalahari Resort & Convention Center should consider engaging in the following activities:

1. Open resort facilities to the community

2. Sponsor community events

3. Allocate space in the convention center to local businesses when needed

4. Hire local managers

5. Incorporate the residents' most important factors into the resort's business plan

Over 50 percent of respondents believed that opening the Kalahari Resort to the community/public was an important factor for resort developers to consider when building. If Kalahari Resort sequesters visitors within its facility and they exclude residents from being able to participate in any of the activities (such as the waterpark),

more negative attitudes might accrue among residents. In order to alleviate the effects

caused by a tourism bubble, Kalahari should target some of its marketing efforts toward

community members as well. It is recommended that Kalahari provide residents in

Monroe County (or within a certain radius from the resort) with an exclusive yearly

membership to the resort's facilities at a reduced rate. Offering the facilities to the public

will strengthen the relationship between Kalahari and the local community and allow

tourists and locals to interact.

Hosting attraction-sponsored special events for the community will help

emphasize the benefits Kalahari can provide residents and help promote more favorable

attitudes toward the resort. For example, in order to emphasize the resort's

environmental initiatives, it can sponsor a special program event at the Pocono

Environmental Education Center. Kalahari could also sponsor a local arts festival or a

sports event such as a local marathon in order to foster a sense of community.

Another recommendation is to market the convention center as a place for local

businesses to hold conferences and events. Meetings, Christmas parties, and training

sessions are a few examples of events that Kalahari's Convention Center could provide to

local businesses. Local businesses could be placed with top priority for conference/

meeting room space to ensure long-lasting relationships with Kalahari.

In addition, I would recommend that Kalahari hire local managers who better

understand the Pocono Mountain area and culture. This will allow for better marketing

communication between Kalahari and the community. As mentioned in Tsiotsou et al.'s

study in Brazil, gaps in tourism promotion are usually due to lack of direction from

public managers, as well as the avoidance of local residents' attitudes. Kalahari's managers must be proactive and involved in community affairs.

Additionally, competition poses a threat to resort and tourism developers. My results show that Camelback Mountain was the most familiar tourist attraction in the Pocono Mountains. As Camelback constructs its own mountain lodge and indoor waterpark, Kalahari faces major competition. Again, aligning its marketing strategies with residents' needs could encourage the local community to support the Kalahari resort. Kalahari must effectively market to residents or else the residents will fall back on Camelback Mountain. Camelback Mountain already has a positive reputation, and residents are more familiar with the resort and its benefits to the community.

The majority of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that tourism is environmentally sustainable, yet almost three quarters of respondents agreed that preserving the natural environment is an important factor for resort/tourism developers to consider when building in the Pocono Mountains. Once again, residents seem to be confused as to whether Pocono Mountain resorts' engage in sustainable environmental practices. As previously mentioned, environmental impacts are a huge disadvantage in rural tourism. Minimizing environmental impacts and carrying out sustainable practices might encourage more positive attitudes toward rural tourism. A recommendation to Kalahari Resort, Camelback Lodge, and other tourist attractions would be to provide the community with information and facts regarding the environmentally sustainable practices that they are engaged in.

It is also important for developers to consider which factors are most important to residents when building. In the Pocono Mountains, the most important factors are

creating jobs (86.8 percent agreed), preserving the natural environment (73.6 percent agreed), developing the resort appearance to fit into the Pocono Mountain landscape (64.8 percent agreed), and minimizing traffic on local roads (64.8 percent agreed). Cultural programming, giving back to the community, creating high-paying jobs, and managing crime are also important factors developers in the Pocono Mountains need to consider when building. Specific factors might be more relevant to certain demographic groups than others. Minimizing traffic on local roads, for instance, might mitigate the negative feelings of those residents within two miles of the resort. Ensuring that the resort blends in well with the Pocono Mountain landscape might induce positive feelings for those residents who have a passion for preserving the natural beauty of the mountains. It is also important for Pocono Mountain resorts to alleviate negative feelings with those living closest to the resort and those who have lived in the area the longest. Both segments expressed more negative attitudes toward Kalahari.

Destination Image

Looking away from specific tourist attractions and towards more general tourism in the Pocono Mountains, the Pocono Mountain Visitor Bureau must understand the importance of branding the Pocono Mountains. Using a holistic marketing approach, creating a destination image can be extremely useful.

Destination image is defined as an individual's awareness of a destination made up of the cognitive evaluation of experiences, learning, emotions, and perceptions (Echtner and Ritchie 2003). But tourists aren't the only ones with a perceived destination image; residents have a perceived image of their hometown. Once a tourist arrives, local

residents from an area influence the experiences a destination has to offer. Local residents work in resorts, restaurants, stores and other tourist visiting spots. The image the local residents have about their hometown will generally be reflected in conversations and encounters with tourists. If a tourist's experience does not match or exceed his/her expectations, he/she may give a bad review of that area when they return home. Over time this may negatively influence tourist perceptions and the image of the tourist area (Chhabra 2012).

