

Reconnaissance Survey for Mountain Biking Trails in Munsiyari, Uttarakhand

22 - 28 October, 2014

supported by

Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation

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*Inviting the Mountain biking fraternity
to experience the incredible biking
potential of Uttarakhand, India*

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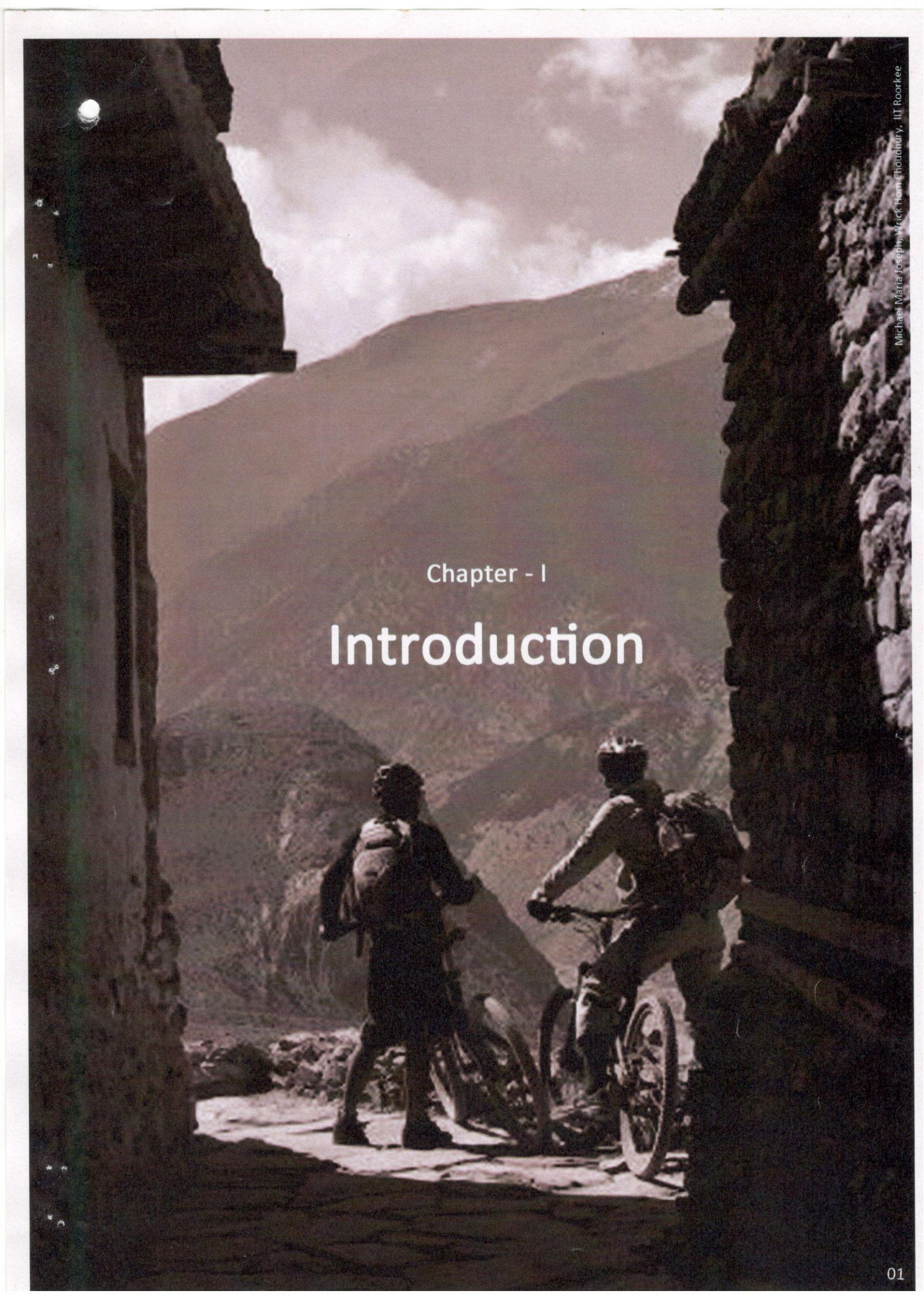
And last but not least, hearty thanks to the friends and family who provided support, editing help and feedback throughout the project.

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A photograph of two cyclists in a mountain pass. The cyclists are silhouetted against a bright, hazy mountain landscape. They are standing in a narrow, rocky path that appears to be a mountain pass or a small bridge. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall tone is warm and atmospheric.

Chapter - I

Introduction

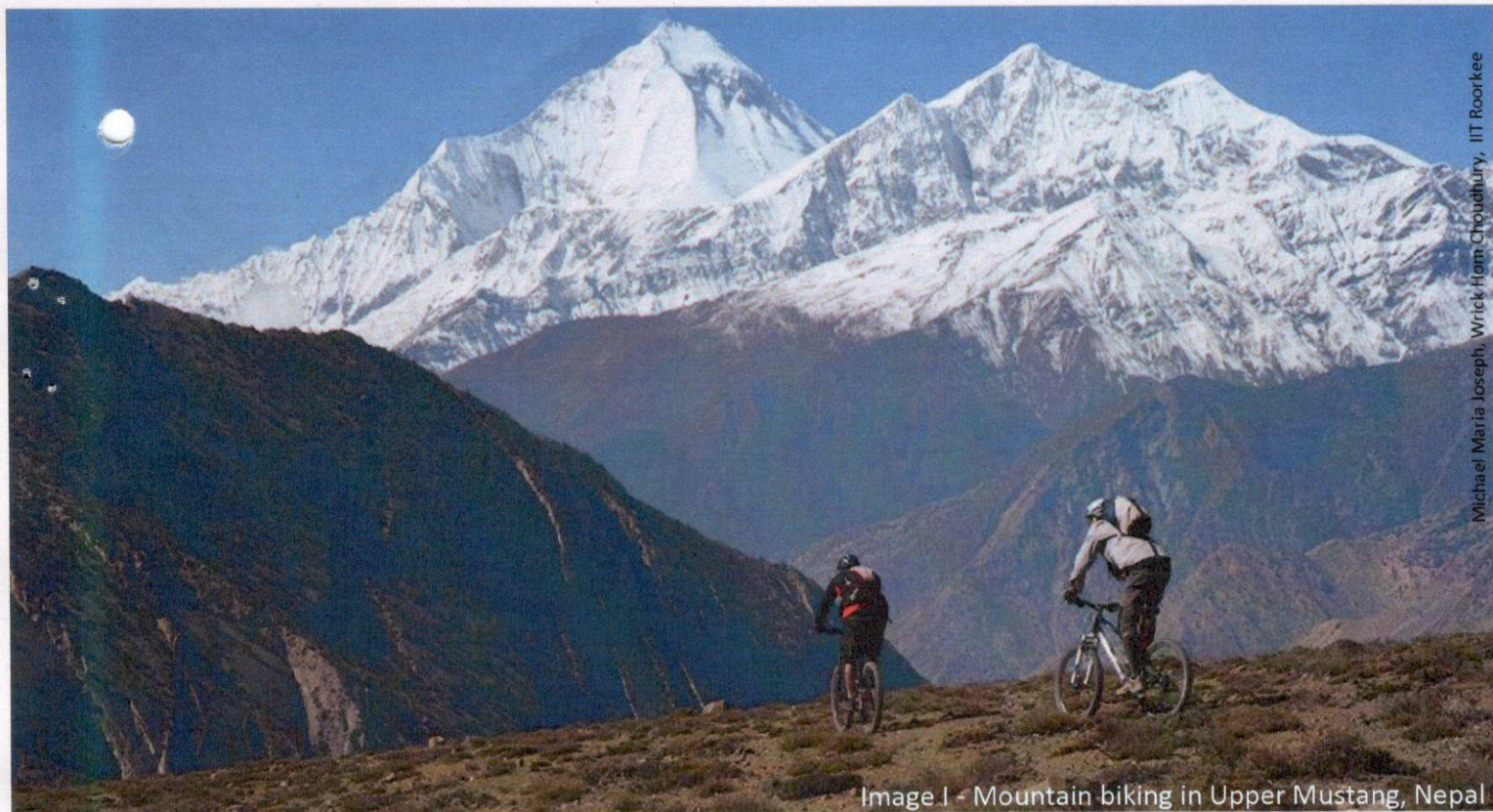


Image 1 - Mountain biking in Upper Mustang, Nepal

1.1 General Introduction

This report is developed majorly through the understandings generated through a reconnaissance survey and provides an assessment of the potential of Munsiyari in Pithoragarh district of Indian state of Uttarakhand to be developed as a mountain bike destination and its possibilities of trail network development. It provides recommendations on how to best the idea to develop Mountain Biking in Munsiyari and how can it be carried forward through various stages of development. The report also touches many general aspects of mountain biking and adventure tourism development.

Mountain Biking is one of the most popular adventure sports in the world and is a fast-growing segment of adventure tourism market. Its appeal lies in its fitness benefits, challenge, opportunity to experience nature, and social aspects. In particular, destination mountain biking is one of the engines fueling this growth. Participation in mountain biking has increased markedly over the last decade worldwide, and has resulted in the emergence of a number of sub-disciplines and the development of mountain bike specific infrastructure and events. The revenue generated by these facilities has proven to be significant, particularly where they are located within proximity to unique and scenic destinations. Mountain bike tourism emerged largely as a result of the motivation of dedicated mountain bikers to experience new terrain, but has grown to include travel for participation in competition, festivals and skills training, as well as the incorporation of mountain biking into other commercial tourism activities.

Mountain biking could be developed into a popular adventure sport in India, with development of mountain bike specific trails and infrastructure, establishment of state and local mountain bike clubs, the increase in mountain bike sales, organization of MTB events, and the development, although limited, of commercial mountain bike tourism products. Mountain biking is all about speed, control and thrill and is one of the latest ways of exploring and discovering new vistas of the Himalayan landscape. The rugged terrain and steep slopes, though risky at times, provide great mountain biking experience in



Image II - Mountain biking near Pokhara, Nepal

Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand is an establishing nature-based tourism destination, well-known for its vast forests wild, scenic and iconic natural and cultural landscapes. Mountain bikers, particularly those interested in downhill riding, cross country riding or all-mountain riding, are seeking similar experiences to those of trekkers and hikers. The sport attracts many national and international tourists and adventure sports enthusiasts, which in turn boosts tourism activities in the state. It is a belief that in a few years, Uttarakhand is bound to become the future hub for mountain biking in Asia. Tourism in Uttarakhand needs to recognize the potential for the state to strengthen its position as a mountain biking destination, by leveraging off the natural landscape assets that the state possesses. Mountain biking and cycling can be great ways to explore the hill towns and villages that fringe the foothills of the Himalayas. It also gives tourists the opportunity to understand the challenges that mountains have in store for them.

The results of the secondary market research showed that mountain biking is one of the world's most popular adventure sports. Approximately 12 million people in the US mountain bike regularly, with per capita rates of participation (approximately 4%) estimated to be similar in Canada, Australia, the UK, and German-speaking Europe. Mountain bikers are generally well educated males 25-45 years of age with high household incomes. Mountain bikers tend to prefer the sport over other activities, participate in it frequently, and maintain this participation over the long-term. Women are a rapidly increasing segment of the market.

Destination reputation and recommendations from friends and family are key travel decision making factors for mountain bikers. Mountain bikers consider variety/difficulty of terrain, number of trails, and scenery to be the most desirable features in a mountain bike destination. A large percentage of mountain bikers travel, and participate in the sport almost exclusively during their mountain bike trips. They show a strong preference for single-track and their willingness to pay in the travel decision making context is directly related to the abundance and variety of single-track.



Image III – Mountain biking in the Himalayas

The development of a mountain bike tourism industry presents many opportunities for the territory. The study team saw mountain bike tourism as a means to reclaim some of the cultural and historical values slowly getting lost when the hill station's once extensive walking trail network through the mountains and villages is slowly getting abandoned in favor of motor road travel. Mountain biking could become a source of pride and focus for the youth in the Munsiyari area. We envision a trail network that would build on existing trails and tracks to provide the best single-track in Asia if not one of the finest in the world. Most importantly, a tourism industry that would respect local capacity and values, maximize economic and social benefits to people of Uttarakhand, and provide quality and authentic experiences for a variety of users.

1.2 Study Background

IIT Roorkee had presented a proposal to develop MTB tourism in Uttarakhand on the occasion of world tourism day celebrations held at Hotel Madhuban in Dehradun, on the 27th of September, 2014. The proposal was highly appreciated by the Hon. Chief Minister Mr. Harish Rawat during the ceremony. He asked the Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation (UKFDC) to arrange a mountain biking event in Munsiyari, Uttarakhand, coordinating with the IIT Roorkee team. It was decided to conduct a reconnaissance survey of Munsiyari during the preparatory phase discussions held between the UKFDC and IIT Roorkee team.

The proposal presented on tourism day celebration by the IIT Roorkee team was to identify potential locations in Uttarakhand and develop a network of MTB trails for nurturing the sport of mountain biking in the state. After discussions between UKFDC and IIT Roorkee team as per the instructions given by the Hon. Chief Minister during the tourism day event, it was decided to divide the progression of the project into two major parts in order to gain public attention, international visibility, media coverage and acceptance.



Image IV - Mountain biking in the Lower Himalayas

The two major parts of the project are listed below.

i. Pre-project

Objective: To organize a promotional event involving International MTB riders in Uttarakhand to gain global visibility for the proposed project among all categories of people involved in mountain biking industry

ii. Project

Objective: To develop MTB trails of international standard in Munsiyari keeping in view the tourism and economic development of the state.

Pre-Project: The pre-project part is the promotional part of the project, which will enable a better project formation towards the actual project stage. The pre-project part involves the following components in the order of their happening.

1. Preparatory Phase:

Following the tourism day celebrations, the IIT Roorkee team was summoned by Mr. Vineet Kumar Pangtey, GM Productions, UKFDC as per the instructions of the Hon. Chief Minister to discuss in details the necessary preparations needed to proceed with the pre-project part.

2. Preliminary site visit by the IIT Roorkee team:

A team from IITR visited Munsiyari and surrounding area from 22nd October, 2014 to 28th October, 2014 for reconnaissance survey, photography and data collection. This report is developed majorly through the understandings generated through the reconnaissance survey conducted during the above mentioned dates.

