

**TOURISM PLANNING WORKSHOP
COMMUNITY TOURISM PLAN
TUMBLER RIDGE**

March 2014

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**COMMUNITY TOURISM FOUNDATIONS PROGRAM
DESTINATION BC
TUMBLER RIDGE COMMUNITY TOURISM PLAN**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Tumbler Ridge Community Tourism Foundations Workshop, hosted by Destination British Columbia, and the Northern BC Tourism Association, was held on March 5th, 2014. It follows up a Tourism Planning Process that was conducted in 2008, and aims to provide updated direction for Tumbler Ridge as the community further develops its tourism industry. This Community Tourism Plan summarizes the results of the workshop, which involved tourism stakeholders from the community, in addition to representatives from the District of Tumbler Ridge. It presents an overview of the destination, its main tourism products and experiences, key markets, priority challenges and opportunities, and goals, objectives, strategies and tactics to be implemented over the next 12 to 18 months. The Plan is based on input from tourism stakeholders provided during the one-day workshop, in addition to supplemental research and analysis conducted by the facilitator. The following Executive Summary presents the highlights of the larger Community Tourism Plan.

Destination Highlights

Tumbler Ridge is a small town located in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies in northeastern BC. It is a district municipality and a member municipality of the Peace River Regional District. The municipality covers 1,558 square kilometres and has a population of 2,710 people. The town was built in 1981 by the provincial government to service the coal industry as part of the British Columbia Resources Investment Corporation's Northeast Coal Development.

The Tumbler Ridge Region offers significant wilderness areas, parks, campgrounds, trails, scenic vistas, and outdoor activities that appeal to both residents and visitors. Examples of these include the following waterfalls: Kinuseo Falls, The Cascades, Bergeron Falls and Quality Falls.

The Tumbler Ridge region's tourism experiences are characterized by a range of summer and winter activities, primarily centred around outdoor recreation. Additional tourism experiences include cultural and heritage activities, sport activities and year-round festivals and events.

The area is also growing in prominence for its paleontological discoveries and research. Discoveries over the last 10 years have prompted the establishment of the Dinosaur Discovery Gallery which opened in 2007. This is the only facility of its kind in BC.

With regard to tourism services, the Tumbler Ridge Region operates a seasonal Visitor Centre. The region offers several fixed-roof accommodation properties, and recreational vehicle camp sites. The region also has a number of meeting venues. The region provides several other facilities and services, including a new recreation centre, retail shops and a performing arts theatre.

Visitor Overview

The Visitor Centre visitor volume statistics show that:

- Visitation to the Tumbler Ridge Visitor Centre experienced an overall downward trend in number of visitors to the centre from 2009 to 2013, which was consistent with trends of Visitor Centres in Northern BC as a whole.

With regard to geographic market origin, Tumbler Ridge Visitor Centre statistics show that:

- BC residents generated the largest number of visitors to the Visitor Centre (69%) in 2013 of which 10% were local residents, followed by Alberta (18%). Dinosaur Discovery Gallery/Museum statistics also show that BC residents are the largest proportion of visitors to the attraction, followed by Alberta.

In 2013, 68% of visitors to the Visitor Centre were "same day" visitors suggesting that a significant proportion of visitors to the Visitor Centre are spending a limited amount of time in the area or they are passing by/through. This presents an opportunity to encourage visitors to spend more time in the community and the area.

Discussions amongst workshop participants revealed that the following markets are important to the area's tourism industry.

Tumbler Ridge Markets: Existing Importance and Future Opportunities

Segment	Existing Importance*	Future Opportunity*
Camping (not lakes)	H	H+
Outdoor Adventure (winter)	M+	H+
Outdoor Adventure (non-winter)	M	H+
Cultural/ Heritage Events	M	H+
Touring - Independent	M+	H
Conventions/Meetings	L	H
Educational Tourism	L	H
Industrial Tours	N/A	H
School Groups	L	H

*"H+" = highest importance; "H" = high importance; "M" = moderate importance; "L" = low importance

Tourism Organizations

While Tumbler Ridge does not have a formal destination management or marketing organization that oversees tourism development and marketing, the District of Tumbler Ridge, in addition to several other organizations, actively support tourism through the operation of a Visitor Centre, funding for some tourism promotion, the operation of the Museum/Dinosaur Discovery Centre, the Community Centre, the hosting of several flagship events, in addition to other initiatives. Destination British Columbia, through Northern BC Tourism, provides support to tourism development and marketing in Tumbler Ridge through the Community Tourism Foundations program, the Community Tourism Opportunities program, in addition to other programs offered by Northern BC Tourism and Destination British Columbia.

