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# **Tourism Potential in North Dakota**

**With emphasis on Southwest ND**

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The authors assume responsibility for any errors of omission, logic, or otherwise.

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## Abstract

This report evaluates tourism potential in North Dakota with special emphasis on southwest North Dakota. A survey of 808 Fargo residents in the summer of 1998 revealed strongest likes, dislikes, and their potential new interests while on vacation. Favorite pastimes while on vacation include (in rank order): viewing natural scenery, boating and other water sports, reading and relaxing, taking an ocean cruise, camping, spending time at unique shops, family activities, seeing historic sites, and viewing a sports event.

Activities respondents had not done while on vacation but would like to try include (in rank order): cruising the ocean, ballooning, ranch/cowboy experience, parachuting, cross country skiing, canoeing, horseback riding, paleontology, hiking, and mountain biking.

Other characteristics of the respondents are listed along with their advice to North Dakotans interested in increasing tourism. Numerous other studies relating to tourism are analyzed, including the likes and dislikes of the international visitor.

Tourism is the fastest growing industry in America, but currently North Dakota is the least traveled state in the nation. This report encourages communities and businesses in southwest ND to work together in attracting more visitors. Activities, structural enhancements, communication through technology, workforce training, collaboration amongst communities, and co-op advertising, are all discussed.

**Key words:** North Dakota, tourism, vacation, activities, pastime, marketing.

## Highlights

This report was commissioned by the Jobs Creation Committee of Adams, Bowman and Slope Counties. The three counties are located in southwest North Dakota, however, this report holds information useful to anyone interested in tourism. Tourism is the fastest growing industry in the United States and the fourth largest sector in North Dakota. Surveys of the public's interest in parks and recreation and hunting and fishing have been completed by NDSU faculty in recent years for state agencies, but it appears that this report is the first time a survey of potential tourists has been completed.

Tourism is not meant to be a solution to rural North Dakota's economic woes; instead, it is a way to supplement the income of the farmer/rancher, shop owner, people in the hospitality industry, and communities in general.

This report reveals through a survey conducted in the summer of 1998, what potential tourists want to do while on vacation and what ND businesses can do to attract their interest. Merchants in the southwest North Dakota counties of Adams, Bowman, and Slope were also surveyed to determine their marketing habits and what workshops they would like offered to help them improve their businesses.

This report also offers previous research on demographic trends in ND, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan and information regarding the international tourist in the United States. Resource people interviewed for this report are listed following the References, in hopes they may provide additional help for increased tourism in our state. This report also offers some answers and encourages further discussion on these questions:

*What are the current assets in the counties of Slope, Bowman, and Adams?*

*How can they be enhanced?*

*What are the current assets of the REGION? How can the tri-counties benefit from them (i.e., events, attractions, accommodation, etc.)?*

*What are some new possibilities?*

*Who is your target audience?*

*How can marketing be improved?*

*What funding is available?*

*How can local business skills be enhanced?*

*How can the pool of interested local people be increased?*

*How can youth play a part now and in the future as adults?*

*What structure/coordination can be put in place to keep/develop the interest of local, state, and federal leaders in regards to building tourism?*

## Introduction

The coal processing mine in Gascoyne, North Dakota, closed in the mid-1990's, resulting in the loss of 65 high-salaried jobs. A Jobs Creation Committee was formed, chaired by Carol Dilse of rural Scranton, ND, to seek alternative employment opportunities for people in the three-county area. The counties include Adams, Bowman, and Slope and are located in the southwest corner of North Dakota. It is a region filled with buttes, the Little Missouri River and the National Grasslands named after the river; and wide open country used for livestock grazing, hunting, and oil exploration.

Early in this century, railroads provided an essential boost to the towns of Hettinger, Bucyrus, Reeder, Gascoyne, Scranton, Bowman, Rhame, and Marmarth. As they crossed North Dakota, they carried thousands of tourists and rail workers through the region. United States Highway 12 parallels the rail line and it, too, brought tourists. Many were from Minneapolis and Chicago and other points east on their way to destinations such as Yellowstone National Park and Seattle, but when the Interstate system was built in the 1950s, the large number of tourists disappeared. Instead, millions of people now travel either in North Dakota

on Interstate 94, 60 miles north of Hettinger and Bowman, or through South Dakota on Interstate 90, 125 miles south of the tri-county region. One of the two federal highways in the area is US Highway 85, also called the CANAM Highway because of its link between Canada and Mexico. US Highway 85 intersects I-94 at Belfield; south of there it passes through Amidon and Bowman before entering South Dakota and intersecting with I-90 at Spearfish. There, US Highway 85 enters the Black Hills, a nationally recognized tourist region, home of Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse sculptures, and the old west gambling town of Deadwood, South Dakota.



Northwest of the tri-counties are the Badlands of North Dakota and the popular tourist attraction, Medora. The tiny village located at the south edge of the Badlands has grown in popularity over the past 40 years due to its scenic location, on-going musical, outdoor fondu dinners, museums, shopping, camping, motels, mountain biking, horseback riding, and old west motif focused on President Theodore Roosevelt. The nearby national park is named after the

Roughrider President who is used in publicity for the western village. Most of the businesses in Medora are owned and administered by the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation.

North Dakota's Badlands and South Dakota's Black Hills are major factors in this study because they attract tourists from around the world. Tourism may grow in the three counties, located in between these two attractions, but currently the region is only experiencing a fraction of business from passers-by. Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota's Badlands hit a peak in 1994 with over a half million visitors (Theodore Roosevelt National Park, 1998). Medora benefitted from many of those visitors because of its location adjacent to I-94 and at the south entrance of the park.

During the past 20 years, North Dakota state government has tried to market regions, so the west is promoted on the State Tourism Department web site, its booklet, and other promotional material, but that is where the united effort ends. No effort exists by communities and businesses involved in tourism to unite to share marketing resources, ideas, or enthusiasm. Instead, too often an element of competition, even envy, exists between communities. In many cases, there is also lack of knowledge of what is even offered down the road and how co-op ideas and money for advertising may build their businesses and local tax revenue.

This study examines the possibilities from marketing, high tech linkage, and public opinion on what is wanted from a vacation experience. The information is offered to local residents for their possible use, to state officials for consideration on how to assist this remote, under-populated region, and to entrepreneurs who may be interested in the region.

## **Southwest North Dakota -- Its History and Other Assets**

### **From Dinosaurs ...**

Millions of years ago dinosaurs roamed the area now home to the tri-counties. Unlike today's semi-arid grazing land dotted with buttes, the dinosaurs lived in tropical marshes and warm-water seas. Paleontologists speculate that, 80 million years ago, the creatures died suddenly and were buried in sand before scavengers could reach them. The writer asks, "What killed the triceratops 15 miles north of Marmarth?" (Prairie Tales II, 1989).

The Slope Saga Committee (1976) reports remains from reptiles, a sabre-tooth tiger, a three-toed horse, rhinoceros, and several kinds of herbivorous animals were found on Chalky Buttes, southwest of Amidon. Why were they all wiped out, the author asks. Was it starvation, climate change, radiation from a star explosion, or some other catastrophe? The remains of those creatures are still being found today in southwest North Dakota.



### **...To American Indians ...**

The Works Progress Administration's (WPA's) historical data project described a Sioux Indian legend that says the Badlands (located south and north of the tri-counties) were once a fertile plain covered with rich grasses and game (cited by Slope Saga Committee, 1976). Hostile tribes gathered each autumn in peace, but a hostile tribe from the west drove them out. The plains people called a great council fire, fasted, and prayed, but no answer came from the Great Spirit. They began to despair.

"Then suddenly a great shudder convulsed the earth, and lightning burned jagged through the gloom. Fires hissed from the earth and the once pleasant land rolled and tossed like the waves of the sea while into its flaming, pitching surface, sank the invading tribe, the streams, the trees, and all of the living things. When the upheaval ceased, it left the plains in grotesque waves"(Slope Saga Committee, 1976, p. 1065).

The Indians called the area "the valley place-where-the-hills-look-at-each-other," but the first white travelers called it "badlands to travel through." It was later shortened to "Badlands."

In 1738, Pierre de la Verendrye was the first white man to arrive in North Dakota. He found the Mandan tribe a peaceful people who were at their prosperous peak. "Their village had nothing savage about it,"

his report indicated (cited in Hanson, 1984). He said the fair or white-skinned natives had blue or grey eyes which caused some people to speculate that the Mandans were the lost tribe of Israel or descendants of the Vikings who many believe traveled from Norway to America, long before Columbus reached the Carribean.



Both Mandan and Sioux legends told of holy men whose visions foretold the coming of "strange, light-skinned men from the East," (cited by Hanson, 1984). Hanson continues, "The Mandan seer, Good Fur Robe, made ready to welcome these mysterious guests and they arrived on schedule. The hospitality the explorers were shown was echoed throughout the next century. It was a spirit frequently not reflected in return."

According to Hanson's (1984) historical account, the Sioux prophet who lived near Canonball grieved over a similar premonition, prophesying that the strangers' powerful weapons would prevail. The Mandan's spiritual faith paralleled Christianity. It includes a Noah-like story of a great flood from which the first humans emerged out of the water onto the land.

### **...To Explorers, Cowboys, and Ranchers ...**

In 1804, Baptiste LePage, a French explorer, was believed to be the first white man to journey from the Black Hills up the Little Missouri River into the Missouri River. He then joined

the Lewis and Clark expedition at an Indian Village near the Knife River (Federal Writers' Project, 1938). In 1861, Dakota Territory was formed with Yankton (now part of southern South Dakota) designated as the capitol.

In 1876, General George Custer passed through the Amidon area on his way to Montana where he and his followers were killed in a clash with Sitting Bull at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. One year later, the US government reneged on an Indian treaty, allowing ranchers to settle the land formerly reserved for the Indians, which includes the tri-county area. After the Civil War, more and more cowboys made their way north to Dakota Territory. The first big Texas company used one and a half million acres (the size of Bowman and Slope counties) to graze its 60,000 head of cattle.

A 25 year-old French man, Marquis deMores, on his way to Montana to ranch, settled in Pyramid Park in 1883. He later named the area for his wife, Medora. He started a stagecoach business connecting Medora to Deadwood, South Dakota. The stagecoach left both towns at 6 am and arrived at the two towns 36 hours later. Relay stations were set up every 20 miles, and places to eat and overnight lodging every 60 miles. The trip was 215 miles and the fare was 10 cents a mile. The route is documented by the stagecoach driver's descendant in the Slope Saga (1976): Dobie Walls, to 3 miles northeast of Amidon, to Roberts Springs, to Chalky Buttes, to Spring Creek 3 miles east of Bowman, and on to relay stations in Ludlow and Buffalo, South Dakota, before reaching Deadwood.

In 1887, William Gay discovered placer gold on the Grand River in southwestern North Dakota (Prairie Tales II, 1989). He was later forced off his land by other ranchers near Haley, ND when they caught him stealing cattle. In 1892, Lincoln Young was the first rancher to settle near the site that would later become the town of Bowman. No trees were visible at that time, just rolling prairies and buttes.

The Bowman area became known as the "Ranchers' Paradise" because it had the best cattle grazing land in the world (Prairie Tales II, 1989). The hay cured on the root so it was superior to other regions along the Chisholm Trail. The trail ran north from the Rio Grande in the Texas Panhandle, to the Black Hills of South Dakota, to southwest North Dakota, up to Miles City, Montana, and finally north to the plains of Calgary, Canada. Hundreds of thousands of cattle were herded in a year's time along that trail until 1896. The Northern Pacific Railroad arrived in some areas, allowing ranchers a way to get their cattle to market on the East Coast.

First, Texas longhorns arrived in the area. By the late 1890s Theodore Hayes brought in Black Angus. A.C. Huidekoper, a Pennsylvania-Dutch rancher brought in Shorthorns from the east. He was the only man to buy large holdings in Slope County in the late 1800s. He paid 25 cents an acre. He controlled 140,000 acres of land by owning and renting. Later, Huidekoper joined Alden Eaton in business and formed the first hunting and dude ranch in the country. Part of his large ranch is home to the present day Logging Cross Ranch. He eventually sold out after briefly being jailed for putting up fences to keep the homesteaders out. He returned to Pennsylvania in 1907 (Wallis Huidekoper, 1950).

P.H. Rundle, a native of Canada, brought in sheep and adopted scientific methods of ranching. Cowboys continued their migration north from Texas working on Dakota and Montana ranches and finally put down roots in Bowman County of North Dakota after it was opened to settlement in 1900 (Prairie Tales II, 1989). Unlike Huidekoper, most ranchers welcomed the homesteaders; in fact, they advertised for companionship.

### **...To Homesteaders ...**

The US government granted land to the Northern Pacific Railroad which turned the land over to an improvement company which then opened up the area to homesteaders. Mail order brides were sought by the male population by placing ads in eastern newspapers. The rancher would pay for the woman's transportation; she would homestead, and they would date. If it worked out fine, they would marry. In a few cases, she may have gotten stuck with a "range tramp" or "saddle bum," (Prairie Tales II, 1989).

The Homestead Act of 1862 was enacted by the U.S. Congress to provide land and consequently, subsistence to those of little means, according to Lindgren (1991). Lindgren (1991) interviewed hundreds of women who homesteaded, or their descendants, and found that it was not uncommon for females to homestead and most were not loners or social misfits. Instead, women were looking for good investments, independence, opportunity, and adventure. Many came with their siblings and/or parents.

The Homestead Act specified the homesteader had to be at least 21 years old. Usually allotments were made in the amount of 160 acres. The person had to live on the property for 5 years to make good on his/her claim. Lindgren says about 40% of those who set out, completed that requirement. In all, the government gave away 250 million acres of land between 1868-1955.

Railroad newspaper advertisements portrayed Dakota Territory as an exciting place with a bright future. The national press gave it favorable accounts saying frontier men appreciated women who were willing to undergo the discomforts of a western town. The territory was said to be free of disease; the soil was rich, and the farm area was free of trees from Fargo to Bismarck (Lindgren, 1991).

Mary Ann Murray and her sons moved from Foley, Minnesota, to Rhame by renting an immigrant railroad car. They loaded it with livestock, belongings, and their cat, the first feline to reach Rhame. They built a sod house, and other relatives settled nearby. Eva Popp and her sister settled in Bowman County. A woman who was a concert violinist in Wisconsin homesteaded in Adams County, and each summer she played in Reeder, North Dakota. A Jewish settlement was founded in Bowman County. Bessie Schwartz, who came from Romania, was one of the 15 women in that 104 person settlement. Lindgren (1991) indicated that train tickets for the land seekers were one cent per mile. The trains were packed, and people were friendly and excited about the new frontier. The majority of the women were 21-25 years old, but others were widowed, abandoned, or heads of their households due to their husbands being ill and/or disabled. Most of the women Lindgren (1991) studied were Scandinavian and came from Minnesota.

The town of Bowman was founded in 1907 when people on a special train from Minneapolis arrived for a lot sale. Eventually, towns sprung up every 10 miles or so to provide the trains' steam engines with water. Rhame was founded in 1908, and the state motto was created, "Strength from the soil" (Prairie Tales II, 1989).

The Yellowstone Trail was founded in 1912, parallel to the Northern Pacific's route. That "trail" stretched from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Aberdeen, South Dakota, to the tri-counties of southwest North Dakota before heading west to Yellowstone National Park in Montana. It is currently known as US Highway 12.

### **...To Modern Day North Dakotans**

Energy exploration in recent decades has been forged by oil companies. In 1967, oil wells were drilled at a cost of seven and a half million dollars. Seven years later, oil was found southwest of Bowman (Prairie Tales II, 1989). According to Bowman County's web site (1998), oil and gas exploration hit its peak in the early 1980s. However, energy exploration continues in the southern portion of the Williston Basin. The rail system, which changed ownership many times since the track was first laid, is currently operated by Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railroad.

### **The Region**

**Amidon** (Slope County)--Located on US Highway 85, 35 miles south of I-94, Amidon is the smallest county seat in the United States with a population of 22 people (US Bureau of the Census, 1996). Amidon's businesses include a restaurant and bar called Georgia's and the Owl, a four-unit motel, and a general store that includes a small cafe. The town's main site of employment is the county courthouse. There is also a two-room schoolhouse which is still in use and a small in-town campground that is currently for sale. About 10 miles southeast of Amidon is North Dakota's highest point, White Butte. It is seven miles long and rises up 3,506 feet. It is privately owned. According to the owner, during the summer, up to 12 people per day will seek permission to hike up the butte. They must hike at their own risk. To this point, accidents or unsatisfactory behavior have not been a problem. She says she is willing to continue public use of White Butte, but she does not want to assume liability, or see any changes done to the butte and its surrounding area.

Southwest of Amidon is an entrance to the Little Missouri National Grasslands and the Coal Vein Road that eventually leads to Medora. The scoria covered road passes by a primitive campsite where the coal veins once burned. The road passes through vast ranch land until it reaches the foothills of the Badlands where it is partially forested. There are no commercial stops along the way except for the Logging Camp Ranch which is located on an intersecting scoria road near the river, amidst the junipers.

The history of the Amidon area not only includes the Medora-Deadwood Trail and Teddy Roosevelt's old hunting neighborhood, but also the trail Custer used to reach Montana.

**Bowman** (Bowman County)--Located on US Highway 85, 25 miles south of Amidon and 60 miles south of I-94. Bowman is the most populated town in the three counties with 1,602 residents (US Bureau of the Census, 1996). Demographics and business statistics on Bowman and Hettinger are available from the ND Economic Development Department. Bowman has a radio station, newspaper, a viable downtown business district, a modern high school, 6 motels with a total of 125 rooms, and a fairground with a grandstand that seats 2,000 (1,500 additional seats if chairs also cover the ground). The grandstand is used for summer fair concerts and it serves as host to the ND High School Rodeo. The Pioneer Trails Museum, open year round in downtown Bowman, was renovated in 1998. A nine-hole golf course is located south of town and is open to the public from April to September. The town has public recreation facilities such as a public outdoor swimming pool, a weight room, and gymnasium. A \$100,000 softball complex has three diamonds and is located adjacent to a picnic area and a baseball diamond.

The Mid-West Stockyards business initiated by the Bowman County Development Corporation at a cost of \$885,000 attracts ranchers interested in cattle and horse sales. Motel operators have reported a booming business on sale weekends. Management of that operation is currently being re-evaluated. The state high school rodeo attracts about 2,000 people each Father's Day weekend in mid-June, but after 13 years of hosting the event, Bowman may no longer be the site by the year 2000. Visitors attending summer weddings fill most of the motel rooms in Bowman on select weekends, especially the second weekend of June. Ownership of Butte View State Campground just east of Bowman on US Highway 12 is scheduled to be deeded over to the town in the near future. Currently, it is marked on the North Dakota traffic map.

Drag racing was a new event sponsored by the Bowman Chamber of Commerce in the spring of 1998. The activity drew 2300 spectators who watched 65 cars race down the airport runway on a Sunday in mid-May. Merchants did not report increased business due to the event because food and drinks were sold at the site. According to the local Tourism Committee, the event was appreciated and plans are underway to repeat it. Unfortunately, it cannot be held during the tourist season because the airport runway is used by Weather Modification crews.

Bowman had been the site of one of the state's tourism centers, but in early 1998, funding for that center was eliminated from Governor Ed Schafer's budget. By May, the volunteer Bowman Tourism Committee had moved the small log cabin to a nearby site. It is at the junction of US Highways 85 and 12 near the Western Way Depot, a popular gift and snack shop. Retired residents, paid in part by federal funds, staffed the tourist center in 1998.

The logo for Bowman is a Native American brave with a bow and arrow, however that logo is the only sign of Native Americans visible in the community of mostly Scandinavian and German heritage. The logo was chosen years ago because it is bow-man. Despite the tourists' potential interest in the Native American culture and cowboys, neither is visible in area towns. Anyone looking for the Hollywood stereotype of a rancher may be disappointed.

Theater and the arts are not stressed in the Bowman schools nor in the town itself. A community theater existed in past years, but not presently. Instead, the high school athletic teams are well known. The business education and computer departments appear well respected in Bowman as well as in Scranton and Hettinger.



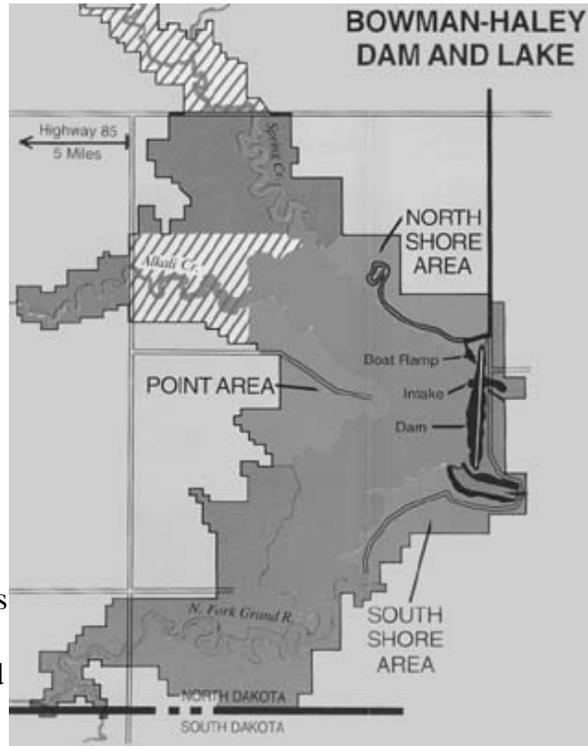
Surveys of past tourists to the Bowman area have found that sixty percent of them are interested in the area's heritage and wide open spaces. The tri-counties are rich in the heritage of homesteaders who traveled via train to "prove up" the land sold to them by the railroad in the early 1900s. Sod houses every 160 acres and one-room school houses every 2-3 miles dotted the vast grasslands. The county heritage societies have preserved that chapter in regional history by creating villages on the fairgrounds. Bowman, Amidon, and Hettinger all have fairgrounds. An architectural history project of the area was completed in 1998 by NDSU professor Thomas Isern. It is on display at the Pioneer Trails Museum in Bowman and may generate further ideas that could enhance tourism. Such projects have been successful in the International Elderhostel program, but no elderhostel involvement has been sought, up to this point, by the tri-counties. Later, under the heading "Opportunities for Tourism Enhancement," North Dakotans skilled in Elderhostel work are listed who are willing to help the tri-counties develop their own program.

A 3-on-3 basketball tournament draws a number of area people to downtown Bowman during the summer. A similar Gusmacker event in Fargo has grown dramatically in recent years, bringing thousands to the city to compete, shop, eat, and tour. Dickinson's event is also growing.

When the exchange rate is favorable, a considerable number of Canadians stop in Bowman on their way to and from gambling in Deadwood, South Dakota. However, in recent years that number has dwindled because the Canadian dollar is devalued in America.

**The Bowman-Haley Dam and Lake**, 16 miles southeast of Bowman, is a spot traditionally enjoyed by residents within a 60 mile radius. It is categorized as a "medium" sized lake by the Army Corps of Engineers. Swimming, boating, fishing, hiking, picnicking, camping, and hunting are all offered. However there are no concessions, or boats for rent; and cabins are not allowed on the lake.

The Army Corps of Engineers owns 6,720 acres of land and water making up Bowman-Haley Dam and Lake. About 1,017 acres of Bowman-Haley is leased to the ND Game and Fish Department and 4,103 acres are managed by the Corps. Ducks Unlimited has a 57-acre wetland on Alkali Creek as well as a 20-acre wetland and a dam within Spring Creek. That low head dam was built to improve water quality and water fowl habitat. Bowman County and its Watershed Board leases 1,600 acres from the Corps, which includes three recreational areas on Bowman-Haley Lake,



the north shore, the south shores, and the point. The Watershed Board has worked with the local Anglers Club in recent years on a number of projects that have enhanced the beauty and accessibility of the lake. There are accessible docks for boat launching, a floating fishing pier, numerous picnic tables, vault toilets, some flush toilets, and electric hookups for campers. Hundreds of volunteer hours resulted in the planting of 18,000 trees within the past 2 years.

A tree farm has also been established to provide more future transplants, and the Anglers Club worked with the ND Extension Service to create shelter belts. Following Christmas, discarded evergreens are collected by

the Anglers Club, and sunk in Bowman-Haley Lake to provide fish habitat. Watershed Board members include Eugene Miller, chairman; Jerry Palczweski; Richard Septon; and Fred Gerth, secretary-treasurer. Craig Steiner is the president of the Anglers Club. Darrel Lutz, a nearby rancher, is contracted for maintenance at the lake.

A free fishing day sponsored by the Tri-State Peace Officers Organization attracts about 1,000 youth and adults the first weekend of each June. Sponsors raise about \$6,000 each year, largely from community businesses, to pay for quality fishing gear that is given to each child at the derby as well as a barbecue shore lunch. A lot of pride and camaraderie is generated by the event, according to Police Chief Don Huso. In May 1998, a special honor was posthumously bestowed to one of the peace officers. The Alkali Creek wetland project at Bowman-Haley Dam and Lake was renamed the George Jankowski Marsh in honor of the district game warden who served the area until his death in 1997 (“Wetland,” 1998, p. E9).

The upkeep of the Bowman-Haley area has resulted in an increase in the deer population causing at least one rancher to post a sign saying “Hunters Welcome!” Facility manager Bob Martin from the Army Corps of Engineers says he would like to see more promotion of that area prior to deer hunting season because it has become overpopulated. He has brochures of that area available by calling (701)252-7666.