3. Preliminary site visit and general studies by international trail design experts (Next Step):

International experts, with experience and specialization in trail design and MTB park 05

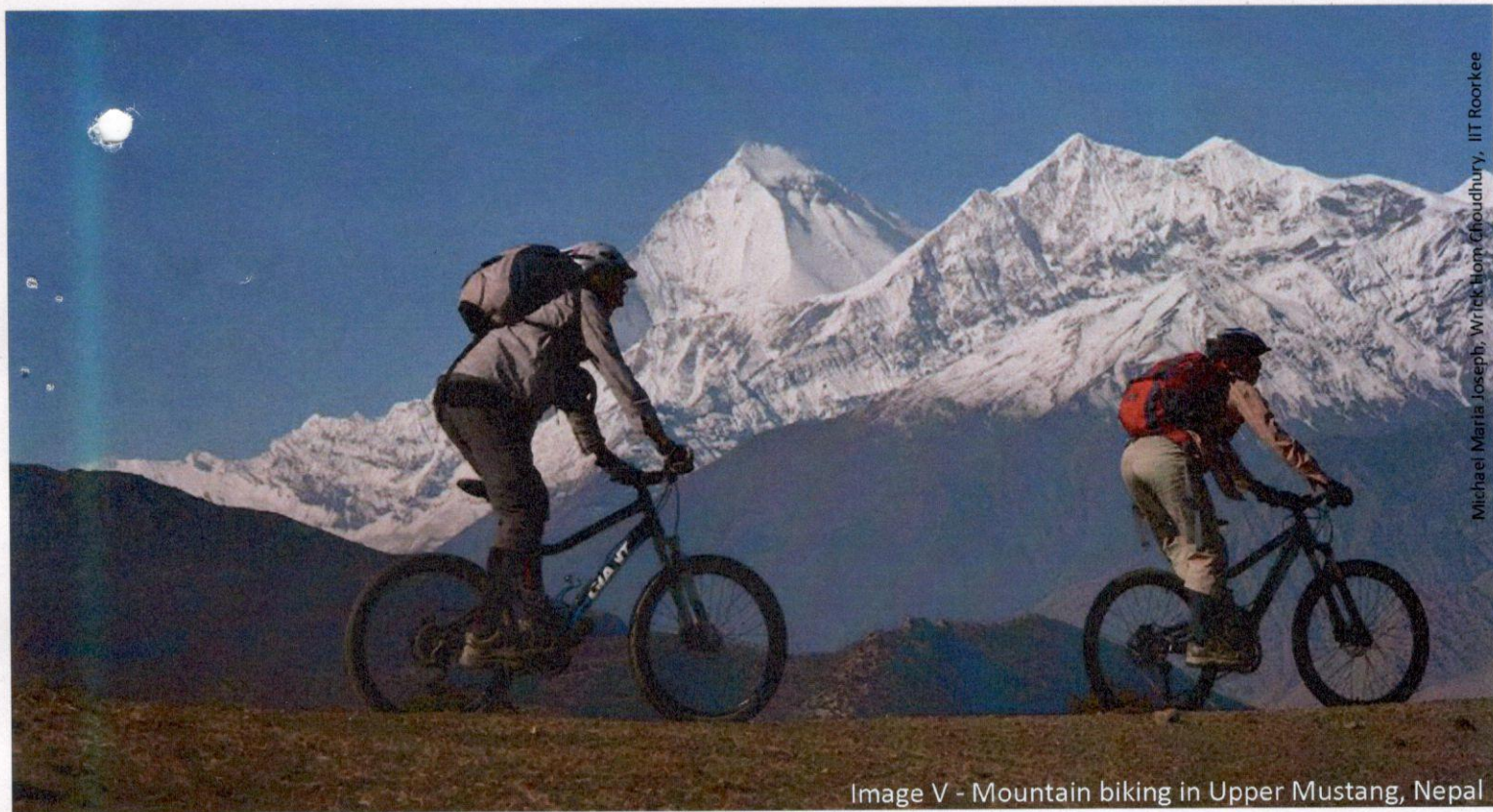


Image V - Mountain biking in Upper Mustang, Nepal

development would visit Munsiyari area for further detailed studies and analysis of existing tracks, developing on the reconnaissance survey findings. Basic up-gradation and safety arrangements for holding the promotional event would be suggested by the visiting experts. The proposition is to bring in two teams of experts totaling up to 6-8 persons for this study. According to the trail design experts, this study could take up to 2 weeks and could be conducted by Mid December, 2014 or just after the winter, in 2015. Scheduling has to be done as per the weather forecast as it is impossible to conduct the studies when the trails are covered in snow.

4. Up-gradation of existing natural trails through necessary construction activities for the purpose of holding an International promotional MTB event:

As per the study results of pre-project stage-II, identified tracks has to be developed for the promotional event. Also, basic safety arrangement and signage along the tracks needs to be put in place.

5. Promotional MTB event - to create a platform for interaction, international media outreach, publicity and possible project development:

The target is to at least bring in a team of around 8 international bikers, 16-20 international Media crew, 2-3 international trail consultants, IIT Roorkee team and local MTB riders to participate in the event, conducted at Munsiyari, once the pre-project stage-III is completed.

The major goals of this event are to showcase the MTB potential of Uttarakhand, especially Munsiyari to the world through international media (Professional Videos and Photographs), magazines and professional MTB riders and also to create a platform for interaction between technical consultants, MTB riders and possible investors. The international media coverage generated through this event and the hands-on experience provided to the bikers could prove very helpful in structuring of this project to develop international standard MTB trail parks in Uttarakhand.



Image VI - Mountain biking in the Himalayas

1.3 Study Aim

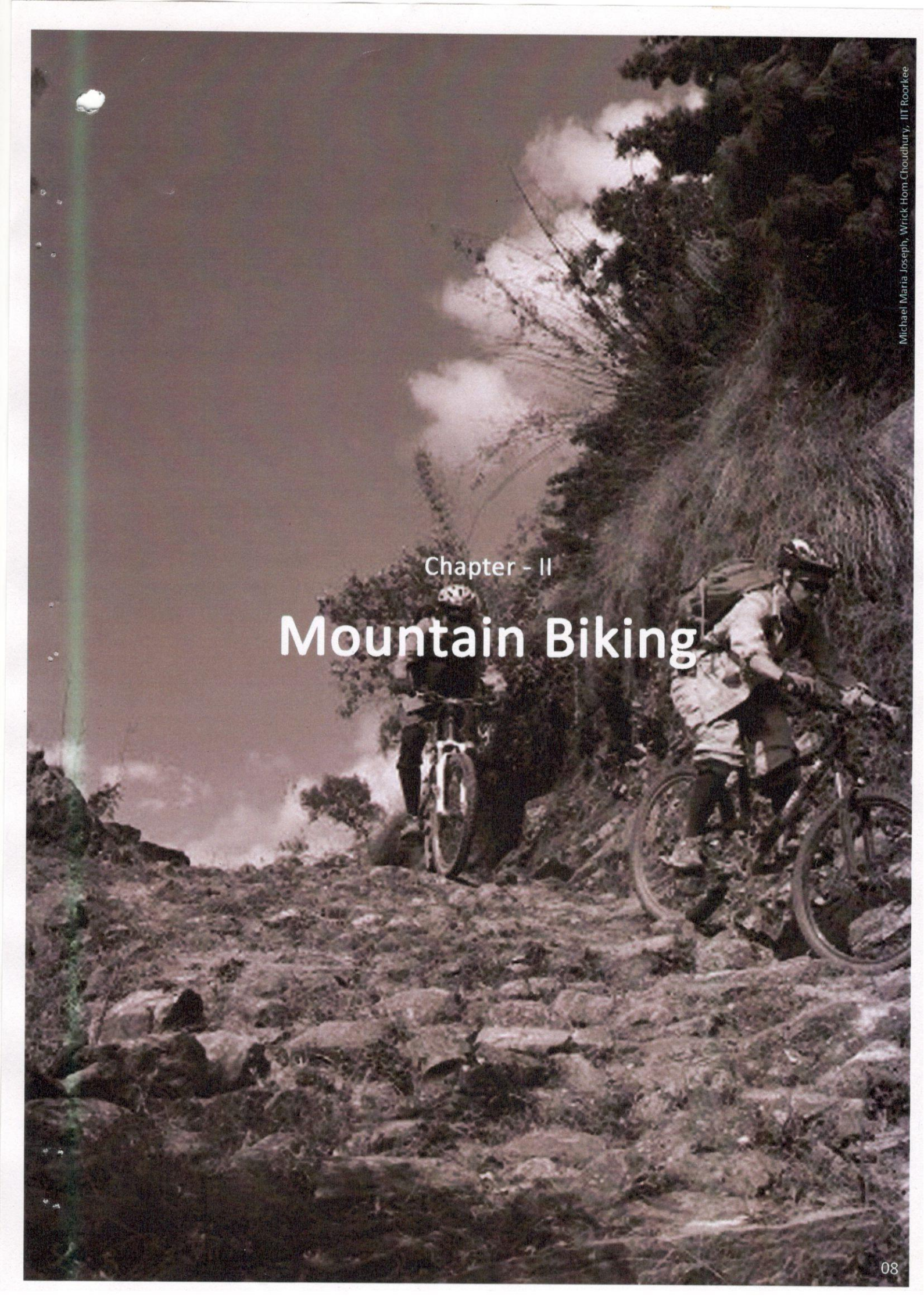
To experience, investigate and to conduct a reconnaissance survey on the existing natural trails and terrain to produce a report on the study results. More specifically, this report aims to provide an initial investigation into the characteristics of this emerging tourism market segment, an overview of naturally existing mountain bike trails in Munsiyari, and an identification of the potential opportunities, based on the research findings and the core strengths, or points of differences unique to Munsiyari. The information outlined in this report could form the basis for the preparation of the Mountain bike promotional event in Munsiyari and Mountain Bike Industry Development Strategy for Uttarakhand.

1.4 Study Methodology

Reviewing natural, existing trails, accommodation facilities, cultural activities & village life
Consulting with a range of international mountain bike contacts, local tour operators in Munsiyari, Forest department and people from different villages in and around Munsiyari;
Preparing a summary report outlining the main research findings, the identified points of difference for Munsiyari, and the best prospect to carry forward mountain bike tourism development in Uttarakhand

1.5 Limitations

It should be noted that whilst this report provides a range of information and a number of recommendations relating to mountain bike tourism, it comprises an initial study only, undertaken within a limited time frame, largely using results and conclusions derived from communications and discussions held with people in Munsiyari and one-time visits to some of the potential sites and natural MTB trails. Further investigation will need to be conducted (Pre project stage-II) to identify more potential trails and its possible branching to determine the level of modification and up-gradation required to the tracks in order to hold the promotional event and to further develop the trails.



Chapter - II

Mountain Biking



Image VII - Mountain biking in the Himalayas

2.1 Various Styles

The following definition of mountain biking derives from the report – Exploring the Market Potential for Yukon Mountain Bike Tourism:

“Mountain biking may best be described as a segment of cycling that is focused primarily on off-pavement travel. Mountain bikes are designed with wider tyres, a more upright position, and lower gearing than their on-pavement counterparts, and can accommodate a wide variety of riding surfaces, including pavement, gravel, rock and most soils”

Mountain biking encompasses four main sub-disciplines:

2.1.1 CROSSCOUNTRY / ALL MOUNTAIN:

Cross country riders are generally self-sufficient, and are interested in riding longer-distance trails (e.g. 16-160km) with loops and natural obstacles. Cross country trails are generally a combination of single track and dirt roads, however, quality tracks are generally considered to be those that have large sections of well-constructed single track. The experiences sought include solitude, nature, exercise and challenge. Cross country bikes are generally lightweight, with relatively short suspension. Cross Country Mountain biking is now an Olympic and Commonwealth Games sport.

2.1.2 DOWNHILL:

Downhill mountain bikers are primarily interested in descending steep and technically challenging tracks. A range of sophisticated equipment is utilized by downhill riders, including reinforced body armor, and heavy-duty motorbike style helmets. Downhill riding is generally more popular among younger riders. Serious downhill riding often occurs in alpine resort areas around the world, due to their suitability for this discipline as a result of topography and infrastructure such as ski lifts and shuttles. Downhill bikes are of a heavier construction with dual suspension. Downhill Mountain biking, including competitive downhill is becoming very popular at tourist locations across the world. Munsiyari has



Image VIII - Downhill Mountain biking

all the natural resources needed for this style of biking.

2.1.3 DIRTJUMPING:

This discipline is generally popular with younger riders, and is often associated with, or a progression from BMX riding. These riders seek dedicated dirt jump parks, but can also take part in other types of mountain biking that involve jumps and obstacles. This discipline also encompasses 'head to head' racing (four races at a time) and dual slalom (two races on two separate identical courses). A range of bikes are used, some of which are jump-specific models.

2.1.4 FREERIDING:

Free Riding encompasses natural and constructed technical features such as rocks, logs, elevated bridges, jumps, drop-offs and teeter-totters, and has its roots in the North Shore region of British Columbia. Free ride features may be incorporated into cross country tracks, or be grouped into stand alone experiences. A range of bikes are used for free riding. Having recognized the various sub-disciplines of mountain biking, in reality the distinction between the disciplines is often less clear. All-mountain riding, encompassing elements of both cross country and downhill is likely to be the predominant discipline, which perfectly suits Munsiyari. The types of bikes used for all-mountain riding are generally hybrid bikes (e.g. a lightweight downhill bike, but sturdy cross country).

2.1.5 HEAD TO HEAD:

Head to head riding is generally conducted in two forms: dual slalom, and mountain cross (otherwise known as four cross). Dual slalom involves two parallel courses, incorporating a variety of jumps and banked corners. Mountain cross trails are wider, being built to accommodate four riders at a time, and generally incorporate larger jumps and obstacles. At present, mountain cross racing is more popular than dual slalom, and is the current head to head racing format used in the MTB World Cup Series.

2.2 What's going on?

Over the last decade there have been a huge number of mountain bike specific trails built in Europe, North America, New Zealand and Australia. During this process of trail development, communities and local governments have started to realize the economic and social values of the trails to the community.

Mountain bike tourism is now well recognized as a niche tourism product across the globe and is rapidly growing in our neighboring country, Nepal. As a result communities and local stakeholders are strategically thinking about how they too can foster mountain bike tourism opportunities in their region.

A look at what is going on in the most established mountain bike communities like Whistler (in Canada), Wales (the UK), Rotorua (in New Zealand) and networks like the 7Stanes (in Scotland) can provide valuable lessons for developing mountain bike riding in Munsyari and other parts of Uttarakhand.



Image IX - View of the mountain behind Munsyari Inter-collge

2.3 Benefits

Mountain biking has a large array of benefits spread across all the related fields. These benefits include local community engagement and enjoyment, increased participation in recreational activity, better health, the ability to attract a dedicated mountain bike market, sharp increase in international tourists visiting the state, business opportunities and economic benefits for the local areas as well as the broader regional and State economies.



Image X - High altitude Mountain biking

2.4 Primary Motivators

The following list of primary motivators is derived from a consideration of a range of studies and discussions with experienced MTB riders:

Convenience/accessibility (e.g. the majority of independent local mountain bikers seem to seek out places easily reachable by vehicles);

Trail quality (e.g. diversity of terrain, trail features, and amount of single track) *and quantity of riding available in an area*; and

Iconic experience – riding in a unique, natural landscape setting, with high scenic value

<u>Features/Attributes</u>	<u>Rating (out of 5)</u>
Variety/difficulty of terrain	4.5
Number of trails	4.4
Scenery	4.3
Reputation as a mtb destination	3.9
Cost of trip	3.7
Weather	3.7
Strong mtb community/culture	3.5
Ease of getting to destination	3.4
Other facilities (bike shops, accommodation, etc.)	3.3
Availability of other outdoor activities	3.1

Table 1: Desirable Features /Attributes in a MTB Destination

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Rating (out of 5)</u>
Reputation of destination	4.0
Recommendation from friend/relative	4.0
Internet research	3.4
Mountain bike magazine article	3.2
Mountain bike race or event	3.2
Guidebook	3.1
Bike club	3.1
Article in a general outdoor magazine	2.7
Brochure	2.6
Travel agent	1.6

Table II: Travel Patterns of Destination Bikers - Factors influencing Destination Choice

2.5 The Market Potential

Mountain biking is a good fit with Uttarakhand's brand as a nature (Eco) based destination, slowly getting recognized internationally for its adventure tourism potential, yoga, scenic mountains and great culture. There are several factors that point towards significant potential for mountain bike tourism. Not only are participation rates increasing in the subcontinent and other countries, but better access and more new trails will help further expand and grow the market.

2.6 Commercial Opportunities

Development of mountain bike trails in Munsiyari and growth in visitor numbers through effective marketing could present a number of commercial opportunities. These are outlined below.



Image XI - View of Munsiyari town from Govt. Inter college, Munsiyari - Nanda Devi bike trail 13



Michael Maria Joseph, Wick Horn Choudhury, ITF Poorke

Image XII - Mountain biking in Nepal - A fast growing adventure sport

2.6.1 Mountain bike hire

Mountain bikes are an expensive commodity. Many people will prefer to try mountain bike riding before they invest in a bike. Visitors to the area unaware of the trail network may also wish to hire bikes. A mountain bike hire service combined with spare parts and repairs is likely to become a viable business over time.

2.6.2 Instruction and Guided Mountain Bike Tours

New riders and visitors may well seek either a guided mountain bike experience or instruction in downhill or single track techniques. A guided mountain bike tour could be modeled on a structured basis. These involve a guide escorting up to six riders on a designated section of track. Instruction or 'rider clinics' could also be provided with an operator providing skills training for beginner to intermediate riders. This could include riding etiquette, bike handling, safety, use of brakes, and maneuvering the bike in difficult conditions.

2.6.3 Rider and Bike Shuttle Service

Many of the proposed rides are point to point trails requiring transport to connect riders with/from their vehicles at the end or start of the ride. There is an opportunity for a shuttle service to ferry riders and their bikes either from or to their accommodation, or to operate between the trail heads. It is likely that a guiding business or local transport service could undertake this service.

2.6.4 Hospitality

With an international standard mountain bike trail coming up there would be a sharp increase in the number of people visiting the area and the hospitality sector can cash in with more accommodation centers and eatery shops promoting large economic growth in the region.

