



Travel Update

• Jefferson Lines Bus Company has extended its service to connect Fargo to Billings, Mont., replacing the service lost when Rimrock Stage Coach was shut down indefinitely.

www.inforum.com/event/article/id/394855/publisher_ID/1/ and http://bismarcktribune.com/news/national/feds-shut-down-bus-company-serving-n-d-mont/article_614e7384-dc60-5fe3-a6b6-d847cb24165f.html

• North Dakota Department of Transportation launched a new smartphone app, text and e-mail service to update the public on road conditions. Go to www.dot.nd.gov and click on the red envelope at the top of the page.

• Roosevelt Park Zoo expects to re-open May 4.

• South Columbia Road from Demers Avenue interchange to 11th Avenue South in Grand Forks, will be closed starting May 1. Partial re-opening is scheduled for Aug. 10.

www.grandforksherald.com/event/article/id/260391/

Hotels Opened in March

Cobblestone Inn, Harvey
Sierra Inn, Minot

Coleman honored by NDAREC

The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperative's 70th annual meeting earlier this month included the presentation of awards.

The Wally Beyer Rural Development Award went to Sara Otte Coleman for 11 years of service as the state's tourism director, during which she has maintained a strong publishing partnership between the Tourism Division and North Dakota Living magazine.



Legislative Update

Committee cuts funds from SB 2018

The House Appropriations Committee's Education and Environment Division has reduced funding for infrastructure grants and marketing enhancement from the Governor's budget recommendation for tourism.

SB 2018, which includes the appropriation for the North Dakota Department of Commerce and the Tourism Division, was re-opened on April 2.

The bill had contained \$1.5 million to enhance tourism-related marketing and research for the state, and a one-time appropriation of \$1.325 million for large infrastructure grants for business development and expansion to attract, retain and entertain North Dakota citizens and visitors to the state.

Legislators reduced large infrastructure grants to \$500,000 and reduced tourism marketing to \$1 million.

In other action:

HB 1066 – Designation of the Yellowstone Trail passed both houses and was signed by the Governor.

HB 1077 – Relating to wineries, option to sell direct to retailers has passed both houses and was signed by the Governor.

SB 2146 – Funding for the Grape and Wine Association to be used for research and marketing is awaiting action by House appropriations.

HB 1278 – Outdoor Heritage Bill was heard in senate appropriations on Good Friday, has been amended and sent back to the House.

SB 2221 – Improvement to scenic roadways and access to recreation areas, which received positive support from various tourism industry and outdoor groups, was defeated on the House floor (59 to 33) April 1.

HB 1019 – Maintains existing funding levels for North Dakota Parks and Recreation operations and programs, while providing additional funding for seasonal staffing needs and



Travel Conference

It's not too late to register for the North Dakota Travel Industry Conference. This is the premier statewide travel and tourism conference for marketers of accommodation businesses, attractions, events and tourism organizations. The conference takes place April 15-17 at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks. Session topics include customer service, digital marketing, crisis communications, event planning, tools for lodging research, business development and much more. Get the scoop at www.ndtourism.com/industry/travel-industry-conference/.

Workshop scheduled

An AgriTourism and Tourism Development Workshop is being held in conjunction with the Travel Industry Conference, and will take place on Monday, April 15, at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks. Cost to attend is free for registrants of the Travel Conference. Learn more at www.ndtourism.com/industry/agritourism/north-dakota-agritourism-workshop/.

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one-time projects. The subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee approved an increase of \$75,000 for one-time equipment purchases and an increase of \$200,000 for the community grant program. The amendments also restored funding to the Executive Budget level for purchase of the docks at Lake Sakakawea State Park. The amendments also included \$42,500 for the purchase of an archaeological collection related to Fort Abraham Lincoln, pending legal authority to make the purchase. The appropriation for the International Peace Garden is also included in this bill, and \$2.5 million for capital projects was added if it is matched dollar for dollar with non-state funds. The amendments removed the House's addition of \$1.67 million to purchase Frost Fire Ski area and added \$3.15 million for capital projects at Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center.