**Marmarth** — Dinosaur remains are plentiful west of Bowman. However, many of the locals say they don't want “bone diggers” coming in from the outside and selling their bones for big profits elsewhere. The Pioneer Trails Museum in Bowman highlights that era. A children's dig is offered at the museum to replicate the work of paleontologists, but there is great concern that tourists and opportunists will destroy important sites, yet to be explored. Negative feelings have been expressed toward scientists and entrepreneurs who have taken dinosaur remains out-of-state to universities in the US and overseas, and to Dickinson, where a new museum stresses various ancient ages in North Dakota. Ever since the selling of “Sue,” a South Dakota dinosaur, for about \$4 million, ranchers have reportedly become more protective of their fossil-rich land.

A well publicized dig was recently completed, northwest of Marmarth on US Forest Service land (“Triceratops skull,” 1998, p. A8). State paleontologist John Hoganson told the Bismarck Tribune that it is an exciting find because it may be a young triceratops, and such a find is very rare (Olson, 1998). It also has the potential to be a fairly complete skeleton. That is also hopeful news because it is rare to find a young triceratops intact. Hoganson and John Campbell, ND Heritage Center paleontologist, were called to the site after local amateur bone hunters, discovered a few weathered bones protruding from a butte near the west river road that runs

between Marmarth and Medora. Heavy equipment was brought in two years ago to remove tons of sandstone. The final excavation occurred in the summer of 1998 under the leadership of both the US Forest Service and ND Geological Society (NDGS). Hoganson said the triceratops will be displayed at the ND Heritage Center in Bismarck if it is a “decent” specimen (Olson, 1998). A Heritage Outbound crew also participated at the site in late August. It was sponsored by the NDGS and the ND Game and Fish Department.



National attention was also shed on the Marmarth area this year when a local eighth grader discovered fossilized skin with reproductive glands. The teenager was invited to a national scientific conference in Pennsylvania to report his findings. The fifteen-year old’s discovery has spurred renewed interest in the Cyber Stop project. A Marmarth resident, says the teenager and his excavating friends could help promote their discovery and the unique qualities of the Hell Creek Formation. Some residents hope an organized approach to hosting and guiding visitors may breath new life into tiny Marmarth. A consensus is needed, however, amongst Marmarth, Bowman, US Forest Service, and ND Geological Society officials in the setting of the ground rules.

This excitement over paleontology is not the first time a potential boom has hit Marmarth. The town which was named after a railroad official’s daughters, Mary and Martha Earling, was once a booming railroad town. After the trains didn’t favor Marmarth anymore, oil exploration caused a rebirth in 1936. The Little Beaver Dome is part of the Cedar Creek Anticline, which stretches from East Montana to southwestern North Dakota. According to A Guide to the Northern Prairie State, (Federal Writers’ Project, 1938), that stretch of energy rich land is one of the greatest natural gas fields in the United States.

The current population of Marmarth is 127 (US Bureau of the Census, 1996). The town includes: a K-8th grade school, a Catholic church, a floral shop, a beauty shop, a dentist, a couple of bars, and the Past Times Restaurant, which has gained fame nationally. The closest establishment to a hotel in Marmarth is the Bunk House. It is a large rooming house built originally for railroad workers earlier in this century. Now, it is home to oil workers, paleontologists, and anyone else interested in inexpensive, simple lodging. It is owned by the Marmarth Historical Society.

The Historical Society also owns the 150 seat Mystic Theater which is under renovation. The tiny stage was only used in September 1997 for a popular cowboy poet gathering until arrangements were made to offer a children’s musical on July 5, 1998. NDSU theater director Lori Horvik and her cast were guests of the Historical Society in the Bunk House, marched in Marmarth’s July 4<sup>th</sup> parade, and performed the following day. The cast was paid \$900. Tickets were sold, and the Historical Society assumed the remaining cost. Horvik is very interested in returning to the area with her student crew in future years. Seeking grants and other funding sources now may allow the program to grow and prove to be a money maker for Marmarth and

other interested communities. It is also a wonderful way for the students to get to know North Dakota and vice versa. Family entertainment appears to be a niche the tri-counties should address.

Marmarth's downtown area is one or two blocks long and has possibilities if at least \$500,000 is found to renovate a large historic, dilapidated building that was once a community center and gymnasium. It is owned by the Historical Society, although an adjoining building--a former bank--is privately owned. Closer to US Highway 12, the first impression upon entering Marmarth is the site of a decaying, empty depot. It is owned by Merle Clark who also owns a former church in Marmarth where he stores cars.

Currently, the local Historical Society only realizes income from its members, its Bunk House rentals, and its pull tab jar at the Past Times Bar, so if more renovations are going to be realized, additional money needs to be found.

Over the decades, Marmarth has suffered not only from a lack of railroad business, but also from a lack of traffic on US Highway 12. While its remote location is a negative because few tourists pass-by, it is also a positive because the Little Missouri National Grasslands road begins its trek north to Medora near Marmarth on either side of the river. This road has attracted tourists who are willing to take the time to travel through this unique terrain to a top-rated restaurant and then back again to Medora for the musical and overnight accommodations.

Marmarth residents interviewed for this report say they favor Baker, Montana (population 3,500) over Bowman for their groceries, entertainment, and other services. Marmarth had the first high school in the county in 1909, but by the late 30s, its teenagers were bused the 20 miles to Baker to attend high school. Now, they have a choice between Baker and Rhame.

Marmarth is a survivor of many disasters. In 1918, a huge fire caused nearly a million dollars worth of damage to buildings (Slope Saga Committee, 1976). It also has a history of devastating floods (1907, 1913, 1921, and 1929) because of its location next to the Little Missouri, but in a typical year, the river is only deep enough for canoeing and swimming in the spring. History also shows that Marmarth almost became the county seat. In 1915, residents in the area now known as Slope County pulled away from inclusion in Billings County saying they resented outsiders trying to get involved, and retorting "They had enough intelligent people in their own area!" (Slope Saga Committee, 1976). At that time, Marmarth was named the county seat until it was determined that transient railroad workers had voted for Marmarth. A second vote was taken, and Amidon was selected. Nearly 5,000 people lived in Slope County in 1915 when homesteaders were numerous (Slope Saga Committee, 1976). Now, there are 846 residents in the county that stretches over 1,200 square miles ("Slope County," 1998 p. A14).



Medora has capitalized on US President Theodore Roosevelt's love of the area, but Marmarth could also identify itself with the Roughrider President. Teddy Roosevelt killed his first grizzly bear a short distance west of Marmarth on the Little Beaver River and his first buffalo just north of Marmarth on the Little Missouri River near

Pretty Butte (Slope Saga Committee, 1976). Roosevelt once stayed as a guest in a squat old ranch house on Hay Creek. He killed his first antelope a few miles west of Amidon.

**Rhame**, population 169 (US Bureau of the Census, 1996), is also known for its location near the Hell Creek Formation because, similar to its neighbor Marmarth, it is surrounded by one of the most important archeological sites in the nation. It is known because it has fossilized flora as well as dinosaur remains.

Rhame offers its youth an education through modern technology. An interactive television hook-up with fellow consortium members Bowman, Scranton, and Hettinger allows an instructor in any one of those locations to teach students in all four schools along US Highway 12 in ND. A history book describes Rhame as the highest town in the state, a fact that may serve as a gimmick to attract the attention of tourists (Prairie Tales II, 1989).

**Fort Dilts Historic Site** is located between Marmarth and Rhame, north of US Highway 12. It is the location where an 80 unit wagon train of immigrants formed a circle, and six foot tall sod walls were built around it. The pioneers, led by Jefferson Dilts, waited out a threat by American Indians in 1864. The 300 Indians wanted to trade an English woman for cattle and weapons, but they left empty handed. Eight government grave markers are at the site known as Fort Dilts in memory of members of the expedition who died southwest of Amidon in an earlier clash with Indians (Slope Saga Committee, 1976).

Tourists and area residents have remarked on the beauty of Fort Dilts, saying its timeless appearance is unique. Visitors have said they can just imagine the incident because the land has been left nearly untouched. The only visual flaw seems to be the tattered looking outhouses that stand near the grave markers. There is no count kept of visitors, but it appears there are many who venture the short distance north of US Highway 12 after seeing the designation on the North Dakota highway traffic map. Tourism may be enhanced by involving living history actors to educate and entertain, but yet maintain the sacredness of the site.

**Scranton** is 15 miles east of Bowman and 30 miles west of Hettinger on US Highway 12. Local ownership appears key to be the livelihood of the town of 269 residents (US Bureau of the Census, 1996). Scranton Equity Exchange operates the elevator, feed plant, truck shop, shopping center, oil sales, and fertilizer plant. The town's economic development booklet says "the grain-marketing and feed facility is one of the biggest in North Dakota" (Bowman



County Development Corporation, n.d.). The town's cafe is also owned by residents through a co-op. It is a small town with a lot of pride, having hosted the former US Secretary of State

Warren Christopher and ND dignitaries in June of this year. Christopher, who spent his childhood in Scranton, was given North Dakota's highest honor when he was inducted into the Roughrider Hall of Fame.

Scranton has a par 34 nine-hole golf course, 41 businesses, and a public school with grades K-12. Its interactive link with neighboring schools enhances curriculum. In 1993, the school system was rated in the top 9% nationally with the "What Parents Want" award (Bowman County Economic Development Corporation, n.d.).

**Hettinger** is 27 miles east of Scranton on US Highway 12. Despite its modest size of 1,427 residents (US Bureau of the Census, 1996), Hettinger is noted nationally as the birthplace of Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs). It is home to West River Health Services which has a satellite in Scranton as well as other surrounding communities. Other facilities include: two motels and a main street with many essential services, although the "dime store" was for sale at the time of this report. Other Hettinger landmarks include: a livestock yard, the NDSU Experiment Station as well as a new Extension Service office, county courthouse, K-12 school system, museum, airport, a trailer park capable of hosting additional guests for the summer season or year round, city park with Mirror Lake as its focal point, and a golf course.

There is interest among local tourism committee members to market Hettinger as a spring-to-fall perch for snowbirds. The population of the town and the surrounding communities has fallen in recent decades as young people leave to find good paying jobs elsewhere and the retired residents go south to find sun and warmth in the winter. A 1.3% unemployment rate has led to job openings, but the problem is the average salary that is offered. A recent training program of nine area residents addressed the out-migration of those people wanting careers. According to the Adams County Development Corporation, UND Williston taught the women transcription skills for 18 weeks. They will then work through a Salt Lake City, Utah, company for \$7-\$10 an hour with hopes of seeing that salary climb to \$25-\$30 an hour with experience. The State of North Dakota's Workforce 2000 program, the Adams County Development Corporation, UND Williston, and the students themselves paid for the course.



Hettinger residents may not be making a lot of money from tourism, but they could be candidates for a hospitality award. They offer a wild game feed, free-of-charge at the American Legion for any interested hunter, the weekend the pheasant season opens in the fall. They also

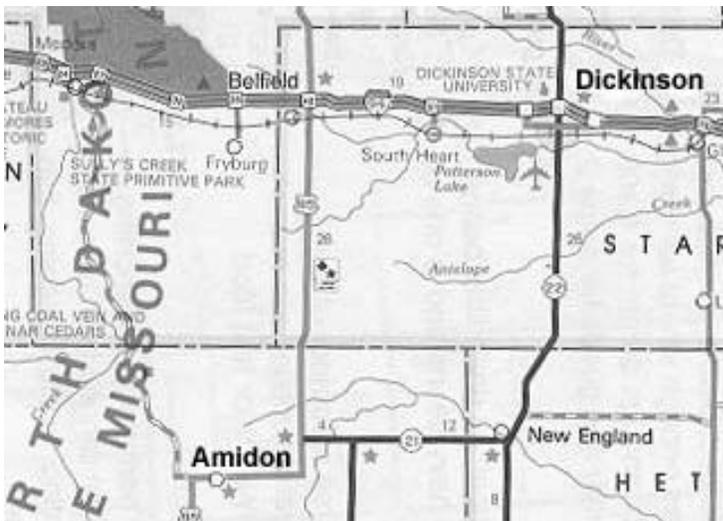


serve 2,000 people a free lunch and entertain them with games, music, and fireworks on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in their city park. When asked why they don't charge, tourism committee members said that they want to show their appreciation to their guests.

Their historic event of note is the Last Buffalo Hunt in June. It commemorates the

last time buffalo were hunted in mass in the United States. The site is near Hettinger in the valley of Hiddenwood Creek. There in 1882, 2,000 Indians were allowed by the US Army to conduct the last hunt of 5,000 bison. At that time, it was not known that the 50,000 buffalo grazing there were the last remnants of an estimated 60-75 million bison that once roamed the western plains of North America (Berg, 1995).

A year later only 10,000 buffalo remained in the last herd that grazed the land that is now home to the towns of Hettinger, Lodgepole, and Reeder. Months later, in October 1883, Sitting Bull and a thousand Sioux from the Standing Rock Reservation killed the last 1,100 buffalo southeast of what is now Hettinger. A sign commemorates the site of the last buffalo hunt, and each June, festivities are held at the site. A black powder encampment is also held at that location each summer, and the number of people interested in that method of re-enacting history has grown in recent years to about 80 enthusiasts. Efforts were made through this project to expand that number in 1998 by creating a mailing list to black powder enthusiasts who are listed on the Internet. More information is available through the Dakota Buttes Visitors Council.



**Dickinson** is about 60 miles northeast of the tri-counties, so not directly included in this study, but it may play a major role in the development of the area. Dickinson is the largest population center in the region with 16,094 residents (US Bureau of the Census, 1996). In recent years, it has taken on a more metropolitan look in its growth near I-94. A number of well-known franchise restaurants, motels, discount shopping stores, as well as the local convenience outlets offer services. It is home to

Dickinson State University (DSU) which is linked up to other state universities through interactive television (IVAN), an asset for state residents and decision makers since 300 miles

separate Dickinson from the state's major population base in Fargo and the North Dakota State University campus where IVAN originates. DSU has seen its enrollment climb the past few years, thanks to a number of new and renovated buildings and strong leadership from President Conn, who resigned at the end of the '97-'98 school year. DSU has also benefitted from Montana's higher tuition; about 30% of DSU's student population is from the western neighbor. Less than 20% of the 1736 students on campus are "other than average" in age. Diana Knutson, university relations director, can provide tours and brochures to anyone interested.



Under Dr. Conn's leadership, emphasis was placed on regional studies, so a fall course in horsemanship and western ND terrain was initiated in the evenings and weekends for the general public. The university contracts with a guest ranch near Killdeer, ND, to provide horses, insurance, and guides. A cultural heritage class is also offered. In regards to tourism, there may be a possibility of re-working these courses into shorter, family-oriented offerings in the summer. Funding is needed to develop the curriculum, and then the proposal would have to gain approval from the university president's cabinet. Besides offering elderhostel in the summer, DSU could offer family-hostel or adventure week for adults. The university also

offers internships and service-learning projects which might include tourism-related projects if pursued by interested parties. Another potential link between DSU and tourism is Rolf Butz, the Dickinson web page designer. Butz is now teaching a course at DSU.

DSU is ranked second in the nation in men's collegiate rodeo. Each December, it offers a rodeo camp for three days, showcasing two alums who have become national champions. DSU has a number of sports camps on campus each summer as well as Business Challenge for ND teens.



The university also has an active theater arts department. A week long drama workshop for teens culminates in their performance prior to the Medora musical each summer. DSU also has a cheerleading camp and is considering a yearbook camp and a Badlands science camp. It has also discussed the formation of a Theodore Roosevelt research center for on-site experiences as well as campus study of the president. DSU's original mission was teacher education which is still a very important major. Workshops are held for teachers each summer. DSU is anxious to expand its contributions to the community and region. It has some beautiful, accessible facilities, including two interactive sites, numerous computer labs, a new recreation center with an indoor pool, a 730 seat theater, and ample parking that may be used by various groups.

Dickinson has a number of industries in industrial parks east and west of town. Some of them are Baker Boy (bread dough manufacturer), TMI Systems Design Corporation (a manufacturer of metal office products), Steffes Manufacturing (space heaters, snowmobile replacement blades, and other specialty metal products), Wastco (plastic garbage cans for national

parks), Fisher Industry (mining equipment), and BL Trailers (horse and cattle trailers). A sense of entrepreneurship and collaboration amongst many of these company leaders was reported. Most of them are natives of the area. They network regularly through a Chamber of Commerce sponsored Manufacturers' Roundtable, having breakfast and dreaming up new ideas to help their businesses and the community grow. Lists of the city's employers, wages, and other pertinent facts on Dickinson's business community are found on the city's web site (see Resource People and Organizations).

Dickinson has one grocery store that's open 24 hours a day, about 14 hotel/motels, and the Dakota Dinosaur Museum which has 12 full-scale replicated dinosaurs, including a complete Triceratops and Edmontosaurus. The skull of an actual triceratops that was found west of Marmarth in Montana is on display in the museum's laboratory. Thousands of rocks and minerals are also displayed. The facility is open from spring until autumn. The facility is first-rate, but despite extensive marketing and an admission charge, the museum is struggling to make ends meet. The dinosaur museum connects to a wing dedicated to North Dakota history and politics called the Joachim Regional Museum. That facility is open free to the public.



On August 19, 1998, it was announced the dinosaur museum would skip its annual debt payment of \$25,000 to the City of Dickinson and cut employees' salaries. Executive Director Alice League told the Associated Press that only 21,600 people had toured the museum this year compared to 35,900 the first eight months of 1995, the peak year for museum attendance. The city asked the museum for \$241,000 of the \$991,000 spent in tax money to build the museum. So far, \$50,000 of that total was paid (Associated Press, 1998, p. A9).

The Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) may move its headquarters to land near the two museums in order to have a stronger presence near I-94 and offer coordination of Dickinson's major tourists' sites—the two museums and Prairie Outpost Park. A number of hotels, motels, and restaurants are also located nearby.

In recent years, out-of-state developers came to Dickinson and bought land for the creation of an RV park for retired people, and they built a shopping and office plaza. The plan was reportedly not economically feasible, the developer left town, and the plaza is for sale at this time. Senior housing is under construction in Dickinson, sponsored by local businesses and medical groups. One



local leader said the reason the snowbird RV park failed was because the newcomers didn't do their homework researching the community. However, another Dickinson leader said it wasn't

because of a lack of effort; the developer went to RV parks in the south and tried to recruit snowbirds, but failed to attract the numbers needed to support the development. More study of that failed effort could give Hettinger some valuable clues if it wants to attract more senior citizens to summer in Hettinger.

Patterson Lake is located on the southwest side of Dickinson and offers fishing and some water sports. A number of special events are held each year in Dickinson including Roughrider Days on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July which in 1998, attracted 2,500 to its derby and rodeo, 1,000 to its concert, and up to 20,000 people to the parade. The Ukranian Festival is held in mid-July, the 3-on-3 basketball tournament (Gusmaker) attracted 243 participants and 1,254 spectators. Team roping fell short of its goal, attracting 400 spectators. Taylor, ND, receives support from the Dickinson CVB for its annual Horsefest, and this year proved to be more successful than ever with 7,000 participants representing 39 states and 5 foreign countries. Taylor organizers were praised by the CVB for aggressive marketing.



The Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau, under the direction of Executive Director Terri Thiel is marketing the entire southwest region of North Dakota, initially unbeknownst to the tri-counties tourism committee. Thiel, a former Hettinger CVB Director, continued the efforts of her Dickinson predecessor and, since joining the staff in September 1997, has developed a map and list of area activities and attractions with Dickinson on one side and “Discover Southwest



North Dakota” on the other side. It is available at many businesses in Dickinson. The CVB’s web site has been updated to include that same information, and a video and television monitor was installed at the new I-94 Hailstone Creek rest stop. After gaining special permission from the ND Department of Transportation, the CVB installed the television that runs continuously promoting the region from Dickinson to Richardton to the Badlands to Bowman. For the first time, Dickinson is also advertising in the Fargo television market. The 30-second commercial is shown along with an ad from Mandan’s Ft. Lincoln, thus attracting the viewer’s attention for western ND for sixty seconds.

*Medora* is also outside the tri-county area under study, but it is a major factor in the arrival of tourists. Medora is 30 miles west of Dickinson on I-94 and about 60 miles north of Bowman. According to the state tourism department, Medora is North Dakota’s number one tourist attraction, ahead of Jamestown, the Peace Gardens, and Mandan’s Ft. Lincoln, respectively. Over 40 years ago Medora was given a new life.

The village was founded by Marquis deMores in the 1880s. The Frenchman built a meat packing plant and established a stagecoach line between Medora and Deadwood before it met financial ruin and he returned to France. He lives on, however, as hundreds of thousands of tourists visit his 28-room Chateau each year; camp near the ruins of his plant; tour the Badlands in search of wildlife and natural beauty; roam the many gift shops, saloons, and restaurants; bicycle; stay overnight in one of many motels; and dine on pitchfork-fondu steak prior to the Medora Musical. The show is only part of the attraction.



The Burning Hills Amphitheater seats 2,750 people and is accessible thanks to an elevator and escalator built into the side of the hill overlooking the Badlands. The man responsible for the modern day development of Medora is Harold Schafer, ND Governor Ed Schafer's father. After a successful business career, he formed a foundation to promote, staff, and equip Medora with the means to succeed. In the summer, about 350 teenagers from around the state supplement the foundation's professional staff and serve as greeters, clerks, waitresses, guides, and whatever other functions are necessary to make the western town a first-class attraction. The teenagers are instructed on how to treat visitors. This year, the Medora Foundation also added guest couples who volunteer a weekend greeting dignitaries. A number of opportunities for socializing have been held in Medora including the Western Governor's Council, the Republican party, and the Judicial Convention .

The foundation oversees the horseback riding concession offered at Peaceful Valley Ranch, a number of businesses, and most of the 400 hotel/motel rooms in Medora. The town's mayor, Olie Golberg, built his own AmericInn in 1997. The \$2.3 million, 56-unit motel features an indoor pool, whirlpool, and sauna (Craig, 1998). Golberg had tried to get a water slide built in town, but after much political debate, the project was scrapped.

Goldberg's AmericInn and the Medora Foundation's historic Roughrider Hotel are the only tourist facilities open during the winter. Medora is the county seat of Billings County, and the town's population is 127 (US Bureau of the Census, 1996).

### **Accumulative assets**

The tri-counties and neighboring counties in southwest North Dakota have an impressive list of assets when combined. Natural beauty includes: the Badlands, the National Grasslands, the vastness of the range, the buttes, magnificent sunrises and sunsets, the Northern Lights, the Little Missouri River and its affect on the land, rolling hills, lakes and wetlands, and an unobstructed view of the sky.

A number of tourism related activities already exist including: horseback riding, branding, ranch sing-a-longs,



hunting, fishing, swimming, paleontology expeditions, canoeing, hiking, mountain biking, playing softball and basketball, birdwatching, wildlife viewing, photographic opportunities, shopping, charitable gambling, and dancing.

Other pastimes in southwest North Dakota include opportunities to visit museums, historic sites, educational opportunities, entertainment, county fairs, and other community celebrations.

Besides the area's natural beauty, the most important asset appears to be area residents themselves. Their sense of history, community, humor, tenacity, independence, strong work ethic, and hospitality, combine to offer visitors a quality experience.

## **Hospitality Providers Survey**

The Tri-County Tourism Committee asked what its role could be in enhancing tourism in Adams, Bowman, and Slope Counties. As a result, a survey was developed and sent to about 200 members of the Chambers of Commerce in Bowman and Hettinger, as well as business people, in the surrounding communities in the three counties. The result generated considerable interest in marketing/publicity, budgeting, staff recruitment and retention, staff customer service training, mentoring from other business people, fundraising, appearance of business, legal issues, and changes in the law (Appendix 2).

Most people indicated that, if they do advertise their businesses, they do so in the local newspaper and on the local radio station. A few used brochures and advertising outside the immediate area, and a very few have Internet sites for advertising purposes.

Initial arrangements have been made with North Dakota State University staff and possibly others who are willing to conduct workshops on the above listed issues in the three county area. These workshops are discussed in the Opportunities for Tourism Enhancement section. The Tourism Committee may be the likely coordinating body for such sessions.

Most respondents also indicated that they serve few tourists in their businesses. Since many business people in the three counties appear detached from the tourism industry, the Tourism Committee also needs to consider educating residents about the direct and indirect benefits of entertaining "outsiders." Enthusiasm is needed throughout the area because tri-county residents are the area's biggest asset, but also potential detriment. For instance, if a motorist stops for gas briefly on the way to Medora or Deadwood and asks, "Anything to see around here?", that clerk can make or break it for the community. If he/she sells the attributes, provides literature, and a personal testimonial about how much fun or interesting such and such is, that motorist may stay overnight. Within those hours he/she may buy gas, groceries, some souvenirs, a new shirt, eat out, have a few drinks, go to the movie, get his/her car repaired, maybe even have his/her hair trimmed before going to the local church the following morning after breakfast, etc. That one pleasant gas station attendant may have brought business into at least 10 businesses and the church. Conversely, if the clerk said, "Ah, nothing ever happens around here; I can hardly wait to move!", the motorist will quickly drive on to the next town becoming the catch that got away!

Studies also show that tourists are in the area to visit family or friends. A positive movement to spark community pride and knowledge of entertainment possibilities should reach

people of all ages in the tri-counties, so they will become good volunteer tour guides for their friends and relatives.

## **Public Tourism Survey, Results and Discussion**

A survey of 7,000 people south of 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South in Fargo, ND, produced an 8.7% return rate. Unlike national (Tourism, 1998) and international surveys (Table 16), the 808 residents in and near Fargo who returned the survey, do not place shopping and bird watching high on their list of things to do while on vacation (Table 1). Instead, they said viewing natural scenery is their favorite pastime.