2.6.5 Sponsorship

Sponsors could be sought to provide resources for the maintenance of the trail or hosting

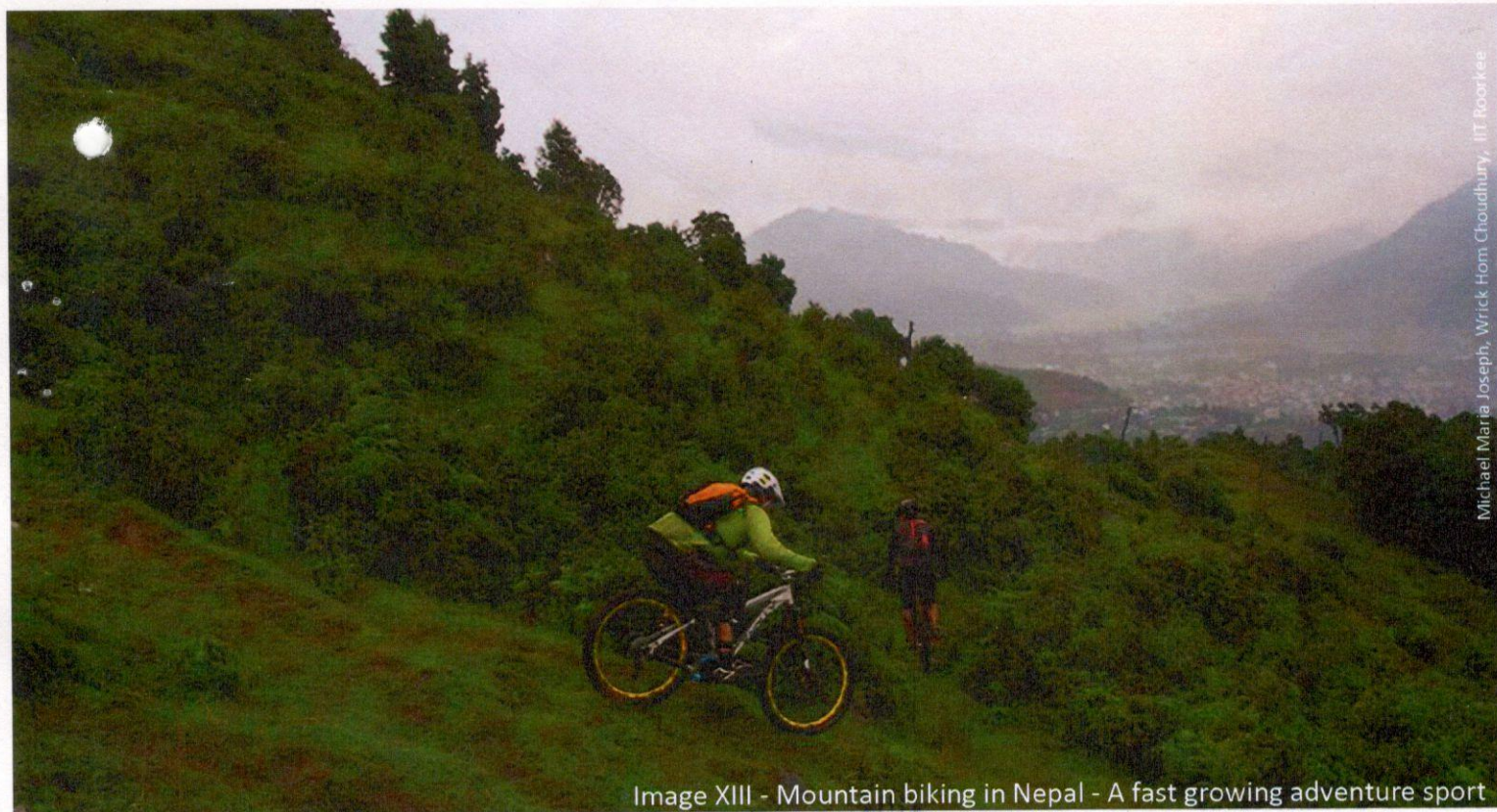


Image XIII - Mountain biking in Nepal - A fast growing adventure sport

of events. The values of the potential sponsor would need to align with the brand and values of the mountain bike trail network I Munsiyari.

2.6.6 Investment Attraction and Regional Stimulus

Increased visitation and expenditure in the region as a result of the trail network is also likely to attract further investment within this part of Uttarakhand. The trails present an opportunity for entrepreneurs to develop products and services to meet the needs of visiting mountain bikers. This could include transport, merchandise, accommodation or provisioning and guiding services. There are existing operators in the region that will also stand to benefit considerably from the increase in visitation. They are likely to capitalize on this opportunity and provide additional services, products and experiences for the mountain bike riders.

The increased expenditure will also provide significant stimulus to the regional communities of Munsiyari area. An increased length of stay for existing markets and the new Destination MTB markets will improve the occupancy rate of accommodation facilities and may also result in investment in new accommodation infrastructure to meet market needs.

2.7 Critical Areas to Consider

2.7.1 Trail design – it is widely accepted and understood that trails need to be sustainable. The International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) Trail Standards are a widely accepted means of achieving sustainable design. Trails must also be designed and constructed primarily for mountain bike use. This means paying careful attention to aspects of design such as the trail gradient (a 5% average trail grade will appeal to a broad range of users). Trails designed for mountain biking can also make good walking tracks and trekking routes (the reverse is not true). This is an important area to consider at the planning and design stage because appealing to a wider range of users (mountain bikers and walkers) often equals more funding opportunities and community support.



Image XIV - View of cloud covered Mountains from Khalia Top

2.7.2 Access – trails that are easily accessible receive higher use. Recreation and entertainment industry is growing rapidly and people are willing to get away from their suffocating city life whenever there is an opportunity. It is very commonly observed that riders will travel considerable distances to ride great trails. But the number of people visiting a place spring board if the place is more accessible in terms of travel time and travel comfort. So it is important to increase connectivity between Munsiyari and other parts of Uttarakhand by road and air. It is also equally important to local transportation in Munsiyari and shuttle services to cater to the tourists. A Ropeway network connecting Munsiyari with Khalia top is very critical for the development of mountain biking as well as general tourism in the region.

2.7.3 Supporting Infrastructure & Business Opportunities – the trail provides the hardware for riders, but the “software” is critical to complete the experience and ensure its success. Supporting infrastructure (e.g. signage, maps, transport, eateries, accommodation and toilets) and businesses bring the trail experience to life. While these things tend to happen organically around trails, a structured and coordinated approach can yield better results more quickly. The infrastructure should include information sources for pre-trip planning, website, trail guides on apps, Maps and guidebooks for riding areas, signage and information shelters, a variety of additional bike friendly conveniences, Suitable accommodation, including campgrounds, hotels, B&Bs, huts, preferably with safe bike storage and located in close proximity to riding areas; Reliable and professional mountain bike repair and retail shops; Transportation services such as bike shuttles, Showers and bike washes (particularly for campers); and, Restaurants, brew pubs, grocery and liquor stores.

2.7.4 The Visitor Experience – While the trail is the critical component for the Destination MTB market, other supporting infrastructure and services complete the experience

2.7.5 Management and Maintenance – Trail management and maintenance involving the localites and villagers is equally important and it provides a large number of employ-



Image XV - Downhill Biking

employment opportunities to even the under-skilled labors.

2.7.6 Community Engagement – the long term success of trails is closely linked to the degree of community engagement. Demonstrating the value of trails is important to convince non-riders of the benefits. Community support needs to extend beyond the dedicated trail builders to include the business sector and other community members/groups. A good percentage of the development has to be carried out through the local communities which reduces the cost while benefitting the local communities and existing tourism industry.

2.7.7 Marketing and Promotion – a coordinated and continues marketing presence is needed to build awareness and promote the opportunity. This should be collaboration between Tourism in Uttarakhand, local government, local communities, regional tourism organizations and the private sector. The mountain bike trails will need to be promoted as a network of tracks and mountain bike experiences. The trail developments will need a consistency in design and construction, the experience, signage, maps, whilst also emphasizing the unique attributes that make each trail and area unique.

Mountain bike riders are a demographic that is known to be tech-savvy and communicate via facebook, twitter and smart phone. This will be the best way of getting information out about the network. Incorporating the mountain bike planning and marketing into the Destination Management Plan will be critical.

2.7.8 Events – events can be an excellent vehicle and catalyst for raising the profile of a mountain bike destination. These range from community based festivals to races and national or international championship events. The promotional event proposed in this report is to gain international audience to the project through quality reports and news in international media and mountain biking magazines.

2.7.9 Trail Type and Grade - The type of trail and grade should be designed for the intended market. The easier the trail, logically the broader the market and more number of

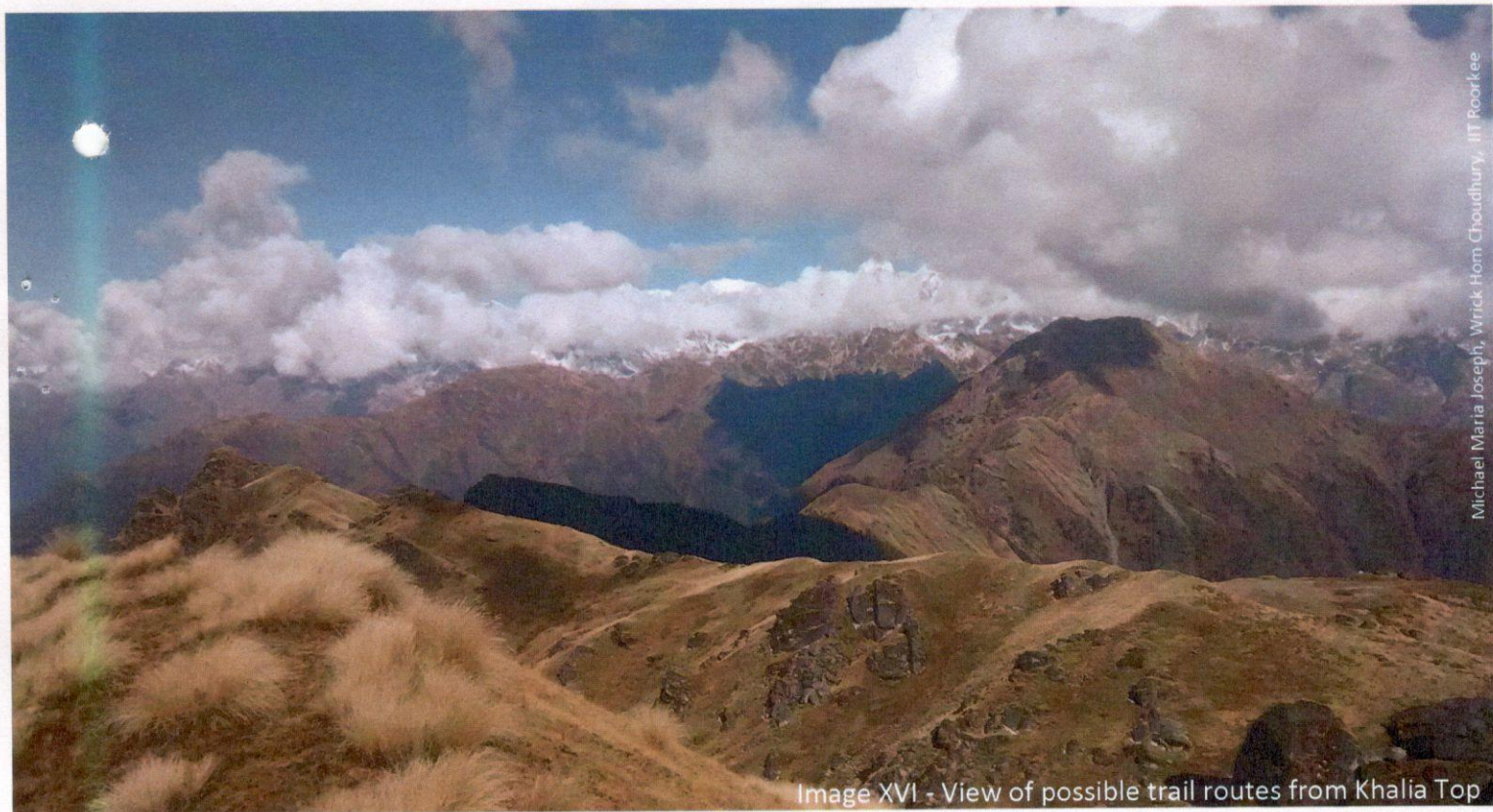


Image XVI - View of possible trail routes from Khalia Top

people will be able to ride. The market will consist of both 'destination mountain bikers' and also people that mountain bike while visiting Uttarakhand (not the primary purpose of their visit). There has to be trails for all categories of riders to have maximum market share. Advanced rider category of the people are always looking to explore new challenges and new places and Munsiyari could be a potential challenge for them to take up and we need to market this potential of the place as well. Generally the most popular and well used trails in a network are the easily accessible beginner and intermediate trails. The inclusion of more technical alternative lines/routes that veer off the main easier route and rejoin can enhance the trails appeal to more advanced riders.

2.7.10 Positioning - The positioning provides the framework for all marketing activity. The mountain bike trails will provide world class infrastructure specifically designed for mountain bikers by some of world's premier trail builders. The trails will be located in the iconic landscape of Middle Himalayas and close to vibrant rural villages of Munsiyari. The finished trail developments will put Munsiyari on the map as one of the 'must ride' mountain bike destinations in the world, along with other established destinations like Whistler, Wales, etc.

2.7.11 Attributes that contribute to a great mountain bike experience -

- Easy Access / Location
- Setting / Environment
- Loops
- Technical Challenge
- Trail Head Facilities
- Signage
- Shared Use
- Physical Challenge
- Elevation Gain or fall
- Map / trail notes
- Trail Flow
- Length of the Trail
- Suitable for range of skill levels
- Built Technical Features (jumps, berms, log rides)
- Other adventure activity options

Chapter - III

The Munsiyari Situation

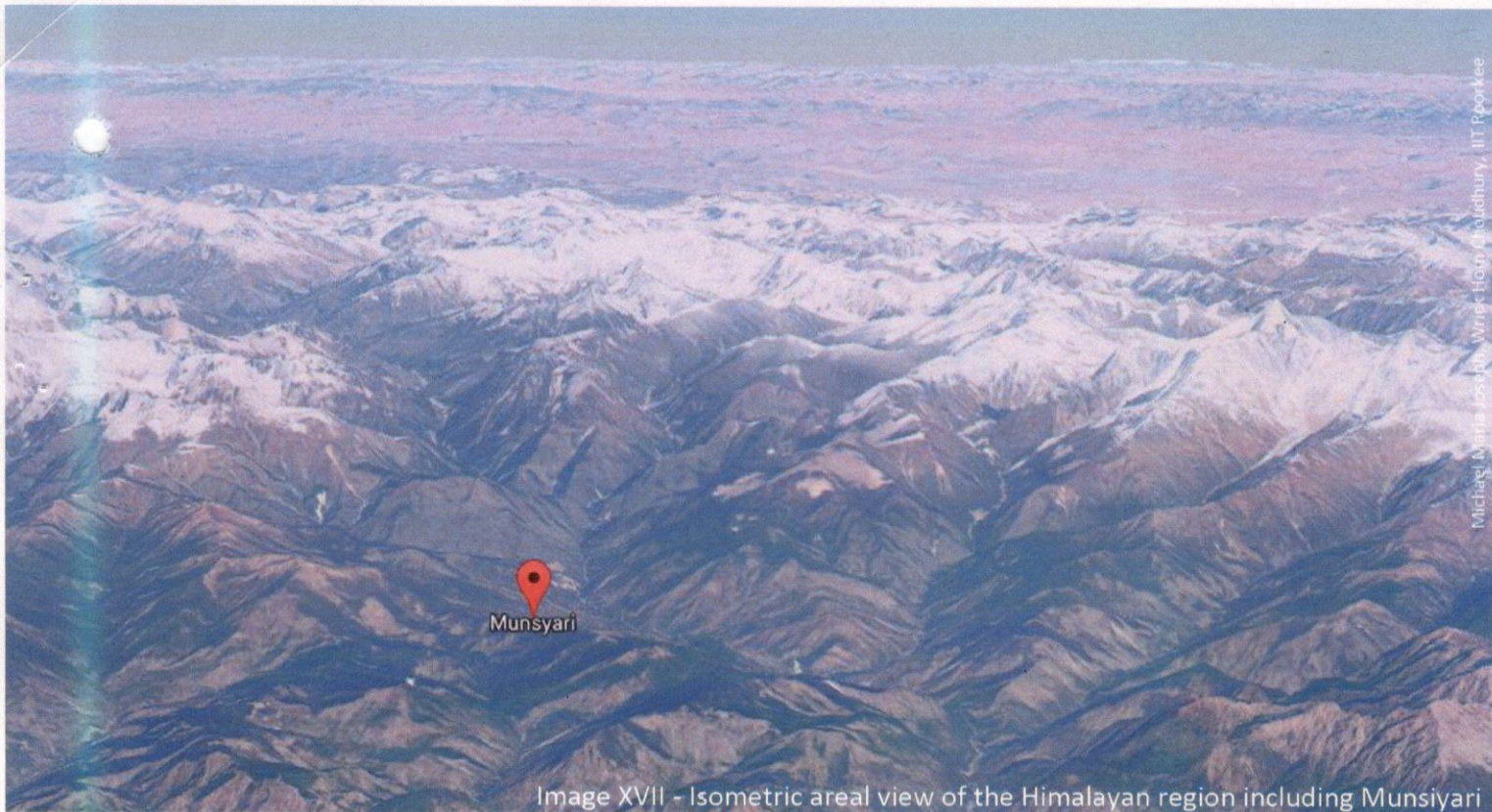


Image XVII - Isometric areal view of the Himalayan region including Munsiyari

This section provides an overview of the existing natural mountain bike trails, tourism operators and hospitality sector currently in operation in Munsiyari.