SB2018 – Commerce Department Appropriation

- Designated \$6 million of the \$12 million Research ND program to biotechnology grants. Grants will be distributed through nonprofit organizations or foundations with principal offices in the state and be distributed to private companies with research facilities and principal operations within the state.
- Limited the Housing Incentive Fund (HIF) to \$30 million.
- Passed amendments proposed by the Housing Finance Agency relating to the Housing Incentive Fund.
- Designated \$3 million of the HIF for child care facilities, of which \$400,000 is allocated to providers caring for children with disabilities or developmental delays.
- Removed \$5 million general fund childcare facility grant program.
- Reduced funding for the State Data Center to \$400,000 from \$498,852.
- For the Unmanned Aerial System Grant program, changed the funding source for the contingent \$4 million to general fund.
- Reduced tourism large infrastructure grants from \$1.325 million to \$500,000.
- Removed \$1.0 million for the North Dakota Planning initiative.
- Reduced base retention grants by \$100,000 to \$1.4 million and directed that Grand Forks and Minot receive \$500,000 each, with the Fargo Air Guard facility receiving \$400,000.
- Added \$100,000 for marketing of the USS North Dakota program.
- Removed \$350,000 for the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute roads study (funded directly to UGPTI in SB2020).
- Reduced Innovate ND by \$50,000 for a total of \$450,000.
- Reduced Operation Intern by \$500,000 for a total of \$1 million. Executive Recommendation was \$1.5 million.
- Reduced increase in tourism-related marketing and research from \$1.5 million to \$1 million.
- Reduced the Executive Compensation Package and established an Accrued Leave Payments line.
- Provided a grant of \$300,000 to the IDEA Center from carry-over from the 2011-13 technology-based entrepreneurship grants program.
- Deleted the section establishing the Energy Conservation Grant fund to provide grants to political subdivisions.
- Reduced the percent of farm vehicle registration fees that flow into the ethanol production incentive fund.
- Approved amendments proposed by BND relating to the Beginning Entrepreneur program and its use for a childcare loans.
- Added a legislative study about intellectual property policies.
- Added \$6,576,000 federal spending authority for newly awarded CDBG disaster funds.

ND Tourism Digital Analytics

Digital Unique Audience

1st Quarter Digital Unique Audience

Website Analytics (Unique visitors and mobile site visits)	108,222
Digital Travel/Hunt and Fish Guides (Unique visits)	4,955
Additional Tourism Sites (NorthDakotaLegendary.com, LegendaryND.com)	297
Twitter Audience (Reach)	2,808,222
Facebook Audience (Organic Reach/Unique)	269,586
E-Newsletter Audience (Total sends)	35,734
YouTube Audience (Unique Visitors)	24,804
Flickr (Members)	408
Pinterest (Followers)	479
Total Digital Unique Audience	3,252,707

Digital Impressions

1st Quarter Impressions

Website Analytics (Page views and mobile site visits)	442,673
Digital Travel/Hunt and Fish Guides (Page views)	88,752
Additional Tourism Sites (NorthDakotaLegendary.com, LegendaryND.com)	402
Twitter Audience (Impressions)	7,839,686
Facebook Audience (Organic Impressions)	1,025,672
E-Newsletter Audience (Total e-mail audience)	35,734
YouTube Audience (Total views)	3,040
Wordpress Blog (Monthly views)	10,096
Total Digital Unique Audience	9,446,055

Tourism Inquiries: Includes lead fulfillment and pages printed from Web site **13,983**

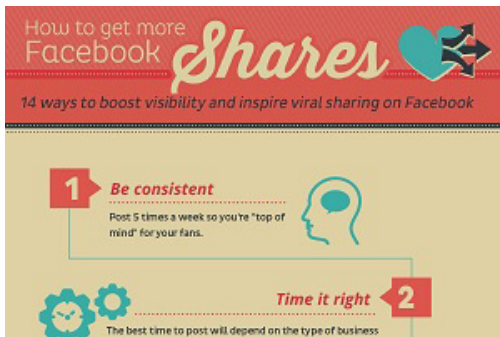
Facebook Shares are better than Likes

Facebook “Likes” are good, but “Shares” are better. That’s because a Share means your content is being passed around social networks and creating buzz for your business.

