The Southern-Urals Road of Health: conception of sport-tourist cluster

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Abstract

The South Urals is the only mountain system in midland of Russia that stretches in the west as far as the borders of the country, this is the territory of Central Russian Plain. West Siberian Plain is its eastern border and steppes of Russia and Kazakhstan are its southern border. More than 30 million people live within a radius of 500 km from the mountains of the South Urals. The population of large cities amounts to 10 million. Growing effective demand for domestic tourism allows to create an all-season recreation center in the South Urals. The possibility of creation of ski centers with ski slopes suitable for world-level competitions is shown.

Keywords: the South Urals, tourism. effective demand, ski centers.
Introduction

Mountains of the Bashkir Urals are suitable for creation of large federal center of mountain-skiing development and mass engaging in the winter types of physical education and sport (Usmanov Yu.I., 2007, 2009).

Creation of network of skiing centers with the vertical drops allowing to conduct the competitions of the world level in the Urals will permit to form the large center of preparation of sportsmen of world and Olympic standard, as well as to create conditions for development of mass mountain-skiing and tourism.

Potential Tourists

The general quantity of potential tourists is highly great.

About 2 million of urban residents live within a radius of 200 km from the designed resort zone, namely Ufa, Sterlitamak, Ishimbay, Salavat, Beloretsk, Magnitogorsk. It is the territory where tourists can arrive without spending the night, so-called "tourists of one day".

More than 10 million of urban residents live within a radius of 500 km, along with the listed regions. They are Chelyabinsk, Yekaterinburg, Perm, Samara, Kazan with a millionth population and a row of metropolises, namely Orenburg, Tolyatti and other cities, that can become the largest "suppliers" of tourists. Total population within a radius of 500 km is about 30 million people. The share of tourists crossing over more than 1000 km, is usually no more than 10% of the total. Therefore tourists from the metropolises of central Russia and from abroad on the first stages of functioning of the City-resort will be substantially less than tourists from nearby cities (Usmanov Yu.I., 2008).

There are rough expert estimates: about 1/3 of population in the world become tourists (with substantial variation by countries). In our case it is about 10 million people. Ratio of tourists spending the night to the number of tourists of one day is very movable, but averages from 10 to 30%. Therefore, the hotel reservation system of the Southern Urals has a carrying capacity of roosting 3 million per year.

Financially Reliable Demand of Population

The analysis of funds spent on tourism has shown that the population of the Republic of Bashkortostan (about 4 million) annually spends on tourism more than 12-14 billion Rub. All types of inbound tourism revenue in the Republic of Bashkortostan give 2-3 billion. Rub, and removal is much higher than the 10-12 billion. Rub. The crisis has not brought in a significant change in this balance (Usmanov Yu.I., 2011, 2013).

An important reason for the misbalance is pent-up demand for tourist services in the Republic of Bashkortostan and Russia as a whole. Opinion polls have shown that the population is willing to spend a part of removal money on rest in the mountains of the Southern Urals; however there are no offers matching the expectations of the emerging middle class.

According to the experts’ opinion the main reasons of weak development of inbound tourism sector are unstable climate of the Ural region, the difficulty in development local routes, lack of efficient instructors and guides and low level of service. The main restrictive factor in developing local tourism is insufficient number of hotels, recreation centers and sanatoria. Econometric estimation of tourist service market functioning in the South Ural cannot accept more than 20 thousand people at a time, while at one foreign small ski resort
there are at least 40 thousand rooms. Obviously, in order to solve this problem, new hotels and recreation centers should be built, the infrastructure should be developed and service should be improved. But it is difficult to attract investors into this sphere as inbound tourism is considered to be a rather cost-based business; the payback period is too long – about 5-8 years.

As practitioners and theorists in the sphere of tourism believe, in the South Ural the market of recreation services of different directions should grow.

Transport Structure

The resort area is located along the highway of Ufa-Beloretsk-Magnitogorsk. Traffic flow is 1 million 980 thousand cars per year (data by Traffic police in the region of Archangelsk, the Republic of Bashkortostan). The Electric Railway of Ufa-Magnitogorsk runs parallel. Along the highway there are three airports: "Ufa" International Airport, the airport of Beloretsk (temporarily closed), and the airport of Magnitogorsk (while several flights per day).

In the city of Ufa major transport Highway site is Federal Highway M5 "Ural", M7 "Volga", R314-R315 Perm -Ufa-Orenburg. From these highways to the resort area is less than 100 km, which makes it attractive to transit passengers.

The scheme of the sport-resort cluster “the road of health” is presented below.