3.1 Munsiyari

At an elevation of about 2,200 m, Munsiyari (30.067413°N, 80.238562°E) is the main town and the starting point of various treks into the interior of the Himalayan range in the region. It is surrounded by many awe inspiring locations such as Khalia top, the glacier river - Gori Ganga, Panch-Chuli peaks, many water bodies like Messar Kund, Thamri Kund and temples like Nanda Devi temple, Kalamuni temple and Hanuman temple. The biking stretch starting from the hilltop behind the inter-school in Munsiyari can run up to Nanda Devi temple and then to Papari village before meeting the motor road. On this trail the cyclist has option of taking various trails on his level of expertise. The route also has ridges, flat lands and down and uphill tracks which can provide variety in the experience of the MTB enthusiasts.

Munsiyari is perfectly well situated to serve the purpose as the Mountain biking base camp in the region, because it is centrally located to all the identified trails and other possible adventure activities. Commercial facilities could be developed in Munsiyari to serve the expected inflow of tourists. Also the vibrant Himalayan villages around Munsiyari provides with an opportunity to experience local lifestyle, culture and architecture while riding through them. The place also has a considerably good museum showcasing the culture and traditions of the region. A little bit of up-gradation can serve as the much needed catalyst to the museum. Some of the villages around Munsiyari which could be explored for mountain biking are listed below.

- | | | | | |
|----------|------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| • Harkot | • Bhunga | • Sela | • Dhan visha | • Jainti, Bharnia |
| • Suring | • Malla-Gorpatat | • Jaduk | • Sevila | • Malla-Dummer |
| • Jalath | • Talla-Gorpatta | • Darati | • Kethi | • Namjala |
| • Darkot | • Sarmoli | • Ranthi | • Dhapa | • Minal |
| • Papari | • Shankhdhura | • Talla-Dummer | • Barnia | |



Image XVIII - View of the village, Darkot

During the survey, many village Sarpanchs (Village Headman) offered their active support to the project and participation in whichever way possible. This could benefit the bikers as well as the villagers in a great way. With the help and coordination from the Sarpanchs there is an overwhelming and exiting possibility of developing biking trails through the village and providing bikers an opportunity to experience the rich cultural heritage of the people of these villages. Lot of professional bikers who travel to various parts of the globe every year to experience new trails and life style never had much of an opportunity to experience the Himalayan culture and high altitude biking and Munsiyari stands a great chance to emerge as a unique biking destination. One of the biggest advantage with Munsiyari would be it potential to deliver an iconic experience to the bikers which is one of the most important determinant in the selection of a destination by a biker.

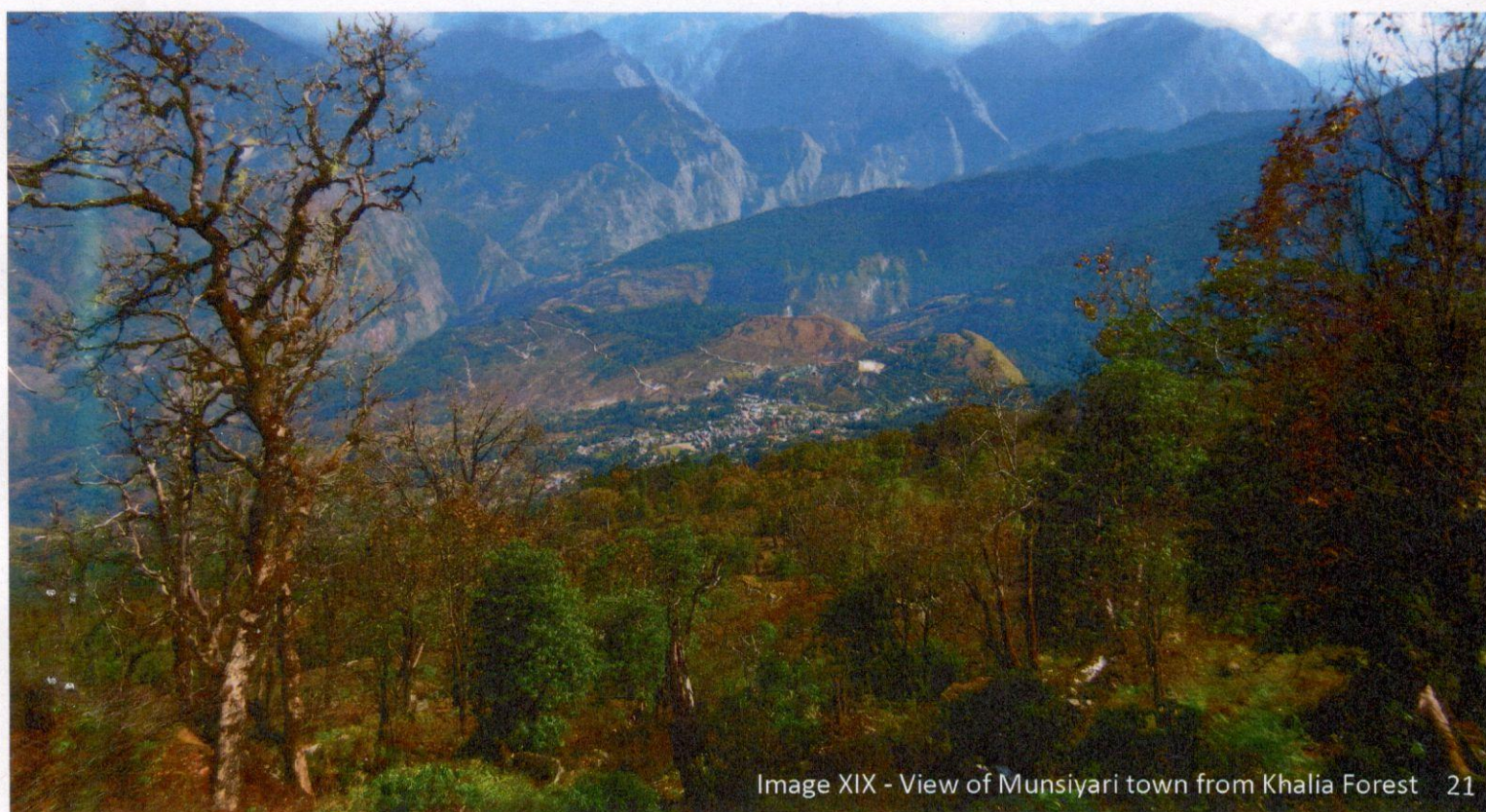


Image XIX - View of Munsiyari town from Khalia Forest 21



Image XX - Isometric areal view of Khalia Top

3.2 Khalia Top

The Khalia Top region includes high altitude alpine pasture (Bugyal grasslands) and the temperate zone forests of the Western Himalayas. This study identifies Khalia Top operated from Munsiyari (as the base camp) as best positioned to be the gateway for the Uttarakhand Bike Trail Network. Khalia Top has potential to be a hybrid experience, combining trails with 'bike park' elements including dirt jumps and a skills park and the opportunity to engage in the true 'iconic wild-mountain ride' experience that underpins the overall vision for the proposed trail network. This combination offers a diverse network of trails catering for all rider skill levels and demographics.

The trail network can also include a 'pocket park' area, which will incorporate a pump track and skills development trail/area which will be a significant attraction particularly to local riders, and will, more importantly, provide avenues for safe skill progression for all riders. The diversity of the Khalia Top and surrounding forest area means that it is suited to all rider skill levels. Whilst much of the network is well suited to intermediate riding and advanced mountain biking, ensuring safe progressions for beginners is also important.

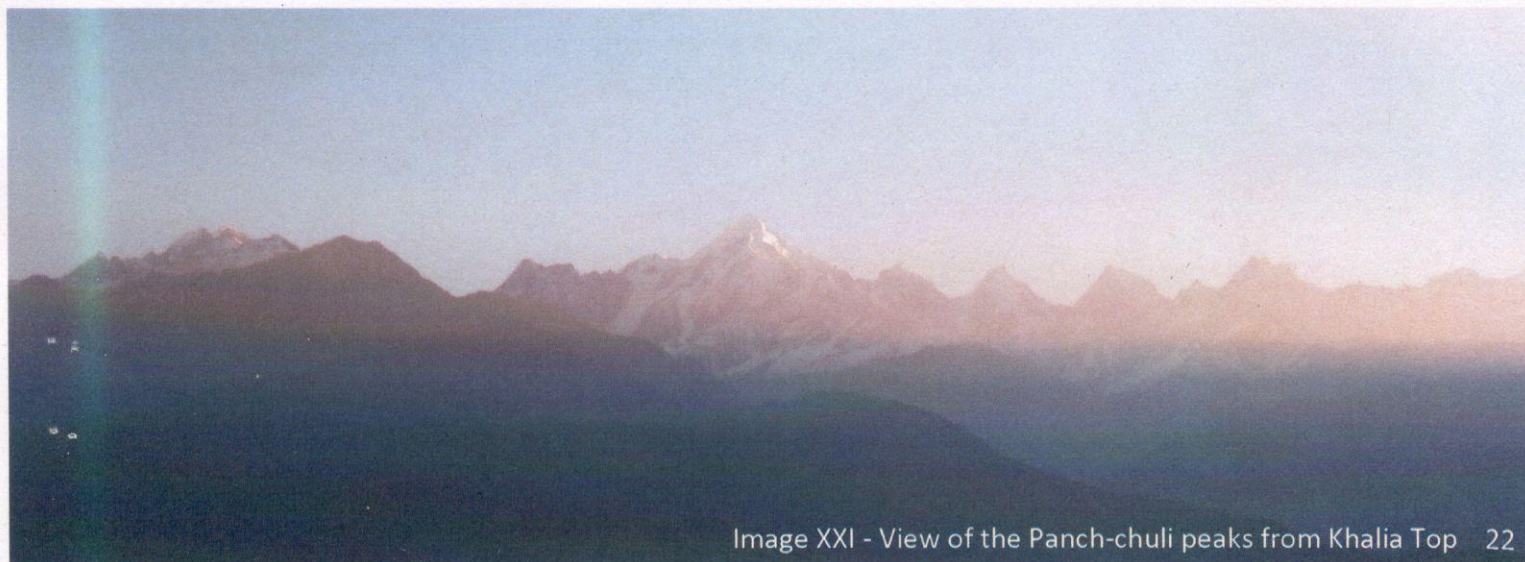


Image XXI - View of the Panch-chuli peaks from Khalia Top 22



Image XXII - Isometric areal view of Khalia Top

The to-be- developed Trail Master Plan in the foothills of Himalayas would definitely provide the real 'hook' and point-of-interest for riders by providing a true 'adventure riding experience' with a sustained climb and descent. The view on offer from the top during a ride is awe inspiring and is of the majestic panorama of Himalayan mountain range including the Panch-chuli peaks on one side and the hills on the other side with a long carpet of yellowish green forest and Bugyal grasslands adding more beauty to the snow white and the sky blue color abundant in the picture frame.

The pump track is expected to also significantly boost the appeal of the site for local riders, who have no access to authorized facilities of this style in the area. A stronger international market share will be encouraged if Khalia Top is projected as a mix of tracks and facilities as well as reflecting the natural attributes of the site in trail design as a point-of-difference over other international trails. A transport connection between Munsiyari and Khalia Top has to be established in order to carry the bikes and the visitors uphill. A Rope-way system would be the best suited for the purpose, as it can even serve the general tourists. An almost completed KMVN guest house just below the Khalia top along the trekking route to the top can be completed soon and would serve as a higher camp site, rest area and food and accommodation option for the bikers and tourists.

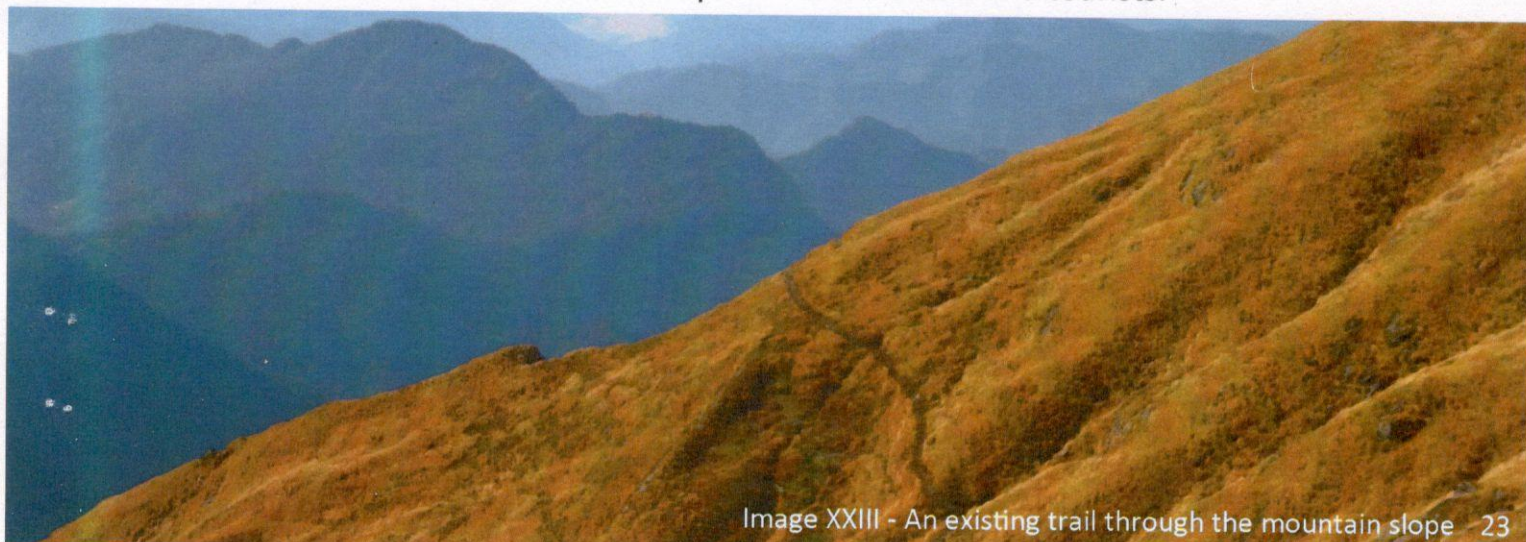


Image XXIII - An existing trail through the mountain slope

Khalia Top also possesses an advantage that the place could be an amazing skiing destination with more than 2 meter of snow during the winter months during which the mountain biking would be absent. So the tourism potential of this area can be used almost round the year shifting between biking and skiing and parallelly running other adventure activities like rock climbing, paragliding and wing suit jumping.

The concept idea include smaller loop options at many points up the mountain, offering potential for riders to ride either the upper or lower mountain independently and long trails starting from the top and running in different directions before meeting the motor road near around Munsiyari.

Some of the major MTB trails that could start from Khalia Top are listed below.

1. Khalia Top – Hanuman Temple
2. Khalia Top – Kalamuni Temple
3. Khalia Top – Messar Kund – Munsiyari
4. Khalia Top – Messar Kund – Suring – Jalath – Darkot – Dummer – Talla Dummer – along Gori Ganga River – Khathi bend
5. Khalia Top – Rur Khan – Pyanti – Dhapa – Munsiyari
6. Khalia Top – Messar kund through Bear Fight route
7. Khalia Top – Rur khan – Pillow Khan Dhar – Suring

A preliminary map of the major possible trails is provided below.