<u>Favorite vacation pastimes:</u>	
Viewing natural scenery	45%
Boating and other water sports	38%
Cruising the ocean	32%
Camping	32%
Shopping in a unique atmosphere	28%
Family activities such as a water slide, bumper boats, go-carts, and other rides	26%
Seeing historic sites	26%
Attending cultural events such as concerts and plays	25.7%
Shopping in a mall	23%
Downhill skiing	23%

The least favorite pastimes may represent activities they haven't done rather than truly dislike. Many of the activities listed as a response to dislikes later appeared as activities the respondent would like to try some time in the future. Parachuting, for instance, received a strong dislike by 85% of those surveyed, but 15% would like to try it.

<u>Strongly disliked vacation pastimes:</u>	
Motocross/ATVing	59%
Ballooning	59%
Motorcycling	55%
Paleontology	51%
Hunting	49%
Mountain biking	41%
Bird watching	41%
Playing softball	38%
Cross country skiing	37%

After ranking 39 activities, respondents were asked to go back and circle those activities that they would like to try while on vacation, but just haven't yet. Those responses showed an interest in adventure sports with the exception of the most popular interest, going for a cruise on the ocean.

Tourism activities respondents have yet to do, but would like to try:

Cruise the ocean	33%
Ballooning	26%
Ranch stay/cowboy experience	16%
Parachuting	15%
Cross country skiing	9%
Canoeing	7%
Downhill skiing	6.8%
Horseback riding	6.7%
Paleontology/digging for dinosaur bones	6.0%
Hiking	5.2%
Snowmobiling	5.0%.

These results may bode well for western North Dakota because they show interest in natural beauty, camping, and unique adventures. According to these results, an ideal trip for a south Fargo resident may be a package vacation that includes lodging and horseback riding on a ranch, a balloon ride over the Badlands and/or National Grasslands, attending a cultural event, boating on Bowman-Haley Lake, and singing around an open campfire at day's end. Certainly there are other possibilities that can be extracted from the survey.

A package should be tailored for a couple, or a family with youngsters, if you want to appeal to the majority of potential tourists from south Fargo. Of the 808 people who responded to the survey, 13% of the respondents were single, 43% couples, 30% families with youngsters, and 14% were families with older children. Filtering can be done to this data in order to determine the characteristics of the person most interested in parachuting, ballooning, and other activities. Filtering can help you target your advertising to those potential tourists who are the most interested.

Similar to national studies, south Fargo respondents say they are taking shorter vacations. Fourteen percent echo the ABC World News Tonight (1998) survey, taking 3-4 day vacations.

<u>Length of vacation</u>	
3-4 days	14%
5 days	12%
6-7 days	16%
10 days	12%
14 days	8%
15-21 days	16%
25-30 days	5%
34-60 days	3%

Most say they prefer to pay what they perceive as an average cost for accommodations and events (71%). Only 26% are looking for bargain prices, and 3% seek out luxury accommodations. Most people take one or two trips a year. Twenty-eight percent said one trip; 32% take 2 trips, 18% take 3 trips a year, and 22% listed a variety of other durations.

Two-thirds of the respondents were female, one-third male. Their ages were evenly divided between three age groups: 20 something, 30 something, and 40 something. Each age group represented about a quarter of the respondents. The other 25% represented a variety of ages younger and older than the three dominate age groups.

The favorite vacation spot for those surveyed was the Minnesota lakes area. North Dakota made the top three.

<u>Favorite vacation spot:</u>	
Minnesota lakes area	55%
Minneapolis-St. Paul	38%
North Dakota	27%
“Other”	24%
Disneyland or Disneyworld	19%
West Coast — US	17%
Montana	17%
Colorado	16%
South Dakota	14%
Southwest US	13%
Mexico	10%
East Coast — US	9%
Nevada	7%
Europe	7%
Washington, DC	5%

Of the 636 who indicated they had vacationed in western North Dakota, most were complimentary. Thirty-four percent circled “excellent” to describe their vacation west of Mandan, ND. Fifty-four percent said it was good; 10% rated it fair, and 2% said it was poor. The response was almost even when asked if they would like to receive more vacation information about western ND. Some who said “no,” indicated they had already received material from the ND Tourism Department. However, some had no interest.

The last question on the survey was open ended. It asked if the respondent had any suggestions for merchants and community leaders hoping to better serve the traveling public in North Dakota (Appendix 4). The overwhelming response was “advertise!” Those people surveyed appear to be interested in their state, but many do not know what there is to do out west except attend the Medora musical. In fact with a few exceptions, Medora was the only attraction they reacted to. It was as if all of the other towns and activities don’t exist! That finding brings us back to their strongest suggestion, market your communities and activities more effectively!

## Previous Surveys and Events

*Americans' vacation habits* — According to a report on ABC World News Tonight (1998), an American's vacation is, on average, four days long. International tourists vacation twice as long in America as American tourists (Table 16). Similar to foreign visitors, American tourists list shopping as their favorite past time, and when traveling overseas, London is the number one destination. In general, Americans are traveling in record numbers according to the report.

According to a survey of 1500 people nationwide by the Travel Industry Association ("Travelers," 1998, p. F2), 77 percent of all adults do some sort of shopping while on vacation. Three percent said it was the primary reason for their trip. People made 43 million visits to the Mall of America in Bloomington, MN last year, which is more tourists than attracted to Disneyworld, the Grand Canyon, and Graceland combined. Tourists spend about \$600 million at the Mall of America annually ("Tourism," 1998, p. A1). In Branson visitors said they were lured to the town to shop more than to attend the stage shows which originally made the small Missouri town famous. Branson has fewer than 4,000 residents but attracted 5.8 million tourists last year ("Travelers," 1998, p. F2). That total is two million more than in 1990 (Koth, 1991), fueled in great part by charter buses. A number of charters depart from Fargo for Branson throughout the year.

The McCormick Marketing firm found tourists spend four to ten times more than local shoppers. Tourists enjoy shopping, in part, because they are not rushed by work and responsibilities at home. Instead, they can relax and treat themselves and others they care about with gifts and souvenirs. They may even buy a product available near their home, but on vacation, they have the time and energy to shop. A study of 8,000 leisure travelers in Las Vegas found 67 percent listed shopping as a major activity while only 18 percent listed gambling, consequently more shopping malls are opening in Las Vegas ("Travelers," 1998, p. F2). A growing number of retailers are seeking popular vacation spots for the locations of their shops. Shopping mall owners are also increasing their clientele by teaming up with hotel owners and airlines to develop travel packages with discounts to attract more tourists.

"More than half of all personal trips in the US are made within a 300-mile radius of the traveler's home, and more than one-third are made within 150," according to the South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium (Koth, 1991). It also found that trips are getting shorter in duration, 40 percent are less than three nights in length. Visiting friends and family is still the number one reason people travel (Koth, 1991). Consequently, a community's own residents can make or break their region's image and additional income from tourism by the remarks they make to their guests.

*Top recreational pursuits in North Dakota Parks* — The ND Parks and Recreation Department commissions a study every five years called SCORP — State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (Table 2). Leitch, Hirsch, & Christenson (1995) surveyed the public to learn how many days they spend a year engaged in any of 30 recreational activities as well as "other." They found the number one activity in the state and in Fargo's region is walking/jogging on pavement. That activity came in second in the tri-county area that includes Adams, Bowman, and Slope. The number one activity in the tri-counties was pleasure driving. Driving just for the

fun of it came in second in the overall state survey and in the Fargo region. Biking on pavement was in the top three for all previously mentioned regions, and use of an ATV, motorcycle, or snowmobile was in the top four as was swimming, except for the tri-counties where that sport wasn't even mentioned.

***Top children's sports in Canada*** — In a Canadian survey (Table 3), swimming was the favorite sports activity of children 6-10 years old, and it came in second to baseball for children 11-14 years old in Canada. The younger group put baseball second along with soccer and hockey third, while the pre-and young-teenagers ranked hockey third, and basketball fourth (Statistics Canada, 1992).

***River recreation in North Dakota*** — A survey to determine the public's use of rivers in North Dakota (Table 4) revealed that the most popular activities along the Red River in eastern North Dakota are sightseeing, walking/jogging, bicycling, fishing, snowmobiling, and picnicking. Dietz and Leitch (1997) found the Missouri was the most visited river in the state; the Red River was second, and the Little Missouri which cuts through Slope County was third. Camping is the most popular activity along the Little Missouri followed by sightseeing, fishing, walking/jogging, hunting, and photography. On average, each person spent about 10 days a year recreating on the Little Missouri in contrast to about 22 days a year on the Red River. The Little Missouri is best used in the spring because after May a lack of water can pose problems, especially for canoeists.

***Top Canadian heritage institutions*** — Nature parks are by far the favorite of Canadians surveyed (Table 3), evidenced by a 56,307,000 attendance in 1993-94. Historic sites took a distant second with 17,020,000 attending, and history museums were far behind with 8,760,000 in attendance. This low interest in museums may give credence to the need for participation. People favored the site where they were physically active as well as intellectually stimulated by nature. Nearly twice as many people preferred to roam around historic sites, and in some cases, interact with living history guides compared to passively looking at objects in museums. Museums are becoming more interactive as technology and funding allows more creativity, but the stereotype stagnant display evidently pales in popularity compared to action-adventure forms of learning.

***Top entertainment choices in Canada*** — The Bowman County Fair, the ND State Fair, and the Red River Valley Fair all offer well-known country music entertainers, but if a survey by Statistics Canada is reviewed, those lineups may be questioned. Canadians were asked how often they went to a variety of performing arts shows (Table 3). The 1998 survey found the greatest share of the population, 16.3% said they attended more pop/rock concerts. Only 4.4% had gone to a country and western musical performance. The other favorites included musical comedy in second place followed by (in order of preference) comedy, drama, jazz/blues, stand-up comedy, symphonic music, country music, opera, and choral music.

Canadians' lack of major interest in country music is echoed in a 1996 survey of radio preferences (Table 3). Thirty-eight percent of those surveyed said they prefer radio stations that play adult-contemporary/gold/oldies/rock while only 14.5% preferred country music radio stations. The least favorite stations played middle-of-the-road, easy listening, and dance music.

The North Dakota State Fair in Minot set a new record in attendance in 1998 as did the Red River Valley Fair in West Fargo. Both relied heavily on country western entertainment. The Bowman County Fair featured the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, also a country act in 1998.

**Fargo radio market leaders** — In Fargo, the radio station with the most listeners is KFGO AM, with a talk format. Its sister-station, Froggy FM, is second with contemporary country, and KLTA follows with a lite rock format, according to the Spring Arbitron ratings in 1997 and 1998. These results may support offering either type of entertainment, i.e., country or non-country if you are hoping to please tourists from the Fargo radio market.

**Red River Valley Fair** — Both the Red River Valley Fair (RRVF) and the North Dakota State Fair set attendance records in the summer of 1998. RRVF Manager Bruce Olson says the move to June from July in 1997 has helped attendance, and this year, the show was lengthened to 10 days rather than the previous seven days. The result was a third of a million dollar increase. Olson says 146,000 people attended, and over \$1.3 million were brought in on the fairgrounds, which does not count the millions of dollars generated in the community through lodging, restaurants, shopping, gasoline sales, and other purchases by tourists. Olson considers a 100 mile radius his target audience. He needs to attract people from at least that distance in order to fill the 9300 seat grandstand and 5000 extra chairs. Cost of expanding and lighting the grandstand area in 1998 was \$600,000, a mortgage Olson said the fair board hopes to pay off in four to five years (“Red River Valley Fair,” 1997).

In June, the Steve Miller Band drew the largest audience at the 1998 fair with about 14,700 fans, Tim McGraw had 14,000 fans of all ages, and Sawyer Brown had 13,000 in attendance. When asked his reaction to the Canadian survey (Table 3) that shows pop/rock music far more popular than country, Olson said he is keeping his eye on that trend. The difficulty is signing rock bands by March so they can be advertised enough. They tend to say “maybe,” while country bands commit by then; in fact, some do by October. The RRVF management team does not avoid bands favored by teenagers. Conversely, Olson thinks its important to attract the youth and gain their support for the fair now and in future years.

Olson spends 10-20% of his budget on advertising. Sponsorships with Pepsi Cola and beer distributors increase his net profit twofold. The companies pay to exclusively serve their beverage on the fairgrounds, and their delivery people put up fair posters along their routes in the surrounding area.

A simple gimmick of selling and allowing people to bring their own 32 oz. mugs for beer and pop has saved the fair money in paper cups and cut cleanup time because the mug isn't discarded. Some people used the same cup all four years the promotion has been offered. Off-duty law enforcement people work the beer stands while on-duty sheriff's deputies police the area in hopes of keeping the lively crowd from stepping over the line that could spell trouble. No beer sales are allowed in the stands; rather, identifications have to be shown at the beer stand before a sale is made, and intoxicated customers are turned away.

Olson credits much of the RRVF's success on its diversification over the years. The facility is not only used in June for the fair, but in July for the World of Outlaws, and in September for Big Iron. This year, the World of Outlaws brought in 21,000 people who spent about \$400,000 on admission fees and concessions. It was also televised for the first time nationally on TNN to 1.4 million viewers. Olson thinks North Dakota should advertise itself

during next year's nationally televised show. He hopes the TNN coverage this year will bring more race fans to North Dakota and West Fargo in July 1999 and the year 2000.

Big Iron, a farm implement show that also offers entertainment and seminars brought in \$400,000 paid by exhibitors for booth space at the fairgrounds exposition. Olson says 70,000 people attended Big Iron during its three day run in September 1997. About 800 exhibitors pay for the right to participate, and many of them buy their own television, radio, and newspaper advertising. If those extra commercials are factored in, Olson says about 30% of Big Iron's budget is spent on advertising.

All three events also enjoy added promotion on the part of the local media who do feature stories, live remotes, and stories before, during, and after the festivities. He hopes to add yet another big event in 1999, a fireworks convention and huge display. Such an event drew 3000 conventioners in 1993 and 60,000 viewers on the fairgrounds and the surrounding countryside.

Olson says he gets many good ideas the first week of December each year when he attends a national convention in Las Vegas that attracts 40,000 fair managers and board members from around the country. A smaller gathering is held in November each year in Bismarck, involving people in the business from the tri-states. Competition is a factor between fairs to attract some of the same entertainers and same guests so there is not a lot of sharing of ideas on the regional level. He says it is imperative to get out and see how others are operating in the Twin Cities, Sioux Falls, Minot, and We Fest near Detroit Lakes. Olson picks up tips on marketing, crowd control, security, funding and entertainment selection by watching and listening to his competition. He credits the growth in attendance and income from the Red River Valley Fair, Big Iron, and the World of Outlaws to his growing knowledge in the business.

***Hunting and fishing in North Dakota*** — In-state and out-of-state hunters and anglers generated \$1.67 billion in total business in the state in 1996. Lewis (1998) found, "Those expenditures accounted for \$250 million in retail trade sales, \$393 million in personal income and supported more than 21,000 jobs." Since 1982, total direct resident and nonresident expenditures have increased from \$157 million to \$578 million. Reacting to the large increase over the past 16 years, co-author Dr. Jay Leitch said, "The amount of money injected in rural areas is nothing to sneeze at!" (Lohman, 1998a, p. E8). Leitch concluded that hunters and anglers accounted for 8 percent of the state's economic base and supported 8 percent of the state's employment in 1996.

Lewis (1998) also found;

Resident open water anglers had the highest average seasonal expenditure at \$2,779. Resident archery antelope hunters at \$450 had the highest average daily expenditure, while gratisfall wild turkey hunters at \$17 had the lowest average daily expenditure and at \$50 the lowest seasonal expenditure (Lohman, 1998a, p. E8).

Lewis and Leitch (1998) also found "excluding gratis license holders, resident archery deer hunters had the least spending average per day at \$99. Nonresident anglers had the highest seasonal expenditures at \$1,122, while archery deer hunters at \$150 had the highest daily expenditures of all nonresident hunters and anglers."

***North Dakota traffic volume in 1996*** --Statistics from the North Dakota Department of Transportation (appendix 1) indicate, on average, about 725 vehicles drive US Highway 85 per day between Amidon and south of Bowman to the border with South Dakota. About 170 trucks make that same journey, on average, each day year round. The traffic count is much higher near

the population centers. Up to 1250 vehicles and 125 trucks travel the section of US Highways 12 and 85 each day, but many of those vehicles are local residents coming and going a number of times.

It is hard to estimate how many outsiders are actually driving US Highway 12 through Hettinger because, in town, the count is 1,150 cars and 160 trucks a day, on average, annually, but east of Hettinger toward South Dakota, the number falls to 675 vehicles and 120 trucks a day.

Marmarth's traffic count is 500 vehicles and 95 trucks a day. Many of those motorists are local people who were counted more than once by the state's mechanized counter.

In contrast to the tri-county traffic volume, I-94 has 3,000 vehicles and 690 trucks, on average, per day near Dickinson. Theodore Roosevelt National Park attracts about one-third of those motorists (Theodore Roosevelt National Park), with an average of 888 visitors per day annually (so, many more than that on a summer day). Medora's short stretch to I-94 records average about 700 vehicles and 60 trucks a day. Estimates of how many newcomers are included in that total are difficult. Medora's tourism industry is mainly from June to Labor Day.

Comparisons between southwest and eastern parts of North Dakota contrast, not only in population and income level, but also in traffic volume (appendix 1). The stretch of I-94 just south of West Acres Shopping Center reported 21,130 vehicles and 1,680 trucks per day, on average, in 1996. The average number of vehicles decreases substantially just west of West Fargo with 8,610 reported per day. I-29 averages 12,400 vehicles and 1900 trucks per day traveling through Fargo.

## **What is Southwest North Dakota's Potential Market?**

### ***Tourism income in North Dakota --***

The tri-counties of Adams, Bowman, and Slope are included in an eight-county area referred to as North Dakota Planning Region 8. Medora, North Dakota's number one tourist spot, is also in that region which reported 77.5 million dollars in tourism related business in 1996 (Table 5). That figure represents 8.1 % of the total of sales for final demand in that region. The major population centers in the state led the list in tourism income with first place going to Fargo's region followed by the regions containing Bismarck, Minot, and Grand Forks. If indeed the number one reason people take a vacation is to visit friends and relatives (Koth, 1991), the biggest cities may have an edge over the smaller towns in attracting visitors and, as the decline in rural North Dakota's population continues, so goes its most valuable asset — family and friends.

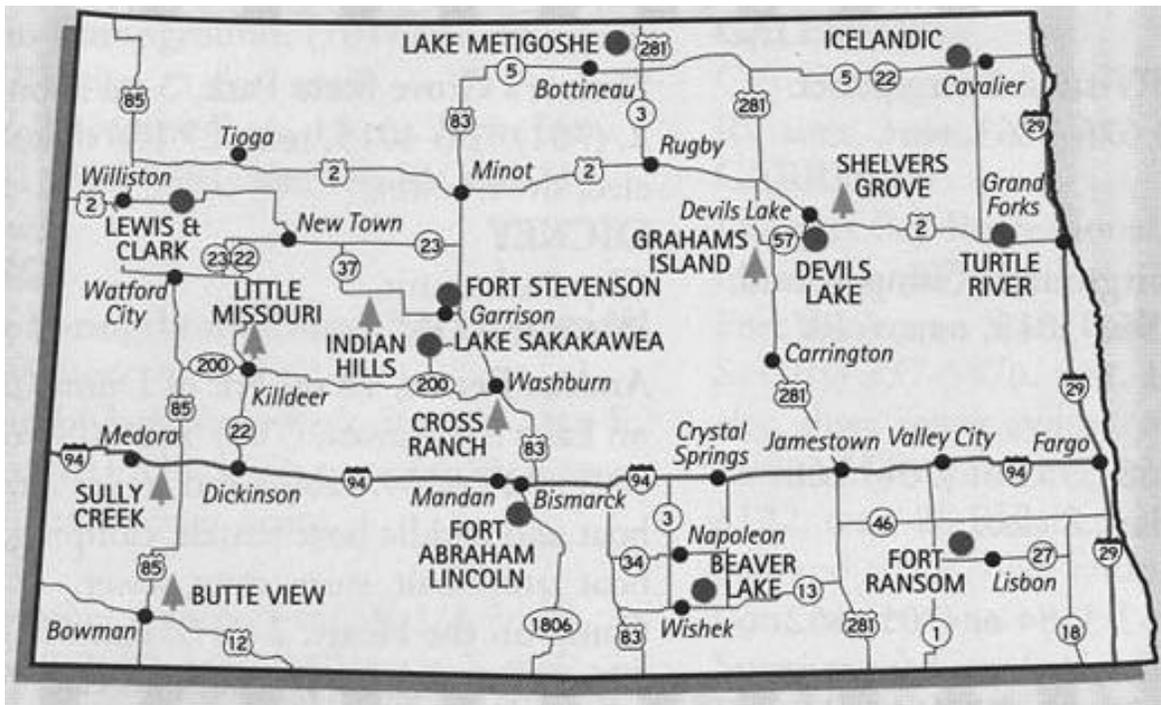
According to ABC World News Tonight (1998), the number one rated activity of Americans while on vacation is shopping. Foreign visitors also rate shopping as number one according to the International Tourism Association (1998). The larger population centers then have an advantage in offering stores and a variety of goods, but according to researchers at the University of Minnesota (Jenks, 1993), the smaller towns should not give up. Instead, they need to find a niche (Jenks, 1993). They need to decide what makes them different and sellable already, or what could in the future. Also, what target market is most likely to enjoy your region?

**Southwest North Dakota's tourism statistics —**

The Bowman Tourist Center tallied the number of visitors signing its guest book. In the summer of 1997, 14% of the 3,577 people who made stops for information at the small log cabin on US Highways 12 and 85 were Canadian. The largest category was visitors from Canada because North Dakotans represented 9.5% of the visitors; Minnesotans 6.8%; Texans 4.9%; South Dakotans 3.8%; residents from each of these states: Michigan, Colorado and Illinois about 2.9%; California and Wisconsin travelers slightly fewer at 2.7%; and 4.5% of the people who stopped for information were from overseas. About 8.8% of the visitors did not sign-in and designate their home area (Table 6).

The majority of the tourists, 76%, were traveling north on US Highway 85 into North Dakota, 18% south on that same highway toward South Dakota, and the remainder were traveling east (2%) and west (3.5%) on US Highway 12 according to Barb Conley, the Bowman Tourist Information Center (1997).

One of the goals of economic development is to bring in new money, that is, not just the local people spending one another's money over and over again. Consequently, potential markets about 300 hundred miles from the tri-counties were studied. The Public Tourism Survey in south Fargo revealed the interests of some of those potential customers when on vacation. Now, let's look at their demographics.



## **Demographics**

**North Dakota's demographics** — Fargo is located in Cass County, one of the few counties in the state that is growing in population (Tables 7-12). In the Year 2000, Cass County's population is expected to be nearly 118,000; in the Year 2005, it may grow to 123,000, and by 2010, it may be nearing 129,000 (Table 8). In contrast, the state's projected population is expected to fall from 614,000 in the Year 2000 to 598,000 in the Year 2005 to 583,000 in the Year 2010 (Table 9).

The population projections for the tri-counties are also listed for they may be useful to business owners wondering how many potential employees will be available, their ages, and what type of local customer base is expected. All three counties are expected to experience continued population declines. Tables 7-12 also indicate dominate age groups. For instance, in the Year 2000, the largest age groups in Adams County will be 10-19 year olds and 45-54 year olds. The same is true in Bowman County, but the age spread is a little wider. In Slope County, the spread is thinner with the 15-24 year olds dominating the sparsely populated county. In the same year, 2000, Cass County's dominate age category is 30-39 year olds. Besides being the most populated county, Cass County also had one of the state's highest annual average earnings in 1996 at \$23,480. That figure is well ahead of Adam's \$17,500, Bowman's \$18,000, and Slope's \$18,800. Oliver, Mercer, and Sargent Counties rate higher than Cass for the top counties (respectively) in annual average earnings in 1996 (Table 13).

What do these demographics mean in relation to tourism development?

One may envision a young rural adult from the tri-counties hosting a thirty-some year old from an affluent, urban area who is looking for a 3-4 day vacation with his/her family in a safe, moderately priced, fun atmosphere. Relatively the same age category will dominate Cass County in the Year 2005, 35-39 year olds. The dominate group in the Year 2010 will be slightly older, 40-44 year olds. Those potential customers may also bring children, and teenagers with them on their vacation since educated, career-minded Americans are having children later in life compared to previous generations.

These demographic examples from North Dakota's largest population base bode well for communities that cater to family activities, lodging and entertainment. Besides the age groups who enjoy outdoor activities, this study showed Fargo-area people like to sightsee, walk/jog, bicycle, swim, and picnic (Tables 2 and 4). Those activities are already offered in the tri-counties in unique geographical settings, but are not widely known outside of the tri-county area. In other words, promotion is a major need, many sellable activities already exist! Comments made by many surveyed in the Public Tourism Survey echo the need for publicity. When asked what advice they would like to give to community leaders and business people involved in tourism they repeatedly said to advertise (appendix 4, question 10).

**Canada's demographics** — Other large population potentials for the tri-counties to draw from are in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The 1997 population of Saskatchewan was 1,023,500, or 3.38% of Canada's total population. Manitoba reported 1,145,200 residents, or 3.78% of the Canadian total (Statistics Canada, 1997). Both provinces report continuing population growth (1993-1997, Statistics Canada). Population projections for Canada (Table 14) show the 35-49 age category dominating in the Years 2001 and 2006 and the 40-54 age category dominating the population base in the Year 2011. Then, it will age a little by the Year 2016 with the greatest amount of 45-59 year old Canadians predicted.

