

# Where are we today?

## Taking a snapshot of your community or project site

In this phase you will carry out an assessment of the resources your community has. In addition to some of the obvious resources for nature tourism - public parks, hiking trails, bed and breakfasts, etc. – we will ask you to consider some other components of your community, such as your human and cultural resources, as well as thinking about things you may not have considered as tourist attractions – like abandoned railroad tracks or sewage lagoons!

Following the steps below as completely as possible will make each additional step easier. Use the links from the “Assess Your Raw Materials” page to help you. If you get totally stuck, consult our “Resources” page or contact us.

**1. Form a Team.** For nature tourism to be successful, it needs to involve input from all the stakeholders in the community. You simply can't do this on your own! In this step you must gather around you all your potential partners in this venture. The first form in this packet will help you to identify these people. We recommend that you use this list to form a working group who will collaborate on the rest of the assessment and planning process.

**This is the most important step. Just trust us here: you can't afford to skip this one.**

**2. Gather Baseline Economic Data.** This is where you need to start using those links we gave you. The U.S. Travel Data Center in Washington, D.C. collects economic data that can help you to readily assess your economic baseline, and give you an idea of your potential. Since you most likely are not in a position to conduct extensive research (if you are, great! You probably don't need us!), you should start by networking and identifying what data is available to you from regional travel organizations. We have given you some links to some resources in Washington State. Then, use our form to create your own “resource directory” of travel statistics.

**3. Create a Market Profile.** To effectively promote your community or site and develop it to best suit the needs of both visitors and residents, you should decide who your desired audience is. What sorts of people are visiting your town now, and what sort of people do you want visiting? Once you have a handle on this, it will be easier to develop a plan to market your community to the right people. Combinations of data collected from steps 2 and 3 will be useful for this part.

**4. Inventory Your Site or Community.** At this point you need to get away from your computer screen and out into your community. You need to figure out what resources for tourism your community has and where they are. We have provided a checklist for you to work through. Expect this step to take a few weeks to complete, and be sure you can call on your team for help. Again, doing this right will make the rest a lot easier.

**5. Map Your Site or Community.** This step involves translating your community inventory onto a community map, to help you get a sense of where potential “hotspots” and/or problem areas might be, and where you should be focusing your efforts. Getting some mapping supplies will make this a lot easier. If they aren't available locally, we have provided a link for where to get what you need. If you can't afford professional stuff, that's okay: make do – butcher paper, markers and a map of your community will be fine.

**6. Create a Calendar for Your Site or Community.** You have mapped your attractions in space: now map them in time. What attractions are at their best during which months or seasons of the year? Are there any special events or festivals that you would like to draw people to? What times of year does your community need extra income? Having this data will enable you to determine which attractions you should be promoting to best serve the needs of your community.

## 1. Form a team

Everyone in your community will be impacted by successful nature tourism, either positively or negatively. By creating a thumbnail sketch of all the interested parties, you will gain a better idea of how to approach each of them, and who should be brought into the planning process. In the chart below, list the relevant groups or individuals for each category, and try to think of all the ways each party will be affected, both positively and negatively, by nature tourism. Remember that in many cases you will be dealing with sensitive ecological systems and potentially threatened or endangered species. Therefore, it is essential that you work with the legal authorities, such as the state and federal Departments of Fish and Wildlife and of Natural Resources, as you proceed with your planning process.

### People to consider:

Land owners State agencies  
Local governments Service clubs  
Tourism organizations Chamber of commerce  
Recreation groups Corporations  
Conservation groups Birders/naturalists  
Private sector tourism operators Tribes  
Fish and game association Education  
Elected officials Farm organizations  
Students Seniors  
Church groups Financial groups  
Local businesses and industry Opinion leaders  
School youth Teachers  
Economic Development Councils

**Affected Party**

**Positive Impacts**

**Negative Impacts**

**Federal Agencies**

- 1. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 3. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**State Agencies**

- 1. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 3. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Tribal Agencies**

- 1. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 3. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**County Agencies**

- 1. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 3. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**City and Local Agencies**

- 1. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 2. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 3. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:

**Affected Party**

**Positive Impacts**

**Negative Impacts**

**Elected Officials**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 3.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Private Foundations**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 3.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Merchants. Associations**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Chambers of Commerce**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Corporations**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 3.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Tourist Services**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:

**Affected Party**

**Positive Impacts**

**Negative Impacts**

3. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:

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**Outfitters and Guides**

1. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
2. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:

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**Communications**

1. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
2. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:

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**Transportation Services**

1. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
2. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:

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**Other Small Businesses**

1. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
2. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
3. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
4. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
5. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
6. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
7. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:  
8. Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:

**Affected Party**

**Positive Impacts**

**Negative Impacts**

**Conservation Groups**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Recreation Groups**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Education Groups**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Historical Societies**

- 1.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
  - 2.Contact Person:  
Telephone Number:
- 

**Concerned Individuals**

- 1.Name:  
Telephone number:
- 2.Name:  
Telephone number:
- 3.Name:  
Telephone number:
- 4. Name:  
Telephone number:

## 2. Baseline Economic Data

To complete this form, you will most likely need to connect to the Travel Industry Association of America, the U.S. Department of the Census, and the Washington State Department of Tourism. Other agencies that may have useful information are the Washington Department of Transportation and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. There are links to all these organizations from our web site. You may also find data from local and regional tourism organizations, economic development, arts and agriculture organizations.

