

Location:

National Pike
Markleysburg, PA

County:

Fayette

Description:

Business expansion loan

Total Project Cost:

\$100,000



Wilderness Voyageurs Outfitters



People:

“The people who were on our raft tours 20 years ago are on bike tours with us today,” says Ohiopyle entrepreneur Eric Martin. That’s a good thing. But as Wilderness Voyageurs Outfitters’ guided bike tour business exploded into the nation’s largest tour operator of rail trail bike tours, the currents of cycles and rafts around their base of operations began to conflict. “Trying to work and load vehicles [with bikes and supplies] around the rafting business, in and out, it was incredibly inefficient,” says Eric, “not to mention not very customer-friendly.”

Progress:

Eric needed a new base for the bike tour business, and after six months of searching, he found an underutilized repair garage 10 miles from Ohiopyle. Having built his businesses using a half dozen loans

from The Progress Fund, that’s where he turned for \$98,000 toward the purchase of the garage.

Impact:

Now Wilderness Voyageurs Outfitters’ 200 bikes are no longer bumping into the rafts. They’re under one roof (instead of three separate ones), with a maintenance shop and enough garage bays to simultaneously stock four tour support vehicles. The new facility cuts in half the time needed to prepare for a bike trip. “We are getting close to paying the mortgage in just the efficiency savings,” Eric says. “We’re going to build a really large business around this, and it will be headquartered here.”

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