The average resident of Manitoba and Saskatchewan reported an average yearly income in Canadian dollars of about \$22,600 and an average family income of about \$50,000 in 1997 (Table 15). The over-whelming majority are not college educated; 86% do not have college degrees. As many singles as married residents live in the two provinces.

Consequently, a business owner or community in the tri-counties can visualize today's average Canadian as 33-46 years old, not highly educated, with an income nearly as high as a Fargo resident, enjoying pop and rock music and comedy, who especially enjoys nature parks, possibly traveling with children who like to swim and play baseball. One can then anticipate demographic trends and anticipate a prime market.

One can only speculate on what the exchange rate will be between the US and Canada in the future, but the exchange rate is a major factor in tourism. The lower the value of the Canadian dollar, the more those potential tourists will have to spend in the US for gasoline, food, lodging, and souvenirs. Tri-county tourism committee members report the number of Canadians visiting the area has decreased visibility since the sharp devaluation of the Canadian dollar. In the US, the Canadian dollar is valued at sell 30% and buy 32% (State Bank of Fargo, 1998, August 5).

Fargo merchants involved in tourism have seen business from Canada "bottom out," according to the FM Convention and Visitors Bureau (Condon, 1998 p. A1). Canadian occupancy in area hotels and motels is about 5% compared to 15% five years ago when traffic hit its peak. The increase was fueled by the fact that North Dakota opened its stores on Sundays in 1991 and a 7 percent sales tax was implemented in Canada.

Grand Forks Convention and Visitors Bureau plans to advertise the community more aggressively in Canada. The American dollar is worth about \$1.50 in Canada (Condon, 1998, p. A1).

A drop in Canadian visitors was felt in 1998 in ND parks ("Visits to ND," 1998, p. A12). Lewis and Clark State Park which usually attracts a number of Canadian visitors, experienced a 36 percent drop in July, and Turtle River State Park, west of Grand Forks, reported a 20 percent drop. In contrast, Lake Metigoshe on the Canadian border posted a 15 percent gain in visitors, and Lake Sakakawea was up 13 percent in July. Visitation to ND state parks was up 3 percent in July with a total of 275,730 visitors.

Winnipeg is already advertising the Pan American Games which take place next summer. Billboards and newspaper advertisements have been visible in Fargo in recent months. Consequently, the devalued Canadian dollar not only cuts the number of Canadians visiting our state, but may also cut the number of North Dakotans opting to stay within their own boundaries.

Canadians represented 42 percent of all foreign visitors to the U.S. in 1989, followed by Mexican visitors representing 20 percent (Koth, 1991). Other international visitor totals echoed findings reported by the International Trade Administration seven years later.

**International visitors to the US** — The International Trade Administration publishes statistics of foreign tourists in the US twice a year. The report, which is available on the ITA web site free of charge, indicates Japanese led the group of visitors to the United States in 1996 (Table 16). They represent 24% of our international visitors, the United Kingdom 14%, and Germany 9%. California is the number one destination followed by Florida, New York, and the Hawaiian Islands. International visitors to North and South Dakota were too few to measure by ITA standards. Minnesota had 266,000 and Montana 48,000 international visitors. The ITA survey

does not include visitors from Canada and Mexico. Usually the visitor is traveling with a spouse (35% of them) or a friend or relative (32%). The travel party is made up of only adults (89% of them). They are in the US for leisure and recreation (76%), and 64% of them only visit one state. Most international travelers have been to the US before (68% are repeat visitors), and they average 8 nights in the country (median measurement).

The international visitor spends about \$2,000 US dollars en route to the US but another \$2,000 while here (Table 16). About one quarter of that total goes toward lodging and one quarter for gifts and souvenirs. Their favorite pastimes include:

Favorite pastimes of international tourists to the US

Shopping	93%
Dining in restaurants	82%
Sightseeing in cities	51%
Amusement parks	41%
Visiting historic places	36%
Visiting small towns/villages	36%
Water sports/sunbathing	36%
Touring the countryside	29%
Guided tours	26%
Visiting national parks	25%
Cultural/heritage sites	24%
Art galleries and museums	21%
Nightclubs and dancing	16%
Concerts and plays	15%
Casinos and gambling	15%
Golf and tennis	11%
Cruises	9%
Attending sports events	8%
Seeing ethnic heritage sites	8%
Visiting American Indian areas	7%
Camping and hiking	6%
Ecotourism	4%
Snow skiing	2%

It is rare to find an international visitor with travelers checks (10%), instead they pay with a credit card 54% of the time or with cash (34%). Usually they are adult male (61%), about 41 years old, whose salary is nearly \$77,000 a year (on average in US dollars). One third of the international travelers are professional/technical and nearly that many (27%) are managers/executives.

Consequently, catering to the international traveler is much different than the Canadian or Fargo family that likes low/average cost fun together, outdoors, entertained by music, comedy and sports activities. The foreign visitor is a seasoned traveler, anxious to consume at shops and restaurants and see the bright lights and attractions of the metropolitan areas. What remains to be seen, however, is if rural America packages and promotes itself overseas, will their list of favorite

places change? Will visits to the countryside, villages, Native American communities, and ethnic sites increase?

International travel is America's largest export. In a sense the US is exporting fun. It ranks ahead of agricultural goods, chemicals and motor vehicles (Koth, 1991).

## **Established Tourism Marketing**

**North Dakota tourism promotion** — The North Dakota State Tourism Department has identified Europe as a strong market potential for the state's tourism industry. Last year, according to Governor Edward Schafer (Schafer, 1998), North Dakota attracted 58,000 international visitors. He wrote that nine million Germans have shown interest in traveling to the United States within the next five years, and the biggest market potential is small town attractions and nature-oriented activities. He said that European travelers have three to six weeks of vacation per year, and they spend five times that of a domestic traveler. In 1997, the North Dakota Legislature appropriated \$150,000 to fund the state's partial membership in Rocky Mountain International, a four state coalition that markets western travel experiences to foreign travelers (Schafer, 1998). State Tourism Director Bob Martinson received harsh criticism from The Forum, a Fargo newspaper (1998) for participating in tourism trade shows in Europe while reducing state funds for tourism centers around the state, including the Bowman Center. Governor Schafer says Martinson had no choice because he was told to cut \$200,000 from his budget and decided advertising was a higher priority than supplementing the centers.

The director of the organization at the center of the controversy, Chuck Box from Rocky Mountain International, says he hopes to see the number of international visitors in North Dakota double by the year 2000 ("Travel Company," 1998, p. C4). Box said, "A lot of the things that we look at in our region as detriments — rural population, lack of access, lack of people — can really sometimes be turned around and viewed as a benefit when we're doing the selling overseas. They are seeking out green, open, natural destinations."

North Dakota officials have also encouraged state residents to tour their own "back roads" ("Schafer urges," 1998, A14). The governor was featured in a 30 second television commercial; the estimated \$100,000 production costs were realized in previous years, but it cost \$28,000 to broadcast the ad on television stations within the state in 1998. Areas featured in the television commercial are Icelandic State Park near Cavalier, the Bagg Bonanza Farm near Mooreton, the Little Missouri State Park near Killdeer and the Danish Mill in Kenmare. Another \$14,000 was spent on newspaper ads this year ("Schafer urges," 1998, p. A14).

Deputy Tourism Director Joanne Burke says the entire budget for state tourism is \$2.7 million a year; \$1.35 million of that is spent in marketing. Within the 1998 marketing budget, \$110,00 was spent on the Vacation Guide, \$14,000 for the publication of the Hunting and Fishing Guide, \$12,000 for printing the Calendar of Events booklet, and \$12,000 for the Outdoor Adventure Guide. Next year, all four publications will be combined into one. State tourism officials do not know if it will save money, but Burke says it will make it easier for the consumer. No other state is taking this approach, so Burke is anxious to see the results in 1999.

About \$30,000 from the state tourism marketing budget is spent on promotion through Rocky Mountain International. The remainder of the marketing budget is spent on participation

in motorcoach and sports shows, outdoor promotions, and design and placement of print and electronic advertising; \$31,000 is designated for the State Film Commission.

Production of several new television commercials featuring Governor Ed Schafer cost \$120,000 this year, and the 5 spots will be broadcast for approximately 3 years. The five new television commercials which will begin running in 1999 feature Lewis and Clark, the governor, fishing with the governor, the governor encouraging North Dakotans to tour their own state, and the governor encouraging out-of-state people to visit North Dakota.

Deputy Director Burke joined State Tourism in April of this year. In June, she met with leaders from the Three Affiliated Tribes in New Town, North Dakota. They view tourism as an opportunity and will now formulate their own marketing plan, possibly using a historical approach. She urged them not to duplicate the earth lodges at Knife River and those located south of Mandan, but instead to offer tourists a cultural exchange. Burke contends the Native American people themselves are what tourists will enjoy, especially with interest building because of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

**South Dakota tourism promotion** — Tourism officials in the Dakotas have reported many Europeans are fascinated by western/cowboy/American Indian culture, but only 7% of international travelers visit American Indian communities. South Dakota's reservations have formed an organization to work with their state tourism department to market their nine tribes in Europe. Monica King of the Alliance of Tribal Tourism Advocates says that Germany is a big market for American Indian tribes ("Tribes," 1998, p. A14). "The German people love Indian culture," she said. "It is home to 300 Indian clubs which have an estimated 85,000 members who dress in native regalia, take Indian names and have weekend get-togethers" ("Tribes," 1998, p. A14).

The alliance works with the Rocky Mountain International group in promoting South Dakota tribes at an annual Berlin, Germany, trade show. It is billed as the biggest tourism trade show in the world. A buffalo rancher on the Pine Ridge Reservation says that many of his visitors have come from Germany, Japan, England and France to see his two white buffalo calves — spiritually significant animals ("Tribes," 1998, p. A14).

**Minnesota tourism promotion** — The State of Minnesota has identified the North Central States as its promotion target this year ("Minnesota," 1998, p. A10). Eighty-six percent of Minnesota tourists come from those 12 states. The Minnesota State Tourism Department is spending \$1.8 million this year on advertising, and all but a half million of that total is being spent on television, radio, and national magazine ads.

**Midwestern states tourism promotion** — The Minnesota campaign is small compared to many of its neighbors. The Associated Press reports, "Illinois has a travel advertising budget of \$8.3 million; Michigan \$6.6 million, Missouri \$6.3 million, and Wisconsin \$4.6 million" ("Minnesota," 1998, p. A10). The order of those advertising budgets nearly echo the order of results, that is the number of visitors from other countries to those states (International Tourism Association, 1998). As mentioned earlier, North Dakota allocates \$1.35 million for advertising and is ranked 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation in tourism.

If you compare North Dakota's entire 1998 budget for the state tourism department, South Dakota's and Wyoming's are twice as large, and Montana's is three times North Dakota's total (Table 17).

In a recent survey, a Missouri couple who vacationed in western North Dakota said, "Thanks to North Dakota Tourism for mailing a great, color magazine. It was very helpful and got us to visit North Dakota! Keep advertising," the 40 year-old female wrote in July 1998. She and her family have not experienced life at a guest ranch, a rodeo, or mountain biking yet, but they would like to in the future. Hiking, family activities and learning something new are their favorite pastimes while on vacation.

**California tourism promotion** — Japan and Germany are both on the State of California's target list for promotions. California has overhauled its tourism department through the California Tourism Marketing Act. Extensive material on the program is available on the state's web site ([www.gocalif.ca.gov](http://www.gocalif.ca.gov)). What California found may help North Dakota officials, professionals, and local tourism industry people.

Tierney (1997) found "that for every dollar spent preparing and sending visitor information to travelers, the State of California received \$181 in return from travelers who decided to visit or who decided to extend their stay because of having received the information". California has initiated a number of promotions, including grants to its lesser-known rural areas. Those regions said they used the money to attend international and domestic travel shows and made over 180,000 contacts. It is estimated that 283,000 people visited California because of those connections. Lassen National Park saw its number of German tourists rise 11% after participating in travel shows overseas. Funds were also spent on the production of a half-hour show featuring ethnic tourism, and it was scheduled to be broadcast on cable and public television in 1998. California spends 12% of its CalTour Marketing budget on international promotion (CalTour, 1998).

California has promoted eight of its largest attractions as "Fun Spots" and credited a co-op type of marketing approach. Those attractions paid for advertising in the western United States and the development of 1.3 million "Fun Spots Cards" that offered special savings at the tourist spots. The cards were delivered in the official California Visitor's Guide and were used nearly 32,000 times during 1997. Consequently, the Fun Spots campaign is continuing. One hundred travel companies in California also formed a co-op of sorts and sponsored a number of efforts to promote the state nationally and internationally (CalTour, 1998).

## Opportunities for Tourism Enhancement

At least seven potential populations are identified in this report that the tri-counties can create programs for and market and cater to:

- \* Canadian couples and families
- \* Fargo families
- \* Two senior citizen groups, physically active learners, and those just wanting a moderate May-October climate and safe, friendly RV park.
- \* The international guest from countries other than Canada.
- \* Paleontologists, a select, national and international group.

A number of potential attractions, activities, or services may attract more tourists. Some of the strongest possibilities include:

- \* A cowboy/ranch experience
- \* Water sports and other outdoor activities
- \* History, culture, scenery, and learning trips
- \* Adventure sports vacation
- \* Family activities
- \* Other potential activities:
  - \* Hunting
  - \* Paleontology
  - \* ATVing

And finally, the region can be enhanced and advertising can be more affordable and effective:

- \* Main Street project
- \* Cooperative marketing and promotion
- \* Cyber Stop
- \* Workshops

A sample of Fargo residents was surveyed to learn what people in North Dakota's largest city, and possibly other midwestern cities, prefer to do while on vacation. Fargo's population is 83,778 (US Bureau of Census, 1996). Fargo is continuing to grow; its income level is rising; and its proximity, 300-400 miles from southwest North Dakota, are all attractive attributes. Further study may find residents from Minnesota urban areas have similar interests. First, let us revisit the results of the survey in Fargo in August 1998.

The favorite vacation pastimes of the 808 adults surveyed were:

1. Viewing natural scenery 45% \*\*
2. Boating and other water sports 38% \*\*
3. Reading, relaxing, and meditating 38% \*\*
4. Taking an ocean cruise 32%
5. Camping 32% \*\*
6. Spending time at unique shops 28% \*
7. Family activities 26% \*
8. Seeing historic sites 26% \*
9. Attending cultural events 26% \*
10. Viewing a sports event 24%
11. Shopping at a mall 23%
12. Downhill skiing 23%

\*\* activities commonly available in the tri-county area. \* sometimes available.

Activities the same group of respondents indicated they greatly dislike include:

1. Paleontology 51% \*\*
2. Birdwatching 41% \*
3. Cross country skiing 37%
4. Downhill skiing 32%
5. Gambling 31% \*
6. Night clubs/dancing 22% \*
7. Native American culture 17%

Activities the same group said they would like to try while on vacation, but have not had the opportunity to do so include:

1. Cruising the ocean 33%
2. Ballooning 26%
3. Ranch/cowboy experience 16%
4. Parachuting 15%
5. Cross country skiing 9%
6. Canoeing 7% \*
7. Horseback riding 7% \*
8. Paleontology 6% \*
9. Hiking and mountain biking 5% \*

This illustrates why it is so important to know your market. For instance, a paleontology dig would not be of major interest to south Fargo residents, but it may be worth offering elementary and secondary school science teachers, university researchers, and their paleontology students. At the same time, many of the most popular pastimes are already available in southwest North Dakota, but as the respondents indicated, they need to be advertised. Besides advertising, other enhancements may be considered.

**Viewing natural scenery and historic sites** — These two pastimes are #1 and #8 in popularity. The history of the area is a definite asset because it is unique. In tourism development finding a niche or unique quality to market is essential.

Southwest North Dakota has had many different eras and residents: dinosaurs, Native Americans, cowboys, ranchers, homesteaders, and the modern day inhabitant. If a person is aware of this rich history, their drive through the countryside takes on new meaning. It is not just a distance covered between points A and B, but instead a journey back in time. It is an experience unlike the bumper to bumper traffic in growing Fargo, unlike western Europe, and unlike Canada's Regina and Winnipeg.

Museums offer tourists an explanation of the area, but too many of them are passing by the museums, so the question is; "How can value be added to their journey?" Package deals can be offered to attract groups. They may be senior citizens on a bus, a university group traveling together, or a field trip for youth. The tri-counties may offer guides with pre-packaged material and activities to enhance the learning experience.

Signs are an obvious method of educating but there are few in the tri-county area. Hettinger recently erected a sign explaining the history of the Last Buffalo Hunt. That sign may serve as an example for other historic sites. Fort Dilts needs to keep its timeless quality but signs, programming, guides, and better toilet facilities are possibilities for the little country monument. Wildlife, geology, and history of the area can all be explained in an entertaining way that sets your area apart. One of the area's greatest assets is its people so why not employ them as hosts and hostesses trained with the knowledge, personality, and a semi-structured plan that will attract and please tourists.

Through this research material was gathered on how to apply to the state for "Scenic Byway" status for the Coal Vein Road. The Tri-County Tourism Committee can follow through on that paperwork. Prior to that, that road just southwest of Amidon, can be enhanced by continual upkeep of the Coal Vein Campground. Other enhancements such as picnic spots, satellite toilets, and signage may encourage more travelers. When improvements are complete the region's advertising should promote the natural beauty, historic aspects, and services available.

Educate the public about the beauty and history through advertising so they have a background before they even arrive. The US Forest Service can provide maps of the National Grasslands so you can educate your own residents as well as tourists about the scenic drives available.

**Cowboy/ranch experience** — Currently there are a handful of guest ranches operating in western North Dakota. A search of the Internet reveals a number of ranches in Montana, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona, and other western states. Associations advertise their members collectively, and through strength in numbers they can afford to advertise internationally, nationally, maintain an association web site, and attract a fair amount of media attention. When movies such as "Horse Whisper" or "A River Run Through It" are released, they see interest in western vacations increase. It appears a western vacation is not foremost on people's minds unless it is brought to their attention. The Forum did a feature story in August of this year on Swede Nelson's operation in the north unit of the Badlands (Froslic, 1998, p. B1). It appeared to raise consciousness and interest in that type of vacation, but the public will have to be reminded of the horseback riding expedition during the late winter and spring months when finalizing plans for the summer of 1999.

The 128 people in south Fargo who showed interest in a ranch experience were analyzed further for demographic characteristics. They are almost evenly divided into the age categories of 20 something, 30 something, and 40 something. They usually travel as either a couple (38%) or a family with young children (38%). They travel an average of 325 miles while on vacation. They are attracted by average prices and are interested in more information on western North Dakota. These people live in the 58104 zip code of North Dakota so marketing efforts can be targeted at that section of the state.

The challenge to the tri-counties is there is only one guest ranch in your immediate region, but there are at least 3-4 viable ranches in the surrounding area. Sherri Ross, owner of Dahkotah Lodge Guest Ranch indicated she is willing to meet with others interested in possibly starting a guest ranch. She does not expect financial reward for sharing her knowledge, instead just a chance to increase tourism for the benefit of everyone interested. Wally Owen, long time operator of Peaceful Valley Ranch may also participate in a potential workshop on “How to start your own guest ranch.” The Wannors, owners of the Knife River Ranch are interested in co-op advertising. (See Resource People and Organizations for their phone numbers.)

Marion Houn from the ND State Tourism Department may be available to share information on the marketing of ranches and bed and breakfasts to bus tours and the general public. A representative of the ND State Health Department could round out the seminar with the rules and regulations one must meet when operating a guest ranch and/or bed and breakfast. If more rural families open their homes and/or ranches to the public, it may also increase tourism during the hunting season.

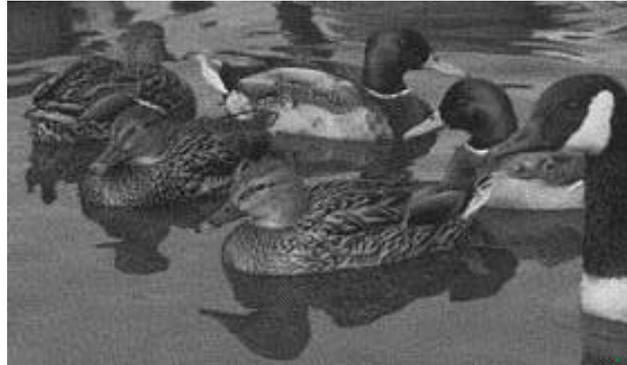
Others involved in tourism may say, “That’s fine for the rancher, but how does that increase business for the rest of us?” If you work together, you’ll find the answers to that question. Instead of isolating the guests out on the ranch, develop mini-tours that involve other businesses. The tour might involve a progressive meal with hors d’ors in one town, the main meal in another, and desert in yet another, with shopping along the way. A lively, informative guide can make the journey unique and showcase the area so the tourist will want to stay longer and/or comeback to see and experience more. Unique entertainment or unusual activities may also cause them to leave the ranch. Hospitality is the key! Nurture your guests before, during, and after their stay.

**Water sports and other outdoor activities** — The Bowman-Haley Dam and Lake already offers swimming, fishing, boating, hiking, picnicking, and camping in the summer, which are all favorites on a number of surveys. Cabins are not allowed around the lake because the Army Corps of Engineers wants to ensure public access to the water indefinitely.

The site could be improved, however, with concessions that offer snack food, drinks, boat rentals, pay telephones, and a sense of security. Currently, the public needs to bring its own perishables, boats, and motors. When Slope County Treasurer Stacey Miller was a child, her late father operated a concession there. She said it seemed viable, but in time, he just wanted to concentrate on his primary career. The concession at Lake Tschida may be comparable to a possible operation at Bowman-Haley. Lake Tschida is a beautiful, remote, under utilized site created and managed by the Bureau of Reclamation south of Glen Ullin, North Dakota.

In the fall, at least this year, Bowman-Haley has an overpopulation of deer, so efforts should be taken immediately to promote it on statewide sports pages as a hunting spot. Bowman-Haley Dam and Lake manager Bob Martin is willing to help Bowman with publicity. He can be contacted at the Army Corps of Engineers (see Resource People and Organizations).

Far more signage is needed on US Highways 85 and 12. A I-94 mention; brochures; and posters at area gas stations, convenience stores, and motels; and generally more prominence in the region's publicity would fuel Bowman-Haley's popularity. It is a major asset that usually only attracts local visitors. Martin has multi-colored brochures ready for distribution. He welcomes more use year round, and he is enthusiastic about the improvements made by the local Anglers' Club with permission of the Bowman County Watershed Board.



When considering development ideas for Bowman-Haley, it should be noted that within a 30 day period of time, people can't camp more than 14 days. Martin thinks more development money could be accessed through the NDGF Department. When asked if a marina would be allowed so people wouldn't have to haul their boats in and out while camping there, he said Tim Koke, Riverdale, ND, office of the Army Corps of Engineers keeps track of regulations.

Another possible funding source is through the North Dakota Wetland Trust, the organization NDGF official Keith Trego recently joined. According to Martin, the Wetland Trust uses Garrison Diversion appropriations and other federal money on projects that also include education. There are two wetlands in the Bowman-Haley area, so the Wetland Trust may be interested. Ducks Unlimited may also choose to continue funding projects in the area after already spending \$200,000. The EPA 319 fund has been used by local natural resource conservationist Kent Belland to benefit the area, and Martin says more may be possible for education and public tours of the area.

**Adventure sports vacation** — People like some comfort on vacation such as returning to a place they enjoyed in their youth or a motel they liked before, but there is also an interest in experiencing something new, a departure from their every day lives. The spirit for adventure evidently caused many south Fargo area people to choose hot air ballooning and parachuting as vacation pastimes they have not done yet, but would like to try. A number of experienced balloonists in the Fargo area may serve as resources for those people interested in pursuing this possibility. One of those operators may be interested in setting up shop in the tri-counties for a limited time period (or more).

The airports in the tri-counties, and other nearby counties, are assets that may be used to offer parachuting. Other businesses may consider collaborating with the operator of an "adventure sport" and offer a package so the potential tourist will be motivated to stay at a sponsor's motel, spend some "locally produced" money at participating stores, restaurants, and other businesses. That collaboration may give the sports entrepreneur the needed boost mentally and financially to dare to offer the activity. The tri-counties may want to offer a financial incentive to attract a balloon and/or parachute concessionaire to the region for six weeks or more a year. Once again, working together will make recruitment, financing, and advertising more affordable.

**Family entertainment** — The tri-counties can learn from Medora’s success, but you may question Medora’s decision not to build a water slide and its choice of entertainment.

The Medora Foundation’s president Randy Hatzenbuehler, says, “careful growth” will ensure a good future for the historic town. He opposes development of a Western-theme amusement park and water slide saying that it could threaten Medora’s rustic charm and historical integrity (Theodore, 1997).

Medora, as well as the tri-counties, may want to reassess the potential for family activities. Family activities such as a water slide, bumper boats, go-carts, and other rides received a top interest rating by 26% of the respondents. The Forum ran a feature story on the water slide park at Kenosee Lake, Saskatchewan shortly before this survey was administered, so that publicity may have fueled interest in such an activity (Glascoe, 1998, p. F1). A tourism task force may want to travel north to check out the \$2.2 million water park first-hand.

Medora has gained a following, in part, because of its quality musical each year. Visitation was up 10 percent in 1997, and 110,000 people attended the musical which is offered every night from early June through Labor Day (Theodore, 1997). It is a polished show but appears to be targeted for an older audience. Efforts are made between acts to appeal to the young and young at heart with a visiting ventriloquist, juggler, and other light-hearted acts. During the peak of the tourist season, the 2,863 seat Burning Hills Amphitheater is filled with guests of all ages.



