

**CONVERTED RAILROAD TRAILS:
THE IMPACT ON ADJACENT PROPERTY**

by

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B.S. in ED., 1981, PERU STATE COLLEGE

M.S. in ED., 1985, KEARNEY STATE COLLEGE

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

Landowner opposition has prevented the development of many railroad rights-of-way into recreational trails across the country. Much of this opposition is based on the belief that the proposed trail will have a negative impact on their adjacent property. Issues such as trespassing, theft, litter, noise, loss of privacy, and lowered property values are major concerns for landowners.

The purpose of this research is to document the changes in adjacent landowner perception about converted railroad trails. The focus is placed on the comparison between current owner attitudes with their concerns before trail development. Some of the factors that impact adjacent property, such as crime and property valuation, are examined. Supporting information is gathered from several professionals including: trail managers, conservation officers, law enforcement agents, county commissioners, appraisers, and real estate agents.

In this study, adjacent landowners are surveyed from two sites in Minnesota, the Root River and the Luce Line Trails. The results indicate that the anticipated concerns before trail conversion are greater than the problems actual experienced by owners after trail development. This reflects an increased desirability rating over time for these two trails.

The information gathered in this study could be used by planners to reassure landowners adjacent to proposed rail-trails. The support of local residents is crucial in developing additional recreational trail across the country.

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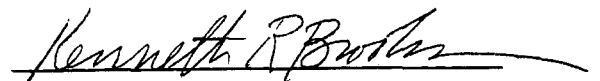
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