There are opportunities to enhance current efforts to support tourism through:

- Tourism stakeholder communication and coordination with regard to tourism initiatives;
- Tourism stakeholder input regarding tourism priorities;
- Increased collaboration and partnerships with regard to positive tourism initiatives, such as the Alaska Highway Community Initiative/Alaska Highway Community Society; and,
- Continued support for positive initiatives such as:
 - The ongoing evolution of the Dinosaur Discovery Centre and associated initiatives;
 - The Geopark initiative and associated opportunities; and,
 - Flagship events such as the Emperors' Challenge and Grizfest.

Key Tourism Strengths

The review of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities was very positive. While several challenges that existed in 2008 still exist today, overall, the strengths and opportunities identified in 2008 appear to be stronger today and several new strengths and opportunities were identified by workshop participants. The most significant strengths and opportunities that Tumbler Ridge plans to capitalize on include:

- The ongoing activities related to the area's paleontological resources and the Dinosaur Discovery Centre;
- The application for the UNESCO Geopark designation, and potential opportunities related to regional satellite Geoparks and ties to other countries, such as China; and,
- The existing system of trails, iconic waterfalls, provincial parks and other natural features ideal for all forms of outdoor adventure.

Tourism Vision

Workshop participants agreed that the tourism vision created in 2008 is still relevant today. However, they did expand on the element of the vision that describes the desired future state of Tumbler Ridge as a tourism destination. The original vision is presented below, with the additional wording shown in red font.

- *Tumbler Ridge has achieved economic diversification in part through tourism development, which provides entrepreneurial opportunities and job creation.*
- *Tourism development enhances quality of life for residents by providing more services and recreational and cultural activities.*
- *By retaining the character of the community as a mountain village atmosphere, Tumbler Ridge continues to be a welcoming community with both the hospitality of the people and tourism development planning.*
 - *Tumbler Ridge is recognized as a centre of excellence for natural history education*
 - *Tumbler Ridge offers a thriving Geopark*
 - *Tumbler Ridge instils a sense of awe and wonder for residents and visitors*
 - *Tumbler Ridge is not a "side trip" but a "destination"*
 - *Tumbler Ridge is multicultural*
 - *Tumbler Ridge offers opportunities for healthy lifestyles*
- *Tourism stakeholders cooperate and collaborate to realize this tourism vision in partnership with local and regional organizations, government at all levels, residents and the business community.*
- *The industry is supported in local government policy for growth and sustainability of our environment. Tourism is organized and well represented and the tourism management function is well balanced with broad stakeholder representation and is supported by research-based planning and sustainable funding.*

Tourism Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Tactics

Overarching Goal: The overarching goal that the 2014 workshop participants identified was to diversify the Tumbler Ridge economy through tourism development and marketing.

Workshop participants discussed three tourism objectives that they would like to achieve collectively which will help them work towards achieving the overarching goal noted above.

Objective 1: Increase the length of stay of existing visitors

Objective 2: Increase the number of visitors focusing on those people who visit outside of the main events which are typically at capacity, such as the Emperors' Challenge and Grizfest

Objective 3: Increase the number of higher-yield visitors

The strategies and tactics identified to achieve the three objectives are summarized briefly below.

CATEGORY A: ORGANIZATION, COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP

Strategy A-1: Increase coordination of and communication related to tourism initiatives	Timing
Tactic A-1-1 Establish a Tumbler Ridge Tourism Working Group	Commence in June 2014

CATEGORY B: PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Strategy B-1: Further develop and enhance the range and types of tourism products and experiences for visitors	Timing
Tactic B-1-1 Build on the initiative to attain UNESCO Geopark designation	Ongoing
Tactic B-1-2 Develop a visitor experience plan that links the diversity of experiences available	- Phase 1: plan Visitor Experiences audit in June 2014 and conduct audit in summer 2014 - Phase 2: Host Tourism Experience Action Plan workshop in fall 2014 and implement action plan in 2015
Tactic B-1-3 Actively support activities related to the nomination of the Alaska Highway as a National Historic Site and the development of an Alaska Highway Tourism Corridor Plan	2014 – to project end
Strategy B-2: Enhance the experience for visitors	Timing
Tactic B-2-1 Improve signage	Ongoing
Tactic B-2-2 Continue support for road and highway improvements for connecting roads and access routes to/from the Tumbler Ridge area	Ongoing
Tactic B-2-3 Examine the feasibility of improving services offered through the Visitor Centre by operating year-round and possibly expanding the facility	Ongoing