Getting your Facebook content shared isn’t as simple as throwing something onto your wall and expecting the Shares to just happen. You need to create share-worthy content.

To do just that, Facebook marketing expert Mari Smith offers 14 ways to boost your content’s visibility and viral sharing on Facebook — all in the following infographic by ShortStack.

<http://www.marketingprofs.com/chirp/2013/10326/how-to-get-more-facebook-shares-infographic#ixzz2PWFTloav>



Tech Talk

Each month, the Tourism Division newsletter will feature technology tips or best practices for utilizing new tools and Web 2.0. Please share your success stories, or your questions and suggestions via e-mail to hlemoine@nd.gov.



Painted Canyon Visitor Center to open May 25

Theodore Roosevelt National Park Superintendent Valarie Naylor announced on April 3 that the revised sequestration plan for park operations was accepted, meaning Painted Canyon Visitor Center will be open this summer.

The center, one of the most visited areas in the state, was targeted for shutdown under sequestration. Naylor said that savings made in other areas of the park can be used to operate the Painted Canyon Visitor Center this summer.

The revised plan will have the center open until at least Labor Day, with the hopes of continuing operations until September 30. At a meeting of local stakeholders, Medora store owners, attraction operators and both the Medora and Dickinson CVBs requested that the fall operations be the priority, citing strong visitation numbers into October.

The meeting organized by Senator John Hoeven’s office included Medora and Billings county officials, local businesses, organizations and promoters, state officials and the TRNP management team.

Tourism Division Director Sara Otte Coleman said the meeting was a great opportunity to learn more about the park budget and operations and the need to develop a long-term plan to sustain the operations at Painted Canyon.

“This scenic overlook is likely the most photographed site in the entire state and allows interstate travelers a glimpse of the scenery they could explore throughout the Badlands,” Otte Coleman said.

Otte Coleman said the group came up with a number of ways to assist the National Park Service, including soliciting donations, assigning volunteers and providing services. Naylor says plans are needed to continue funding after expected budget cuts in 2014.

The Press Run: Featuring North Dakota

North Dakota in the news: First quarter 2013



- ▣ Outside Magazine: North Dakota Snowkiting
- ▣ Group Tour Magazine: Western Edge Style
- ▣ Midwest Living: Theodore Roosevelt National Park; New Museums 2013
- ▣ True West Magazine: Bully Country - Top 10 Things to do; Back in the Badlands
- ▣ Rough Guides: North Dakota Update
- ▣ Itineraries Midwest: Legendary Itineraries North Dakota
- ▣ Group Travel Directory: North Dakota 2013
- ▣ American Cowboy: Where to Live Now - McHenry County
- ▣ Ladies Home Journal: Best Zumba Party Ever
- ▣ Golf Digest: Golf Advertorial
- ▣ Budget Travel Magazine: Hiking North Dakota
- ▣ Great Plains Game and Fish: Hunting and Fishing in North Dakota
- ▣ Bismarck Tribune: North Dakota Leads Nation in Tourism Growth
- ▣ MSN Travel UK: 50 State in 30 Days



In the News

(Go to the links below each item for a complete news release)

North Dakota Tourism in the news in March



March 4: Eleven pieces from North Dakota Tourism’s advertising campaign were recognized with ADDY awards by the North Dakota chapter of the American Advertising Federation (AAF). All advertising components were created by Odney. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=541>