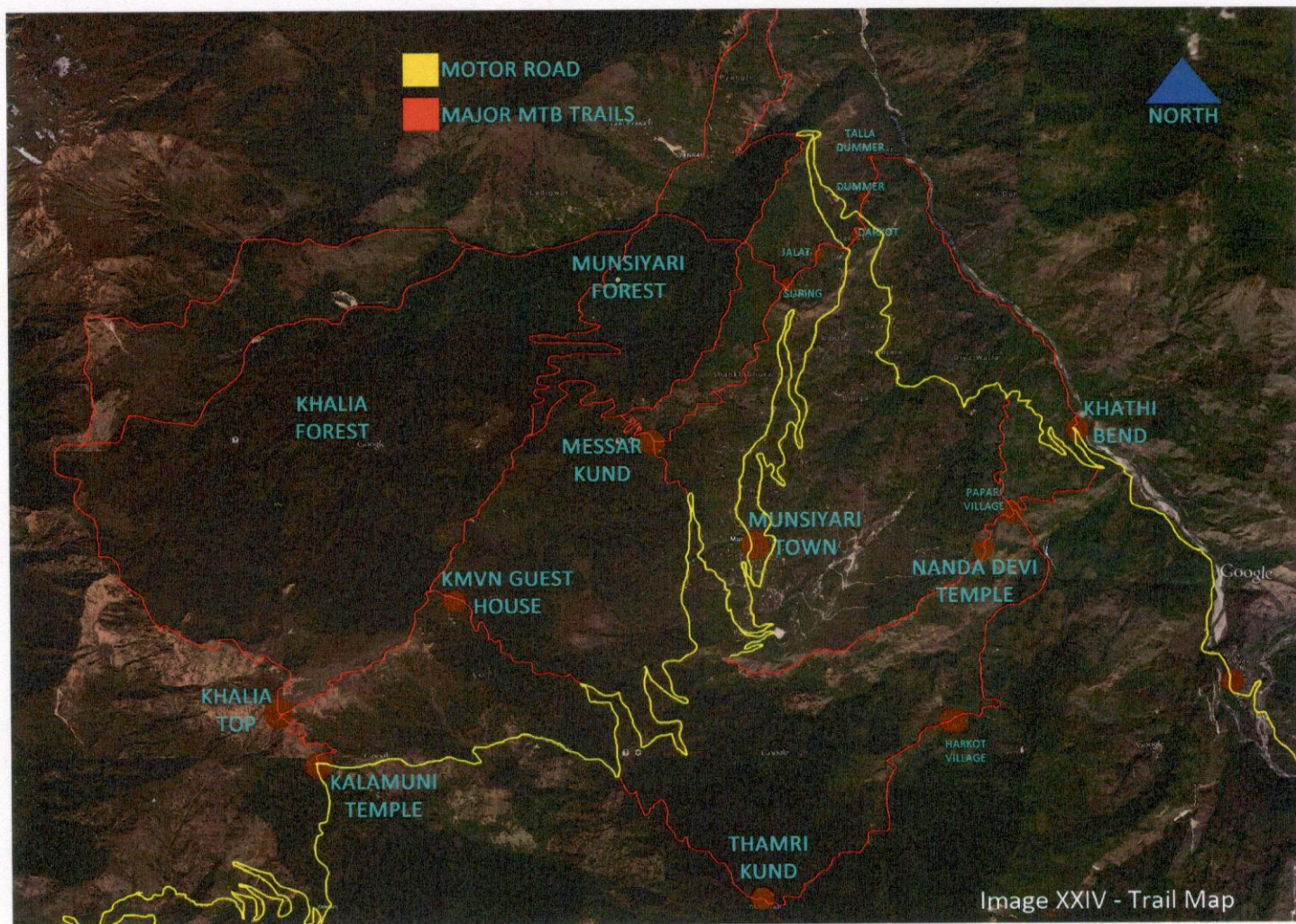




Image XXV - Nanda Devi Temple

3.3 Nanda Devi Temple

The trails running to Nanda Devi Temple starting from the small hill behind the Govt. Inter College, Munsiyari should be developed targeting intermediate-beginner rider skill levels, with more focus on beginner riding. To ensure attraction to the broader market, it is important to ensure that there are adequate trails suited to the intermediate and beginner level riders. It is also important to provide trails for beginner level riders to nurture the local mountain bike culture.

This stretch of trail could target a mix of intermediate and beginner trails and is the best approach in achieving reasonable market share because it is closely situated to Munsiyari town. The scenic value and riding quality is amazing with the view of Panch-chuli peaks from the entire riding stretch.

Beginner level facilities can be developed across the length of this track and this could be a skill development area for the localites who will be introduced to the sport for the first time.

The Nanda Devi trails will attract the true 'destination mountain biker' too, as it can be an introductory ride before advancing to the Khalia top trails. Also there is a possibility to extend the Nanda devi trails through Papari Village and to the main road going to Madkot much below the hill.

The major trails routes that could be developed in this area are;

1. Inter-Scholl Hill Top – Nanda Devi Temple - Munsiyari
2. Inter-Scholl Hill Top – Nanda Devi Temple - Talla Ghor Patta – Papari – Bernia Gaon – Kawa Dhar – Dhami kura – Munsiyari-Mudkot Road
3. Inter-Scholl Hill Top – Nanda Devi Temple - Talla Ghor Patta – Papari – Sella Malla – Kirkhet - Munsiyari-Mudkot Road

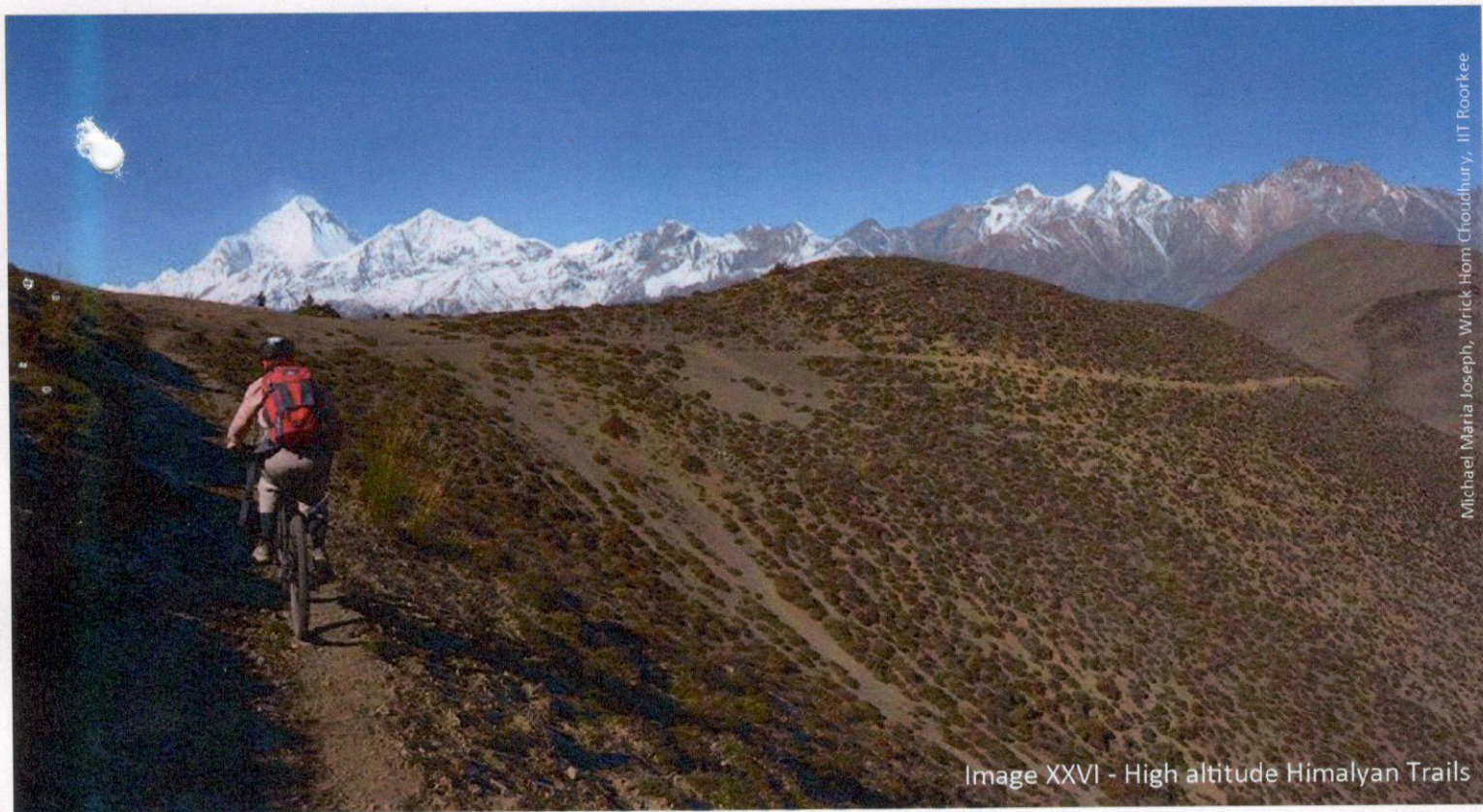


Image XXVI - High altitude Himalyan Trails

3.4 Munsiyari as a MTB Destination

This section provides a brief overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis) in relation to the development of mountain bike tourism in Munsiyari, in light of the information that can be ascertained about the market:

3.4.1 Strengths:

- Diverse landscape and terrain reachable from Munsiyari if it is developed as a base camp for MTB tourism (e.g. possible to experience a range of natural landscapes in one day)
- Cool temperate forest/wet forest, Bugyal grasslands and mountain top riding opportunities
- 'Wild', rugged and remote scenery with the background of Himalayas
- Proximity of Himalayas and the Himalayan peaks, especially the Panch Chuli peaks which are a major climbing destination in the region.
- 'Small' feel, authentic local experiences including a unique local culture, vernacular architecture, villages and its traditions
- Range of existing natural trails, the majority of which is located within close proximity to Munsiyari (e.g. trails starting from Khalia Top)
- Enthusiasm among young localities for mountain biking and adventure tourism (e.g. very positive and exiting response from the Inter-school students)
- Fast increasing popularity of mountain biking across the world
- The development of mountain bike experiences based around the unique and diverse



natural landscapes of Munsiyari

- Potential to package mountain biking with existing adventure and nature-based tourism products, cultural experiences, etc
- Potential to lever off existing and future events and competitions to raise the profile of Uttarakhand tourism and Indian mountain biking
- Interest expressed by government agencies, departments and foreign MTB tourists in relation to mountain bike facilities development
- Although Munsiyari is a considerable distance from main tourist destinations in Uttarakhand, the place has such potential to be the leading mountain bike destination in Asia.

3.4.2 Weaknesses:

- The naturally existing trails (current trek routes, Shepherd routes, etc) needs professional modification in order to make them possible biking trails
- Absence of a local mountain biking culture, even though this can be developed over the years by providing localities with good exposure to mountain biking
- Accessibility – Munsiyari is a bit far from current mainland tourism hotspots in Uttarakhand. Better connectivity between Munsiyari and Haldwani is a major determinant.

3.4.3 Opportunities:

- Mountain biking is a big advocate of Eco tourism with negligible impact on the nature.
- It is one of the fastest growing adventure tourism internationally. People are looking for new and unique locations to explore on a bike.



Image XXVIII - View of an old house from Darkot Village

- The marketability of Himalayas

3.4.4 Threats:

- It's not possible to ride more than 200 days in calendar year, due to the climatic conditions (not possible during heavy snow and rain). An alternate mode of tourism needs to be developed to run the industry even during the off season time, such as skiing, kayaking or some other adventure sport.

3.5 Point of difference:

- Diversity within a compact landmass – varied terrain
- Proximity to many possible MTB trails radially around Munsiyari
- Environment, climate and landscape
- A developing model of nature-based (Eco) and adventure tourism in Uttarakhand
- At the beginning stage of the MTB development process, with the opportunity to build innovative, unique and high quality infrastructure/experiences
- Venues access is free unlike many international biking locations
- Possibility of diverse trail types – diverse riding types
- Proximity of Himalayas and 360 degree view of Mountains and Hills
- Munsiyari has the potential to become an iconic tourist destination in Uttarakhand
- Exclusivity of Munsiyari – not crowded

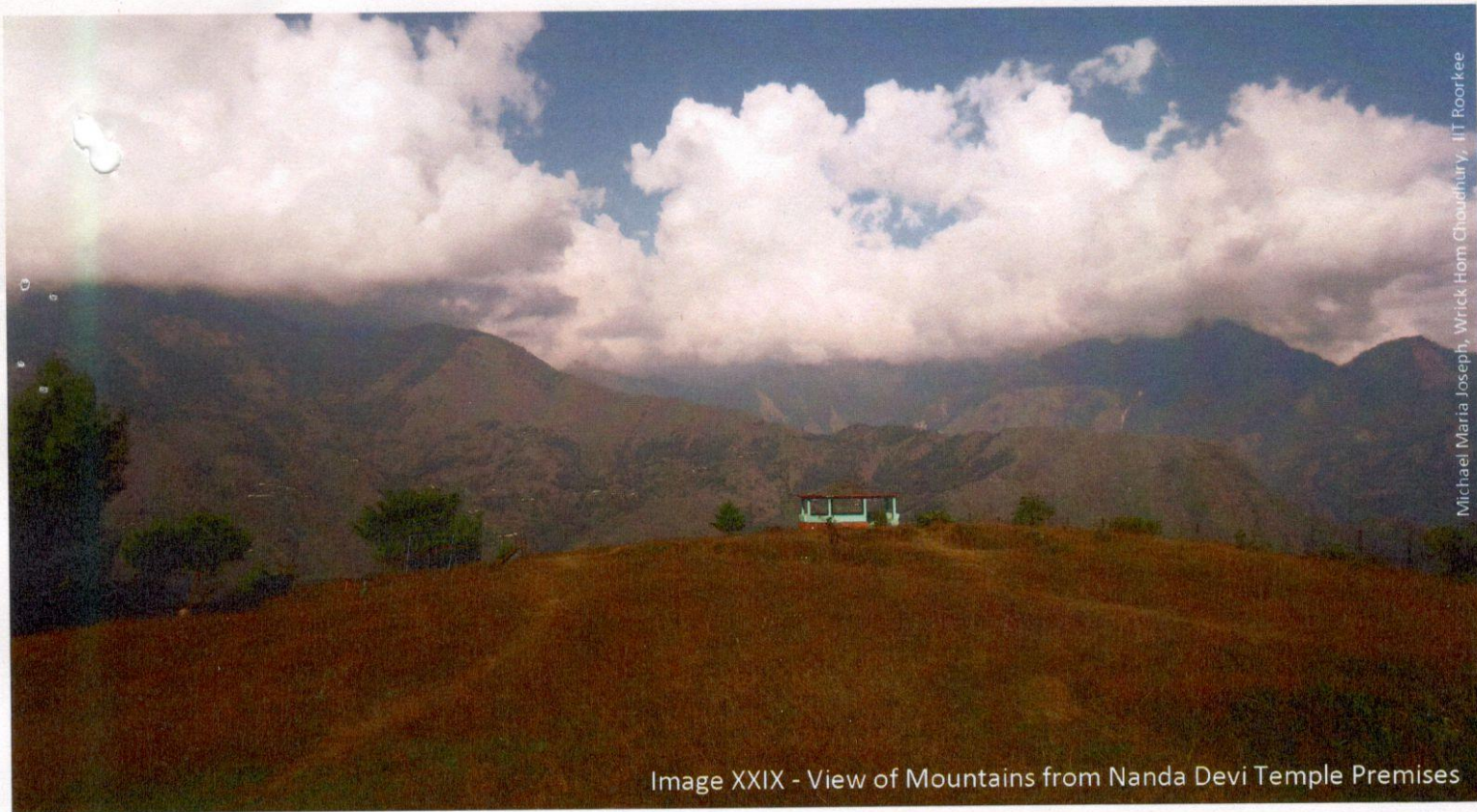


Image XXIX - View of Mountains from Nanda Devi Temple Premises

- Unique culture, vernacular architecture and chance experience Himalayan mountain life style
- 'Real' mountains – real mountain biking, pristine, raw and remote
- Much lesser expenses compared to other riding locations across the world
- Opportunity to experience unique flora and fauna in the natural environments of Himalayas
- Myriad of other visitor activities which could be developed including Himalayan trekking, Kayaking in glacier rivers, rock climbing, para gliding, wing-suit jumping, hot-air ballooning, white water rafting and much more
- Discover the unique lifestyle in the Himalayas with people who are famous for being friendly and hospitable

