



Circular Economy and Tourism Framework: A Rural Community Case

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Abstract

Tourism plays an important role in the United States, including, in many rural communities' where tourism is an economic lifeline due to the employment potential as well as the social, cultural, and environmental implications. However, the environment is in a constant state of decline that necessitates transformation in how activities are conducted (Panwar, 2020), including tourism-related activities. One proposed approach that has risen in prominence and can be applied to tourism, is the circular economy (Lacy & Rutqvist, 2015). The transformation to sustainable tourism requires a cross-disciplinary approach (Falcone, 2019) with the application of circular principles: new models of production and consumption; using biodegradable products for guests; creation of cultural values; and greening the tourism industry (Pan et al., 2018). This study contributes to recent literature on tourism and the circular economy, and implications for sustainable tourism in rural communities of the United States. The purpose of the study was to capture resident and visitor perceptions around the four pillars (sustainable management; socioeconomic impacts; cultural impacts; environmental impacts) developed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) which are used as a fundamental framework for rural communities to become a sustainable tourism destination. Findings from this study are presented within the circular economy and tourism framework.

Keywords: consumption, cross-disciplinary, socioeconomic, sustainability, visitor