So far the cluster has been implemented only on one site: in the region of Abzakovo-Yaktykul (Bannoe). This initially ski resort has been transformed into the all-season resort by Magnitogorsk metallurgical industrial complex nearby the city and the airport of Magnitogorsk. According to independent experts, the population of the city of Magnitogorsk actively uses these centers: attendance ratio exceeds 1, i.e. with a population of the city of Magnitogorsk of approximately 500 thousand people attendances far exceed this figure. Analysis of the regions represented at the Mount Skiing Center (hereinafter MSC) shows that residents of the Urals and the Volga region of Central Russia, also visit these resorts.

The western slopes of the Urals Mountains are virtually unexplored from the direction of Ufa, Orenburg and other cities of the Republic of Bashkortostan and Russia. We therefore propose to develop three platforms at a distance of 100-120-150 km from Ufa, where there are mountains as well as an initial infrastructure (roads, gas and electricity) and it is possible to arrange large MSCs and grounds for all-season vacation spots.

These platforms are “Ulu-Tau” in the region of Arkhangelsk (the Republic of Bashkortostan), as well as Mountain ridge “Zilmerdak” and Mountain “Small Yaman-Tau” and Mountain “Yaman-Tau” in the region of Beloretsk (the Republic of Bashkortostan).

Location of these platforms near each other will allow creating a single multi-purpose center of the City-resort format for so large tourist-and-recreational area. The Côte d’Azur in France, the structure of the big Sochi, the resort area of Kaliningrad, with its center in Svetlogorsk, the resort city of Jurmala, Riga, and many other health-resort-recreation zones are organized quite so. There is no such a city in the Urals.
Table 1. The climatic features of the resort areas of western and eastern side of the South Urals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters of climatic conditions (average of years of data)</th>
<th>West-Arkhangelsk</th>
<th>East-Magnitogorsk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The number of sunny days (+variable cloudiness)</td>
<td>260 - 270</td>
<td>280 - 290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The average precipitation (mm/year)</td>
<td>650 - 700</td>
<td>450 - 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The average height of snow cover, sm</td>
<td>45 - 60</td>
<td>30-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The average supply of water in the snow layer, mm Mm</td>
<td>150 - 200</td>
<td>100- 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The duration of frost-free period, the average summer and winter temperatures are similar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ulu-Tau Ridge**

Ulutau Ridge peaks of 473.8 m and 437.3 m proposed to develop are the closest mountains to the city of Ufa, where it is possible to create a full-fledged ski centers.

It is defined as follows:
- vertical drop from the mountains tops to the fields of outrun out is around 250-300 m. So, the level of River Basu is170 meters.

Slopes for routes from peak to foot is from 1.5 to 3.5 km. The length of the slope on which it is possible to arrange routes of various steepness and complexity is about 5 km. In general, the area suitable for creating comfortable routes can be estimated roughly at around 8-10 square meters.

For the mountain-forest slopes 5-10% alienation of area is environmentally safe. Area routes are within 0.5-1.0 sq.km or 50-100 hectares. At the width of the route in 30 m it is possible to build 16-30 km of skiing routes.

By international standards, a skier needs to 180-200 m. The potential capacity of Ulu-tau mountainside is over 5500 skiers at a time.

This would put Ulu-tau MSC alongside with the best MSC of the Southern Urals (see table № 2Appendix).

During construction of the MSC on Ulu-tau Ridge it is necessary to take into account the following:

Ulu-Tau MSC becomes the catching symmetric resort area for residents of the Cis-Ural region and the Volga region, en route to the resort area of Magnitogorsk MSC. Therefore the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the whole complex should be, at least, no worse than in Magnitogorsk. Otherwise the second time tourists will travel by.

So, the western slope of the Urals region (the region of Arkhangelsk and the western part of the region of Beloretsk (according to meteorological data of weather tracking station "Inzer") is more convenient for creating MSC than the east side of the Urals near Magnitogorsk.

All this points to the need to create symmetrical resort area on more populated and industrialized western slope of the Southern Urals.

Mountain River Basu flows at the foot of Ulu-Tau Ridge. In its valley there is a comfortable platform for creation of water storage reservoir and year-round recreation and entertainment complex, which will allow better use of infrastructure, regardless of the time of year, including hotels and catering establishments
Zilmerdak Ridge - Usman-Gali Village

This cluster is located in the northwestern part of the region of Beloretsk. The territory of the cluster is a compact rectangular area on Zilmerdak Ridge bounded by the following points (see map):

- intersection of the highway of Ufa-Inzer-Beloretsk and roads towards Zuyakovo village;
- Zuyachka River - the road up to Zuyakovo village;
- from Zuyakovo village – Inzer River - Resort Assy - Inzer village;
- the highway of Ufa – Inzer-Beloretsk

Total area is about 400 sq km, which is slightly larger, but comparable to the "Abzakovo-Yakty-Kul" cluster (about 200 sq km).