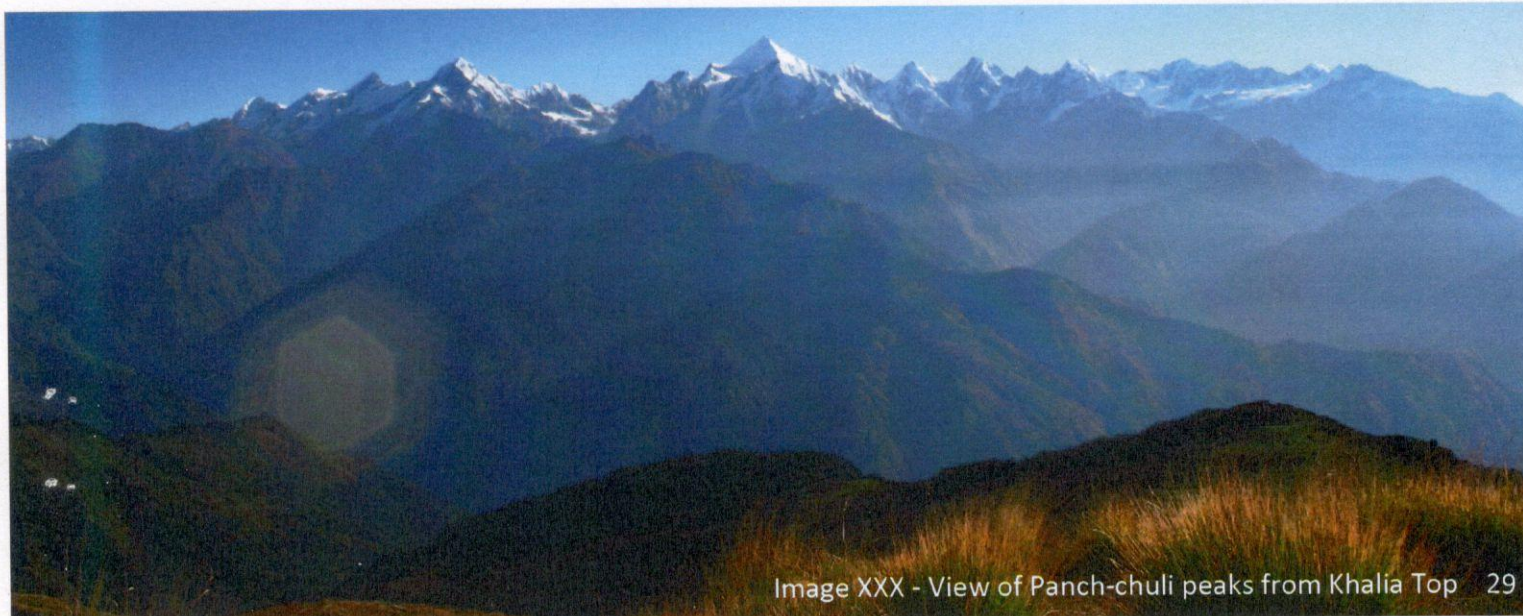


Image XXX - View of Panch-chuli peaks from Khalia Top 29

Chapter - IV

Travel and Accommodation



Image XXXI - KMVN guest house near Khalia Top (unfinished)

4.1 How to Reach Munsiyari?

Munsiyari lies on the entrance of Johar valley and falls en route the ancient trade route between India and Tibet. This section discusses various travel options available with tourists travelling to Munsiyari.

4.1.1 By Air

IGI Airport, Delhi is the nearest international airport. Munsiyari is approximately 600 km from Delhi.

Nearest Domestic airport which operates regular flights to many other cities in India is Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun, which is approximately 430 kilometers from Munsiyari in the state capital of Uttarakhand.

The closest airport to the Munsiyari is Pantnagar airport, which currently doesn't have any regular flight operation. Pantnagar airport is situated approximately at a distance of 300 kilometers from Munsiyari in the state of Uttarakhand.

Naini Saini airport which is a small airstrip on the hills is located at Naini Saini in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand (130 Kms from Munsiyari), but there are no regular flights operating from there.

There is a permanent Helipad at the GIC Munsiyari ground and one can travel to Munsiyari by a chartered Helicopter from different tourist places in Uttarakhand and also from Delhi. From Delhi, Dehradun and Pantnagar, one can choose between hired taxis, bus or train to reach Munsiyari. Sharing a jeep is another option for getting to Munsiyari. These jeeps shuttle between Haldwani, Almora, Thal and Munsiyari.

4.1.2 By Rail

To get to Munsiyari, one could travel by train up to Kathgodam or Tanakpur or Ramnagar and then shift to road transport.

Munsiyari is approximately 280 km from Kathgodam, the nearest railhead and major transport junction for the Kumaon Hills. Buses and taxis are available from Kathgodam to Munsiyari. The distance between Tanakpur and Munsiyari is approximately 275 kilometers. Trains from Delhi, Calcutta, Lucknow and Bareilly connect to Kathgodam daily. To get to Almora, Pithoragarh, Bageshwar and Munsiyari taxis are available at both the railway stations.

Ranikhet Express from Delhi is convenient train that leaves Delhi at 21:55 hrs and reaches Kathgodam at 05:45 hrs. There are three direct trains including Shatabdi. Further details of trains are available at www.irctc.co.in which is the official website for electronic reservation for the Indian Railways.

4.1.3 By Road

Munsiyari is located at about a distance of 600 Kms from Delhi and 280 kms from Kathgodam Railway station. One can reach Champawat, Almora, Tanakpur or Haldwani from Delhi or Haridwar by Uttarakhand state transport buses and from these places tourists can hire cabs or shared jeeps to reach Munsiyari comfortably.

Hiring a jeep from Haldwani or Thal to Munsiyari for a comfortable journey would be an apt and wise option. Jeeps to Munsiyari leaves Haldwani in the early morning hours, but a lot of Jeeps ply frequently all through the day to Munsiyari from the hilly retreat of Thal. Munsiyari is 127 Km from the district headquarter of Pithoragarh through Jauljibi - Madkot road.

Tourists traveling by their own vehicle should keep in mind that one can fill their diesel / Petrol tanks at Almora / Bageshwar/ Thal, but not in Munsiyari.

Some of the routes to reach Munsiyari are listed below:-

- a) Pithoragarh – Thal - Munsiyari.
- b) Pithoragarh – Jauljibi - Munsiyari.
- c) Almora – Seraghat – Berinag – Thal - Munsiyari.
- d) Almora – Bageshwar – Thal- Munsiyari.
- e) Dehradun - Rishikesh – Srinagar – Rudraprayag – Dungiri – Gwaldham – Baijanath – Bageshwar – Kapkot – Dana - Munsiyari
- f) Nainital - Bhowali – Almora – Binsar- Madhya Sarkari - Duka – Bageshwar – Kapkot – Dana – Munsiyari
- g) Haridwar – Kashipeth – Haldwani – Bhimtal – Almora – Bageshwar - Chaukhori – Thal – Munsiyari
- h) Kathgodam– Bhimtal – Bhowali – Almora – Binsar – Takula – Bageshwar - Chaukhori - Thal - Munsiyari

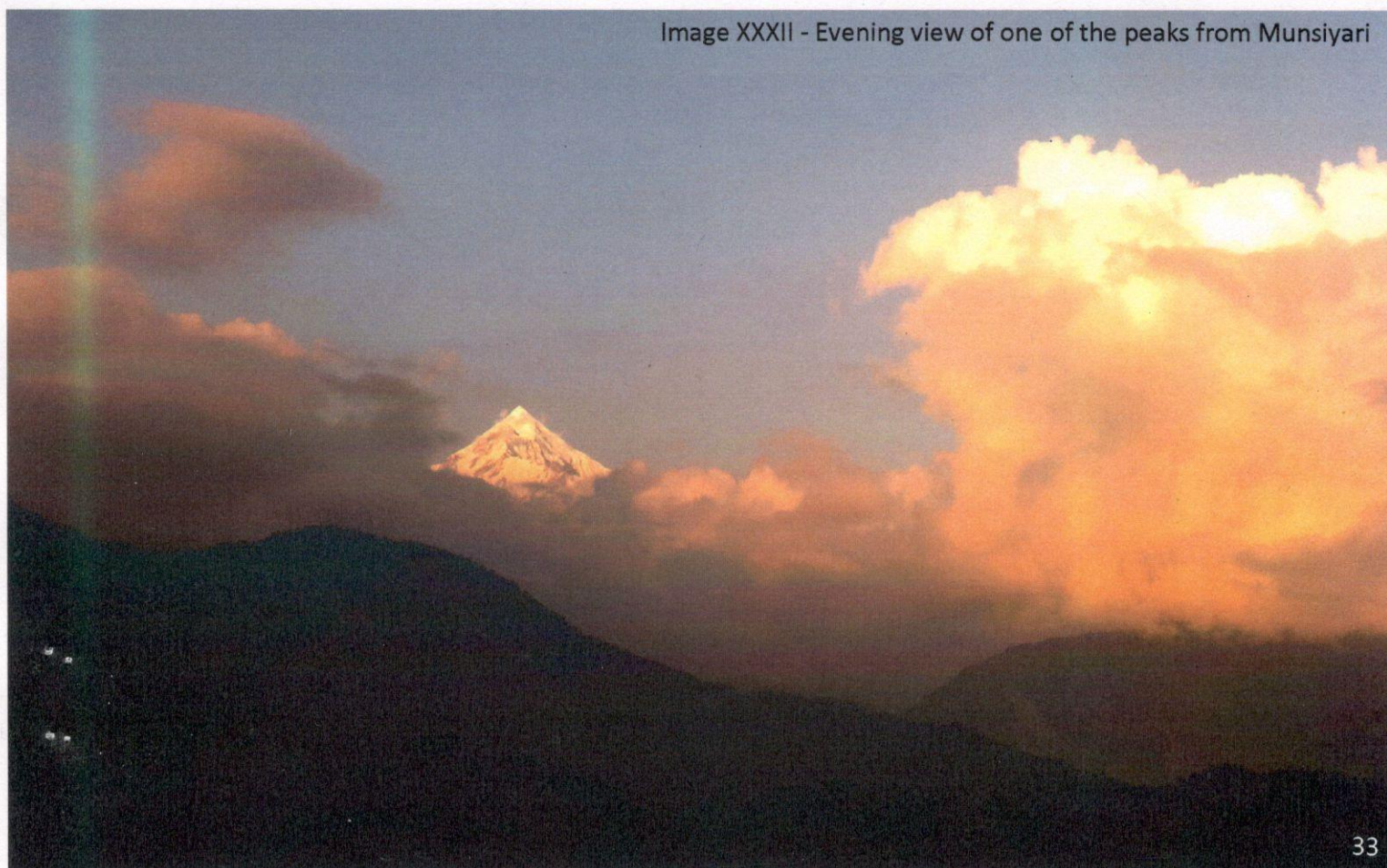
- i) Delhi - Gajraula – Joya - Moradabad - Rampur - Bilaspur - Rudrapur - Haldwani - Bhimtal - Bhowali - Khairna Bridge - Almora - Seraghat - Berinag - Udiyari Bend - Thal – Birthi - Kalamuni – Munsiyari
- j) Delhi - Hapur - Gajrola - Moradabad bypass - Kashipur - Kaladhungi - Nainital - Bhowali - Khairna - Almora - Chitai Temple - Barechina - Dhaulchina - Sheraghat - Udiyari Bend - Thal - Birthi Fall - Kalamuni Top - Munsiyari.
- k) Delhi - Hapur - Gajrola - Moradabad bypass - Kashipur - Kaladhungi - Nainital - Bhowali - Khairna - Almora - Kosi - Someshwar - Kausani - Baijnath - Garur - Bageshwar - Vijaypur - Chaukori - Udiyari Bend - Thal - Birthi Fall - Kalamuni Top - Munsiyari.
- l) From Kausani or Binsar the access to Munsiyari is through Bageshwar, Chaukhori and Thal.

If one enter Kumaon through Kathgodam, its better to take route c or d. If entered Kumaon through Tanakpur, route a or b can be taken. The best road surface quality can be expected in route d.

Approximate Distances to various places from Munsiyari are listed below

Delhi - 600 km	Kathgodam - 281 Km
Almora - 194 km	Kausani - 164 km
Haldwani - 290 km	Dharchula - 94 km
Bageshwar - 130 km	Phitoragarh - 129 km
Champawat - 200 km	Binsar - 180 km
Ranikhet - 224 km	Chaukori - 100 km
Nainital - 265 km	Didihat - 91 km
Lohaghat - 190 km	Patal Bhuvaneshwar - 130 km

Image XXXII - Evening view of one of the peaks from Munsiyari



4.2 Accommodation/ Hotel/ Eateries Survey

This section of the study gives a basic idea of some of the good hotels and stays currently in operation in Munsiyari.

4.2.1 KMVN Guest House

Located at one of the best location in terms of accessibility with rest of the town the KMVN guest house offers the tourist an enticing view of the Panch-chuli hills from most of the rooms. The guest house has a moderate tariff, 22 rooms of different capacity and a fantastic service. The hotel provides rooms of premium quality rooms and has a good parking space. The hotel has all and necessary amenities like television and wifi. It also houses spacious and good quality toilets along with all rooms.



4.2.2 Hotel Milam Inn

The simple layout of the hotel has facilitated a magnificent view of the Himalayas from every single room. The rooms are provided with giant glass windows too. The rooms are good and comfortable with good attached washrooms and balcony.

The service provided by the staff is good. There is place for outdoor fireplace and bar-beque. The hotel has a parking space of its own. The hotel is a bit away from the main town but it also is located in a very blissful location. This hotel has the best possible outdoor space to hold a gathering or a party.

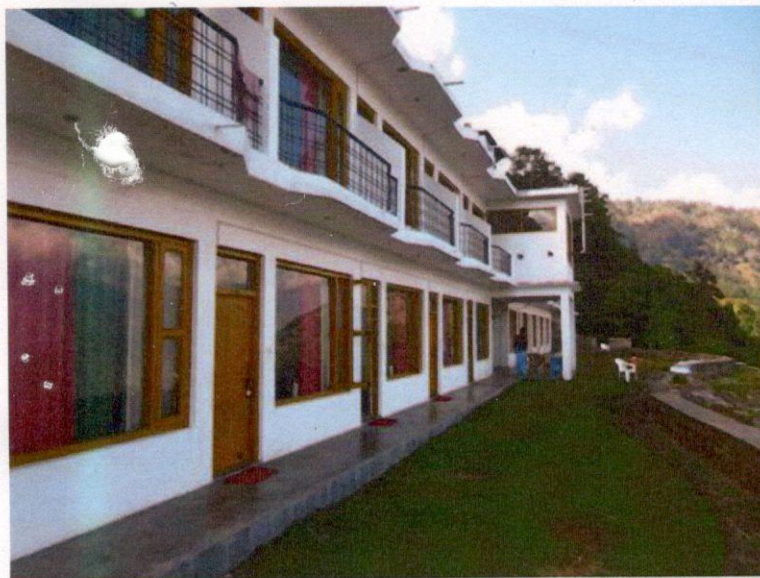


Image XXXIV - Hotel Milam Inn

4.2.3 Hotel Bilju Inn

One of the most well-known hotels in Munsiyari, Bilju Inn has around 24 rooms of different size and capacity. It has a good service provided by the hotel staff. The hotel also has a terrace from where the tourists can have a good view of the Himalayas and hold small late night gatherings. The rooms also have big glass windows so as to facilitate good view from inside the rooms. The rooms in the back though have no view at all. The parking is along the roadside since the hotel does not have its own parking facilities. The Hotel is very close to the main Munsiyari area.