The popularity of Medora and the success of the first Spirit Fest Midwest in July 1998 at the Soo Pass Ranch south of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, confirm this author’s belief that people are hungry for wholesome, fun entertainment that they can share with the entire family, from the grandparents down to the toddlers. The crowd near Detroit Lakes was estimated at 15,000-20,000 people of all ages.

The more violent, fraudulent, and rude the world gets, the greater the hunger for normalcy. Most people apparently want to experience a friendly, low crime, inexpensive environment. Southwest North Dakota already fits that description and it can rise to prominence with some fine tuning and additions.

Arrangements were made through this project in July 1998 for a crew from NDSU to travel to southwest North Dakota and present one performance of its summer show. Marmarth hosted the cast in the Bunk House and it performed in the Mystic Theater to an enthusiastic crowd. On other occasions, Hettinger has received funding through the North Dakota Council for the Arts and has hosted the Missoula Children’s Theater for a few days.

Fargo is much larger in population than the tri-counties, but the growth and power of the arts as an income generator in Fargo may foreshadowed what’s possible on a smaller scale in southwest North Dakota. According to a survey by the Lake Agassiz Arts Council, the arts community contributed greatly to the Fargo area in 1997 (Pantera, 1998, p. C1). It spent \$28 million on goods, payroll, and services, and 1.1 million people attended arts events in the metropolitan area which represents 7 times the population of Fargo-Moorhead. The crowd spent \$2.4 million on its tickets, not to mention the money spent on lodging, shopping, gasoline, etc.

The tri-counties could employ theater companies from NDSU, Missoula, and possibly other companies from various colleges and communities to learn what can be accomplished for the sake of tourism and local youth development. Other family-friendly entertainment could be booked so there is a variety. Peak tourism weekends could be booked and, in time, more weekends added. Local teens and young adults would learn how to run an entertainment business, increase their own self esteem, and feel a part of the community. Pride may cause them to want to return after college and/or their first job.

The Children's Museum at Fargo's Yonker Farm is a delight for all ages because it allows the kid in the visitor to come out as he/she looks into a distorting mirror, tries on career costumes, spontaneously puts on a puppet show, plays cafe, or rides on the miniature train around the picnic grounds. It got its start when a group of volunteers from Junior League saw the need. They went to a number of children's museums around the country to get ideas and then went to work raising money . (Each room has a different corporate or private sponsor.) They also called on the community to help paint, build, and fix up the historic farm into a show piece.

If there is interest in any of the tri-county communities, arrangements can be made to visit with the coordinators of that project in Fargo. The Internet also has web pages for children's museums around the country. Some are examples of multi-million dollar facilities, but fun can be relatively inexpensive. Equipment and props can be hand-me-downs rather than costly items. A children's museum or "fun factory," or what ever you want to call it, can also serve as a great place for young people to work in the summer.

Young children and their families may be attracted to the area by pony rides rather than horseback riding in the Badlands. Trip notes to Tourism Committee members reported on such a concession at Jamestown, North Dakota's Frontier Village. Ponies reportedly costing about \$300-\$400 apiece were purchased from Dennis Kline in Lamoure, ND. Rides are one dollar a child for four times around the circular enclosure. The Frontier Village pays for the insurance, and young people assist the adult in charge of the concession. The adult operator also gives \$2 a person rides in a horse-drawn stagecoach. It is not a money making concession, instead it is one more reason for people to stop and make Jamestown the second most visited site in the state. Rather than calling on the generosity of the concessionaire, the tri-counties could pay workers. Riders can be charged a moderate fee with hopes that subsidizing the concession will lead to attracting more visitors to the area, visitors who will stay longer and spend more.



Bike rentals and a path from campgrounds to businesses, entertainment, and more bike trails would give the region another popular attraction.

Much of the tri-counties' problem is lack of coordinated promotion and at least one major "WOW" to attract more people, another words a major attraction. A number of opportunities already exist for tourists, but they are not obvious to the outsider and they may need a WOW to get them to stop long enough to notice the smaller attractions. Perhaps Medora's lack of support for a water slide or water park is an opportunity for the tri-counties.

**Shopping** — Demographics support the assertion that there are many families now and in the future in Fargo’s eastern North Dakota market and in Canada’s Saskatchewan and Manitoba provinces. The survey of south Fargo residents did not rank shopping in a mall as a top priority, but national and international surveys do indicate shopping is a major interest while on vacation. The Fargo survey did indicate an interest in unique shopping opportunities. A few merchants in the tri-counties have geared up to meet that need, but more shop owners need to, and want to, reassess their merchandise. NDSU experts are willing to help in that regard.

Linda Manikowske, Holly Bastow Shoop, and Mort Sarabakhsh are willing to offer a workshop, or workshops, in southwest North Dakota to help area residents sharpen their hospitality business skills. Manikowske and Bastow Shoop are textiles and merchandising professors. They also have experience in outreach work, helping shop owners improve the layout of their merchandise, targeting their market, and improving business skills. Sarabakhsh is an NDSU hotel/motel management professor and a consultant to a multi-million dollar motel chain. Besides providing expertise to the facility operators, he can help fine-tune service personnel so they will offer the hospitality, credibility, and information needed to increase tourism.



Roger Reierson, president of the Greater North Dakota Association is interested in involving GNDA in these potential hospitality industry workshops. Besides educating current industry employees, separate or joint workshops may be offered to educate and motivate the youth in the area. Bowman business teacher Barb Bickel and Jane Nelson, the school guidance counselor, have shown interest in offering such a workshop on a Friday afternoon during school hours. As discussed in previous correspondence with the Tri-County Tourism Committee, the workshop may involve current area business people as students themselves but also as mentors for the younger members of the audience.

Dickinson State University may be interested in participating, too. Diana Knudson, the University Relations Director can serve as a liason with DSU. She is also a member of the Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors. DSU is the host of Business Challenge, a program sponsored by GNDA. Each June about 150 teenagers from around the state gather at DSU for a week to learn business skills. A number of teenagers from the tri-counties attended in 1998 and may be valuable members of a task force charged with planning these business workshops. The GNDA office in Bismarck can provide you with those names. All of the people mentioned above are listed at the end of this report under “Resource People and Organizations.”

**Other possibilities —**

**Hunting** — This section may have a sub-title “proceed with caution” because of long held customs and a lack of concensus on how hunting should be approached in the area. It is a topic of debate and the debate will probably get hotter as money and protected species issues become more intense.

Hettinger hosts hunters each year with a free dinner to kick off the pheasant season. A meeting of merchants in the region (motel, restaurants, stores, gas stations, and bars) who stand to benefit from that form of tourism should be called together during the winter to discuss how to better serve and make a living from that key period of time each year. The potential is there to increase local income through guide services, food, liquor, and lodging fees. However, so far,

many times the hunters have been entertained as if they are close friends or relatives. The region's hospitality is admirable, but it won't pay bills.

Interview hunters on what services or attractions they would like added. Monitor the Cannonball hunting co-op formed near Mott and continually reassess the situation. A rancher south of Rhame raises elk and runs a fee hunting business in a penned-in area. This research found no support for fee hunting from those people interviewed in the tri-counties, unless the hunter is disabled and needs the advantages of a penned-in area. Instead, there was displeasure expressed toward ranchers who accept federal payments for their idled acres and then charge hunters for the use of their land.

At least one area rancher, Bill Freymiller, told the Bowman Tourism Committee that he is interested in possibly sponsoring a prairie dog hunting operation. Unlike other game, the plentiful prairie dogs can be hunted year round. Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau Director Terri Thiel reports that she receives more inquiries about prairie dog hunting than any other attraction. She keeps a list of area guides and sends out a packet of information to interested people. She also attends an annual national gathering of such hunters in Pierre, South Dakota, in order to promote southwest North Dakota. She recently beat out Grand Forks for a future state convention because she was able to offer prairie dog hunting as a convention activity.

Meanwhile the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) has launched an effort to outlaw hunting of prairie dogs saying although the creatures are plentiful now, the black-footed ferret, an endangered species, relies on the prairie dog's habitat ("Group," 1998, p. A9). Mark Van Putten, federation President, says the prairie dog is linked to the survival of many other species including the swift fox, mountain plover, ferruginous hawk, and burrowing owl. The NWF petitioned the federal government on July 31, 1998, to issue emergency regulations listing the black-tailed prairie dog as a threatened species throughout its range, which includes the Dakotas. The federation's biologist, Sterling Miller says prairie dogs inhabit about 800,000 acres of grassland in America but use to range over 100 to 250 million acres. He says the species has already been eliminated in Arizona. Miller said, "We've still got millions of prairie dogs out there, but if we don't do something to save their last habitats, they'll be gone and so might a lot of other species." The federation wants to change attitudes that treat the animals as vermin to be exterminated.

The issue is expected to be very controversial. Roger Rostvet, NDGF deputy says legislators in the Dakotas, Wyoming, and Montana have passed laws regulating the spread of prairie dogs because of the damage they cause with their burrowing.

An editorial from the Bismarck Tribune was reprinted in The Forum ("Prairie dogs not," 1998, A4) said prairie dogs are not threatened. The Bismarck Tribune said, "Prairie dogs will table-up a pasture, and their burrow-holes pose a threat to livestock. Ranchers can't shoot them fast enough." The newspaper also said Theodore Roosevelt National Park has had global positioning technology tracking prairie dogs in recent years. The editor suggested NDGF compare the numbers now to those in two or five years. The Bismarck Tribune also said a ban for all 10 states is a bad idea. Instead, each state should be studied.

John Cooper, Secretary of the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Department said the prairie dog should be shown respect and managed rather than eradicated ("Prairie dogs\_deserve," 1998, p. E9). He said if the prairie dog makes the list of protected species, it will take away the

state's flexibility in dealing with the rodent. A week later, South Dakota announced it will protect the prairie dog in a section of the state ("Prairie dogs get," 1998, p. E9).

Lodging for hunters is another opportunity. Some ranch families have opened up their homes to hunters, providing lodging and meals, and, in some cases the land to hunt. One hunter reported a North Dakota ranch wife charged him \$20 a night for such a comprehensive package, so he sat down and mathematically explained to the hostess why she should be charging him at least \$50 a night.

It appears there is a tendency for North Dakotans to short change themselves for the sake of hospitality, and often, the guests are well prepared to spend freely while on vacation. Marion Houn from the ND Tourism Department has conducted workshops on how to start a guest ranch and/or bed and breakfast. She can provide valuable information for anyone interested. The State Health Department needs to be notified and its regulations followed by anyone accepting money for lodging and food preparation. If the hunter is paying for the right to hunt your land, you also need to contact your insurance agent.

Montana may have a compromise that may be useable in North Dakota. Ranchers/farmers enroll their land in the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Department's block management program. The hunter contacts the state office, and gets the names and telephone numbers of ranchers in the region he/she is interested in visiting. The hunter contacts the rancher. Arrangements are either made, or he/she is encouraged to call someone else in the program. When the hunter arrives, he/she signs the rancher's form that the state has provided, verifying he/she was there. The rancher sends the form into the state and is reimbursed for the wear and tear of the ranch land by the hunter. It appears to be a win-win situation. The hunter can leave home for Montana knowing he/she has everything arranged and does not have to chase all over the countryside looking for owners. The owner gets some money for allowing tourists in to hunt, and the state can coordinate, market, and promote its hunting program. Critics don't like the paperwork and the pressure to plan ahead, but they can still just knock on doors and hope to find a willing rancher, have him/her sign the form, and then hunt.

South Dakota says it is monitoring Montana's program to see if changes might be advantageous in its state, too. Bowman County Development Director, Cal Klewin requested information, which was ordered. Individuals and organizations may want to work through their local legislators and the ND Game and Fish Department to affect change in North Dakota. Keith Trego, formerly with the NDGF, said there is a concern that hunting acres be accessible to the general public in the future rather than becoming merely a rich man/woman's sport. He said fee hunting is too often the case in other countries, consequently only those who can afford the fees can enjoy the outdoor adventure.

The NDGF Department opened 61,000 acres of hunting to the public this fall ("Four," 1998, p. E9). Farmers rented 23 plots to the NDGF for up to 10 years for use by the public. Another program called the "CRP cost-sharing program" made 78 plots available for up to 10 years after NDGF paid for about half the cost of grass seed for those acres. Adams County and its neighbor, Hettinger County, are included in that program. Action was taken by the state because it has become harder for hunters to find free land to hunt in that area.

A growing number of outsiders are apparently buying property in western North Dakota for the purpose of hunting and/or just establishing a get-away. Absentee landowners may be a

trend to fear as it may take away hunting possibilities from locals, but it may also be an opportunity. Just as the lakes area of Minnesota became a get-away for city residents, western North Dakota may become a retreat. Locals may want to consider the sale of smaller sections of property that would allow middle income people a chance to own a part of the west. It may be a throw-back to the days of the homesteader when western North Dakota enjoyed its highest populations. Those people would not only own property, but they would also be potential consumers of groceries, gas, clothing, contributing to the church collection plate, etc.

***Paleontology*** — Interest was not strong in south Fargo for paleontology, in fact 51% said they greatly disliked the thought of spending their vacation digging for dinosaur bones. Lack of experience in paleontology may be the cause for their lack of interest, but even so, it shows what a tough sell such an activity would be. If a special clientele is developed, the result could be positive, but don't expect the general public to sign up in large numbers. A special clientele already exists in the Marmarth area through various universities. That target audience could be enhanced, but first the region needs to decide if they want more paleontologists.

Marmarth, in particular, needs to decide if it wants to continue its population decline, eventually lose its school, perhaps have a person injured in a dilapidated building, and continue its inner struggle over whether or not to embrace the interest of paleontologists; or create a master plan for structural improvements and an economic focus for the small community.



Residents seem very proud of their region's contributions to the study of dinosaurs, other fossils, flora, and possibly a clue to what caused the extinction of that era. Many area residents say they are hurt that museums in other parts of the world, the US, and western North Dakota, display their bones, rather than displaying them in Marmarth and other tri-county communities. The culmination this summer of a two year dig north of Marmarth was already discussed. (See Region/Marmarth.)

Another find by local 8<sup>th</sup> grader Tyler Lyson was also discussed earlier. (See Region/Marmarth.) Dakotah Jay Loux and some other Marmarth adults are now interested in enlisting the knowledge and enthusiasm of Tyler and other youth in the development of a web page for Marmarth. They envision Marmarth becoming a hub of paleontology exploration. Dickinson web page designer, Rolf Butz, has since been in contact with Loux. In communication with Loux, this author warned him to involve the community so as not to cause a split between those who want to go public and capitalize on paleontology versus those who dislike and distrust what they call "bone diggers."

Loux thinks the City of Marmarth will be willing to fund 25% of the computer's cost through the town's Fire Department which he says is a non-profit. He's hopeful federal or private foundation money will fund the remaining 75% of the cost of initiating Cyber Stop. In regards to the debate over whether or not to expand dinosaur digs; the state paleontologist, the US Forest Service, NDGF, and Bowman museum paleontologists should all be involved in the discussion. They have been involved in past digs and need to be a part of Marmarth's and the tri-counties' future policy and role regarding paleontology.

If community support is there, Marmarth and other interested communities could become outing centers for teams of paleontologists from many universities each spring-autumn rather than the modest number who annually frequent the area from Denver, Minot, Michigan, and Grand Forks universities. Curriculum could also be developed to offer the less skilled paleontologist (young or old), and also those people interested through the Elderhostel movement.

Such an ongoing collection of visitors could also support more entertainment in the historic Mystic Theater as well as already popular bars and restaurants in the area. Other businesses in the area may also benefit, and still others, may be created to serve the seasonal visitor.

The Historical Society's Bunk House may be renovated and other, more costly projects taken on as momentum builds over the interest of Marmarth's on-site collection of creatures. As reported earlier, Royce Yeater's architectural firm is willing to assess the possibilities in Marmarth if contacted while still in the area on contracted work. Lori Reichenberg reported earlier that an architect had assessed renovation of the old gymnasium building on Main Street at about a half million dollars. The local Historical Society owns it but not the attached building, which is privately owned.

The North Dakota Community Foundation Director Kevin Dvorak is willing to meet with area leaders upon their invitation to discuss possible fundraising. This offer is applicable to any community, but might be most helpful in the renovation of Marmarth. Rather than creating its own non-profit organization with 501(c)3 status, a community or organization can become an entity under the umbrella of the NDCF. That Bismarck based organization will then expect the local people to form a committee or board to set priorities for the use of the funds. For instance, the NDCF will offer to "Marmarth Visionaries" \$5000 if it will raise an initial \$25,000. The interest on that \$30,000 mini-endowment will then be available for projects recommended by the "Visionaries" and formally approved by the Board of Directors of the NDCF. Dvorak and his staff will also help the locals raise additional funds for use in their community.

A few regulations may, or may not, be of concern to those considering involvement with the foundation. The NDCF would ultimately have control over that fund, but the foundation board is there to protect the money so it is spent the way benefactors specified. The other specification is an administrative fee. It pays for the professional care and investment of that money. Dvorak is confident there are gifts waiting to be tapped in the Marmarth area. The NDCF already administers two scholarship funds that benefit students in southwest North Dakota.

Besides benefitting from paleontology; Marmarth could outfit, lodge, and feed canoeists in the spring and mountain bikers from spring to autumn; who may enjoy the National Grassland Roads on either side of the Little Missouri River. Besides the Bunk House, a campground may prove popular. Entertainment at the theater may feature alternative singers (cross between folk/pop/rock) rather than family entertainment — depending on what age group gravitates to Marmarth or the town hopes to attract. The cowboy poets who gather in September should be featured earlier, too, and advertised more.

***Mountain biking and hiking*** — The development of the Maah-Daah-Hey Trail from the south to the north unit of the Badlands will attract more mountain bikers and hikers as word spreads of its completion in 1999. Backpacker magazine's extensive feature story in September 1998 is bound to attract enthusiasts in the future (Rennicke, J., 1998, p. 46). A little bit of interest (5%) was evident on the part of south Fargo people when surveyed regarding mountain

biking and hiking. It is an activity they haven't tried yet while on vacation, but some are interested. A larger percentage (32%) rate camping as their favorite pastime while on vacation. It is a select group so the tri-counties need to focus on the younger adult with an interest in testing his/her endurance, grit, and sense of adventure. On average they may have fewer days available to vacation, compared to other tourists, so they need direction on how to best spend that time.

Amidon is the closest town in the tri-counties to the southern edge of the Maah-Daah-Hey Trail. Amidon is located near the National Grasslands Road that runs through the back country to Medora. Amidon is unique because of its size and location. It is the smallest county seat in the nation and it's the nearest town to White Butte, North Dakota's tallest point. Amidon could become an outfitting center for hikers and mountain bikers. It has a small campground that would suffice for now and possibly be enhanced when usage justifies updating it.

A dinner theater is under consideration at Georgia's and the Owl Restaurant. The owner may want to share entertainment with Marmarth to add to the cast's schedule and income. Such shows could be coordinated so the two towns do not compete with one another and, consequently, collaboration would ensure some interesting entertainment on a regular basis in Slope County.

A White Butte Interpretative Center is also under consideration. The butte's owner is willing to continue to allow hikers on her land, but at their own risk because she doesn't want to incur the cost of insurance. She gives them that warning and she has a sign to that affect, but caution is advised regarding that issue. If White Butte is going to be promoted as a landmark challenge awaiting the adventuresome, insurance is needed, whether it is carried by the owner or a White Butte non-profit organization. If parking and entry onto the property is enhanced, the North Dakota Department of Transportation needs to be consulted (see Resource People and Organizations). There has been talk of a chuck wagon meal being served to tourists who hiked the butte or rode to it on the wagon. This idea may have potential, especially during the weekends of the six busiest weeks of the summer and with adequate promotion, but it needs to be consistent. People have to be assured that if they travel that far, it will be available. The same is true with any of the above mentioned ideas. Enthusiasm and hospitality have to be consistent so those travelers will recommend the area to others. Word of mouth is still the most positive form of promotion. The ND Tourism Department will also promote this unique experience and any other activities/businesses in its annual booklet, but information should be submitted nearly a year in advance.

The National Grasslands Road has potential for mountain bikers, but some accommodations are needed such as satellite toilets and water along the way (or a major emphasis to fill up before leaving Amidon) as well as medical and emergency supplies, some security and some signage to educate and entertain.

A great deal of conversation has evolved regarding White Butte. The bottom line is the butte's owner must feel comfortable with those people involved and those enthusiasts must



maintain their interest. Similar to Marmarth, the ND Community Foundation is available to help create a non-profit endowment to help fund and manage such an undertaking if the Amidon residents want that assistance.

A local builder is constructing a genuine log cabin on the main street of Amidon for the Grazing Association. That structure will greatly improve that site.

Local and state officials have been consulted regarding economic development in Amidon. The effort to employ area women in their homes may mushroom into a product, or products, that may lure tourists to Amidon to make a unique purchase. The key words are “unique” as well as “well advertised.”

Amidon may also benefit from the advice of an architectural firm. (See the section on Main Street.) Georgia’s and the Owl, the courthouse, the campground, the school house, and library may all be enhanced after assessment by professionals.

Amidon has potential, but its small size is an asset and a detriment. A few people can affect change, but a few people can also decide not to affect change. The decision is theirs.

**ATVing** — ATVing did not receive support in the public tourism survey, in fact 59% said they do not have interest in the sport. Unlike some of the other “negative” rated activities, ATVing did not show up later as a sport to pursue if given the chance. With that preface, information is offered to those still interested in offering the pastime.

If there is interest in developing a motocross track, the tri-counties may want to compare the Gascoyne coal mining site to a former coal site six miles north of Beulah, North Dakota. The ND Public Service Commission (PSC) gave Coteau Properties Company permission to end its reclamation obligation on the 25 acres which was once part of the Freedom coal mine. Instead, a motorcycle club wants to develop a track there (“Former,” 1998, p. C7). The PSC decided it would help more than motocross enthusiasts since their current track is closer to a golf course and the noise has been unwanted.

Anyone considering the development of a motocross track or trails for the bikes or ATVs should consider the potential clash of riders and non-riders. The issue has become heated in Montana where officials are trying to decide whether or not trails for snowmobiles and ATVs should be separate from hikers and skiers (“Muscles,” 1998,). The Associated Press article said, “Few public lands issues are as thorny as ‘travel management plans,’ deciding where machines can and cannot go”(“Muscles,” 1998). Discussion is focusing on the Gallatin Forest in Montana, but a decision is not expected for at least a couple of years. The Montana Wilderness Association has launched a new “Quiet Trails Campaign,” saying, “Like an invading army, motorized recreationists are assaulting Montana’s unprotected public wildlands.” The Pipestone area near Butte and the upper Gallatin drainage are already closed to motorized vehicles.

Jonathan Kempff, trails program manager for the Gallatin said, “Motorcycle use hasn’t grown much in the past 20 years, but ATV use has ballooned, and the new machines are stronger and easier to ride than ever before”(“Muscles,” 1998). Because of that added power he anticipates more people taking them deeper into the wilderness. Nationwide, the number of registered ATVs and off-road motorcycles grew ninefold to 2.5 million in 1993 according to The Billings Gazette. In Montana, the number of registered ATVs doubled from 1990 to 1996, with a total of 15,400 registered. In North Dakota, the number is modest, but it may not reflect the true number of ATVs, merely those registered. What’s happening in our neighboring states should also be of interest since tourists may bring their machines into North Dakota while on vacation.

The Tourism Committee in the tri-counties said it is not interested in pursuing the use of ATVs, and it indicated much of the terrain in the area is not conducive to such vehicles. It is an issue worth watching since it's a growing controversy nearby.

**Collective enhancements —**

**Main Street** -- The tri-counties could create unique, inviting shopping and entertainment spots for seniors and tourists alike if professional planning and renovation took place. Royce Yeater and his colleagues at his Fargo based architectural firm have extensive experience in this field. The Main Street project involves historic preservation, accessibility, and a rebuilding of a sense of community charm. Yeater recommends national Main Street workshops sponsored by the National Trust for Historical Preservation. A list of those workshops and other information regarding the rebuilding of America's historical areas can be accessed at its web site: [www.mainst.org](http://www.mainst.org). Yeater and his associates are already consulting in Bowman and Hettinger regarding senior projects and, while in the area, he said they could give an initial assessment of other potential projects, including Marmarth and Amidon as well as Bowman, Hettinger, and other interested communities.

Structures in Marmarth were mentioned earlier and Hettinger's 14,000 square foot Ben Franklin Store is a potential, currently for sale. It is the town's only variety store, and because of its prominent downtown location, its future is of interest to this project. Bowman's Main Street and Amidon's restaurant and school house buildings may also benefit from an architect's input.

**Living history projects** -- The following suggestions can be applied in various communities but one example is offered to illustrate how living history players can enhance tourism. Fort Lincoln south of Mandan has already employed the concept and can serve as a good resource.

Dickinson, although outside the tri-county area, can play a major role in attracting more tourists to the area. If the Dinosaur Museum overcomes its financial problems and its neighboring tourist sites grow in popularity, the region's popularity will grow.

The Frontier Village could be staffed with Dickinson State University students who could put their business and education courses to work creating living history and an interactive fun experience. Similar to the Children's Museum in Fargo, the Frontier Village could become a place where the tourist becomes the pioneer for an hour or two ... putting on borrowed western dress and getting involved in "make believe play" initiated by the young, creative staff. Such a proposal may be funded by the USDA or the Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration. It may also appeal to private foundations because of its positive influence on the young adults guiding the program and the young people participating.

The Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau and DSU could collaborate on pursuing such funding. Collaboration is currently very popular by funding sources. In fact, some of the tri-county communities may want to find a way to involve their youth in such training.

The Dickinson CVB has already made impressive inroads and is energized to continue to grow the local tourism industry. A number of potential roles were discussed earlier under Dickinson's assets, but they bear repeating; the region would have far more power if it works together.

*Cyber Stop* is a concept conceptualized by this researcher and Dickinson web designer Rolf Butz. It has found support in meetings with the Tri-County Tourism Committee, the Jobs Creation Committee, the REAP Board, and the Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors. The State Tourism Department is also interested in studying the possibility.

Cyber Stop involves installing a computer at various sites within the three counties (or whatever number of counties decide to participate) for the purpose of promoting tourism, community pride, development of computer skills by anyone interested, and public access to the Internet. In the case of tourists, they can access (with encouragement from the trained staff) information on the region (i.e., places to see, eat, sleep, hike, etc.). They can also send a picture e-mail home, selecting one of the many shots provided of the area. Cyber Stop would also provide organization, so there would be a flow of information from event coordinators in the tri-counties to the Web Master. Cyber



Stop would provide residents, as well as tourists, the latest information on dates, ticket prices, and other details of upcoming events. Posters for individual events will still be needed, but in a sense, the web pages would replace the paper poster. Cyber Stop can be accessed by anyone, anywhere in the world.

It is hoped that Cyber Stop will also energize the general populous into wanting to learn how to use the Internet. A number of private foundations which care about rural development can be approached for help with funding. There is also interest on the part of regional businesses and in the case of Marmarth, reportedly backing by town government.



The Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau already hired Rolf Butz this past summer to update its site, and an overview of the entire region (including the tri-counties) is

included on the CVB site. If a relationship is formed between the tri-counties and the Dickinson CVB, that office could be the clearing house for information to be submitted to Butz, the web master at Custom Data, Inc. Currently, Bowman and Hettinger have their own sites which the Dickinson CVB links to. Bowman and Hettinger's sites are largely for economic development but also mention tourist information. Butz has drawn up a proposal for Cyber Stop, so details are available through him or through this author.

Butz estimates the first kiosk with a touch screen computer, highly protective incasement for the machinery, creation of the various links, and additional web pages would cost about \$15,000. This figure does not include training hospitality industry employees to use it or publicity. The North Dakota Extension Service has shown interest in possibly training and housing the kiosk(s). This location offer may be especially valuable in the courthouse in Amidon.

Hettinger has a visitors' bureau on Main Street. Popular businesses in Bowman and Marmarth may want to sponsor sites because the kiosk could prove to be a unique draw to their establishments. Each additional kiosk and web site development fee will cost about \$8,000. Communities will also have to fund monthly fees for the additional telephone line, Consolidated Telephone's Internet access fee, and fees paid to Butz and the Dickinson CVB to coordinate and update the sites on a regular basis.

Some interest has already been expressed by some Dickinson corporations to help fund the first Cyber Stop kiosk, and discussion is underway in Marmarth. As discussed earlier there is a possibility of student involvement, whether it is helping update the sites, spreading enthusiasm, or public training. Some federal funds may be available to help launch Cyber Stop, especially if Dickinson State University is involved, according to a reliable source. Private foundations are also a possibility. Federal and private funds seldom pay for hardware (i.e., computers) but instead are interested in the educational value and economic development aspect for rural America, and projects that can serve as an example for other remote, economically challenged communities. The mission of many private foundations is to fight drugs and improve the self-esteem of youth. A curriculum could be written to answer those goals.

A copyright check of the name "Cyber Stop" has not been made. That check should be done if "Cyber Stop" becomes the title of choice.

***Cooperative marketing*** -- Marketing together can greatly enhance the number of tourists in southwest North Dakota. The affect of advertising was apparent in July and August according to Dickinson CVB board members. The CVB executive director's interviews in June on Fargo television and radio stations is an example of what can be done at little cost. Terri Thiel also ran 30 second television commercials that caught the general public's eye, many who thought the Badlands were only in South Dakota until they saw the colorful, adventure-packed advertisements.

Thiel is an asset not only to Dickinson, but the entire region. She ranched near Bowman and worked in Hettinger as a promoter, so she knows the area and believes in it. This author met with her Board of Directors on August 26<sup>th</sup> in Dickinson to explore the possibility of expanding the mission of their Convention and Visitors Bureau to include the southwestern counties. The Dickinson CVB is already promoting the area but could pack a much bigger punch if the tri-counties, and possibly other counties, join forces with Dickinson.

More members funding a bigger budget would buy more advertising time on eastern North Dakota television, more magazine and newspaper ads in target areas, and more representation at sports and travel shows in the region and elsewhere. You may also want to assist state tourism so that your dollars will stretch further by manning its booth in larger cities in America and even abroad. The ND Tourism Department can also recommend key magazines to advertise in.

For instance, if those interested in paleontology can agree on what they would like to offer, Thiel and her staff could help make it happen with specific advertising. If Bowman, or any other community also wants to get involved with lodging and shopping, a bus trip could be developed involving all interested parties.

If Hettinger is going to make a commitment to the senior citizen, targeting that age category with publicity is important. Efforts should be made to market at trade shows that attract seniors, as well as through ads in magazines and newspapers read by seniors.

If Amidon wants to become a outing center for mountain bikers and hikers, advertising can be placed that is focused on that age group and fitness level. A mountain bike should be part

of the display at sports shows. Perhaps all of the communities can offer a biking experience and share in that display.

Thiel has experience and interest in promoting southwest ND, but she needs more money for marketing. She will also need a bigger staff if tourism in southwest North Dakota builds to its potential. Pay is also an issue tourism leaders need to consider. Thiel (or any executive director) needs to be paid a competitive wage, so you don't lose that person to another city.

The Dickinson CVB Board of Directors appears open to the regional CVB concept but does not want to appear over-bearing. The board members would prefer the tri-counties contact them, if interested.

If Cyber Stop gets up and running, the various communities can operate, in part, regionally but continue to function individually when the need arises. When ads are placed in magazines, on television, on radio, or in newspapers, the communities could co-op, chipping in for the amount of space their locale is mentioned. For instance, if Marmarth gets one mention and Dickinson's activities five mentions, Marmarth would pay 1/5 as much as Dickinson. The owner of the Knife River Ranch is also interested in co-op advertising, as are Dahkotch Lodge, and Logging Camp Ranch. A number of businesses may be interested in sharing the cost of advertising, thus allowing Thiel to promote the region in a number of media.

**Workshops** should be offered periodically to update area residents on how to start their own bed and breakfast or even just lodging for a few weekends during the hunting season. Earlier, three NDSU professors were mentioned who are willing to lead a workshop on merchandising, hotel/motel management, and customer relations. Marketing was a need expressed by the majority of the tri-county business people. That can also be arranged through NDSU or other groups. Kathy Tweeten from the ND Extension Service office in Bismarck is interested in providing leadership in community development.

Hettinger is in the process of receiving updated Internet access that will allow teleconferencing and faster connections to the web. This technology update is important for the medical community and the Hettinger Research and Extension Center, but it may also provide an opportunity for seniors. An Elderhostel program that involves breaking through fears of using computers along with some southwest North Dakota sightseeing and entertainment may attract participants who may decide to stay longer.

## Summary

Each reader may see different priorities in this report, but for the sake of discussion, here are seven starting points:

1. Initiate Cyber Stop, and establish the structure in your community to ensure its success. (i.e., appoint one person who will gather information such as county fair dates and report them in a structured way to the Dickinson CVB, so all information can then be funneled to the Web Master for update of the site on a regular basis.) Also, work with other Cyber Stop communities in the formation of public workshops on how to use and promote the kiosks.

2. Create a relationship with the Dickinson CVB so that Terry Thiel will know which one person she can call in each community to offer co-op advertising opportunities. Also, create the structure (committee or person) who can make a decision on spending money on marketing in a

timely manner. Participate in trade shows representing southwest ND, and form a group interested in supporting the State Tourism Department by lobbying legislators for more money for promotion of ND. In other words, form alliances rather than competing and complaining as separate entities.

3. Initiate workshops in your communities over the winter to “stir things up.” Get people thinking about the positive impact tourism can make and how they might play a part. Make an effort to widen your circle. If they show interest in opening their homes to hunters, make arrangements to have a speaker come in with that necessary information. If they are interested in capitalizing on dinosaur digs, form a task force with the State Paleontologist John Hoganson, and other officials to discuss the possibilities. Educate tourism’s front line (i.e., convenience store clerks, motel personnel, and waitresses) on the merits of your region and how to promote. NDSU, the State Extension Service, and GNDA personnel may help you.

4. Contact the ND Community Foundation for help in setting up an endowment fund for economic and tourism advancement in your area. It may provide seed money for entrepreneurs.

5. Form a task force (it may be the local tourism committee and Dickinson CVB members). Travel *together* to see successful tourism attractions at Stillwater, MN; the St. Paul Science Museum; Children’s Theater in Minneapolis; Murphy’s Landing (a living history pioneer village south of Minneapolis that almost closed but found the answer to success); Yonker Farm Children’s Museum in Fargo; Fort Lincoln south of Mandan and its use of living history players; Jamestown’s frontier village and National Buffalo Museum; and Kenosee Lake, Saskatchewan to see the water slides at Moose Mountain Provincial Park. Discuss what impresses you, what needs work, and how southwest ND might imitate the positives you see elsewhere (and avoid the pitfalls you also observed).

Create an atmosphere in your communities in which the general public is encouraged to scout out good ideas on their trips. Have people take pictures and report to your growing tourism group. Perhaps you should establish a travel club for that purpose rather than a “committee,” accenting the fun involved in brainstorming and sharing ideas. Look at the demographic trends outlined in this booklet, and decide what target your community wants to market to, such as the 40 year old foreigner with time and money, the regional family with half as much time and money, or the senior citizen often with a less structured vacation who’s interested in learning rather than adventure sports, etc.

Look at the strengths of your group, (i.e., what part Dickinson State University can play, your local teens and young adults, your history-smart seniors, your merchants, etc.). What kind of packages can you offer the public rather than just a disjointed laundry list of vague mentions of things to do? Can you provide bus tours a program director who boards their bus in Fargo or meets them in Dickinson and leads them through a quality experience for a few days?

You may find people want to mountain bike or horseback ride the Maah-Daah-Hey Trail one day, recreate at Bowman-Haley the next, and go on a dinosaur dig the next with shopping and good meals in between. The sponsors of the package such as the restaurants, motels and shops who invested in paying the guide(s) and advertising would benefit from the tourists’ business.

What established, big events can you piggy-back with and share tourists, (i.e., the annual Crazyhorse Volksmarch the first weekend in June near Custer, South Dakota; the Little Bighorn

reinactment near Hardin, Montana in late June; Sturgis bike rally; and Lewis and Clark activities during the bicentennial)? If those groups aren't willing to co-op advertise with you, at least use their event to your advantage (i.e., "On your way to Hardin, travel the country Custer traveled and along the way shop, fish, boat, swim, explore, dine in style, etc."). Those tourists might stay longer in your region than at the major event that originally attracted them.

Lobby as a group in Bismarck to attract more support and money for tourism expansion. Consider what other states are doing and assess the potential of those ideas in North Dakota. Ideas may include the involvement of the Extension Service in tourism, similar to the Extension Service in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and other states.

All of the organizations and individuals involved in North Dakota tourism may want to consider Minnesota's model and form an alliance in the state that can lobby, educate, and advocate for tourism growth. This may include groups such as the Retail Association, the Hospitality Association, the Convention and Visitors' Bureau Directors Association, the Chambers of Commerce, the Greater North Dakota Association, guest ranch owners, bed and breakfast owners, arts organizations, fair board managers, water management directors, and others.

6. Develop the Bowman-Haley Dam and Lake as a well-known recreation spot for the general public. It could become your WOW factor (i.e., a major draw) that would benefit the entire region. Work with Bob Martin, Army Corps of Engineers, and Terri Thiel, Dickinson CVB, in the promotion of B-H as a spring and summer recreation site and for deer hunting in the fall. If a concessionaire doesn't step forward, consider funding and staffing it at least on weekends during the summer. Contact the Lake Tschida concessionaire for tips. Start small with a few used, inexpensive fishing boats with small motors for rent, and limited food and pop items for sale. Work with the county, the ND DOT, and landowners for permission to erect many signs promoting the site, using US Highway 85 as the main gateway.

7. *Finally* — Believe in yourselves! Great potential exists for unique vacations in southwest North Dakota. The four day length of the average American's vacation may draw people from eastern ND and Canada who want a outdoor experience, either flirting with danger on horseback, backpacking in the frontier, or another wholesome family activity. It may be the one time the family actually gets to know one another!

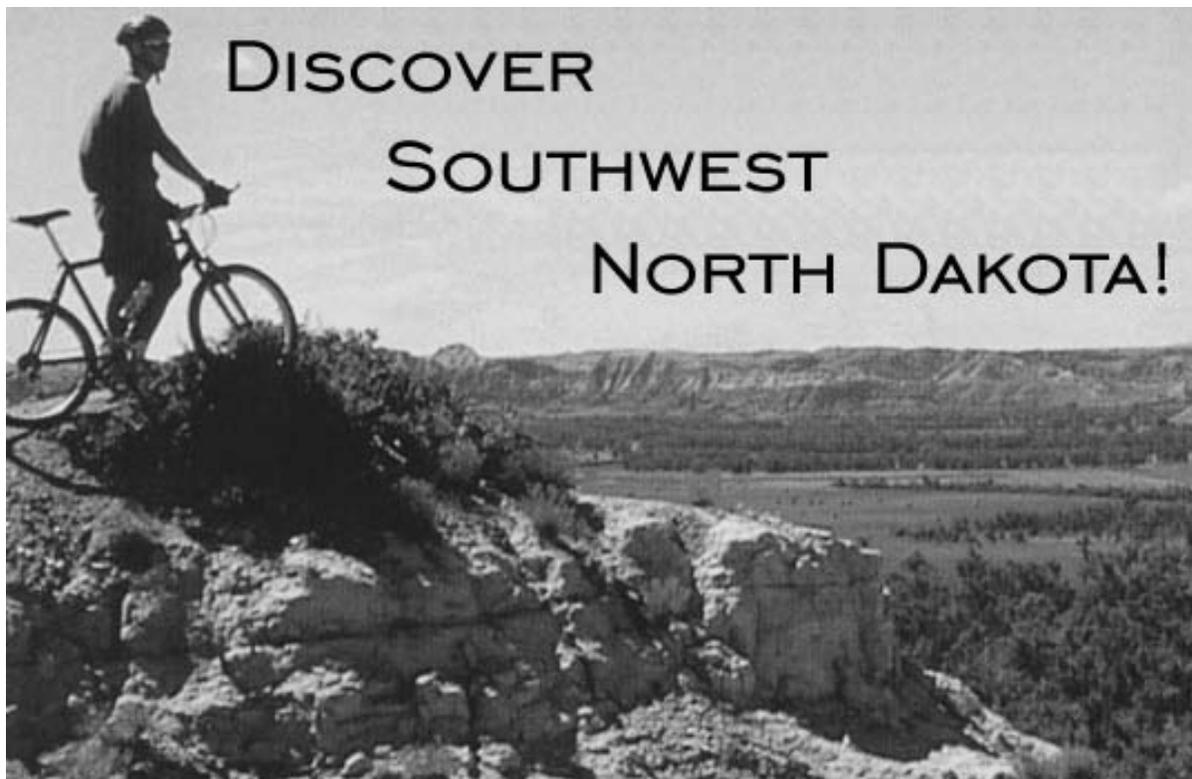
International tourists may be seeking the same unique experience but for twice as long. Offer a package that offers approximately 8 nights with shopping included, possibly at the Mega Mall in Minneapolis. Provide them with a program director who greets them at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and guides them through their city and country vacation. ND State Tourism is already developing such a plan along with the Rocky Mountain Foundation.

The area already has the most important ingredient for success in tourism, friendly people. Your hospitality will become even more important as the world becomes more violent, dishonest, and frenzied. The wide open places offer people a calm, majestic, almost god-like atmosphere. History is another major attribute that needs to be developed. If the land could talk, it would have a fascinating tale to tell; it can't, so residents need to talk for it.

The residents of southwest North Dakota need the extra income tourism can bring, but the public also needs southwest North Dakota for it offers a link with the past and a connection to something very decent and genuine.

A student conservation crew worked in Theodore Roosevelt National Park for nine weeks this past summer (“Student,” 1998, p. A11). The students came from all over the country. Steven Lens, 18, of Texas said, “You can’t beat the view — every day. My image of North Dakota was all flat.” Nicole Andersen added, “When people get here, they are humbled.”

North Dakota’s geography, wildlife, and residents have a lot to offer the public. It just needs to be packaged and sold. It is hoped that this report will spark conversation in many circles — from small town main streets to state agencies. Cooperative efforts between towns, cities, and state government are needed to pool financial resources and people power to spread the word that southwest North Dakota offers peace, relaxation, adventure, sport, a spiritual experience, hospitality, beauty, and much more!



**Table 1. Public Tourism Survey, Summer 1998, ND**

---

<b>Top places to vacation (in rank order)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Minnesota lakes area	55
Minneapolis-St. Paul	38
North Dakota	27
Other	24
Disneyland or Disneyworld	19
West Coast — US	17
Montana	17
Colorado	16
South Dakota	14
Southwest US	13
Mexico	10
East Coast — US	9
Nevada	7
Europe	7
Washington, DC	5

---

**How far away from home do you usually travel during your vacation?**

---

<b>Miles</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
-	
0-125	10
200-300	27
300-600	18
600-1000	20
1500-3000	15
Other	10

---

**Respondents' characteristics**

---

	<b>Percentage</b>
Sex: Male	33
Female	67
Prefers less costly events & accommodations	26
average cost	71
luxury prices	3
Age: 20-29	25
30-39	25
40-49	24
50-59	13
60+	11
Other	2

Continued

**Table 1. Public Tourism Survey, Summer 1998, ND, continued.**  
**Respondents' characteristics continued.**

---

<u># of trips taken on vacation each year</u>	<u>Percentage of respondents</u>
1	28
2	32
3	18
4	7
5	5
6	2
<u># of days spent on vacation each year</u>	
3-4	14
5	12
6-7	16
10	12
14	8
15-21	16
25-30	5
34-60	3

---

**Most popular activities while on vacation (in rank order)**

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	<u>Percentage</u>
Viewing natural scenery	45
Boating, skiing, sailing, jet skiing	38
Cruising the ocean	32
Camping	31
Shopping in a unique atmosphere	28
Family activities (i.e., water slide, rides, etc.)	26
Seeing historic sites	25.7
Cultural events, such as concerts, and plays	25.6
Shopping in a mall	23
Downhill skiing	23

Continued

**Table 1. Public Tourism Survey, Summer 1998, ND, continued.**

**Least popular activities while on vacation (in rank order)**

---

	<u>Percentage</u>
Parachuting	85
Motocross/ATVing	59
Ballooning	59
Motorcycling	55
Paleontology/looking for dinosaur bones	51
Hunting	49
Mountain biking	41
Bird watching	41
Playing softball	38
Cross country skiing	37

**Activities respondents would like to try on vacation but haven't yet (in rank order)**

---

	<u>Percentage</u>
Cruising the ocean	33
Ballooning	26
Ranch stay/cowboy experience	16
Parachuting	15
Cross country skiing	9
Canoeing	7
Downhill skiing	6.8
Horseback riding	6.7
Paleontology/looking for dinosaur bones	6
Hiking	5.2
Snowmobiling	5

**How would you rate your experience visiting western North Dakota?**

---

	<u>Percentage</u>
Excellent	34
Good	54
Fair	10
Poor	2

**Are you interested in vacation information from western North Dakota?**

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	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes	52
No	48

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Source: Public Tourism Survey, Summer 1998, ND, K. Coyle, NDSU Department of Agriculture Economics, Fargo, ND.

**Table 2. Outdoor Participation in Recreational Activities, 1995**

Ranking of activities based on number of days done a year

North Dakota	Region 5 (Fargo area)	Region 8 (Tri-county area)
1. Walking/jogging on pavement	Walking/jogging on pavement	Pleasure driving
2. Pleasure driving	Pleasure driving Biking on pavement	Basketball Walking/jogging on pavement
3. Biking on pavement ATV, motorcycling, snowmobiling Basketball	Swimming ATV, motorcycling, snowmobiling	Biking on pavement
4. Swimming Picnicking Golf	Boating Picnicking	ATV, motorcycle, snowmobile
5.		Golf Boating, waterskiing

Source: North Dakota 1996-2000 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), N.D. Parks & Recreation Department, prepared by J. Leitch, S. Hirsch, and D. Christensen, NDSU Agriculture Economics.

Selection was made from the following outdoor recreational activities:

Archery, ATV/ Motorcycle/snowmobiling, basketball, bicycling on paved trails, bicycling on unpaved trails, boating/water skiing, camping at undeveloped campgrounds, camping at developed campgrounds, canoeing, cross country skiing, downhill skiing/sledding, golf, hiking, ice hockey, ice skating, horseback riding, horseshoes, in-line skating/or skateboarding, picnicking, pleasure driving, soccer, softball/baseball, swimming, tennis/volleyball, trap/skeet shooting, walking/jogging on paved trails, walking/jogging on unpaved trails, walking/jogging in historic parks, walking/jogging in playgrounds/picnic areas, and other.

**Table 3. Canadian Recreational Preferences**

<u>Performing Arts Attendance, 1998 (in rank order)</u>		<u>% of total population</u>	
Pop/rock		16.3	
Musical comedy		11.2	
Comedy		10.3	
Drama		8.6	
Jazz/blues		6.3	
Stand-up comedy		5.7	
Symphonic music		4.8	
Country and western music		4.5	
Opera		4.4	
Choral music		3.1	

<u>Radio Preferences, 1996 (in rank order)</u>		<u>% of listening time</u>	
<u>Station type</u>			
Adult-contemporary/gold.oldies/rock		38.0	
Country		14.5	
Talk		13.2	
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation		9.5	
Contemporary		6.4	
Other		4.7	
Album-oriented rock		4.1	
U.S. Stations		3.3	
Middle-of-the-road		2.6	
Easy listening		2.2	
Dance		1.4	

<u>Favorite Children's Sports, 1992 (in rank order)</u>			
<u>Age 6-10</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Age 11-14</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Swimming	19	Baseball	16
Baseball, Soccer	14	Swimming	14
Hockey	12	Hockey	13
		Basketball	11

<u>Preference in Heritage Institutions 1993-94 (in rank order)</u>	
<u>Type</u>	<u>Attendance (thousands)</u>
Nature parks	56,307
Historic sites	17,020
Other types of heritage institutions	11,531
History museums	8,760

Source: Statistics Canada, copyrighted.

**Table 4. Activities on Select North Dakota Rivers in Rank of Popularity, 1996**

<u>River</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Red River (N = 136) Total Activity Days = 2,976 Ranked #2 out of 6 Rivers	Sightseeing	21.8%
	Walking/jogging	20.0%
	Bicycling	13.3%
	Fishing	10.7%
	Snowmobiling	8.5%
	Picnicking	5.0%
<hr/>		
Little Missouri (N = 84) Total Activity Days = 876 Ranked #3 out of 6 Rivers	Camping	12.7%
	Sightseeing	11.6%
	Fishing	10.0%
	Walking/Jogging	8.6%
	Hunting	7.9%
	Photography	7.3%

Source: Survey of North Dakota River Associated Recreation, N. Dietz and J. Leitch, North Dakota Park and Recreation Department, September 1997.

**Table 5. North Dakota Sales for Final Demand\* by Region and in the Tourism Industry in 1996**

<u>Area</u>	<u>Tourism</u>	<u>Total</u>
Region 1 (Northwest-including Williston)		
Million \$s	58.4	680.1
% of total	8.6	100.0
Region 2 (Including Minot)		
Million \$s	163.5	1,624.5
% of total	10.1	
Region 3 (Including Cavalier/Langdon)		
Million \$s	91.3	859.4
% of total	10.6	
Region 4 (Including Grand Forks)		
Million \$s	145.3	1,620.4
% of total	9.0	
Region 5 (Including Fargo/WFargo/Wahpeton)		
Million \$s	194.3	1,921.9
% of total	10.1	
Region 6 (Including Jamestown/VCity/Lamoure)		
Million \$s	151.7	1,315.0
% of total	11.6	
Region 7 (Including Bismarck/Mandan)		
Million \$s	179.3	2,770.4
% of total	6.5	
<b>Region 8 (Including Bowman, Hettinger, Medora)</b>		
Million \$s	77.5	961.2
% of total	8.1	
<b>NORTH DAKOTA</b>		
Million \$s	1,061.3	11,216.7
% of total	9.5	

\*Sales for final demand are the activities which lead to a net inflow of income/wealth from outside the state.  
Source: Coon and Leistriz. 1997. Sales for Final Demand by Economic Sector, unpublished data. Department of Agricultural Economics, NDSU.

**Table 6. Bowman Tourist Information Center Visitors, May 26-August 31,1997.**

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<u>Home Region</u>	<u># Visitors</u>	<u>% Total</u>
North Dakota	340	9.5
Minnesota	243	6.8
Texas	177	4.9
Saskatchewan, Canada	144	4.0
South Dakota	137	3.8
Manitoba, Canada	131	3.66
Michigan	105	2.9
Colorado	104	2.9
Illinois	101	2.8
Alberta, Canada	100	2.8
California	99	2.76
Wisconsin	97	2.7
Germany	61	1.7
Switzerland	18	.5
Japan	11	.3
France	11	.3
England	11	.3
Netherlands	11	.3
Unknown	316	8.8
Total	3577	100.0

---

Source: Bowman Tourist Information Center, Barbara Conley, Director.