March 8: Nominations are being accepted for the North Dakota Governor’s Awards for Travel and Tourism. These annual awards recognize outstanding tourism leaders, events and attractions in the state. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=542>

March 15: Explore an informative and entertaining way to network, learn and cross-promote business at this year’s North Dakota Tourism Development and AgriTourism workshop at the Grand Forks Alerus Center. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=545>

March 15: Travelers to and within North Dakota have more hotel options to consider. From 2002 to 2012, 80 new hotels were built in North Dakota, with slightly more than 50 percent constructed in the last two years alone. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=544>

March 15: March, hop, parade, ride or race. Pick one. Whatever you do, be sure you get to enjoy some of these great events and activities in North Dakota in March. Snowmobiling, St. Patrick’s Day, road races and more are on tap as we transition from winter to spring. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=543>

Expansion grant deadline nearing

North Dakota’s tourism entities have until April 12 to apply for the Expansion Grant Program from the North Dakota Department of Commerce and North Dakota Tourism.

Expansion Grant Program funds infrastructure and building needs at new or expanding nonprofit or for-profit North Dakota tourist facilities. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$24,000 in any given year. Grant applications must be received by Friday, April 12.

North Dakota Tourism also offers two matched grant programs to assist with marketing and events for 2014. Application deadline for the marketing and event programs is August 30, 2013.

Applications for all three grants are now available at www.ndtourism.com/industry/ndtourism-grants.com. For more information on tourism grants, contact Dean Ihla with North Dakota Tourism at 701-328-3505 or dihla@nd.gov.

Community Snapshot

Discover hidden gems, personalities, facts and special events in our North Dakota communities. Each month, a new community will be featured with fun-filled highlights that can be easily added to an itinerary. This month’s Community Snapshot is **Belcourt**.

Located in Rolette County, Belcourt is the community seat for the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. The 2010 U.S. Census listed a population of 2,078. Belcourt’s original name was Siipiising, which is Anishinaabe (Chippewa) for “creek that sings with life-giving water” in reference to Ox Creek. The name was changed to Belcourt in honor of Georges-Antoine Bellecourt, a Canadian Jesuit missionary and priest who served the Chippewa and Métis in the mid-19th century. Industry employers include Turtle Mountain Community College, the school system, Sky Dancer Resort and Casino and Quentin Burdick Medical Facility and Clinic.

• **Hidden Gems:** Turtle Mountain Cultural and Heritage Museum contains displays and information on the unique cultures of the Chippewa, Cree and Métis traditions ... Nearby St. John offers guests the Rolette County Historical Society Museum.

• **Did you know:** In 1972, Turtle Mountain Community College was housed downtown and offered only a few courses. Currently, TMCC’s main campus north of Belcourt includes a 165,000-square-foot academic building on 123 acres and more than 800 students. The Anishinabe Learning Cultural & Wellness Center has several log cabins to rent and has an obstacle course, several walking and biking trails and picnic areas.

• **Personalities:** The 39th recipient of the North Dakota Theodore Roosevelt Rough Rider Award is Louise Erdrich, an award-winning author and member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa ... Albert Lee Ferris, a successful artist-sculptor and bronze artist grew up in the Turtle Mountains. He was asked by President Ronald Reagan to participate in the Night of First Americans art expo in Washington, DC. His work was seen at the Smithsonian, National Museum of the American Indian and the Kennedy Fine Arts Center.

• **Special Events:** Re-grand opening of Sky Dancer Resort and Casino on June 20-22 will include new event center with musical entertainment, new menus at the casino restaurants, room packages for its new accommodations and a motorcycle ride.

To have your community highlighted in the tourism newsletter, please contact Deanne Cunningham at 701-328-2502 or e-mail: decunningham@nd.gov to receive your form.