Following the general data sheet is a Chamber of Commerce data sheet, which you should photocopy and ask each of the chambers of commerce in the region you are assessing to fill out. It may also be useful to provide this sheet to any local tourism or economic development organizations in your area and request their input, as well.

Finally, there is a questionnaire that you should begin asking visitors to your community to fill out. Put copies of this at places you know visitors come. Give copies to hotels, restaurants and visitors' centers. Use hotel guest books to develop mailing lists to send the questionnaires out to. Get as many visitors as possible to fill these out over the course of several months. This can be an ongoing process and you may proceed with the other steps in our sequence before this is completed. This will help you to identify why people are coming to your community and how you can improve their experience.

### Visitor Counts

	Number	Average Length of Stay (if known)	Year
Park visits			
Forest Visits			
Tourism Attraction Visits			
Attendance at Special Events			
Visitor Information Center Records			
Visitor Inquiries in Response to Promotion			
Highway or Border Counts			
Air, rail and bus arrivals and departures			

### Business Impact

Travel Expenditures	Dollar Amount	Year of Data
Transportation		
Lodging		
Food		
Entertainment		
Recreation		
Other		

Number of Travel-related job? \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Data: \_\_\_\_\_

Total value of payroll? \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Data: \_\_\_\_\_

Lodging occupancy rate? \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Data: \_\_\_\_\_

Camping occupancy rate? \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Data: \_\_\_\_\_

**Public Revenues:**

	Dollar Amount	Year of Data
<b>Local Tax Receipts</b>		
Retail Sales		
Food		
Lodging		
Other		
<b>State Tax Receipts</b>		
Fuel		
Retail Sales		
Other		
<b>Business permits</b>		
<b>Other</b>		

**Chamber of Commerce Data Sheet**

Community or Tribe: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

- How many hotels or motels are in your coverage area?
- How many beds and breakfasts are in your coverage area?
- Approximately how many beds does your coverage area have (total number of beds from all facilities listed above)?
- How many lodgings are accessible to the disabled?
- How many and what type of restaurants are in your coverage area?
  - Total:
  - Fast food:
  - Family:
  - Ethnic:
  - Ice cream:
  - Coffee shops:
- What is the general price range for a meal in your coverage area?
  - Breakfast:
  - Lunch:
  - Dinner:

**Appendix II - Working Forms**

8. Please indicate whether the following accommodations are being utilized at capacity, under capacity, or are in an over-capacity status, considering both the peak season of use and off seasons.

	<b>Under Capacity</b>	<b>At Capacity</b>	<b>Over Capacity</b>
a. Peak season - beds			
b. Off season – beds			
c. Peak season – restaurants			
d. Off season – restaurants			

9. Is there a range of affordability for overnight accommodations and restaurants to fit the needs of the types of visitor, i.e., from low to high income levels?

Restaurants: Yes:  No:

Please explain:

Overnight accommodations: Yes:  No:

Please explain:

10. Does the price charged for these two visitor services represent a good value for the money?

Restaurants: Yes:  No:

Please explain:

Overnight accommodations: Yes:  No:

11. Among the five basic tourism markets please indicate the percentage of visitation for each area, and whether that area has the potential for expansion.

<b>Visitor Market</b>	<b>Current %</b>	<b>Potential for Expansion?</b>
a. Pass-through traveler		
b. Vacation/leisure		
c. Friends and family		
d. Commercial business		
e. Personal business		

12. From what communities, states or regions do most of your visitors come?

14. Describe the demographic characteristics of the typical visitor:

Age:                      Other:                      Family size:                      Income level:

## Appendix II - Working Forms

14. Indicate the modes of transportation that visitors use to reach your coverage area by putting a 1 by the most used, a 2 by the second most used, etc.

- |                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| a. Airline      | e. Recreational vehicle   |
| b. Personal car | f. Bus                    |
| c. Rental car   | g. Other (please specify) |
| d. Rail         |                           |

15. Approximately how much money does the typical visitor spend each day in your coverage area?

16. Is information about public land attractions, recreation and user fees made available in your coverage area?

Yes:  No:

If yes, please list the attractions and the type of information provided:

## 3. Create a Market Profile

### Marketing strategy checklist

- Use your vision and assessment materials to define your community and or site and surrounding area.
- Identify your target audience or users
- Establish the marketing category (e.g., RV traveling seniors, high-end ecotourists, casual nature travelers, etc.)
- Determine whether your community/product will be a market category leader, follower, challenger, or specialized niche item.
- Describe the unique characteristics of your nature experiences and/ or services that distinguish them from the competition.
- Define whether your pricing will be above, below, or at parity with your competitors and establish whether you will lead, follow, or ignore changes in competitors. pricing.
- Identify the distribution channels through which your products/services will be made available to the target market/end users.
- Describe how advertising and promotions will convey the unique characteristics of your products or services.
- Describe any research and development activities or market research plans that are unique to your business.
- Describe the image or personality of your community and its products or services
- Use a visitor site survey (or the community survey) to create visitor information on your site once it is open to the public or for your community. Both forms\* help you determine who is coming from where and what they came to see and enjoy.