When local residents and tourists have the same image about a place, one might assume that marketing strategies have accurately represented views important to both groups. When there are differences in destination image between these two groups, perception gaps exist about tourist attractions in that area. The information gaps may be helpful to tourism marketers because marketing strategies could be improved to better reflect the experience tourists have while visiting.

As the tourism industry grows, competition for tourists will also rise. As more development occurs, tourists will have more destinations to choose from. In today's society, individuals have higher disposable incomes as well as more transportation options to travel to destinations, giving them a means to choose from a wider variety of places. Marketers of the Pocono Mountains are positioning the destination as the "Indoor Waterpark Capital of the East." Verifying that this is a compelling positioning is critical so that strategic marketing of the destination can more accurately influence the decision-making process of tourists.

Final Thoughts

The Pocono Mountains is well on its way to becoming a destination hot spot in Pennsylvania. In order to maximize profits and long-term growth in the area, tourist attraction owners must incorporate the community into its business plan. Residents' attitudes and perceptions of tourism in their area will impact the success of rural tourism – from the attractiveness of the property, to the tourists' experiences, and the overall vitality of the area. In order to produce more positive attitudes, resort owners must reach out to the community, keep them apprised of new tourism development activities, and close any information gaps that might exist, including economic, social, and cultural benefits to the community and environmental sustainability initiatives. Developing marketing strategies that meet the needs of both residents and tourists can be a major gain for the tourism industry.

Appendices

Appendix A

POCONO MOUNTAIN TOURISM SURVEY

*Please fill out this survey **only if you are a resident of Monroe County** in the Pocono Mountains, and at least 18 years of age. Chelsea Lansdowne, a Penn State University student completing her thesis in the Schreyer Honors College, is conducting this study. This research focuses on rural development and tourism attractions in the Poconos. As an incentive for participating, you will receive a $1 lottery scratch-off card. All information collected will be kept confidential. Please note that your participation in this survey is voluntary and you may end the survey at any time. Thank you for participating in this study!*

1. Please write down what you believe are the three most recognized tourist attractions in the Pocono Mountains, with number 1 being the most recognized.
   1. _____   2. _____   3. _____

2. Were you born in the Pocono Mountains?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

3. How long have you lived in the Pocono Mountains?
   ☐ Less than a year   ☐ 1-5 years   ☐ 6-10 years   ☐ 11-18 years   ☐ More than 18 years

4. If you moved to the Poconos in the last 10 years, **why did you move to the Poconos**? Please rate the following factors on a scale from "Not Very Important" to "Very Important." If you moved here more than 10 years ago, skip to question 5. If you lived here your entire life, skip to question 6.

	Not Very Important	Not Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Important	Very Important	N/A
There was a lower cost of living.						
There were better job opportunities.						
It was a peaceful area.						
My job transferred me here.						
My family lived in this area.						
There were more outdoor recreational activities here.						
The city life was too hectic.						
The mountains were a beautiful place.						
My significant other lived here.						
I attended college in this area.						
I wanted more land/property.						
I wanted to raise a family here.						

5. From where did you move? Please write the city and state: _____

6. What city/town do you currently live in? _____

7. Do you or another household member currently work in the tourism industry?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

8. If you responded "yes" to the previous question, in what service sector do you and/or your household member work?

- [ ] Airline
- [ ] Taxicab
- [ ] Hotel/Resort
- [ ] Casino
- [ ] Sports venue
- [ ] Water park
- [ ] Ski/Snowboard Resort
- [ ] Restaurant/Food service
- [ ] Shopping mall/outlets
- [ ] Music venue
- [ ] Outdoor recreational activities
- [ ] Other:_____

9. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements by putting an "X" in one box for each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I believe there should be more tourist attractions in the Poconos.					
Tourism in the Poconos disrupts my lifestyle.					
Tourism has reduced the outdoor recreational opportunities in the Poconos.					
My family has financially benefitted from the tourism industry.					
I am happy when tourists choose to vacation in the Poconos.					
Tourism causes more land to be developed.					
I enjoy interacting with tourists.					
The city government addresses the needs of the residents.					
The city government should allow more tourism in the Poconos.					
Tourism in the Poconos is environmentally sustainable.					
Tourists are important to the community.					
Fracking will benefit the Poconos area.					
The Poconos is less rural than it was 10 years ago.					
The Poconos is a serene place to live.					
The benefits of tourism outweigh the negative consequences of tourism development.					
Tourism in my community has increased my standard of living.					
Tourism enhances the Poconos' culture.					
Tourism helps boost the Poconos' economy.					
The tourism industry enhances the Poconos' natural beauty.					
Casinos are a good choice for the Poconos.					