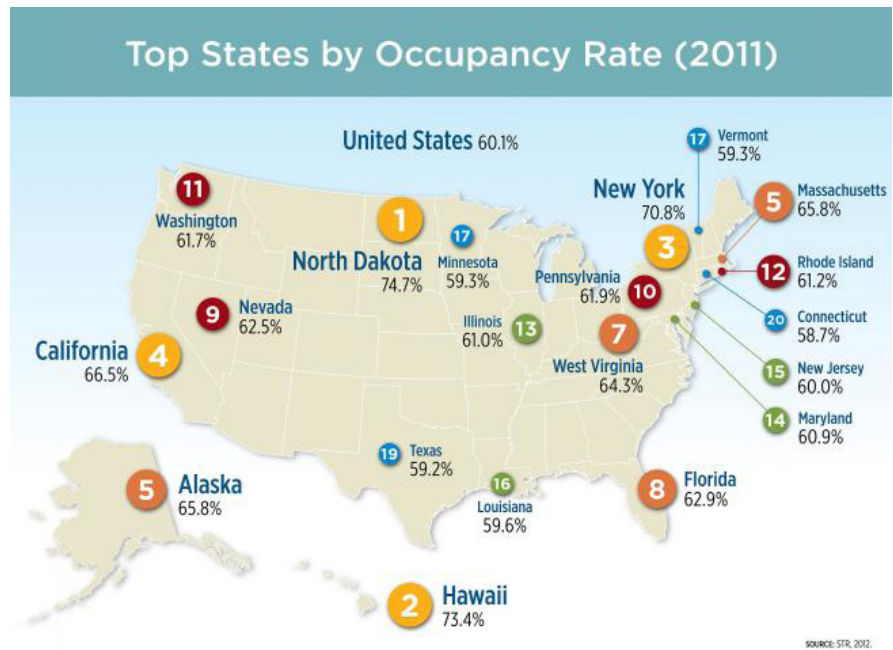
National Travel & Tourism Week is set for May 4-12

It's time to gear up for National Travel and Tourism Week!

This year's theme is "Travel Effect," U.S. Travel's new advocacy and awareness campaign.

There are a number of great resources available to emphasize the benefits of travel, including graphics and logos, ideas to celebrate, talking points, social media tips and more at <http://www.ustravel.org/marketing/national-travel-and-tourism-week>.

Rally Day is May 7, so share your events with RallyDay@ustravel.org and also with Kim Schmidt at ksschmidt@nd.gov. North Dakota Tourism will also unveil its new Web site and motorcycle riding program.



Hotels/motels opened in 2012

Looking for a new place to stay this year? New hotel and expansion projects added more than 2,500 rooms in 2012 with more scheduled for in 2013.

Skydancer Hotel (addition)	100	Belcourt
Mainstay Suites	65	Bismarck
Sleep Inn	74	Bismarck
Residence Inn by Marriott	92	Bismarck
Staybridge Suites	97	Bismarck
Cobblestone Inn & Suites	31	Carrington
LaQuinta Inn	79	Dickinson
My Place-Dickinson	64	Dickinson
Hampton Inn and Suites	85	Dickinson
Savannah Suites	98	Dickinson
Cobblestone Inn	44	Killdeer
Cobblestone Inn	31	Langdon
Astoria Hotel & Suites	102	Minot
Baymont Inn & Suites	75	Minot
Country Inn & Suites	68	Minot
Econo Lodge	66	Minot
Hampton Inn	86	Minot
LaQuinta Inn	91	Minot
Microtel Inn & Suites	94	Minot
My Place - Minot	64	Minot
Noble Inn	66	Minot
Souris Valley Suites (addition)	47	Minot
Four Bears Casino & Lodge (addition)	122	New Town
Enchanted Castle	19	Regent
Microtel Inn & Suites	77	Stanley
Black Gold Suites	98	Tioga
The Watford	77	Watford City
Best Western Plus	105	Williston
Grandview Motel	19	Williston
Hampton Inn	98	Williston
Holiday Inn Express	88	Williston
Mainstay Suites	89	Williston
Value Place Extended Stay	248	Williston
Winterton Suites	25	Williston
Total	2684	

The U.S. Travel Association has launched a new travel and tourism rankings website which aggregates more than 100 downloadable factual travel-related rankings compiled from various reputable sources, including: U.S. Department of Commerce; U.S. Census Bureau; National Park Service; Richard K. Miller & Associates; World Tourism Organization; and the U.S. Travel Association. The reports are free and contain everything from unemployment rates to traveler spending, activities and media usage. Find these and much more at <http://travelrankings.ustravel.org/>

Want to be an ABA Top 100 Event?