\*Forms provided may be modified to meet your needs and serve only as a template

# Community/Site Visitor Survey

Date:

Thank you for participating in our visitor survey.

Your answers will be held in confidence; however, summary statistics will be used to improve services for you and other visitors.

1. How many times, including today, have you visited our area during the past 12 months?

2. Other than today, when have you visited our area?

Spring  Summer  Fall  Winter

3. What was the main purpose of your visits?

- Attending a conference or meeting.  
Month(s):
- Other business.  
Month(s):
- Visiting friends/relatives.  
Month(s):
- Pleasure/vacation.  
Month(s):
- Just passing through.  
Month(s):
- Other:  
Month(s):

4. Which of the following activities have you participated in during the past year in this area?

- Outdoor recreation  
Activity and season:
- Cultural events  
Activity and season:
- Museums/historical sites  
Activity and season:
- Nature viewing  
Activity and season:
- Other tourism attractions  
Activity and season:
- Other activity  
Activity and season:

5. Usually, what is your main mode of transportation to this area?

- Commercial Airline
- Personal car
- Other:

6. How many days and nights did you stay in our area during the last year?

- Trip 1:    days,    nights
- Trip 2:    days,    nights
- Trip 3:    days,    nights

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7. If you stayed overnight, how many overnights did you stay?  
in a motel or similar facility?  
with friends/relatives?  
at a bed and breakfast? other?  
Please specify:

8. Approximately how much money did you spend during your longest visit to our area? Please exclude transportation costs to and from and money spent elsewhere for purchase of services here.  
\$

9. For how many people were these expenditures?  
Adults: Children (less than 18 years old):

10. What three things did you like most about your visit?

11. What three things did you not like about your visit?

12. When seeking information about an area, would you rather (mark just one)

Read about it in the:

newspaper  book  brochure  directory

Ask a:

friend/acquaintance  travel agent  visitors bureau

Watch/hear a:

TV program  radio program  TV ad  radio ad

Word of mouth:

while still at home  while traveling in the area  Other:

13. What sources of information did you use in preparation for this trip?

14. How far in advance did you plan your trip?

spur of the moment  1-2 months  3-6 months  over 6 months

15. What is your home town?

## 4. Site Resource Inventory (Site Specific Information)

Now you need to get out onto your site and figure out what resources you have. Enlist the help of your newly formed team to do this. Local knowledge of your area is invaluable in this step. If there are tour guides or naturalists in your area, see if they can arrange a tour for key people on your team, so you can really get a feel for what the assets of your site are. If there are birders, hunters, fishers or other recreational users of wildlife that already use your site, talk to them about what they see and use there. In addition to assessing potential tourist attractions, you will need to assess the tourism infrastructure to which your visitors will have access. Use our inventory sheet to help you in this process.

### Site Inventory

#### Geographic Information

Site name:

Acres:

Nearest town/city:

Miles away:

#### Geologic Information

Significant geologic features/events with visual evidence:

- Metamorphic mountains
- Sedimentary Mountains
- "Ice Age flood" scouring
- Volcanic activity
- Columnar basalt cliffs
- Glacial scouring
- Glacial erratics
- Moraines
- Fault lines
- Mima mounds
- Caves
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Cultural/Historical Information

- Native American site/trail
- Famous homestead/settler structures/sites
- Lewis & Clark site
- Early trade route/cattle trail
- Other:

#### Habitat Information

- Forest     Big game winter range     Big game summer range
- Shrub steppe/arid grassland     Western Washington grassland     Fresh water wetlands/streams
- Marine/estuary     Agricultural     Small game
- Endangered species (specify):
- Other:

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### Fish and Wildlife Viewing Information

Use "E" for an excellent chance of seeing the species in a 15 minute visit during the appropriate season, .M. for a moderate chance of seeing the species in a 2-hour visit. For less than moderate, leave blank. You may need to expand this list for birds and wildlife of your site.