**Table 7. North Dakota Population and Migration 1980-1996 by Select Counties and Statewide Average**

Area	Population		Percentage change
	1980	1996	1980-1996
<b>Adams</b>	<b>3,584</b>	<b>2,841</b>	<b>-20.7</b>
<b>Bowman</b>	<b>4,229</b>	<b>3,303</b>	<b>-21.7</b>
<b>Slope</b>	<b>1,157</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>-28.5</b>
Cass	88,247	113,343	+28.4
Burleigh	54,811	65,681	+19.8
Morton	25,177	24,422	-3.0
Oliver	2,495	2,234	-10.5
Grand Forks	66,100	71,450	+8.1
North Dakota	652,717	643,539	-1.4

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. 1980 and 1990 Decennial Censuses of Population and Housing; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Intercensal Population Estimates, 1996; The State of North Dakota, Coon and Leistritz, NDSU Agriculture Economics, 1998.

## Table 8. Cass County Population Projections

(Includes Fargo-West Fargo)

Based on 1/3 1980-1990 Migration Rates

Age-Gender Distribution

Age	2000		2005		2010	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4	4106	3865	3789	3566	3554	3346
5-9	3701	3482	4069	3828	3755	3532
10-14	3820	3691	3694	3479	4061	3824
15-19	4976*	4503*	4980	4392	4844	4171
20-24	4702	4098	5125*	4578*	5129	4465
25-29	4441	3855	5089*	4656*	5628*	5269*
30-34	7896**	7556**	4934	4322	5669*	5234*
35-39	4999*	4954*	7066*	6820*	4382	3876
40-44	3985	4286	4743	4724	6704*	6504*
45-49	4177	4245	3886	4275	4625	4712
50-54	3468	3302	4076	4206	3792	4235
55-59	2319	2333	3354	3278	3941	4176
60-64	1661	1931	2096	2282	3032	3207
65-69	1379	1704	1464	1853	1847	2190
70-74	1248	1610	1192	1609	1266	1749
75-79	951	1344	976	1463	932	1463
80-84	571	1051	647	1154	664	1257
85+	343	1121	388	1154	439	1243
Subtotal	58,743	58,931	61,568	61,639	64,264*	64,453*
Total	117,674		123,207		128,717*	

\* denotes highest categories

Source: North Dakota Census Data Center 1993 Report #21

**Table 9. North Dakota Population Projections**

Based on 1/3 1980-1990 Migration Rates

Age-Gender Distribution

Age	2000		2005		2010	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4	19474	18330	18824	17719	19285	18152
5-9	20243*	19383*	17919	17157	17321	16585
10-14	21604*	21309*	19469	18831	17234	16669
15-19	28204*	26291*	24247*	23162*	22185*	20796*
20-24	27547*	24873*	28054*	25741*	24184*	22690*
25-29	19633	17984	22622*	20753*	23089*	21548*
30-34	19213	17688	18434	16955	21292*	19603
35-39	21208*	20848*	16815	15808	16122	15141
40-44	22331*	22976*	19894	19877	15764	15071
45-49	22746*	21814*	20923	21664	18640	18742
50-54	18497	17487	21778*	20996*	20032*	20852*
55-59	13974	13972	17395*	16794*	20480*	20164*
60-64	10860	12467	12452	13445	15500	16161
65-69	10322	12318	9903	11765	11354	12688
70-74	10602	12269	9074	11526	8706	11008
75-79	8331	11024	8430	11091	7215	10420
80-84	5574	9578	5717	9438	5785	9496
85+	3471	9302	3550	9725	3640	9751
Subtotal	303834*	309913*	295500	302447	287828	295537
Total	613,747*		597,947		583,365	

\* denotes highest categories

Source: North Dakota Census Data Center 1993 Report #21

**Table 10. Adams County Population Projections**

(Includes Hettinger)

Based on 1/3 1980-1990 Migration Rates

Age-Gender Distribution

Age	2000		2005		2010	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4	92	87	89	84	92	87
5-9	98	81	91	76	88	74
10-14	144*	82	98*	76*	91	71
15-19	111*	95*	104*	73*	89	68
20-24	111*	89	106*	90*	99	69
25-29	68	65	80	64	77	65
30-34	37	34	58	56	69	55
35-39	68	74	34	31	53	51
40-44	98	87	65	71	32	30
45-49	104*	110*	92	84	61	68
50-54	108*	112*	100*	107*	88	82
55-59	71	68	98*	103*	91*	99*
60-64	60	63	62	64	86*	97*
65-69	55	73	54	62	56	63
70-74	65	93*	48	70	47	59
75-79	54	78	51	86	38	65
80-84	43	80	37	68	35	75
85+	31	70	30	85	26	81
Subtotal	1388*	1441*	1297	1350	1218	1259
Total	2829*		2647		2477	

\* denotes highest categories

Source: North Dakota Census Data Center 1993 Report #21

**Table 11. Bowman County Population Projections**

(Includes Bowman, Rhame, and Scranton)

Based on 1/3 1980-1990 Migration Rates

Age-Gender Distribution

Age	2000		2005		2010	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4	102*	96*	103*	97*	103*	97*
5-9	110*	101*	93	86	94	87
10-14	97*	105*	106*	96*	89	82
15-19	133*	111*	86	89	94	82
20-24	142*	102*	125*	102*	81	82
25-29	78	77	95	69	84	69
30-34	38	33	65	65	79	58
35-39	71	74	35	31	60	60
40-44	130*	124*	68	71	34	30
45-49	126*	125*	119*	114*	62	65
50-54	99*	103*	119*	119*	113*	108*
55-59	89	91	88	98	106*	113*
60-64	54	69	77	87	76	94
65-69	64	92	47	67	67	84
70-74	80	91	55	87	40	64
75-79	55	84	64	90	44	86
80-84	39	97	38	76	44	81
85+	27	81	28	107*	27	98
Subtotal	1534*	1656*	1411	1551	1297	1440
Total	3190*		2962		2737	

\* denotes highest categories

Source: North Dakota Census Data Center 1993 Report #21

**Table 12. Slope County Population Projections**

(Includes Amidon and Marmarth)

Based on 1/3 1980-1990 Migration Rates

Age-Gender Distribution

Age	2000		2005		2010	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4	33	31	36	34	33*	31*
5-9	30	26	32	27	34*	30*
10-14	31	25	29	25	31	25
15-19	41*	29*	29	22	27	22
20-24	44*	29*	39*	27	28	21
25-29	18	22	29	19	26	17
30-34	13	8	15	18	24	16
35-39	17	16	12	8	14	18
40-44	36	42*	16	16	11	8
45-49	38	29	33	40*	15	15
50-54	32	22	36	28	31	39*
55-59	15	19	29	21	32	26
60-64	17	20	13	18	25	20
65-69	23	25	14	15	11	14
70-74	19	15	19	21	12	13
75-79	10	14	12	12	12	17
80-84	7	16	6	11	7	10
85+	4	5	4	10	3	10
Subtotal	428*	393*	403	372	376	350
Total	821*		775		726	

\* denotes highest categories

Source: North Dakota Census Data Center 1993 Report #21

**Table 13. North Dakota Total Income, Annual Average Earnings for Regions and Select Counties in 1996**

<u>Area</u>	<u>Annual Average Earnings</u>
Region 1 (Williston area)	\$19,832
Region 2 (Minot area)	\$19,259
Region 3 (Cavalier/Langdon area)	\$18,218
Region 4 (Grand Forks area)	\$20,352
Region 5 (Fargo/W Fargo/Wahpeton area)	\$23,162
Region 6 (Jamestown/V City/Lamoure area)	\$17,648
Region 7 (Bismarck/Mandan area)	\$23,367
<b>Region 8 (Bowman, Hettinger, Medora area)</b>	<b>\$18,070</b>
Cass County (Fargo/ West Fargo area)	\$23,480
Grand Forks County (Grand Forks area)	\$20,772
Sargent County (Gwinner, Wyndmere area)	\$28,071
Richland County (Wahpeton area)	\$22,575
Oliver County (Center area)	\$35,832
Mercer County (Beulah/Hazen area)	\$33,161
Burleigh County (Bismarck area)	\$23,219
<b>Adams County (Hettinger area)</b>	<b>\$17,567</b>
<b>Bowman County (Bowman/Rhame area)</b>	<b>\$15,860</b>
<b>Slope County (Amidon/Marmarth area)</b>	<b>\$18,807</b>
North Dakota (entire state average)	\$21,235

Source: The State of North Dakota: Economic, Demographic, Public Service, and Fiscal Conditions by Coon and Leistritz, NDSU Agriculture Economics 1998.

**Table 14. Canadian Population Estimates 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016****(In thousands)**

Age	2001 Residents		2006 Residents		2011 Residents		2016 Residents	
	<u>Rank</u>		<u>Rank</u>		<u>Rank</u>		<u>Rank</u>	
30-34	4	2,633.3	5	2328.3	5	2416.1	4	2541.4
35-39	1	2668.2	3	2479.5	4	2443.0	5	2530.4
40-44	2	2388.8	1	2782.9	3	2544.5	6	2509.9
45-49	3	2159.9	2	2734.2	1	2801.9	3	2569.9
50-54	6	1672.6	4	2391.1	2	2722.0	1	2791.4
55-59	12	1333.1	10	2113.8	7	2362.0	2	2688.7
Total	4	31877.3	3	33677.5	2	35420.3	1	37119.8

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, July 30, 1998 web site, copyrighted.

**Table 15. Profile of Residents in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Canada, 1997**

Category	Manitoba	Saskatchewan
Education	86% no college degree	87% no college degree
Average income	\$22,667	\$22,541
Average family income	\$50,236	\$49,483
Single	505,591 people	454,596 people
Married*	529,053 people	472,961 people

\*Includes persons legally married, legally married and separated, and persons living in common-law unions.

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, July 30, 1998 web site, copyrighted.

**Table 16. Profile of International Leisure Visitors to the US, 1996\***

<u>Destinations</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>Visitation (000)</u>	<u>Change from '96 to '97</u>
California	28	6,436	7.2%
Florida	28	6,073	6.4%
New York	20	5,274	9.8%
Hawaiian Islands	14	3,073	0.5%
Nevada	9.1	2,202	6.8%
Washington, D.C.	5	***	***
Texas	4.3	1,040	6.8%
Arizona	4.0	968	-2.9%
Illinois	4	1,137	-3.5%
Colorado	2	532	-6.0%
Minnesota	1.1	266	-2.1%
Montana	.2	48	6.8%
North Dakota	**	**	**
South Dakota	**	**	**

\* Excludes visitors from Canada and Mexico

\*\* State visitation estimates not shown are due to low sample size of overseas visitors

\*\*\*Not listed

<u>Residence of Travelers to the U.S.</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Western Europe	41
United Kingdom	14
Germany	9
France	4
Italy, Netherlands, Switzerland	2
Spain, Sweden	1
South America	11
Brazil	4
Venezuela, Argentina	2
Asia	34
Japan	24
South Korea	3
Taiwan	2
Hong Kong, P.R. of China	1
Australia	2
Middle East	2
Africa	1

Source: Tourism Industries, International Trade Administration. 5/98.

Continued

**Table 16. Continued: Profile of International Leisure Visitors to the US, 1996**

<u>Travel Companions:</u>		<u>Nights Spent in the US:</u>	
Traveling Alone	20%	Median	8
Spouse	35%	<u>Traveling History:</u>	
Family/Relatives	32%	First Time Visitors	32%
Friends	19%	Repeat Visitors	68%
Business Associates	6%	<u>U.S. Trips in Last 5 Years:</u>	
Tour Group	5%	Mean # of Trips	4.8
<u>Travel Party Size: (persons):</u>		Median # of Trips	2.0
Adults Only	89%	<u>Number of States Visited:</u>	
Adults and Children	11%	One	64%
Median Party Size	2	Two	18%
<u>Main Purpose of Trip:</u>		Three or More	18%
Leisure/Recreation/Holiday	76%	<u>Number of Destinations Visited:</u>	
Business/Professional	7%	Median	2
Visit Friends/Relatives	10%	<u>Leisure/Recreational Activities:</u>	
Convention/Conference	4%	Shopping	93%
Study/Teaching	1%	Dining in Restaurants	82%
<u>Transportation in the U.S.:</u>		Sightseeing in Cities	51%
Taxi	38%	Amusement/Theme Parks	41%
Rented Auto	39%	Visit Historical Places	36%
Airline in the U.S.	30%	Visit Small Towns	36%
Private Auto	24%	Water Sports/Sunbathing	36%
City Subway/Bus	22%	Touring the Countryside	29%
Bus between Cities	13%	Guided Tours	26%
Railroad between Cities	7%	Visit National Parks	25%
Recreational Vehicle	3%	Cultural/Heritage Sights	24%
<u>Average Total Trip Cost:</u>		Art Gallery, Museum	21%
Per Visitor	\$4,080	Nightclub/Dancing	16%
<u>Average Costs in U.S.:</u>		Concert/Play/Musical	15%
Per Visitor	\$2,048	Casinos/Gambling	15%
Per Visitor Per Day	\$ 209	Golf/Tennis	11%
<u>Categories of Expenditures:</u>		Cruises, 1 or more nights	9%
Lodging	25%	Attend Sports Event	8%
Gifts & Souvenirs	24%	Ethnic Heritage Sights	8%
Food/Beverages	18%	Visit Am. Indian Areas	7%
Transportation	16%	Camping/Hiking	6%
Entertainment	9%	Ecotourism	4%
Other	9%	Snow skiing	2%

Continued

**Table 16. Continued: Profile of International Leisure Visitors to the US, 1996**

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Trip Expenses Payment Method:

Credit Cards	54%
Cash	34%
Travelers Checks	10%
Debit Cards	2%

Sex and Age of Traveler:

Male Adults	61%
Average age	41 years
Female Adults	39%
Average age	36 years

Occupation:

Professional/Technical	30%
Manager/Executive	27%
Clerical/Sales	15%
Student	7%
Homemaker	6%
Retired	6%
Craftsman/Factory worker	4%
Government/Military	3%

Annual Household Income:

Average	\$76,900
Median	\$63,000

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Source: Tourism Industries, International Trade Administration. 5/8.

**Table 17. Projected State Tourism Budgets, 1997-98**

1993 Ranking & State*	Projected Tourism Budget '97-'98	Change Over Previous Year
28 Alabama	9,177,112	32.0%
46 Alaska	6,606,655	-21.0%
19 Arizona	8,295,000	11.0%
33 Arkansas	10,543,950	4.0%
1 California	12,300,000	68.0%
30 Connecticut	5,505,585	7.0%
2 Florida	23,031,990	20.0%
9 Georgia	7,557,000	15.0%
18 Hawaii	27,779,570	-23.0%
41 Idaho	4,283,050	3.0%
5 Illinois	35,336,700	8.0%
26 Indiana	4,805,000	26.0%
32 Iowa	4,356,822	24.0%
37 Kansas	4,254,010	13.0%
29 Kentucky	6,375,100	2.0%
22 Louisiana	15,167,390	2.0%
40 Maine	4,223,000	55.0%
21 Maryland	8,670,366	1.0%
14 Massachusetts	17,405,000	3.0%
13 Michigan	14,794,300	34.0%
24 Minnesota	9,132,677	-3.0%
38 Mississippi	10,506,300	-4.0%
16 Missouri	13,267,150	14.0%
42 Montana	6,447,151	2.0%
39 Nebraska	2,732,100	24.0%
6 Nevada	9,116,897	-2.0%
43 New Hampshire	3,433,219	38.0%
7 New Jersey	5,282,000	-3.0%
36 New Mexico	4,769,400	-9.0%
4 New York	18,197,300	2.0%
12 North Carolina	10,368,480	15.0%
<b>5 NORTH DAKOTA</b>	<b>2,108,484</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
11 Ohio	6,500,000	2.0%
35 Oklahoma	8,835,854	23.0%
27 Oregon	2,904,425	8.0%
8 Pennsylvania	19,450,000	5.0%
51 Rhode Island	2,622,530	24.0%
23 South Carolina	14,617,000	1.0%
49 South Dakota	4,212,000	7.0%
15 Tennessee	12,395,700	- 5.0%
3 Texas	25,128,660	15.0%
34 Utah	4,586,750	6.0%
47 Vermont	5,074,470	51.0%
10 Virginia	18,322,320	5.0%
20 Washington	3,181,690	4.0%
44 West Virginia	8,011,392	8.0%
25 Wisconsin	11,680,000	- 1.0%
45 Wyoming	4,311,552	18.0%
Total	78,717,147	6.5%

Sources:\*U.S. Travel Data Center, Washington, D.C. *Impact of Travel on State Economies 1993*. Travel Industry Association of America, Washington, D.C. *State Tourism Budgets*.

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## Resource People and Organizations

- Anderson, Dr. Sharon - North Dakota Extension Service State Director, Fargo. 231-7867.
- Arithson, Linda - Bowman County Development office manager, Bowman. 523-5880.
- Berg, Francie - Hettinger author, historian, dietician, and Tourism Committee member.
- Bickel, Barb - Bowman Senior High School business teacher interested in a teen/community workshop.
- Blake, Cindy - Tourism Committee member, former Pioneer Trails Museum director, and Amidon resident.
- Borlaug, David - Lee Enterprises, Bismarck, involved in Lewis and Clark seminar April 1999.
- Brentrup, Shirley - Roosevelt-Custer Planning Council, Dickinson. E.Z. Zone knowledge. 227-1241.
- Brown, Erin - Hettinger Experiment Station intern and rural Marmarth resident.
- Bucholz, Kevin - Tri-County Tourism Committee Chair, North Winds Lodge owner-Bowman. 523-5641.
- Burke, Joanne - ND Tourism Department Deputy Director, Bismarck. 328-3505 or 1-800-Hello-ND.
- Butz, Rolf - Custom Data computer and video co-owner along with Ryan Jilek, and designed Dickinson web site and video to promote southwest ND. 225-3036.
- Childers, Beryl - Marmarth Historical Society member.
- Conley, Barb - Tourism Committee member and Bowman resident. 523-3283.
- Coyle, Kathy - Tourism report researcher, NDSU, Fargo. 231-6370.
- Davis, Bill - USDA Rural Development, Bismarck. 800-582-7584 or 250-4781.
- Dilse, Carol - Tri-County Jobs Creation Committee Chair, Scranton.
- Dorgan, Darrel - ND Cowboy Hall of Fame Director, Medora but based in Bismarck.
- Dukart, Ken - Roosevelt-Custer Planning Council, Dickinson. Grant administrator. 227-1241.
- Dukart, Melanie - USDA Rural Economic Development, Dickinson. 800-688-2251 or 225-9168.
- Dvorak, Kevin - ND Community Foundation President, Bismarck. 222-8349.

Eggl, Mike - US Senator Byron Dorgan's aid, Bismarck. 250-4618.

Erickson, Rev. Jerry - Amidon Lutheran Church.

Fargo-Moorhead Convention and Visitors Bureau - Cole Carley, Director; Cindy Wagner; and Sylvia Garcia, Fargo.

Ferrel, Linda - Marmarth Historical Society president.

Flint Advertising - Fargo company that designed Dickinson CVB's brochure on southwest ND.

Forum Communications - Features editor, Cathy Zaiser and reporter Erin Froslic. 235-7311.

Fuglie, Jim - Kransler-Kingsley Advertising, Bismarck. Former ND Tourism Director and Hettinger native.

Gerard, Sister - University of Mary Elderhostel coordinator willing to share knowledge.

Goplin, Jim - Tourism Committee member and Hettinger banker. 567-4531.

Greater North Dakota Association (GNDA) - Lyle Halvorson, public relations, Bismarck. 222-0929 or 800-382-1405.

Hanson, Jennifer and John - Logging Cross Ranch owners, rural Amidon.

Harmon, Randy - ND Parks and Recreation, Bismarck. 328-5358.

Hatzenbuhler, Randy - Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation President. 800-633-6721.

Hehn, Wendy - Adams County Development and Dakota Buttes Visitor Council office manager, Hettinger. 567-2531.

Houn, Marion - ND Tourism Department bus tour coordinator, Bismarck. 800-Hello-ND.

Huso, Don - Bowman City Police Chief involved in fishing derby at Bowman-Haley Lake.

Hohbein, Suzanne - Bowman County Deputy Sheriff involved in youth fishing derby.

Hoganson, John - ND State Paleontologist, Bismarck. 328-8000.

Hornbacher, Dean - Owner of Hornbacher's Grocery Stores in Fargo and Moorhead. Willing to help southwestern ND advertise through his stores.

Isern, Dr. Tom - NDSU History professor who completed a historical/architectural display for the museum in Bowman in 1998. 231-8339.

Jorgenson, Tom and Rose - Country Store and Cafe owners, Amidon. 879-6295.

Kaldor, Connie - Mayville State University Elderhostel coordinator willing to share knowledge.

Killion, Rick - Fargo advertising executive who designed Hettinger's logo and hunts there.

Klewin, Cal - Bowman Economic Development Director, Tourism Committee member.  
523-5880.

Knudson, Diana - University Relations Director, Dickinson State University also member of the CVB Board and interested in the university's role in tourism. 227-2787.

Kudrna, Bob - Adams County Development Corporation Executive Director - Hettinger Tourism Committee member. 567-2531.

Landblom, Rod - Roosevelt-Custer Planning Council Director, Dickinson. 227-1241.

Lang, Kathy - Dickinson State University Continuing Education Director and Elderhostel coordinator.

Langemo, Cathy - Project Back Home coordinator, Mandan.

League, Alice & Larry - Dickinson Dinosaur Museum Director and Paleontologist.

LeClerc, Ron - ND Economic Development and Finance, Director of Community and Rural Development. 328-5300.

Leitch, Dr. Jay - NDSU Interim Dean of College of Business Administration, Fargo. He's researched for NDGF and NDPR.

Link, Jody Braaten - Former Deputy Director ND Tourism and now ED & F Marketing Director, Bismark. 328-5300.

Lorge, Marie - Georgia's and the Owl Restaurant owner and Amidon resident. 879-6289.

Lorge, Pat - Slope County Sheriff, Amidon. 879-6276.

Loux, Dacotah Jay - Marmarth resident interested in the creation of Cyber Stop. He's reachable through the Past Times Restaurant. 279-9843.

Manikowske, Linda - North Dakota State University Textile/merchandising professor, willing to workshops in the tri-county area.

Markegaard, Wayne - Adams County Extension Agent, Hettinger Experiment Station.

Martin, Bob - Bowman-Haley Dam Manager, Army Corps of Engineers, Jamestown, ND.

Martinson, Bob - ND Tourism Department Director, Bismarck. 800-Hello-ND.

Miller, Allan - KXJB Television News anchor and reporter. 282-0444.

Miller, DuWayne - Varmint Hunters Association representative in ND and Devils Lake businessman.

Miller, Jim - Bowman County Fair Board President and businessman.

Miller, Stacey - Slope County Treasurer, Amidon. 879-6276.

Miller, Stephen - ND Economic Development and Finance, Bismarck, Community Economic Development Coordinator. 328-5300.

Nelson, Dr. Bill - North Dakota State University Department of Agriculture Economics professor and Quentin Burdick Co-op Center Director, Fargo. Supervisor of this project. 231-1016.

ND Extension Service Technology Specialists - Rhonda Conlon and Jason Eide, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

ND Department of Transportation - Ben Kubischta, rest stop and ISTEPA funding coordinator. Reiny Keller, signage expert. Jeff Patten, traffic statistics expert.

NDSU Theater Department - Joy Erickson and Lori Horvik.

Nudell, Dan - Hettinger Experiment Station, Hettinger, N.D.

Owen, Wally - Former Peaceful Valley Ranch operator and national officer in a horseback riding concession organization, willing to share knowledge.

Perry, Patty - Marmarth Mayor and former Historical Society President.

Potter, Tracy - Fort Lincoln Foundation Executive Director, Mandan.

Rafferty, Leann - Tourism Committee member and owner of the Western Way Depot, Bowman 523-3174.

Rathge, Richard - ND Census Bureau, NDSU, Fargo.

Reichenberg, Lori - Owner Past Times Restaurant and Marmarth Historical Society volunteer. 279-9843.

Ross, Sherri - Dahkotch Lodge Guest Ranch owner, rural Medora, willing to share knowledge. 800-508-4897 or 623-4897 or [www.dahkotchlodge.com](http://www.dahkotchlodge.com)

Rust, Jodi Uecker - Vice President Great Plains Software, Fargo and native of Hettinger.

Sarabakhsh, Mort - NDSU Hotel/motel professor and industry consultant willing to do workshops in the tri-county area.

Schultz, Bryan - Former Dickinson Chamber of Commerce President, now at Fargo-Moorhead Chamber in charge of special events.

Schneider, Lois - US Senator Kent Conrad's aid, Fargo. Bowman native. 232-8030.

Schouweiler, Donna - ND Parks and Recreation, Bismarck, Public Information Director. 328-5358.

Selvig, Daron - KVLY Television News anchor and talk show host. 237-5211.

Shoop, Holly Bastow - NDSU Retail merchandising/textiles department chair, willing to do workshops in the tri-county area.

Sturn, Gerald - ND Extension Service Southwest District Director, Bismarck.

Thiel, Terri - Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau Executive Director. 225-4988.

Thompson, Patsy - ND Arts Council Executive Director, Bismarck.

Tweeten, Kathy - ND Extension Service Community Development Specialist, Bismarck. 221-6865.

University of Minnesota Extension Service Tourism Center, St. Paul, Bill Gartner, Director  
Cynthia Messer, Assistant. 612-624-4947.