10. Are you aware of the Kalahari Resort and Convention Center that is currently being built in the Poconos?
[ ] Yes   [ ] No

By early 2015, Kalahari Resorts will be opening the 3rd largest safari themed resort and convention center in the United States. The $350 million, 150-acre complex will be built in Pocono Manor, PA (Monroe County). The first phase of construction will include 457 guest rooms, 18 meeting rooms, a 300,000 sq. ft. convention center, spa, salon, kids camp, 18-hole golf course, 100,000 sq. ft. indoor water park, entertainment center (including mini golf, bowling, and arcade), seven dining facilities, and an outdoor water park. Excavation was started on October 1, 2013.

11. Please check all of the following emotions you have when thinking about Kalahari Resorts opening in the Poconos.

- [ ] Content
- [ ] Excited
- [ ] Optimistic
- [ ] Pleased
- [ ] Interested
- [ ] Proud
- [ ] Confused
- [ ] Intrigued
- [ ] Happy
- [ ] Eager
- [ ] Worried
- [ ] Afraid
- [ ] Angry
- [ ] Shocked
- [ ] Disappointed
- [ ] Sad
- [ ] Disgusted
- [ ] Annoyed
- [ ] Hurt
- [ ] Frustrated

12. Overall, do you want Kalahari Resorts to be built in the Poconos?
[ ] Yes   [ ] No   [ ] Mixed feelings

13. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements by putting an "X" in one box for each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The area will benefit from Kalahari.					
Kalahari will ruin the image of the Poconos.					
I want to visit Kalahari when it's built.					

14. Please check the following factor(s) you think are important for resort/tourism developers to consider when building in the Poconos.
- [ ] Create jobs
- [ ] Develop resort appearance to fit into Pocono landscape
- [ ] Open facility to local community/public
- [ ] Minimize traffic on local roads
- [ ] Preserve natural environment
- [ ] Provide indoor recreational activities
- [ ] Provide outdoor recreational activities
- [ ] Other: _____

15. What is your gender?   [ ] Male   [ ] Female   [ ] Prefer not to specify

16. What is your ethnic background?
- [ ] African-American
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] Caucasian
- [ ] Hispanic
- [ ] Other: _____

17. What is your age?
- [ ] Less than 21 years old
- [ ] 21 to 30 years old
- [ ] 31 to 40 years old
- [ ] 41 to 50 years old
- [ ] 51 to 60 years old
- [ ] More than 60 years old

18. What is the highest level of education you have attained?
- [ ] Less than high school
- [ ] High School/GED
- [ ] Some college
- [ ] Bachelors Degree
- [ ] Masters Degree
- [ ] Doctorate Degree

19. What is your total annual household income?
- [ ] Less than $40,000
- [ ] $40,000 to $59,000
- [ ] $60,000 to $79,000
- [ ] $80,000 to $99,000
- [ ] $100,000 to $150,000
- [ ] More than $150,000

You have completed the survey. Thank you for participating!

(If you have any questions, please direct them to Chelsea Lansdowne – cll5229@psu.edu.)

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Academic Vita

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Education and Academic Honors

Pennsylvania State University
Schreyer Honors College, University Park, PA

- Smeal College of Business; Bachelor of Arts candidate in Marketing, 2014
- Schreyer Academic Excellence Scholarship
- Study Abroad to Fiji: Summer 2012, New Zealand and Australia: Winter 2013
- Notary Public for Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 2009

Work Experience

Management Trainee Intern – Enterprise Holdings, Mount Pocono, PA, 2013

- Excelled in customer service; Branch ESQi score increased
- Top performer in Additional Revenue Per Day
- Sold rental car protection products; Ranked 40/230 on employee matrix
- Marketed to accounts, local businesses, and community
- Managed and maintained a 110 rental car fleet

Retail Sales Associate – J. Crew, Tannersville, PA, 2010 to 2014

- Customer service and sales; General promotion and sales of products
- Excelled in sales; top third seller in store, qualified as top seller in district

Activities

Schreyer Honors College Student Council, 2010 to 2014

- Student Council Executive Board; Homecoming Chair 2013 to 2014
- Social Committee, 2010 to 2014
- Recruitment Committee – SHC tour guide, 2010 to 2014
- Service Committee, 2011 to 2014

Beta Gamma Sigma – International Honor Society for Business, 2012

Penn State Marketing Association, 2013

- Marketing Research Division

SHC THON, 2011 to 2014