The American Bus Association TOP 100 Events has been in existence for 31 years and continues to promote the best of the best events of North America. Designed to assist motorcoach and tour operators with itineraries, the TOP 100 Events receive worldwide media attention via television, radio, print, digital, Facebook and Twitter.

North Dakota Tourism Group Travel can submit a maximum of seven nominations.

Nomination forms are available by e-mailing Tourism's Deanne Cunningham at decunningham@nd.gov. All ABA members of all membership categories are eligible to submit three nominations. For the 2014 Top 100, ABA non-members can submit one nomination for a fee of \$100, which is then refunded if they join the association in 2013.

Things to consider:

1. Does the event have wide appeal to motorcoach and tour groups? How many?
2. Is the event near other attractions that allow tour operators to create a package?
3. Does the event have adequate motorcoach parking and group accommodations? Is the parking free? Can the nearby hotels accommodate a motorcoach group?
4. Is the event worthy of media coverage and is it the finest that area has to offer groups?
5. Does the event have a Web site with event details?
6. How does the event treat bus drivers and group escorts-free admission? A dedicated driver area or hospitality lounge?

Nominations will need to be received by May 6.

Tourism promotes outdoors at travel and sport shows

North Dakota Tourism once again hit the road to spread the word about the state's great outdoors to enthusiasts at six travel and sport shows across the Midwest. Tourism had booths in St. Cloud, Minn.; Pheasant Fest in Minneapolis; Omaha, Neb.; Sioux Falls, S.D.; Milwaukee and the Northwest Sportshow in Minneapolis.

Snow and ice were major factors in show attendance this year. Two shows in February experienced

major drops in attendance and even closed early because of inclement weather. But cabin fever created by these late storms had an opposite effect on Pheasant Fest and the March shows.

"People were ready to get out

and start planning summer travel" said Mike Jensen, Outdoor Promotions Manager for North Dakota Tourism. "They were fed up with this seemingly endless winter."

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Sport Show broke the single-day attendance record for the 70-year-old show with well over 30,000 people showing up on Saturday alone. The Northwest Sportshow also saw a bump in numbers with 36,138 people attending, an increase of 28% over 2012.

People from across the Midwest are very excited about what North Dakota has to offer lovers of the outdoors. Attendees were very interested in hunting ducks and pheasants, camping, hiking, visiting parks and family attractions, and most of all fishing on our pristine waters.

"Based on what I saw at this year's shows, outdoor tourism should see a very good 2013 travel season," Jensen said.

More than 6,000 people stopped to discuss traveling to North Dakota at a tourism sport show booth this year, a 14.5% increase over 2012.



Get ready to travel North Dakota in 2013

In an effort to get you ready for the 2013 travel season, we wanted to summarize a few updates on attractions, expansions and transportation options around the state.

Roosevelt Park Zoo in Minot is scheduled to re-open after the floods of 2011. Its grand opening is slated for May 4.

The new Lucien C. Barnes Pavilion at Bonanzaville in West Fargo is now open. It features an event center, conference room, rotating exhibit gallery and additional museum space that will be open year-round.

Painted Canyon Visitor Center at Medora will open by May 25.

Newly constructed Andrew Berg Log Cabin at Sheyenne Oaks Horse & RV Camp at Leonard is now available. The queen bed on the main floor and two twins and one double-up in the loft are all made and ready to provide a good night's sleep.

Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park at Mandan will have two tipis available for rent this summer, "The Heart" and "The Missouri."

The new Sitting Bull Visitor Center at Fort Yates will offer travelers information on local events and venues starting in May.

The Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center expansion project of the additional gallery space and research library at Washburn is scheduled to be completed later this year.

On September 1, the State Museum in the North Dakota Heritage Center at Bismarck will open the Northern Lights Lobby, hallway exhibits, new Museum Store, James River Café, Great Plains Theater, Missouri River Events Center, Hub of History, Pembina River Plaza and renovated Russell Reid Auditorium. Also debuting September 1 is the first phase of new exhibits, Adaptation Gallery: Geologic Time. The official grand opening of the Adaptation Gallery is set for October 13.

A new marina at Eastbay Campground at Devils Lake is scheduled to open summer 2013.

The energy boom in Western North Dakota has travelers asking how they might experience the oil culture. A few options include McKenzie County Oil Exhibit in Watford City, Al the Pumper at the Dickinson CVB or North Dakota Energy Tours currently provided by Satrom Travel and Bakken Field Tours.

Planes, Trains & Automobiles

Transportation enhancements in 2012:

Frontier Airlines added nonstop flights from Minot, Fargo and Bismarck to Denver.

United Airlines began service from Williston to Denver, offering three flights daily.

Delta Airlines added nonstop flights between Dickinson and Minneapolis and Williston and Minneapolis.

AmTrak renovation of the Minot depot complete and fully operational.

Jefferson Bus Lines has stepped in to pick up the bus route between Fargo and Billings, Mont.

New road is complete to Graham's Island State Park near Devils Lake.



North Dakota Tourism International Marketing Manager Fred Walker recent met Phillip Murphy and his wife, Tammy, at a travel show in Europe. Murphy is the United States Ambassador to Germany.

Walker takes word of Legendary North Dakota worldwide

North Dakota Tourism Division International Marketing Manager Fred Walker recently wrapped up an international show schedule that took him halfway around the world. In Australia, he attended 17 shows and functions and made 71 trade and media leads. On a Nordic mission to Finland and Norway, he had 104 trade and media leads in four shows and five staff trainings. And in shows in Scandinavia and Germany, Walker made 54 trade leads at seven shows, presentations and trainings. Walker's work is generating new interest from foreign publications interested in spreading the word to would-be visitors.

New www.NDtourism.com coming soon

North Dakota Tourism will be launching a new Web site on May 1 and partners will see a preview of the site at the Travel Industry Conference luncheon on April 16 in Grand Forks. The Tourism Division and staff from the Web site vendor, Miles, will be available throughout the conference to provide hands-on training for the new capabilities available to businesses and organizations that use the site for free listings. Additionally, regional demos are being scheduled for early May.

Travel guides flying off airport rack in Twin Cities

North Dakota is a hot commodity in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport. More than 4,500 state travel guides have been picked up in the past two months.

Tourism Hospitality Program

In mid-January, a brief survey was sent to all CVBs regarding the revised ND Tourism Hospitality Program.

Based on responses to the survey, Tourism's Hospitality Committee will conduct a free pre-conference meeting at the 2013 Travel Conference. Tourism welcomes your suggestions on where the hospitality program goes from here and how it can help you.

The meeting will be from 4:30 to 5:30 and the location will be listed on the hotel kiosk.

Attending from North Dakota Tourism

- The Hospitality Committee - Tammy Backhaus, Deanne Cunningham and Janice Fuhrman

Topics of Discussion

- What is the best way for North Dakota Tourism to communicate with its partners?
- What can we do as a state to help create a better front-line?
- Would a quarterly hospitality newsletter be beneficial?
- Share ideas of what your community is already doing and how to help get things started in other communities.
- Open discussion.

Please RSVP to Tammy Backhaus at tbackhaus@nd.gov or 328-2526.