**Wildlife:** Spring \_\_\_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_\_\_ Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Winter \_\_\_\_\_

#### Salmonids

Chinook \_\_\_\_\_ Steelhead \_\_\_\_\_

Coho \_\_\_\_\_ Chum \_\_\_\_\_

#### Elk

Olympic \_\_\_\_\_

Rocky Mountain \_\_\_\_\_

#### Deer

Black-tailed \_\_\_\_\_

White-tailed \_\_\_\_\_

Mule \_\_\_\_\_

#### Other large mammals

Bighorn sheep \_\_\_\_\_ Mountain goats \_\_\_\_\_

Moose \_\_\_\_\_ Bear \_\_\_\_\_ Marine mammals \_\_\_\_\_

#### Waterfowl

Ducks \_\_\_\_\_

Geese \_\_\_\_\_

Swans \_\_\_\_\_

#### Shorebirds \_\_\_\_\_

#### Songbirds

Migrants \_\_\_\_\_

Residents \_\_\_\_\_

#### Raptors

Bald eagle \_\_\_\_\_

Peregrine falcon \_\_\_\_\_

Golden eagle \_\_\_\_\_

#### Grouse

Sage \_\_\_\_\_ Sharp-tailed \_\_\_\_\_ Blue \_\_\_\_\_

Ruffed \_\_\_\_\_ Spruce \_\_\_\_\_

#### Small mammals \_\_\_\_\_

#### Reptiles & amphibians

Turtles \_\_\_\_\_ Snakes \_\_\_\_\_ Frogs \_\_\_\_\_

#### Invertebrates

General \_\_\_\_\_ Butterflies \_\_\_\_\_

**Other** (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

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### Existing Condition

Estimated use by visitors:

Spring \_\_\_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_\_\_ Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Winter \_\_\_\_\_

Primary user conflicts: \_\_\_\_\_

### Roads Open to Public:

Miles by type:

Paved \_\_\_\_\_ Gravel \_\_\_\_\_ 4WD \_\_\_\_\_ ATV \_\_\_\_\_

Road hazards:

Winter access: Yes/No

Number of pull-offs: Paved \_\_\_\_\_ Gravel \_\_\_\_\_ 4WD \_\_\_\_\_

Parking: Adequate \_\_\_\_\_ Inadequate \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate number of spaces for each type of parking:

Paved \_\_\_\_\_ Gravel \_\_\_\_\_ 4WD \_\_\_\_\_

### Signs

**Directional signs from:**  Federal highway  State highway  County roads  City roads

**On-site signs:**  Entrance sign at all major accesses  Entrance sign at one access  Pull-offs

Trailheads  Interpretive displays

**Property boundary (select one)**  Clear and regularly marked  Good, but needs improvement

Poorly and irregularly marked  None

**Trails (number of miles):** Foot: \_\_\_\_\_ Horse: \_\_\_\_\_

Mountain bike: \_\_\_\_\_ Winter: \_\_\_\_\_ Boardwalk: \_\_\_\_\_

Wheelchair: \_\_\_\_\_ Cross-country skiing: \_\_\_\_\_

**Restrooms (number):** Flush, ADA: \_\_\_\_\_ Flush, non ADA: \_\_\_\_\_ Concrete vault: \_\_\_\_\_ Pit: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other (number):** Picnic areas: \_\_\_\_\_ Campground: \_\_\_\_\_ Viewing structures: \_\_\_\_\_

Boat ramp: \_\_\_\_\_ (condition: ) \_\_\_\_\_

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### Needs

General suitability of site under existing conditions to sustain increased wildlife viewing use:

- Excellent
- Good
- Moderate
- Poor
- Already overcrowded

**Highest priority need to accommodate increased wildlife viewing recreation:**

**Additional needs** (be specific):

1.

2.

3.

**What simple project could be undertaken that would quickly increase wildlife viewing opportunities?**

### Surrounding Area

List the approximate number of the following that are within a 10 minute walk or drive of your site:

Hotels:

Motels:

Bed and Breakfasts:

Total beds:

Locally-owned restaurants:

Total restaurants:

Grocery stores or convenience stores

Other tourism destinations:

List:

1.

2.

3.

List the number of the following that are within a half-hour walk or drive of your site:

Bus stations:

Train stations:

Airports:

Gas stations:

Other tourism destinations:

List:

1.

2.

3.

## 5. Community Inventory

Now you need to get out into the community and figure out what resources you have. Enlist the help of your newly formed team to do this. Local knowledge of your area is invaluable in this step. If there are tour guides or naturalists in your area, see if they can arrange a tour for key people on your team, so you can really get a feel for what your assets are. One thing that some communities have tried is to hand out disposable cameras to schoolchildren and have them go out and photograph their favorite places. If there are birders, hunters, fishers or other recreational users of wildlife, talk to them about what the best places for wildlife are. In addition to assessing potential tourist attractions, you will need to assess your tourism infrastructure. Use this inventory sheet to help you in this process.