The territory has numerous natural sites that can become the basis for the formation of the major tourist “attractions”, they are:

- skiing, because the vertical drop "Zilmerdak Ridge - Valley of Zuyachka River reaches 480-500 m, which is greater than Metalurg-Magnitka MSC on Lake Yaktykul. Vertical drop over 300 m are available around Resort Assy (Large Arch Ridge, Large Stone Ridge) (see table 2);
- salt medicinal waters of Yurmash River. Only a small portion of salt water intrusion is used in Resort Assy. The rest of water is lost. Building a Spa complex (aquapark, outdoor pools, whirlpool, saunas of various configuration settings, etc.) with salt medicinal waters is reasonable. Such complex would enjoy great popularity among all segments of the population;
- rafting on Inzer River. It is possible to arrange 1-2-3 day rafting on Inzer River from Tyulma down during summer season;
- Zuyachka River can be 1 or 2 ‘s field crammed with the beautiful mountain lake-reservoir for all water sports;
- cluster area has many cliffs, forests, streams and other places where there may be many types of Scout summer camps, "Indian", "historical", "mystical", etc. under the strict control of conservation of the environment quality (Lebedev A.I., 2013, 2014, 2015; Usmanov Yu.I., Zdanovich G.B., 2013; Usmanov Yu.I., 2014).

This area has all kinds of communications and energy sources. A high voltage POWER LINE and pipeline get through the cluster. This territory is located on the highway of Ufa-Inzer-Beloretsk, and is about 100 km far away from the city of Ufa. It is a 1.5 hour drive along the picturesque highway. From the southern group of cities it can be reached by the highway of Sterlitamak-Krasnousolsk-Arhangelsk-Inzer (100-140 km).

Nearby there is also a railway. In the cities of Beloretsk, Mezhgorye and the villages of Inzer and Arkhangelsk there are highly skilled teams of construction workers with the appropriate base. This will significantly reduce construction costs of the complex.

Mountain Maly Yaman-Tau

Mountain Maly Yaman-Tau is one of the best mountains for the setting up MSC in the Southern Urals (see table 2). Vertical drop is up to 680 m and the potential length of the slopes allows to create routes that meet the criteria of the world championships on all types of ski competitions, except speed skiing. Highway and railway are in close proximity to the mountain. A high voltage POWER LINE and pipeline are laid through the mountain.

Creation of large hotel network, as well as other leisure (aqua park, etc.) is hampered by lack of adequate sites for construction. Therefore, it is advisable to use bases near Ulu-Tau
Ridge and Zilmerdak Ridge as well as convenient sites of Mezhgorye.

The city of Mezhgorye and Mountain Yamantau. Currently, the city of Mezhgorye is located in the territory of the Southern Urals nature reserve and has the status of the settlements, where entrance is restricted.

At the same time, the outskirts of the city, as no other region in the Southern Urals, are repleted with slopes that are suitable for the sports of the higher achievements.

Due to the fact that the city of Mezhgorye falls into the category of "single" with complex perspectives of development we consider it appropriate to discuss the possibility of conversion combining special functions and creating a wholesale sports center of the higher achievements with a pronounced military-patriotic slant on its bases.

Mountain Yamantau is the highest mountain in the Southern Urals (1640 m a.s.l.), suitable for the formation of the FIS WORLD CUP slalom and speed skiing. Below Mountain Yamantau there is the city of Mezhgorye (formerly village Kuzyelga). There are 6 mountains more than 1000 m (400-600 m vertical drops) nearby.

**Broadening the Base of Skiing and Snowboarding After Exploring the New Msc in the Southern Urals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSC</th>
<th>Distance from Ufa</th>
<th>Vertical drop</th>
<th>Length of routes, km</th>
<th>Max. number simultaneously on the route</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ulutau Ridge, the region of Arkhangelsk (the Republic of Bashkortostan)</td>
<td>120 km</td>
<td>300 m</td>
<td>30 km</td>
<td>10 000 per.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zilmerdak Ridge, the region of Beloretsk (the Republic of Bashkortostan)</td>
<td>140 km</td>
<td>530 m</td>
<td>45 km</td>
<td>20 000 per.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Maly Yaman-Tau, the region of Beloretsk (the Republic of Bashkortostan)</td>
<td>170 km</td>
<td>680 m</td>
<td>40 km</td>
<td>12 000 per.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resort Assy MSC, Beloretsk region of the Republic of Bashkortostan</td>
<td>180 km</td>
<td>300 m</td>
<td>13 km</td>
<td>6 700 per.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>About 300 km</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

So, it is possible to create a chain of ski resorts with the world-class skiing along the highway and railway of UFA – Beloretsk –Magnitogorsk. The total length of the routes is about 300 km. Capacity is up to 50 thousand people at a time.

The Southern Urals chain of MSC of international circuit on the bases of which can be built an application to host the winter Olympic Games can be formed together with the existing Mratkino MSC (the city of Beloretsk), MSC, Abzakovo Metallurg-Magnitogorsk MSC (Lake Bannoye).
References


