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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bicycling = Healthy Citizens and Healthy Wisconsin State Economy

Madison, WI. February 2010 – For decades, the healthcare industry has reminded young and old alike that bicycling is good for the mind, body, and soul. Now a University of Wisconsin study confirms that, among outdoor activities, bicycling delivers healthcare costs savings and significant economic benefits as well.

The report, produced by the **CHANGE** program of the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at UW-Madison, estimates bicycling's annual state-wide economic benefit to exceed \$924 million. \$533 million is accounted for by direct (consumer) spending while \$391 million is due to indirect effects, such as purchases and services that serve cyclists. When you factor in Wisconsin's robust bicycle manufacturing, sales, and service industries, cycling generates well over \$1.5 billion in total economic impact each year. Compare this to Wisconsin Dept. of Tourism annual figures for snowmobiling (\$250 million) and deer hunting (\$926 million).

The Study's authors, Maggie Grabow, Melissa Whited, and Micah Hahn point out that, "49% of Wisconsin's residents enjoy bicycling for recreation, placing it among the most popular outdoor activities in the state. State residents generate approximately \$388 million in economic activity while enjoying Wisconsin's extensive network of bicycle trails and scenic country roads."

Wisconsin is recognized by the League of American Bicyclists as one of the top cycling destinations (ranked 2nd in the nation). Non-residents spend approximately 6.4 million days a year cycling in Wisconsin, generating more than \$535 million annually. The bicycling industry accounts for over 13,000 jobs in the state. The study's authors also note that by increasing the number of short trips – too often taken by automobiles – will create a dramatic economic impact on healthcare spending. "Bicycling to work," the trio explains, "could save approximately \$319 million a year from reduced morbidity and health-related costs. Fewer cars on the road would result in a decrease in air pollution..." Pollution reduction would cut associated healthcare costs by \$90 million in Madison and Milwaukee alone.

Eric Schramm, tour director for Bikewisconsin® notes that GRABAAWR®, Bike Northwoods, and SAGBRAW® contribute between \$3.7 to \$6.1 million annually to the state's economy. Most of these dollars are spent in the communities along the route, bringing a much welcomed economic infusion to rural areas across Wisconsin.

For more information and a detailed summary of the CHANGE study, visit the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin's Website at <http://www.bfw.org>. and Click on the 'Education' link

Come enjoy a "vacation on your bike". For more information, contact Mark Evans at 608-843-8412 or email at mark@bikewisconsin.com