### Tourism Attractions Inventory

**Ratings:** Low – Out of the way, unattractive or uninteresting

Medium – Attractive

High – Accessible, very attractive

Number	Attraction	Rating	Comments
<i>Natural or Scenic Attractions</i>			
	Arboretum and botanical gardens	L M H	
	Beaches	L M H	
	Bird-watching areas	L M H	
	Deserts	L M H	
	Fall foliage	L M H	
	Spring blossoms	L M H	
	Forests	L M H	
	Environmental programs	L M H	
	Geological formations	L M H	
	Geysers	L M H	
	Islands	L M H	
	Lakes	L M H	
	Mountains, hills, cliffs	L M H	
	National parks	L M H	
	Nature trails	L M H	
	Natural lookout points	L M H	
	Oceans	L M H	
	Prairies and grasslands	L M H	
	Wetlands	L M H	
	Rivers, streams or creeks	L M H	
	Sand dunes	L M H	
	Star gazing sites	L M H	
	Tide pools	L M H	

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Number	Attraction	Rating	Comments
	Volcanoes	L M H	
	Waterfalls	L M H	
	Waterways (canals, harbors, straits)	L M H	
	Wildlife sanctuaries/refuges/preserves	L M H	
	Wilderness areas	L M H	
	Woodlands	L M H	
	Other:	L M H	
	Other:	L M H	
<b>Recreation</b>			
	Beaches	L M H	
	Bicycling	L M H	
	Bird watching	L M H	
	Boat rides	L M H	
	Camping	L M H	
	Canoeing	L M H	
	Dams	L M H	
	Farms	L M H	
	Fish hatcheries	L M H	
	Fishing and fishing contests	L M H	
	Float trips	L M H	
	Fossil hunting	L M H	
	Game ranches	L M H	
	Hang gliding	L M H	
	Hiking, walking	L M H	
	Horseback riding	L M H	
	Hot air ballooning	L M H	
	Hunting	L M H	
	Kite flying	L M H	
	Local parks	L M H	
	Marinas	L M H	
	Mountain climbing	L M H	
	Parachuting	L M H	
	Picnic areas	L M H	
	Playgrounds	L M H	

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Number	Attraction	Rating	Comments
	Rock climbing	L M H	
	Rock/mineral hunting	L M H	
	Roller skating	L M H	
	Running areas	L M H	
	Sailing	L M H	
	Scenic highways	L M H	
	Scuba diving/snorkeling	L M H	
	Skiing	L M H	
	Sledding	L M H	
	State parks	L M H	
	Swimming	L M H	
	Square dancing/folk dancing	L M H	
	Tennis	L M H	
	Whale watching	L M H	
	Zoos	L M H	
	Other:	L M H	
	Other:		
<b><i>Cultural and Heritage Attractions</i></b>			
	Archaeological sites	L M H	
	Battlefields and old forts	L M H	
	Birthplaces/homes of famous people	L M H	
	Buildings of architectural interest	L M H	
	Burial grounds	L M H	
	Ceremonial dances	L M H	
	Churches, synagogues, temples	L M H	
	Conservatory	L M H	
	Early settlements	L M H	
	Ethnic celebrations	L M H	
	Folklore programs	L M H	
	Ghost towns	L M H	
	Historic districts	L M H	
	Historic theaters and opera houses	L M H	
	Historical tours	L M H	

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Number	Attraction	Rating	Comments
	Interpretive centers	L M H	
	Landmarks	L M H	
	Libraries	L M H	
	Lumber and mining camps	L M H	
	Memorials and monuments	L M H	
	Missions and shrines	L M H	
	Military bases	L M H	
	Museums	L M H	
	Native American historical sites or museums	L M H	
	Recreated villages	L M H	
	Re-enactment of events	L M H	
	Ruins	L M H	
	Ships	L M H	
	Walking tours	L M H	
	Waterfront restorations	L M H	
	Other:	L M H	
	Other:	L M H	
<b><i>Special events</i></b>			
	Arts and crafts/hobby fairs	L M H	
	Barbecues, special food events	L M H	
	Boat shows	L M H	
	Camps (athletic, training, language, computer, work)	L M H	
	Concerts	L M H	
	Dance or opera productions	L M H	
	Ethnic/multi-cultural celebrations	L M H	
	Fairs (agricultural/others)	L M H	
	Farm tours	L M H	
	Farmer's market	L M H	
	Other farming activities	L M H	
	Film series	L M H	
	Fish/wildlife festivals	L M H	
	Flower shows	L M H	

## Appendix II - Working Forms

Number	Attraction	Rating	Comments
	Food processing tours	M	
	Food festivals	M	
	Forest tours	M	
	Harvest celebrations	M	
	Hay rides	M	
	Holiday celebrations, festivities	M	
	Home and artisan studio tours	M	
	Educational vacations	M	
	Local centennials/bicentennials	M	
	Local theater	M	
	Livestock exhibitions	M	
	Music festivals, concerts	M	
	Native American celebrations	M	
	Parades	M	
	Religious/spiritual observances	M	
	Sports events	M	
	Symphony & orchestra performances	M	
	Theater productions	M	
	Workshops, seminars, retreats	M	
	Other:	M	
	Other:	M	
	Bed and breakfasts	M	
	Barns, windmills	M	
	Bridges	M	
	Country inns	M	
	Dams, power stations, hydro plants	M	
	Dude ranches and farms	M	
	Ethnic grocery stores	M	
	Geothermal installations	M	
	Government buildings	M	
	Herb farms and sales outlets	M	
	Libraries	M	
	Locally prepared and packaged food specialties	M	