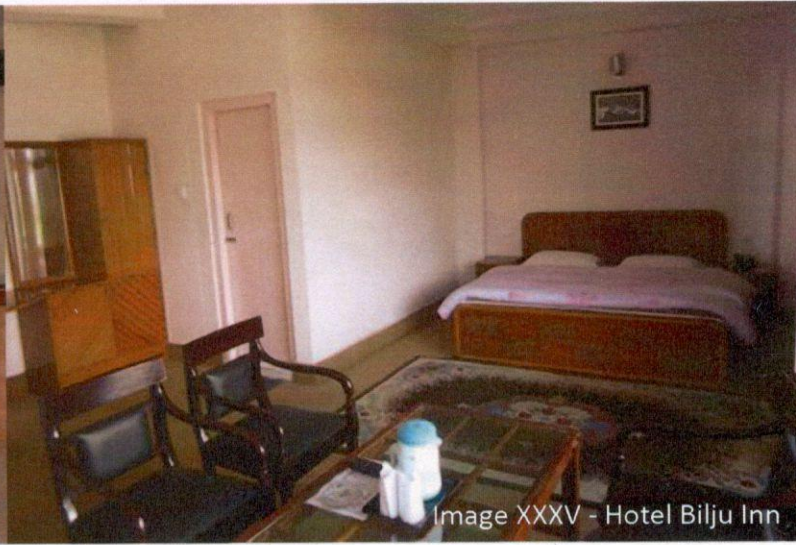
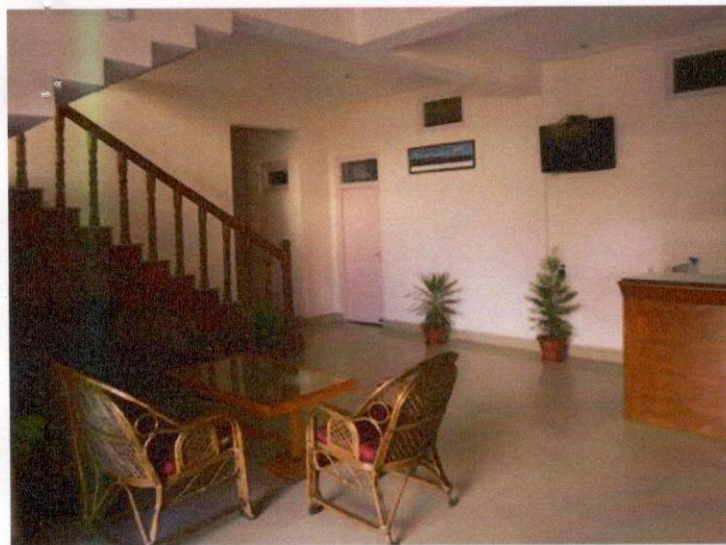


Image XXXV - Hotel Bilju Inn

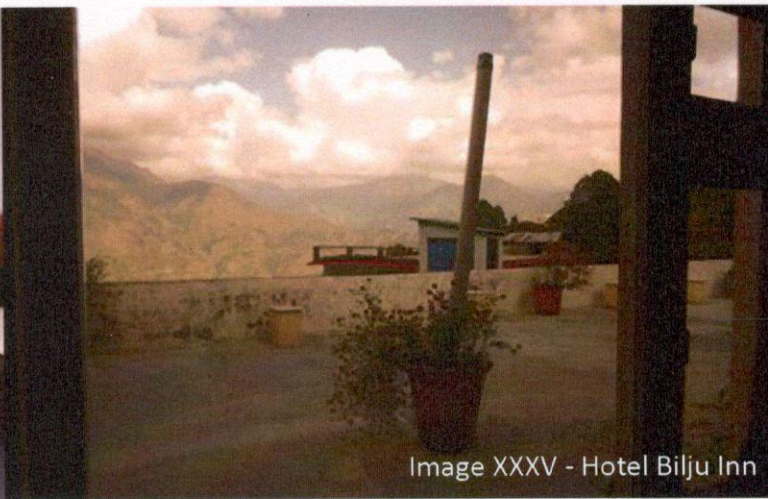
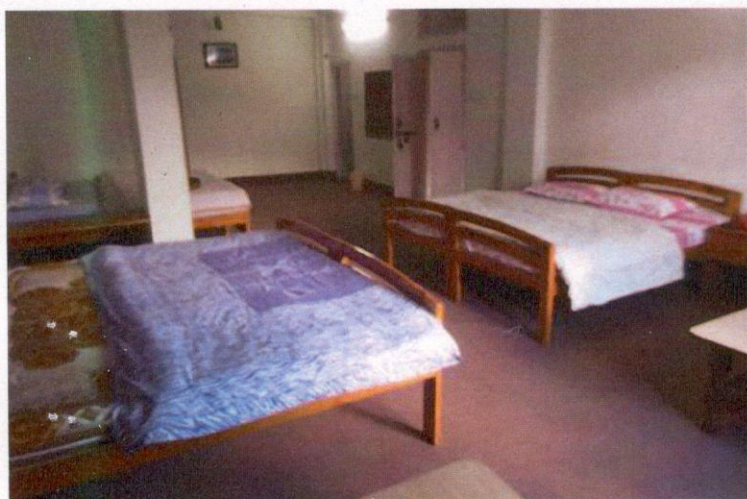


Image XXXV - Hotel Bilju Inn

4.2.4 Hotel Vijay Mount

The Hotel is on the way to Munsiyari, situated on the roadside with a very good view of the mountains in front. But the rear side rooms have no view at all. The Hotel has all the required amenities. It has good rooms and service. It also has its own parking space in front of the hotel.

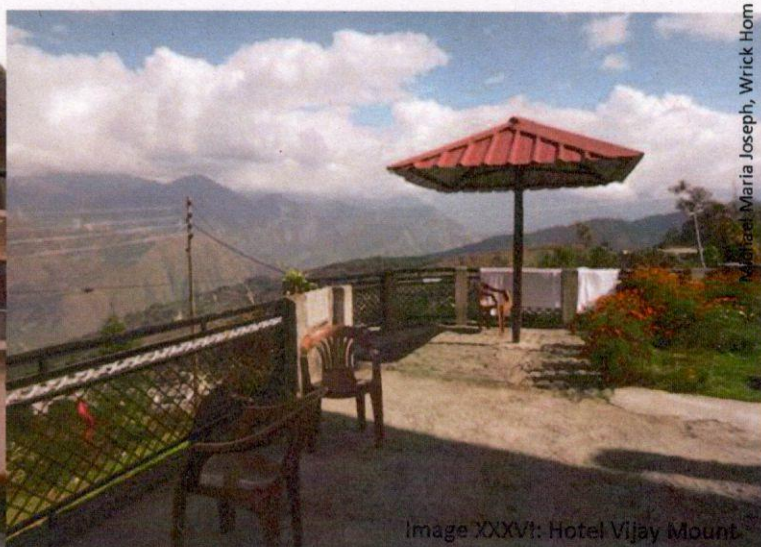


Image XXXV: Hotel Vijay Mount

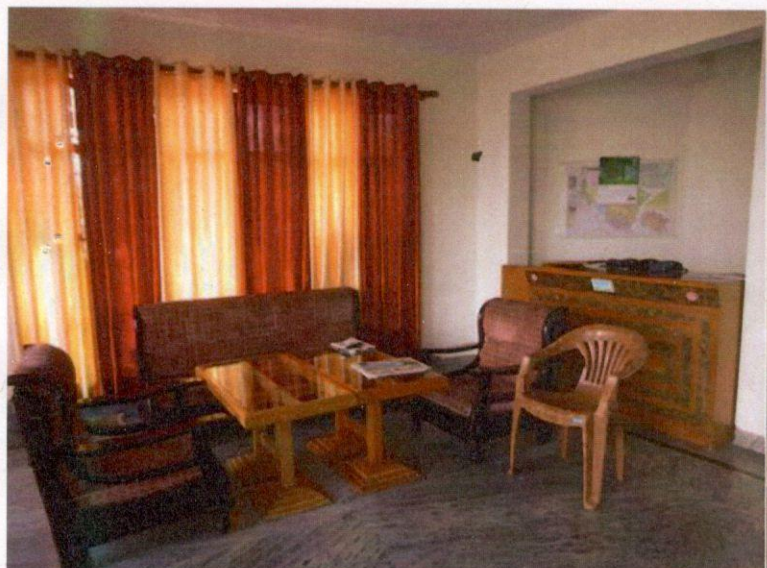


Image XXXVI: Hotel Vijay Mount

4.2.5 Hayat Paradise

It is a Budget Hotel with few rooms and an average view of the Himalayas. It does not have a kitchen. Food for the guests are bought in from the nearby restaurant. Parking can be done in the Bus Stand premises

4.2.6 Bugyal East End Rooms

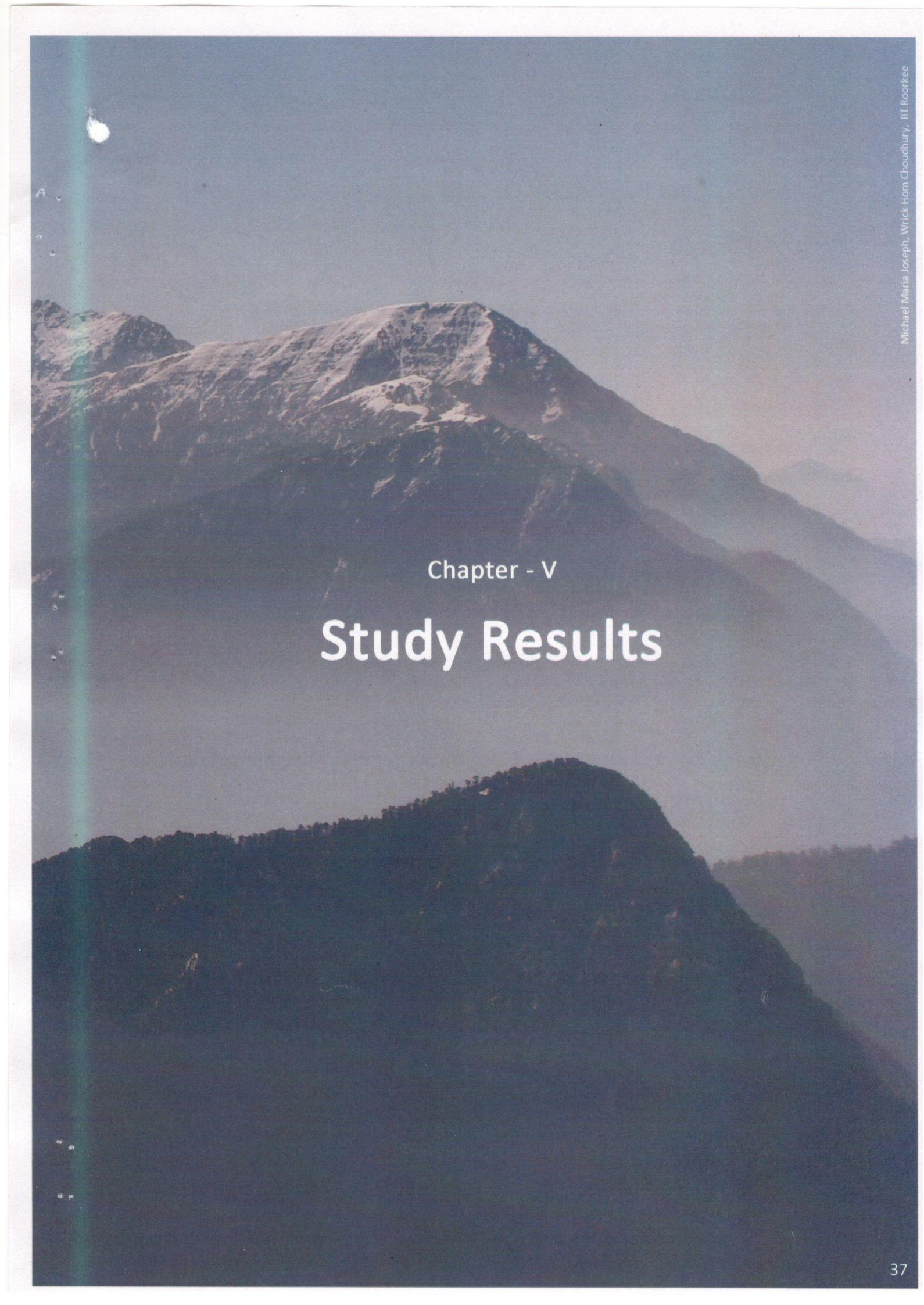
The Hotel has only four rooms and no restaurant. Rooms are of good quality though. It gets food from the neighboring restaurants on order from the guests. Parking can be done in the Bus Stand premises.

4.2.7 Hotel Leela mount View

Hotel Leela Mount View is situated in the Munsiyari Bus stand and has a few good rooms with good view of the mountains. Most of its rooms are being constructed presently. Parking can be done in the Bus Stand premises.

4.2.8 Pandey Lodge

It is a budget hotel with good restaurant facilities.



Chapter - V

Study Results



Image XXXVII - Mountain biking in the Himalayas

5.1 Conclusion

The success of other mountain bike destinations when examined show that if you get things right, mountain biking can bring both social and economic benefits to communities and regions. Given the natural assets of Uttarakhand there is an opportunity to develop a trail network that similarly will bring significant economic and social benefits to its communities.

The popularity of mountain biking worldwide, the demographics and riding patterns of its core participants, the high percentage of mountain bikers who travel and international assessments of market demand indicate that mountain bike tourism is a global niche market with strong potential for growth. Mountain bike riding is becoming more popular and appealing to a broader demography. Emerging trends in the sport suggest that overall participation in the sport will continue to increase and that mountain bikers will seek out more exotic, wilderness-based riding experiences in the future. Munsiyari – Khalia top stretch and surrounding villages has a huge potential to develop as a top international mountain biking destination and there is a large scope for trail development and mountain biking experiences. With its unsurpassed scenic and wilderness attributes and existing natural trail resources, Munsiyari is clearly positioned to become a mountain bike destination.

Mountain bike tourism presents opportunities for destination tourism in the various regions of Uttarakhand and would attract a distinct niche adventure market segment whose needs would be compatible with the territory's wilderness tourism industry. In order to differentiate from global competitors, meet future demand, and maximize existing assets, Uttarakhand should strive to offer the best wilderness and culture-based Himalayan single-track cycling in the world. Meeting this objective will require an expansion of the existing road and trail network to provide increased single-track trail access into mountain areas in the region.

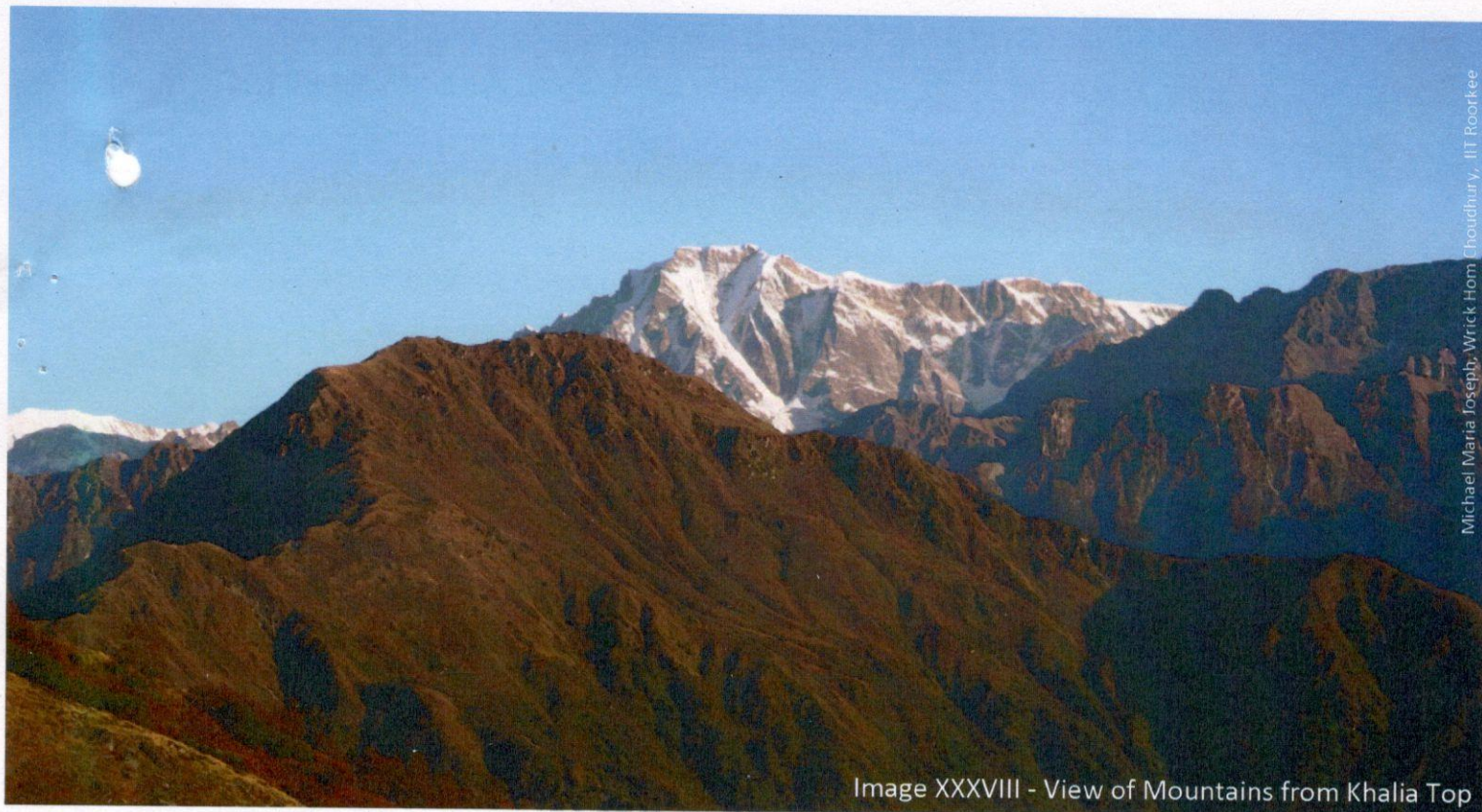


Image XXXVIII - View of Mountains from Khalia Top

Through this reconnaissance study, a number of natural trails in the above mentioned stretch was identified, which could be polished for using in the promotional event proposed and later during the main project stage developed to a greater level more professionally. There is possibility of making branch trails which start from the main trails at various points and they will complement the existing trails in the region and provide an additional track length for riders. The trails will provide mountain bike experiences for beginner through to advanced riders. They include a range of trail options from point to point trails, loop trails and even a skills park. The proposed trail network will attract new visitors to Uttarakhand, especially to Munsiyari, as well as value-adding experiences to existing visitors and providing opportunities for localites to also bike ride in the scenic Himalayan trails.

