

Building Partnership

Creation of a Water Amusement Trail on the River Bodrog and its Tributaries - SKHU/1601/1.1/038

Press Release

The Aggtelek National Park Administration and the Municipality of Oborín, Slovakia have submitted a successful project application to the call for projects, published as part of the Interreg V-A Slovakia - Hungary Cooperation Programme, aimed at increasing the popularity of the border region and at developing quality tourism based on joint natural and cultural values.

The project entitled "**Creation of a water amusement trail on the river Bodrog and its tributaries**" (SKHU/1601/1.1/038) was awarded a non-refundable grant of € 2.612 million.

Water tourism has been active for a long time on the river Bodrog and its tributaries, especially on the 48-km-long section of the river between the state border and the city of Tokaj, as well as the canals of the area Bodrogzug [Bodrog corner], with 14-15,000 estimated visitors annually. On the Slovak side, of the five tributaries of the river Bodrog, only the rivers Laborec and Latorica are appropriate for navigating small vessels. As a natural green corridor, the river Bodrog connects the two special protection areas covered by the Ramsar Agreement; one is situated along the river Laborec, Slovakia, while the other is the area of Bodrogzug in Hungary. **The multitude of natural values offers an attractive, multi-day outdoor experience to the visitors.**

The aim of this joint Hungarian-Slovak project, developed between 2017 and 2019, was to develop a **comprehensive attraction package based on active eco-tourism** and the corresponding infrastructure on an 80-km-long cross-border section of river Bodrog and its tributaries between Tokaj, Hungary and Oborín, Slovakia, with its elements complementing the nearby touristic attractions (Tokaj wine region, region of Zemplén, castles, etc.).

In the project, we significantly increased the length of **waterways** in Bodrogzug available for lovers of water sports - by cleaning the canals and establishing locks and docks. In the project, 3.5 km of waterways were deepened, 12 locks were established in Bodrogzug, 4 classified docks were created on the Hungarian part of the river Bodrog and another 4 in Slovakia on the rivers Laborec and Bodrog. The latter facilities shall join the national river docking point network, developed by the Hungarian Canoeing Federation.

We established **bicycle and horse-riding trails** on both sides of the border - more than 32 km in Hungary and 12 km in Slovakia. On the trails, 14 birdwatching towers, 10 sheds and horse-riding stops, outdoor wooden tables and benches, more than 20 fireplaces and approx. 100 information boards and signs enrich the experience of the visitors of this area of wonderful natural values.

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Visitors of the area may gather further experience in the 5 newly created information and presentation centres:

At the navigation base in Zalkod, we installed a fishing exhibition, with an active fishing presentation, with the aim to present fishing - one of the professions with the longest tradition in the area of Bodrogköz - to the visitors. In the restored building in Zalkod, on the bank of the stream Zsaró-ér, there is a campsite (with yurts, fireplaces, exterior toys), lavatories and toilets available for the water tour participants. The area of Bodrogköz preserved the lifestyle, the natural values and the traditional professions connected to the rich natural resources - including fishing and beekeeping - from the arrival of Hungarian tribes to the Carpathian basin to the end of the 19th century.

In Oborín, Slovakia, the newly established village museum presents the fishing traditions of the village and serves as a starting point for the long and short nature trails established for the visitors as part of the project.

The beekeeping exhibition and therapeutic service point established in Szegi, Hungary, on the bank of the Bodrog present the ancient beekeeping traditions and provides healing services exploiting the bees. The aim of the exhibition is to popularise beekeeping, especially among school pupils and students, to eradicate any negative presumptions associated with the bees and - last, but not least - to popularise healthy Hungarian honey, produced in a natural environment. One of the natural therapies of respiratory diseases and allergies is to use beehive air for therapy, which is possible at this visitor centre.

The village museum at the Long Forest near Sátoraljaújhely, Hungary, shall be a stop of the water, bicycle and horse-riding trails; moreover, we provide field activities for the visiting pupils and students. At the Long Forest National Nature Reserve, the village museum situated 100 m from the river Bodrog, may be a starting point of various organised - cycling, horse riding or pedestrian - tours.

At the educational and visitor centre established in the centre of Sárospatak, an interactive nature conservation exhibition is open to the public. The exhibits, interactive elements and various digital devices show the touristic and natural attractions of the territory.

The complexity of the project is evident also from the fact that multiple touristic service providers were included in the project to operate the procured assets - bicycles, boats, ships - and the renovated real estates.

On the completely renovated Internet site of the area, bodrogzug.hu, the interested may find information about the tours in the area and the touristic and natural values of the project - in Hungarian, English and Slovak.

The National Park Administration shall present the results of the project at a conference open to the media, with Dr. István Nagy, minister of agriculture of Hungary as a special guest.

Further information:

Phone: +36-48-506-000; +36-30-370-1333

E-mail: info.anp@t-online.hu ; projektiroda.anpi@gmail.com

This project was implemented within the Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cross-border Co-operation Programme. Details of the programme are available at www.skhu.eu. Information provided herein does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union.