## Appendix II - Working Forms

Number	Attraction	Rating	Comments
	Miniature railroads	L M H	
	Observation towers, observatory	L M H	
	Outlets for artisans or other locally-made products	L M H	
	Railroad depots	L M H	
	Railway rides	L M H	
	Restaurants and bars with locally grown or ethnic foods	L M H	
	Retreat and learning centers	L M H	
	Roadside produce stands	L M H	
	Showboats, ferry boats	L M H	
	Universities, colleges, other schools	L M H	
	Winery tours and tasting rooms	L M H	
	Local oddities (the best, the worst)	L M H	
	Most remote spot	L M H	
	The biggest/smallest something	L M H	
	The first of its kind	L M H	
	The highest/lowest	L M H	
	Other:	L M H	
	Other:	L M H	
<b><i>Public Services/Facilities/Infrastructure</i></b>			
	Public restrooms	L M H	
	Public water fountains	L M H	
	Police/sheriff/patrol stations	L M H	
	Fire stations	L M H	
	Interpretive centers	L M H	
	Water supplies	L M H	
	Waste disposal facilities	L M H	
	Recycling facilities	L M H	
	Parking spaces	L M H	
	Emergency road service	L M H	
	Emergency medical facilities	L M H	
	Hospitals	L M H	
	Ambulance service	L M H	

## Appendix II - Working Forms

Number	Attraction	Rating	Comments
	Visitor information centers	L M H	
<i>Transportation</i>			
	Main access roads	L M H	
	Freeways	L M H	
	Directional signs	L M H	
	Signs for major attractions	L M H	
	Airport with regularly scheduled commercial service L M H		
	Taxi, limousine, bus and/or rental car service for air travelers L M H		
	Landing facilities for private aircraft	L M H	
	Commercial bus service	L M H	
	Train service	L M H	

## 5. CREATE A CALENDAR

In this step you will review the attractions that will bring tourists to your site, and figure out when the tourists should be coming. Take out your inventory and go through the items that you marked as an M or an H. Highlight up to 30 that you think tourists will be most likely to come see, or that you are most eager to share with others. Skip the section on services and infrastructure.

Write down each of the attractions in the appropriate column on the following page. Then put an "X" in the row next to the attraction, under each month that the attraction is available for viewing. Below is an example of this sort of "time-mapping."

When you're finished creating the calendar chart, there are two things you can do with it. First, you can use it to determine what months will be best for tourism at your site, by simply looking for the months that have the most attractions. Second, your team can discuss during seasons your community would most benefit from additional tourism. Then you can use your chart to determine which attractions you should be marketing, to bring tourists to your site when they're most wanted.

For example only

### Washington State Wildlife Area:

	Sandhill Crane Staging	Waterfowl Migration	Heron & Egret Colony	Bald Eagle Nest
January				○
February				○
March	○		○	○
April	○	○	○	○
May		○	○	○
June			○	○
July			○	○
August	○	○	○	○
September	○	○		○
October				○
November				○
December				○



## Finding A Shared Vision For The Future

After completing the steps in “Assess Your Raw Materials, ” or if you already have a pretty good idea of your communities assets and weak points related to tourism development. Before you can develop your plan for a nature tourism site or community project, you need to work with your team to create a shared vision of where you want to go. How much, when and where does tourism development make sense in your project area? What type of visitors are you trying to draw? How each decision or group of decisions impact your community?

Collaboration is key in this step. Make sure you get input from a wide cross-section of the community. While the previous step was of a more technical nature, during this step you should plan to rely heavily upon meetings, workshops, town hall forums, etc. Use the links from the “Envision Your Finished Product” page to help you. If you need to, you may consult our “Resources” page or contact us.

Much of the work in this section involves meetings and workshops. It is essential to keep a record of the conclusions and key points of each of these discussions. You will need to refer back to this information in future steps.

**Identify Community Values and Assets.** What is important to people in your community? What holds them together, or pulls them apart? What are attitudes towards nature, wildlife, and tourists? Who are your public land managers and wildlife experts? What are the economic and legal limitations that you must operate under?

**Create a Vision.** Bringing tourists to your community can have a huge impact on the way your community looks, feels and interacts in the future. To control or minimize this impact, there needs to be a shared vision of what the future will look like.

**Find Your Purpose, Choose Your Audience.** Why do you want to bring nature tourism to your community? Who will benefit and how? Who is it that you want to attract to your community? What sort of experience or experiences is your community willing or able to provide, and who do you think will be drawn to this experience?

**Develop and Implement an Action or Project Plan.** Finally, you will need to use the results of the previous questions to develop an Action Plan with concrete goals upon which your team will act.

## Identify Community Values

This step can be tricky. There are a lot of ways to go about identifying the key values in your community, and which one you choose will depend a lot on the makeup of your team, your time and other resources, and your community itself. The key here is to *keep an open mind*. You're trying to find out what people here really care about, why they like living here, what they would like to see more of or less of. The process needs to be open to everyone in the community. Whatever method you choose, try to listen to community members and refrain from passing judgment. You're not trying to change people's minds or sell them on the tourism idea. You want to create your vision around those things that people in the community truly care most about, so that you can get the highest level of participation and agreement in future steps. By the end of this process, you may have identified a few more people who want to be on your team.