It is also obvious that the increase in tourist inflow as a result of the development of the trail network will support a large number of employments in the region. This includes employment directly related to the management and operation of the trail as well as indirect employment generated in the hospitality, retail and accommodation sectors. The creation of local job opportunities, along with increased expenditure in the local region, will have a significant impact on the village communities located in proximity to the trail network. It will increase investment in the region and provide optimism for local businesses and industry. It is also likely to increase community pride and community participation of local residents in the region.

Uttarakhand has further challenges to overcome in developing mountain bike tourism. Himalayan experience and value for money biking are two of the strongest advantages the state has got. But there may be a shortage of low/mid-budget accommodation providers that can cater to bikers. The limited capacity of the mountain biking community will require that it pursue partnerships as a means of making progress. In the short-term, raising the profile of mountain biking in the region has to be a strategic priority. Uttarakhand should proceed with development and marketing in a way that allows sufficient time, but without delay in developing trails.



Image XXXIX - A traditional house from Papari Village

5.2 Vision for Mountain biking in Munsiyari within the next five to ten years:

- Network of MTB trails with links between them and accessible motor road
- An iconic (or epic) ride
- Recognition of the mountain bike potential of Munsiyari – to be known as an international riding destination
- An ideal place to live in if you are a mountain biker
- Health and wellbeing for the local community – culture of bike riding
- Better links with other adventure sports and activities
- Signature events
- Centralized information source (e.g. website)
- Infrastructure/maintenance infrastructure – active management of the experience
- Community acceptance/recognition of MTB – documented in policy
- Community-based organizations for MTB
- Develop state authority/peak body for MTB – representative group – web-based coordination
- Greater supply of business opportunities/support services



Image XXXX - View of Papari Village and Gori-Ganga river below

- New branching trail developments from the existing major trails increasing the number of loops
- Database and complete information about all existing trails and to-be-developed trails
- Bike shops as primary advocates and information sources
- MTB as a contribution to healthy lifestyle, particularly for young people in the region
- Higher status for MTB/adventure events – as a ‘hook’ to attract interstate, national and large number of international riders
- Innovation and sustainability
- Better commercial opportunities and economic growth (e.g. bike hires tours etc)
- Development of a Ropeway system between Munsiyari and Khalia Top for easy and fast transportation of Bikes, bikers and tourists.
- Development of KMVN guest House at Bhujani as a second base camp on the way to Khalia top and as a rest house for downhill bikers.
- Ensure that other values (e.g. environmental and cultural) are not lost as a result of MTB development or access
- Statewide education about MTB trail construction techniques, code of rider conduct etc
- Higher level of national and international recognition as a mountain bike destination – with high quality experiences and support from state tourism and forest industries and other government agencies(e.g. bike friendly services)

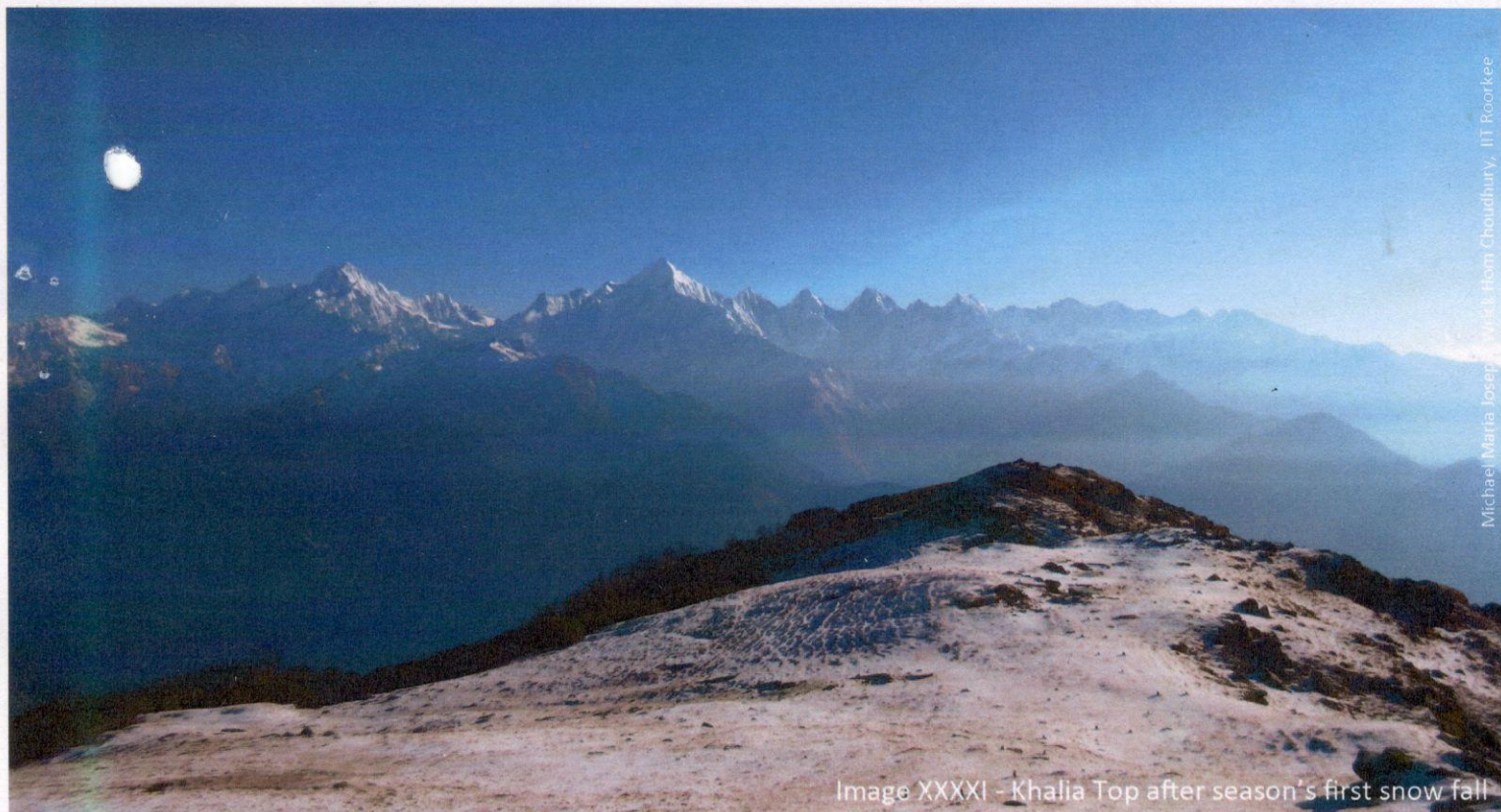


Image XXXXI - Khallia Top after season's first snow fall

5.3 Recommendations

Short Term:

1. Ensure that the concept proposed translates onto the ground, especially with respect to immediate following stages mentioned in the pre-project part. Get the right people to design and build the trails.
2. Establish a working group to develop the trails for the proposed promotional event with a more detailed vision and action plan.
3. Initiate the process of educating the tourism, business, and First Nation communities about the market potential for mountain bike tourism in Uttarakhand and especially in Munsiyari.
4. Identify potential partners, bikers, media, trail designers and resources required to host the proposed promotional event in the pre-project stage in preparation for actual project stage.
5. Identify the funding and organizational structures required to realize the above stated goals.

Medium Term (2-4 years):

1. Pursue opportunities for funding support for the project
2. Stage the development of the trails to focus resources
3. Ensure the trail development accessible to a broad mountain bike market (e.g. beginner to intermediate trails)
4. Ensure resources are dedicated to planning, coordinating and facilitating business development and the trail experience. Key areas include:
 - o Communicating the business opportunities within the region
 - o Developing information packages to help business cater to bikers
 - o Focusing initially on expanding the capacity of existing trails
 - o Providing mentoring services to businesses
 - o Assisting with packaging experiences for visitors
5. Prepare a Marketing Strategy and Action Plan. As an interim step a small piece of work

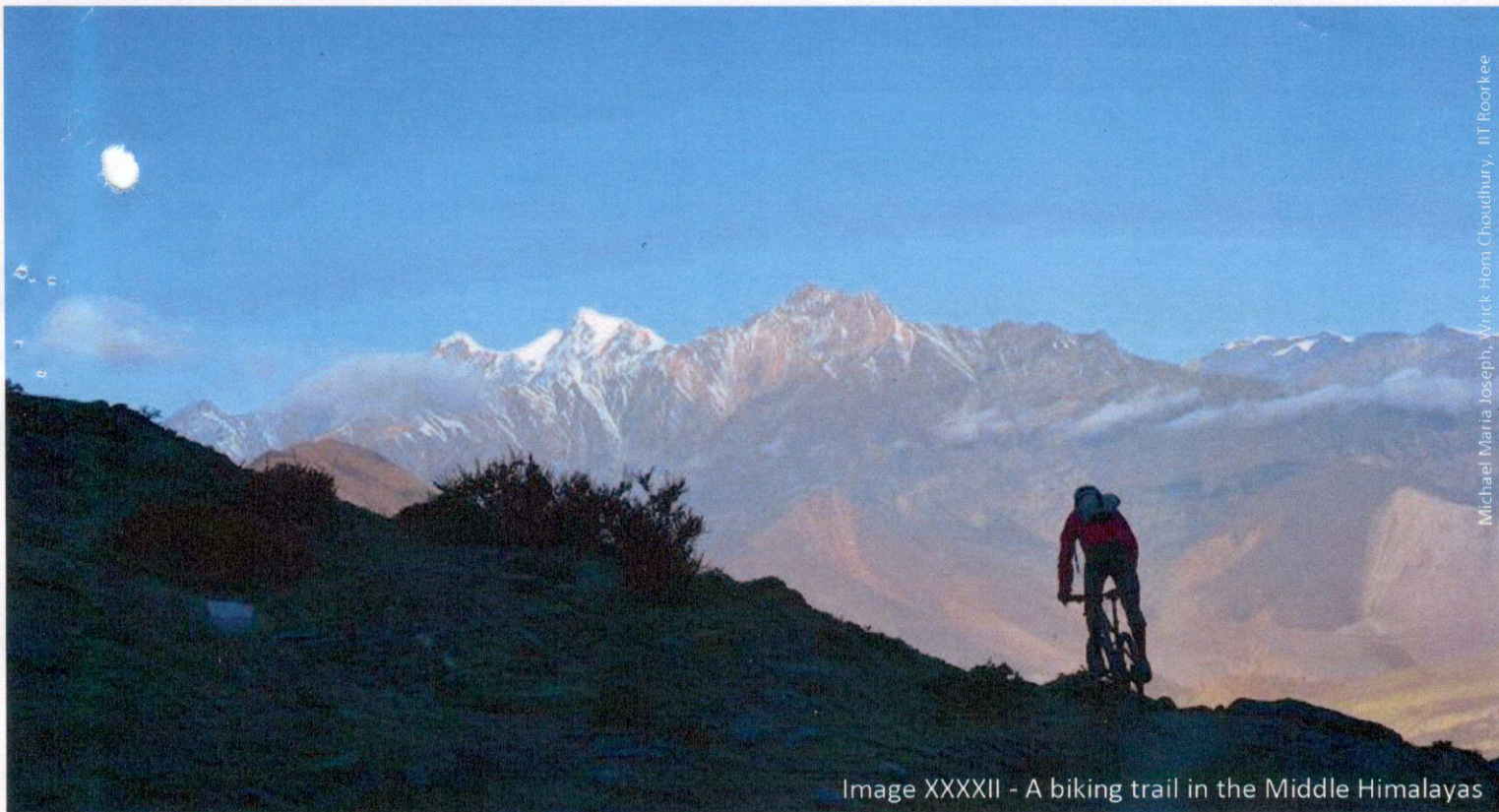


Image XXXXII - A biking trail in the Middle Himalayas

could demonstrate how the market will be targeted and what has been successful elsewhere.

6. Develop a simple user-friendly guide or brochure detailing mountain bike rides, businesses, and services in Munsiyari, Uttarakhand, including trail maps and other infrastructure facilities.
7. Undertake a pilot project in partnership with local village community, including trail development, signage and building initiatives and a recreational program for local youth as well as tourists.
8. Undertake a feasibility study for the creation of a long-distance non-motorized trail network in and around Munsiyari, identifying strategic locations, potential project partners and funding.
9. Develop a mountain bike-specific destination positioning and marketing plan with Uttarakhand Tourism and the Uttarakhand forest departments.

Long Term (5+ years):

1. Work with interested biking communities and other bodies to enhance the economic and recreational benefits of single-track trails.
2. Develop a long-distance Himalayan trail network in Munsiyari – Khalia Top region to facilitate major events and enhance trails-based and year-round tourism opportunities.
3. Stage a world-class mountain bike event to enhance Uttarakhand's image as an amazing Himalayan mountain bike destination.

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Accommodation/ Hotels/ Eateries - Comparative Chart

SL.No	HOTELS	NUMBER OF ROOMS										Quality of rooms			Toilets			View	Services	Parking	Remarks
		super DL	Tariff	Delux 2 Bed	Tariff	Delux 4 Bed	Tariff	others	Total no. of rooms	room heater	other amenities (TV/WiFi)	Western	wash	geyser							
1	UTC Guest House KMN/VN	4	1300	8	990	4	2100	6	22	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	VERY GOOD	GOOD	9 to 10 hotel parking	Very good rooms and service			
2		Milam Inn	10	2650	10	2250				20	✓	✓	✓	✓	VERY GOOD	GOOD	7 to 8 hotel parking	Very good view from room and service			
4	Bilju Inn				12	1500			12	24	✓	✓	✓	✓	VERY GOOD	GOOD	7 to 8 roadside	Very good rooms and service and view			
5	Hotel Vijay Mount			8	1200			2	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	GOOD	AVERAGE	6 to 7 hotel parking	Average rooms and good view			
6	Leela Mount View			4	2200				4+		✓ no wifi	✓	✓	✓	AVERAGE	AVERAGE	parking in bustand	Most rooms under construction			
7	Hayat Paradise			6	1200				6+		✓ no wifi	✓	✓	✓	AVERAGE	AVERAGE	parking in bustand	Budget rooms			
8	Bugyal East End Rooms			4	2200				4		✓ no wifi	✓	✓	✓	AVERAGE	AVERAGE	parking in bustand	Too less rooms			
9	Pandey Lodge														AVERAGE		parking in bustand	Budget rooms available			