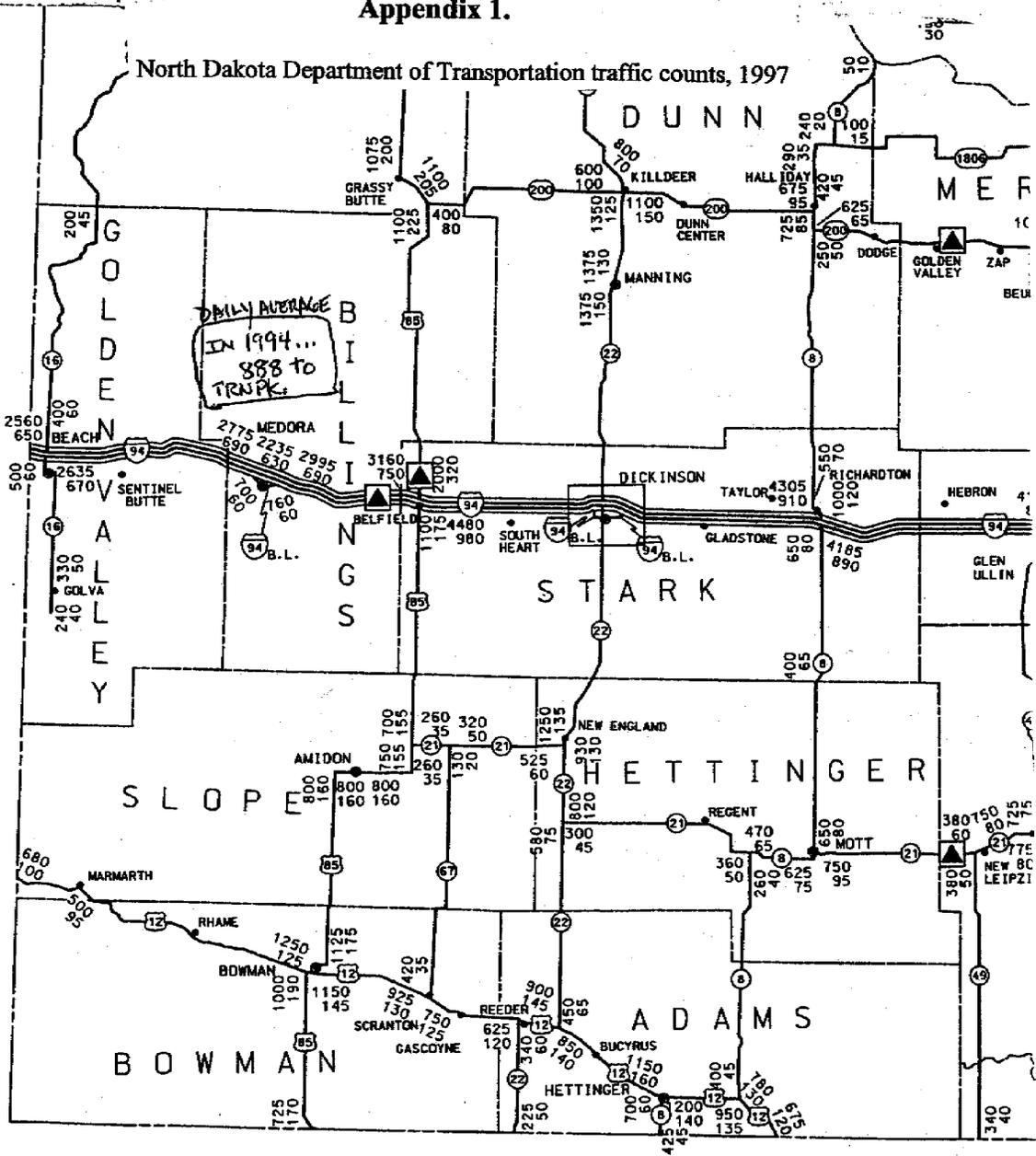
VanDaele, Angeline - Owner of White Butte, North Dakota's highest point. 879-6236.

Wanner, Lois - Knife River Ranch owner 983-4290 or [www.dakmall.com/kitv](http://www.dakmall.com/kitv)

Waltos, Arlys - US Forest Service, Bismarck.

Yeater, Royce - Architect specializing in historic buildings, Fargo. 280-2084.

### Appendix 1.



### TRAFFIC LEGEND

- AADT (Average Annual Daily Traffic) - 2500
- COMMERCIAL TRUCK TRAFFIC - 150
- THE TRAFFIC FIGURES ARE THE TOTAL AT THE CLOSEST HIGHWAY INTERSECTION OR TOWN.

CAD MAP PRODUCED BY THE CARTOGRAPHY SECTION  
PROGRAM AND PLANNING DIV. NDDOT



Appendix 2.

Hospitality Survey  
Adams, Bowman, and Slope Counties  
June 29, 1998

To: Operators of motels, gas stations, gift shops, barber shops, stores, restaurants, activity sites, chambers, civic organizations, and others involved in the hospitality business in southwestern North Dakota.

\*\*\*\*\*

Please take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to possibly make it busier in the future! You are invited to take part in a research study by completing the attached survey. I am working with a community group from Adams, Bowman, and Slope Counties who are assessing the current and future potential for tourism/business in your area. You will be invited to a community discussion in a few months on the general results of this survey and ways to increase visitors and income. Your name will not be attached to specific answers, instead that will be kept confidential. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, just skip it, but the more you share, the more helpful it will be in planning. If you have any questions, please call or write me at NDSU.

Please keep this letter for future reference and only return the white survey sheet. We'd appreciate your reply within the next *few days*. If we don't receive your completed survey, we'll give you a call to make sure you get a chance to be heard.

Thank you for your participation. I'll buy you a cup of coffee and dessert when we meet a few months from now!

Kathy Coyle  
NDSU  
Box 5636  
Fargo, N.D. 58105-5636  
Phone 701-231-6370

Appendix 2. Continued.

Survey of Hospitality Providers

June 29, 1998

Please **circle** your reply and feel free to comment further. If you don't want to answer a question, just skip it. Your specific answers will be kept confidential and will only be reviewed by this NDSU researcher. She will then compile general trends for you and your colleagues in the tri-counties. Please return this within a few days. Thank you.

**1. "Tourists" are defined as guests to your community, whether they are from Dickinson, Minneapolis, or Europe. What percentage of your business is gained from tourists? (Circle)**

5% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Comment (if you want):

**2. Which of these six groups is your target customer/audience? (Circle)**

Teenagers, Young adults without children,  
Young families, Single parent families  
35-55 yr. olds with children, 35-55 yr. olds without children  
or Senior citizens

Comment with **percentages if more than one age group**

**3. How far are these tourists from home?**

Less than 60 miles \_\_\_\_\_ %  
61- 200 miles \_\_\_\_\_ %  
201- 400 miles \_\_\_\_\_ %  
more than 400 U.S. miles \_\_\_\_\_ %  
from Canada \_\_\_\_\_ %  
from Europe \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_ %

Comment with **specific home towns that seem to dominate** \_\_\_\_\_.

**4. What types of advertising do you use annually and to what extent (percentage)?**

	<u>Check if used</u>	<u>Percentage of budget</u>
Local newspapers	_____	_____
Yellow pages	_____	_____
Local radio ads, interviews	_____	_____
Dickinson radio	_____	_____
Other radio stations	_____	_____
Dickinson television ads, announcements	_____	_____
Other television stations	_____	_____
Brochures	_____	_____
Posters, fliers	_____	_____
Billboards	_____	_____
Ad in the annual State Tourism Booklet	_____	_____
Ad in Going Places Magazine	_____	_____
Ad in Old West Explorer Magazine	_____	_____

Other publications \_\_\_\_\_  
 Advertising through affiliations (i.e., AAA, Best Western, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Internet site (individual co. or event) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Direct mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Total annual marketing budget in dollars** (optional question) \_\_\_\_\_

**6. How many nights a trip, do you think most of your visitors spend in the tri-counties?**  
 Zero, One night, Two nights, Three nights, Four nights, or More than four

**7. How many trips a year do most of them make to the tri-counties?**  
 One, Two, Three, Four, or More than four

**8. Do you keep a data base of your customers for use in marketing by direct mail, email or phone** (their name, address, interests, etc.)?  
 Yes No

Comment:

**9. In which areas would you welcome tips in order to increase your business?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Marketing/publicity,
- \_\_\_\_\_ Budgeting,
- \_\_\_\_\_ Staff recruitment & retention,
- \_\_\_\_\_ Staff customer service training,
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mentoring from another business person
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fundraising,
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appearance of business (sign, layout of merchandise, etc)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Legal issues(liability, personnel, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Changes in the law (local, state, or federal)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please explain):

**10. Are there any other specific questions you'd like addressed by research or by your community tourism committee?**

Comment:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Business or community organization you are representing with these answers:

Full Address:

Phone numbers at work (w) and home (h): \_\_\_\_\_ Thank you!

### Appendix 3.

## Public Tourism Survey Summer 1998

You are invited to participate in this voluntary tourism survey aimed at helping North Dakotans better serve the public. Your response will remain anonymous. The general findings will be presented to business people and community organizers who are anxious to learn how to increase business in our state. If you don't want to answer a question, just skip to the next one. If you have any questions or comments, you may contact us at NDSU where we are conducting this research. Please mail this completed survey back to **Cass County Electric** with your monthly utility payment. Thanks for your help!

Kathy Coyle  
North Dakota State University  
Box 5636 Fargo, N.D. 58105-5636  
Phone: 701-231-6370

*When answering these questions, please consider a "vacation" as a break from your normal routine. Your "vacation" might be very short and not far from home or it can be lengthy with many miles covered.*

**1. What was the destination of your last vacation (city and/or state)?** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Circle your top 3 places to vacation:**

Minnesota lakes area	Washington D.C.
Colorado	East Coast-U.S.
Montana	West Coast-U.S.
Minneapolis-St. Paul	Mexico
Western North Dakota	Southwest U.S.
Disneyland or Disneyworld	South Dakota
Nevada	Europe
Other (please indicate)	_____

**3. How far away from home do you usually travel during your vacation?**

\_\_\_\_\_ (one way estimate in miles)

**4. Please tell us about yourself...**

\_\_\_\_\_ Male or Female

\_\_\_\_\_ Age

\_\_\_\_\_ How many days a year do you travel away from home on vacation?

\_\_\_\_\_ How many days do you usually spend on vacation each year?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you prefer accommodations & events that cost *less, average, or luxury prices*?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you usually travel as a single, as a couple, a family w/youngsters, or a family w/older children?

Continued.

**Appendix 3. Continued.**

**5. Please rate all of the “free time” activities you have done with a number between 0 & 5.**  
(5 indicates you’ve enjoyed them the most, a 0 indicates you greatly dislike these activities)

*Shopping categories:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Shopping in a unique atmosphere (i.e. historic or ethnic, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shopping for antiques
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shopping at a mall

*Sightseeing categories:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Bird watching
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seeing historic sites
- \_\_\_\_\_ Viewing natural scenery
- \_\_\_\_\_ Picnicking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spectator at sporting events
- \_\_\_\_\_ Looking for dinosaur bones/paleontology
- \_\_\_\_\_ Photography

*Sports categories:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Motorcycling
- \_\_\_\_\_ Horseback riding
- \_\_\_\_\_ Canoeing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Golfing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Boating, skiing, sailing, jet skiing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Playing softball
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hunting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Parachuting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Motocross/ATV’n
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ballooning
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mountain biking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hiking

*Winter sports categories:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Snowmobiling
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cross country skiing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Downhill skiing

*Other:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Gambling
- \_\_\_\_\_ Night clubs/dancing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cruising the ocean
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reading, relaxing, and/or meditating
- \_\_\_\_\_ Camping
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family activities i.e. water slide, bumper boats, go carts, and other rides.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family/child learning activities i.e. children’s museum, musicals for children
- \_\_\_\_\_ Learning about the Native American culture/history
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ranch stay and cowboy experiences riding, branding, campfire sing-a-longs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attending ethnic festivals/demonstrations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cultural events such as concerts and plays
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attending agricultural shows/festivals(fairs)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Going to movies (away from your hometown)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other, explain:

- 6. Now please go back to the above list and *circle* those you’d like to try, but just haven’t yet.**
- 7. Any other suggestions for merchants and community leaders hoping to better serve the public in North Dakota?**

**Please return this survey in your Cass County Electric envelope...Thanks!**

## Appendix 4.

### Comments made by respondents on the Public Tourism Survey

#### **Question #10: Any suggestions for merchants and community leaders hoping to better serve the traveling public in North Dakota?**

- 2. No.
- 8. Clean rest areas, motels and restaurants.
- 9. Improve accommodations in Medora.
- 13. Need better method of getting events into the public's hands both on the local and tourist level.
- 16. (Medora) better eating facilities such as Embers, Randy's, Denny's, a sit down non-fast food restaurant.
- 20. The people in Fargo, I live in this community, drive like maniacs!! Better law enforcement.
- 25. Emphasize the awesomeness of the Badlands. Highway rest areas need improvement especially in numbers.
- 27. No.
- 29. No.
- 36. Increase the Interstate speed limit to match South Dakota (75 mph).
- 37. Think they are doing a great job!
- 43. Keep up the friendly attitudes!
- 50. Whatever you do, do it well. If you can't do it well, don't do it at all. Basic facilities in good shape are better than fancy facilities in poor shape. Keep things clean. Use the technology if you can to handle it. Emphasize the low crime rate, then keep it low, then emphasize it again. Keep prices reasonable. Have gasoline available evenings and weekends.
- 65. More rest areas.
- 66. More lodging in Medora.
- 67. No.
- 73. I think ND does a good job. The main reason we have chosen to vacation in far away places is that we don't have children yet. When we start our family, we will spend more time vacationing near home. Of course in the winter months, it's nice to go away to somewhere warm.
- 86. Nope. Everything is fine just the way it is.
- 87. Air that video with Schafer in it more. It's really good.
- 91. The end to construction! Fix it during the night or when I'm not on the road. Put up some trees. When traveling the freeway Wall Drug signs are tacky!
- 101. There just isn't much to see in ND but what is here is nice and clean.
- 102. Advertise.
- 120. Fair prices, clean facilities.
- 122. Make sure all employees are well informed about their local area.
- 125. None.
- 127. No.
- 134. Accurate maps and directions.
- 137. More advertising in local daily newspapers, "Going Places" magazine mailed free to all addresses at least every 3-6 months.
- 141. ND needs to pay better wages to its employees, wages from \$6-\$8 an hour doesn't cut it!
- 142. None.

Continued.

147. Discounts for state residents.
148. Provide more historic awareness.
153. Don't focus so much on the historical sites. Although they're interesting and one selling point, there are others, biking, hiking, concerts, plays, etc.
163. No.
166. Get gambling in Medora!
172. Billboards telling which exit the mall's are on and also billboards for grocery stores, camping. We travel in a motor home and even if we're not staying in a particular city, we stop at malls and grocery stores as we travel through.
173. Re-open rest areas, modernize and clean-up.
180. Must do more advertising.
181. We have a great state. Roads, shopping, entertainment are all assets to our state!
182. Don't over commercialize things. There is great beauty and charisma in the natural land ND has to offer.
186. Just to let the public know what's available in that area (highlight the areas of interest)!
188. Communities could publicize their early history, bonanza farming, etc.
190. Not all of us are interested in seeing bison, riding horses, etc. Camping and hiking are most fun, downhill skiing, etc.
192. More advertising. Ability to have easy accessibility to maps and campgrounds. Phone numbers to call.
194. I don't know yet as we've just purchased a 5<sup>th</sup> wheel for travel in our area and have young children! Next year we plan to visit state parks and Mount Rushmore, all in our area!
195. Put specials in Sunday papers of scenic stuff and hotel specials.
199. Better maps, more advertising.
202. Safe rest stops.
212. Be open Sunday morning. Keep open late in summer, especially holiday weekends. Advertise ethnic foods and historical products at retail locations.
218. Advertise events and amenities in newspapers.
220. More and better rest areas, better round signs, more roadside attractions.
229. Need more "child appropriate" entertainment, i.e., water parks, indoor playgrounds, zoo with children's section (Baltimore has an excellent one), outdoor historical sites, etc.
233. Keep prices in line. More camping areas with "very clean facilities" for those of us that aren't self contained!
241. Develop reasons to stop and market those reasons.
247. Lower gas prices west of Fargo!
250. We like to vacation in ND but usually do it in long weekends or at beginning or end of longer vacations. The rate at the Badlands Motel was quite high.
254. Make it more fun for younger kids.
258. None.
259. At travel centers a copy of The Forum, home newspapers that truly show a personal touch and the newspapers from each tourist center which projects the love of the area.
262. When a person doesn't walk good and when they do go out you are in a chair, not much to do outdoors. Wish there were more things to do.
263. At age 82 and alone its good to be home.
266. Montana speed limits going from East to West (I-94). Make North Dakota/Montana — "The great American Auto bon." It would attract people from around the entire country!
269. Advertise your services better.

Continued.

270. Advertise/emphasize.
272. Keep rest stops open and clean, highways are already good. Have related info available.
274. No, they are doing a pretty good job.
277. My income doesn't include traveling.
288. I did my traveling before retiring. Now it's short trips to visit relatives.
290. Advertise more.
292. Small coffee houses and walking trails. Also swimming areas (public).
297. In March I went to Billings, Montana for two weeks, stopped in Medora, ND and couldn't find a cup of coffee! Nothing open at 11 am!
310. Wayside info more.
317. Places for lodging and also where an RV can stay.
321. None so far. Our vacations normally consist of visiting relatives and spending time with them and not necessarily doing the "extra" activities.
323. Businesses should be open more hours of day such as open late, open on Sunday, open after 6pm Sunday.
324. More fall activities.
329. Channel 4 Bruce Asbury's Trip on a Tankfull has done a lot to promote local tourism among people I know. Something similar makes people aware of local attractions.
330. Stop pretending every town is a tourist mecca. Stop pretending every town needs a "Fargo Dome." North Dakota is the way California was when I was a kid growing up there. I fled California because of what tourism did to that state. Don't turn the Dakotas into a disaster like California and Oregon and Washington have become! I love the open country in North Dakota. Save her beauty from the tourist virus!
333. Do you have enough nice rest stops?
334. None.
339. No.
341. More places to relax at near the places we visit.
345. Get another airline.
353. Nothing at this time.
354. Drop the speed limit during the daytime.
357. Lottery, better rest areas, more than just shopping on eastern part of state (zoo is great, amusement park, etc.)
401. North Dakota needs a large water slide park.
404. Make fun attractions!!
410. Free lodging. We paid \$50 a nite.
414. Doing a great job!
415. None.
419. Have more bus tours.
427. No real suggestions.
431. No.
434. Get out to city people not to eye you like you don't belong there!
436. Advertise your services. I don't know what's out there.
438. No.
439. Be unique.
448. Get rid of tourist trap offenders. Be North Dakotans. Not like New York cons.
451. We farm and have young children. Not much chance to go on "vacation."
452. Open shops earlier.

Continued.

453. Need more attractions and better accommodations.
464. More funds for zoo animals. It is an exciting day, always a new adventure watching animals.
474. Market the Badlands, Teddy Roosevelt National Park.
475. Camping information.
477. Get message out as to what's interesting/fun. I don't see much from ND.
482. There are no luxury hotels in Minot. Travel from Fargo to Minot was poor! Bad highways, no good places to stop.
483. Discount packages with travel destination places.
486. Discounts on activities.
508. Cass County tours should be prior to school starting
512. Clean restroom and maintained in parks, restaurants, and vacation spots, friendly hosts, ticket people, guides, hotel check-in, parking facilities, information on what to see.
514. Keep up advertising regards to western ND in eastern ND. Too many in the FM area think this is all there is and nothing else is important! Boo.
516. We drove by signs that said we were driving by the unpainted or painted canyon and Medora. I wish I knew more about these places. I would like to see and learn more about ND. Also the Peace Gardens.
518. Promote uniqueness and wide open spaces.
524. More advertising, more info/brochures out there, maybe through the mail. I really don't know what there is to see in ND.
525. I've been to the Medora musical twice. Once my reservations were lost. Oh well, I shall return. I think more western ND history should be highlighted.
529. Past advertise what is there, and when it is going on.
533. Promote Eastern ND and not only Western ND.
534. Get the word out, over 50% of the nation thinks this state is a joke, publicize that our Badlands are prettier than SD's.
542. More motels in Medora (Day's Inn, Comfort Inn, Select Inn). Reasonable priced places to stay.
544. Keep prices at a minimum, promote family discounts, (we have a family of 6) offer coupons and advertise this.
545. More clubs for dancing for people under 21!!
546. Package discounts.
560. As a family in 1995 we traveled the state of ND and greatly enjoyed it. Actually surprised at the history and things to see and do.
563. Promote eastern ND, Peace Gardens, and Red River Valley events.
565. They are doing a good job, weather and lack of population hurts the travel industry.
566. We like amusement centers with go-carts, arcade, water slide, rides (The Wave at Valley Fair!), mini-golf. Things we can do actively, OUTSIDE, as a family!
567. Need something to do in Medora between time park tours completed and beginning of musical.
568. Invite some people to hunt, etc. Make a video of it. They need to promote the state much better. Try to invite some notable celebrities who might do an ad for the state, etc. A big undertaking should be commenced to promote rural towns as summer retirement places.
569. Keep up the good work, advertise! Market the positives.
579. Clean up rest areas. Highway signs.
580. We are new to this area and haven't been to the West and have no idea if anything is out there besides Medora (just for young children it seems) and buffalo in Jamestown. I'd enjoy information.
581. Events, festivals that are promoted in the Fargo area.
584. No. They do a good job as it is.

Continued.

587. Find a way to make everyone more aware of events in each community.
593. More rest stops.
610. No rain.
611. None!
612. Fix the highways. Increase the speed limit on Interstates to 75.
613. Better or more traffic signs. White lines on University need work. Needs to be more eclectic.
617. The best thing I liked in Bismarck was the Street Fair, but I go to that now in Fargo.
620. Keeping the prices down so a whole family can enjoy things together without it costing \$100 per event.
625. A pamphlet of Bed and Breakfast locations and activities, cost.
627. Remember the elderly and the handicapped.
633. Stop promoting ND as the place to go where people still ride horseback, covered wagons and live in “little house on the prairie” houses. Those ads reinforce the stereotype that we are backwards. Still living in the past, etc. Old fashioned. What else do we have to offer? How about something contemporary!
635. I get a charge out of signs that say “Try our \_\_\_\_.” To me it should be “Enjoy our \_\_\_\_.”
637. Highlight the new and exciting golf courses throughout the state.
649. Offer packages at average rates taking into consideration average to lower income households (married college students for example).
654. Water slide at Medora!
664. Better camping facilities. It’s quite a long drive from Fargo to Medora with little to do in between. After one full day my family is ready to move on.
673. A great water park for the kids would be of interest.
674. No.
675. Get a different tourist coordinator for ND.
690. I feel everything has already been made readily accessible.
691. Better and more access to private hunting land, everything’s posted.
699. I like ND the way it is.
701. Info in hotel rooms, re: finding local services, restaurants, attractions. How to get there, costs, etc.
712. Most people in Eastern ND don’t know anything of Western ND. Minnesota is advertised here more than ND!
713. Make sure the rest stops are clean. Some type of rating system of camping sites in the tourism magazine would be nice.
714. Friendlier, hunter specials, better service.
715. Don’t have the Interstate ripped up all summer. Hard to travel that way.
719. No.
724. More advertising.
732. Make some scenic lakes with trees and wildlife.
734. Make available guest registrations with full information so that future mailings of ND events can be sent out to help people be aware of what’s going on when in ND.
735. The state has so many things to offer. I just wish more would take advantage of it. Maybe a better list of things happening in the state sent to each home would help.
740. Talk to the small shop owners in MN about how they succeed. ND has to work twice as hard to get tourists.
741. We have six people in our family, coupons or discounts are always nice. It’s costly to travel as a large family.
743. Quit raising gas prices during tourist seasons. I go to places off the beaten path to avoid price gouging and crowds!

Continued.

725. Upgrade the Interstates or at least mark the bumps and holes better.
751. Advertise/ marketing spend money.
754. No.
757. Better advertising. Stress clean air and low crime rate, etc.
763. Advertise more so people know what is in ND to see (in other states too!).
774. More info at the Chamber!! Discount coupons to some place @ Medora.
775. Weekend packages with air fares for seniors (or almost seniors).
776. Buy Internet yellow pages and listings or web sites from me.
777. Definitely, get the stink out of West Fargo !!!
778. I have none. I believe our leaders have provided wisely for the traveling public. I grew up in Bowman County. I just want more time to go there and be there. The West is a perfect place to spend quiet time.
779. Be open extended hours for the convenience of travelers. It can be very hard to find a place to use a restroom!!!
782. More information on campgrounds around the state. More recreational activities, for example, go-carts, bumper boats, etc. In Minnesota they are all over.
787. None.
790. Family oriented activity/ranch.
796. Rest areas need work, smelly, gross and dilapidated and very few waste dump stations available.
800. Plan for parking of large RV's.
820. Rest areas are COLD in the winter/fall months.
830. Make a list or more ATV/snowmobile parks.
833. None.
836. Keep up the good work.
847. Coming back into Fargo traveling East I didn't notice any signs indicating what was on the various exits, i.e., shopping mall, names of restaurants, Hardees, Perkins, etc.
850. Need to smile and be friendlier.
854. No.
855. No.
854. Advertise, advertise, advertise.
861. Nope.
865. Advertise well!
866. Just give good service and information.