### **Choose and implement a method.**

There are many ways to get input about the community's values. We have provided a few methods that other communities have used as examples below. You can choose one of these, or develop one that better fits your needs. Choose a time horizon - e.g. 5, 10 or 20 years - over which you will ask people to envision the future of the community.

#### **A. Town Meetings and Surveys**

This is the classic way of going about this process. Send a survey to several hundred randomly selected households in your area and ask for their input, and hold one or more well-publicized town meetings to generate discussion of the community's future. This is the most familiar form of gathering community input and therefore, depending upon the character of your community, may be more or less effective than some of the less conventional methods described below.

#### **B. "Postcards from \_\_\_\_\_."**

You can do this through a town meeting or workshop, or work with businesses to have the postcards and collection boxes available around town. In this project you ask residents of the community to write a postcard to a hypothetical relative twenty years in the future, describing the qualities and characteristics that they most value and want to share. The town of Breckenridge, Colorado has used this process. You can find out more about how they did it and the results on their web site, accessible from the "Envision" links page.

#### **C. "Meetings-in-a-Box"**

This was a plan implemented by a community in Michigan as part of their visioning process. The "Meetings-in-a-Box" (MIBs) were small focus groups of no more than 10 people, held by area residents, organizations and businesses. The planning group for the MIBs process handed out cardboard boxes containing materials to hosts of the meetings. Participants in the meetings individually completed response forms, which were returned to the visioning team. Resources and a more detailed description can be accessed from the "Envision" links page.

**The results of your information gathering will be analyzed in the next step.**

## Create A Vision

Now you can sit down with your team and analyze the results of your surveys to form a vision of your community at the end of your identified timeline. There are several questions below that you should try and answer together, to form a comprehensive picture of your vision. These questions look at details and are aimed at moving you towards developing specific targets, but there is one overarching question you must answer:

### **How do we want our community to look, feel and BE in the future?**

It may help to use drawings, photos or maps to paint a complete picture about the future quality of life and face of your community.

#### **Questions to address:**

1. How much population growth do people want to see, both in terms of residents and visitors?
2. What do people feel are the key cultural and historical aspects of your community that need to be preserved?
3. How much additional commercial, residential and industrial development do people want to see?
4. What types of recreational activities and open spaces do people want to have?
5. What type of infrastructure, in terms of transportation, utilities and communication, do people want to see?
6. What sorts of public services, such as schools, medical, police and fire fighting, are most important to people?
7. What sorts of private services, such as retail shopping, restaurants, recreation and medical services are most important to people?

## Find Your Purpose, Choose Your Audience

Go back to the worksheets you completed in part I, Assess Your Raw Materials. Look at Steps 2 and 6, the baseline economic data and market profile. The documents you created in those steps will remind you who is coming to your community now and what they are getting out of the experience. Use this information to address the following checklist.

### Marketing strategy checklist

1. Use your vision and assessment materials to define your community and or site and surrounding area.
2. Identify your target audience or users
3. Establish the marketing category (e.g., RV traveling seniors, high-end ecotourists, casual nature travelers, etc.)
4. Determine whether your community/product will be a market category leader, follower, challenger, or specialized niche item.
6. Describe the unique characteristics of your nature experiences and/ or services that distinguish them from the competition.
7. Define whether your pricing will be above, below, or at parity with your competitors and establish whether you will lead, follow, or ignore changes in competitors. pricing.
8. Identify the distribution channels through which your products/services will be made available to the target market/end users.
9. Describe how advertising and promotions will convey the unique characteristics of your products or services.
10. Describe any research and development activities or market research plans that are unique to your business.
11. Describe the image or personality of your community and its products or services
12. Decide Upon Desired Outcomes/Develop a Project Plan

## Develop and Implement an Action or Project Plan \*

### Suggestions:

- Prioritize projects based on developed criteria
- Assign committees or individual champions to each project
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of each project (SWOT Analysis)
- Develop an overall timeline based on prioritized goals, strengths and weaknesses and resources.
- Coordinate the various efforts being implemented from the action plan
- Continue to share the ideas and successes with the larger community

### Tips for Planning A Successful Project

You can never over-plan a project: In the end, good planning will likely save you money and headaches. Scope out your project systematically, and then execute it in distinct steps:

#### **Understand what you're overall project demands.**

Talk to friends and acquaintances that have completed similar projects. Watch seek help online or consult do-it-yourself and home-improvement experts.

#### **Plan what revenues the project may generate.**

Establish a realistic budget considering all materials and expenses for labor. Factor in an extra 30 percent for unexpected costs.

#### **Does the project fit within local and state plans and regulations?**

#### **What other facilities and services will need to be enhanced to support the project construction and operation?**

Set a timetable s for tasks and project completion.

Establish a realistic deadline for the project. Decide how much should be completed by the end of each week, month or year (if the project is large). Then add 30 percent to your time estimate.

#### **Obtain bids and references from competing firms/consultants.**

This will help ensure competitive pricing and quality work.

#### **List the sequence in which tasks need to be accomplished.**

#### **Keep the end result in mind.**

#### **Use photos, sketches, and prototypes as review and reflection models.**

#### **Stage breaks for yourself.**

Fatigue reduces productivity and can contribute to poor workmanship.

#### **Expect the unexpected.**

A project that's completed without a hitch is the exception, not the rule.

\* **Suggestions can apply to a single project or series of related projects**

# Additional Nature Tourism Business Resources

## **Experience Washington -**

Official Washington State Tourism, Office of Trade and Economic Development, industry site provides visitor profile, travel economic impact and other tourism marketing information specific to Washington State.

<http://www.experiencewashington.com/>

## **The Sonoran Institute -**

The Sonoran Institute works with communities to conserve and restore important natural landscapes in Western North America, including the wildlife and cultural values of these lands. The Institute's efforts create lasting benefits, including healthy landscapes and vibrant livable communities that embrace conservation as an integral element of their economies and quality of life.

<http://www.sonoran.org/>

## **The Conservation Fund -**

The Conservation Fund forges partnerships to preserve our nation's outdoor heritage -- America's legacy of wildlife habitat, working landscapes and community open-space.

<http://www.conservationfund.org/>

## **United Nations Environment Publication -**

Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: Guidelines for Planning and Management

[http://www.unep.org/pc/tourism/library/sust\\_prot\\_areas.htm](http://www.unep.org/pc/tourism/library/sust_prot_areas.htm)

## **Making Nature Your Business: A Guide for Starting A Nature Tourism Business in the Lone Star State -**

From Texas Parks and Wildlife.

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/>

## **Establishing a Birding-Related Business: A Resource Guide -**

From the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas A&M University.

<http://www.rpts.tamu.edu/tce/tcepublications.htm>

## **Providing Positive Wildlife Viewing Experiences -**

From Watchable Wildlife, Inc. and the Colorado Division of Wildlife. A resource book for professionals providing wildlife viewing experiences.

<http://www.watchablewildlife.org/publications/propub.htm>

## **Twinshare: Tourism Accommodation and the Environment -**

A guide to wildlife-friendly building practices for the nature tourism industry.

<http://twinshare.crctourism.com.au/>

## **For Tourism Professionals -**

A collection of links from the National Geographic Society's Sustainable tourism Resource Center.

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable/professionals.html>

## **International Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism from the Convention on Biological Diversity -**

Sustainable Tourism From the Global development Research Center.

<http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/socio-eco/tourism/guidelines.asp>

## Appendix IV - Additional Nature Tourism Resources

### Sustainable Tourism -

From the Global development Research Center. The Business of Nature Tourism: Resources

<http://www.gdrc.org/uem/eco-tour/eco-tour.html>

### General Tourism Resources

**Promoting Tourism in Rural America** covers major issues in rural tourism including cultural/heritage tourism, agritourism, ecotourism, planning, marketing, economic impact and more. It provides extensive information and resources for assisting local officials, communities, and citizens involved in tourism development.

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/tourism.html>

**U.S Environmental Protection Agency: Community Based Approaches- Ecosystem Tools** - offers numerous discussion papers, community handbooks and tool kits for the planning, marketing and communications about green issues, sustainable tourism and more in PDF format.

<http://www.epa.gov/ecocommunity/tools.htm>

**The Tourism Assessment Handbook** - guides communities through a process that not only helps determine their "tourism potential", but also requires them to estimate the social, economic, and environmental costs and benefits that tourism development might offer.

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwrdc/>

# Nature Tourism in Washington

Below are a few of the many resources available to help you plan a trip in Washington. We also suggest that you view some information about nature tourism “Best Practices” and how to make sure your visit is as low-impact as possible.

## **Experience Washington**

Washington State Tourism official site for consumers features watchable wildlife and other nature attractions throughout the state.

<http://www.experiencewashington.com/>

## **Washington Wildlife Viewing Guide**

From the WDFW Watchable Wildlife Program.

<http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/viewing/wildview.htm>

## **Heritage and Scenic Byway Links**

Resource guide from Washington State Department of Transportation.

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/TA/ProgMgt/Byways/>

## **Watchable Wildlife, Inc.**

From Watchable Wildlife, Inc.

<https://secure.watchablewildlife.org/tek9.asp?pg=products&grp=24>

## **Sustainable Tourism for Travelers**

Resource guide from the National Geographic Society.

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable/travelers.html>

## **GreenStop**

A resource guide “to help travellers make an informed and responsible choice of hotel or holiday at a glance.”

<http://www.greenstop.net/default.asp>

## **Do No Harm: Photographers, Wildlife and Personal Space -**

A guide to wildlife-friendly practices for photographers

<http://www.photosafaris.com/Articles/DoNoHarm.asp>

## **Tips for Environmentally Friendly Visits**

From the International Bicycle Fund

<http://www.ibike.org/enviro-travel.htm>