CATEGORY C: MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

Strategy C-1: Increase awareness about the Tumbler Ridge Area's tourism assets and experiences	Timing
Tactic C-1-1 Evaluate marketing and promotional initiatives to ensure they support the objectives of the Community Tourism Plan and other priorities of the Tourism Working Groups	Ongoing
Tactic C-1-2 Refresh the tourism brand and brochure	- Commence discussions in Fall 2014 - Complete the updates by early 2015, in time for the 2015 high season
Tactic C-1-3 Formalize approach to working with the travel media to enhance media coverage of the region	Ongoing
Tactic C-1-4 Coordinate online tutorials to build the capacity to effectively utilize social media	2014-2015

CATEGORY D: RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Strategy D-1: Monitor the performance of the Tumble Ridge area's tourism industry	Timing
Tactic D-1-1 Coordinate the collection of visitor statistics and monitor the performance of the tourism industry	• Ongoing

CATEGORY E: ADDITIONAL PROJECTS IDENTIFIED POST-WORKSHOP TO HELP ADDRESS ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

Shortly after the CTF workshop which was held on March 5th, 2014, Walter Energy decided to idle two coal mines in northeastern British Columbia due to difficult market conditions and declining prices for metallurgical coal. One of these mines – Wolverine Mine – is located near Tumbler Ridge. The idling of this mine has resulted in over 400 job layoffs, which is negatively impacting the economy of the Tumbler Ridge area.

Since Tumbler Ridge is considered to be a community in transition, several potential projects/initiatives have been added to this Community Tourism Plan. These projects are proposed for consideration, as they have the potential to encourage tourism growth and, as a result, contribute to the community's economic transition strategies.

The projects/initiatives listed below are based on input from Destination British Columbia, the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and other community stakeholders. They need to be further discussed, prioritized and defined immediately following the establishment of the Tourism Working Group. This forms the basis for Strategy E-1, which was not discussed during the March 5th workshop, but should be carefully considered as Tumbler Ridge starts to implement this Community Tourism Plan.

Strategy E-1 Encourage tourism industry development and growth through targeted projects/ initiatives	Timing
Tactic E-1-1 Improve reservation system for camping and increase the number of dry and serviced RV sites.	• Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-2 Determine whether to proceed with developing a mountain bike tourism experience.	• Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-3 Develop an events and festivals framework	• Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-4 Support the development of authentic aboriginal cultural tourism experiences	• Ongoing
Tactic E-1-5 Support the sustainability of the Peace Region Palaeontology Research Centre (PRPRC)	• Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-6 Develop and launch social media strategy and campaign for Nordic activities	• Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-7 Coordinate a Community Heritage Values Workshop	• Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-8 Investigate the opportunity to collect the Municipal and Regional District Hotel Room Tax or ("Additional 2% Hotel Room Tax") Program	• 2014 and beyond

Next Steps

The next steps with regard to the Tumbler Ridge Community Tourism Plan are for tourism stakeholders to:

- Review the Plan in detail;
- Identify and agree upon priority tactics (if certain tactics are not priorities at this time, place them on a "holding list" to be revisited at a later date) and create an Action Plan;
- Identify who should lead and who should support the implementation of priority tactics;
- Define the budget requirements for priority tactics;
- Identify funding sources and secure funding;
- Possibly hold a "Community Forum" to present and discuss the Community Tourism Plan and priority initiatives; and,
- Proceed with implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Background

The *Community Tourism Foundations* ("CTF") program is a program of Destination British Columbia ("Destination BC") that provides resources to communities to assist with tourism planning, with the objective of strengthening the tourism industry and increasing tourism's value to the overall economy. The workshop provides stakeholders with an opportunity to help shape the future direction of their industry, focusing on strategies and tactics that can be implemented within a short-term period (approximately 12 to 18 months).

Tumbler Ridge prepared a CTF Tourism Plan in December 2008. Together with Northern BC Tourism, Tumbler Ridge was interested in updating the 2008 Tourism Plan. To this end, the CTF program sponsored a Tourism Planning Workshop, which took place on March 5th, 2014, leading to this updated CTF Community Tourism Plan. The Plan is based on input from tourism stakeholders provided during the one-day workshop, in addition to supplemental research and analysis conducted by the facilitator.

1.2 Workshop Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were as follows:

- To bring tourism stakeholders together to exchange views on the Tumbler Ridge tourism industry;
- To provide an overview of Destination BC and Northern BC Tourism with regard to Community Tourism Development and Marketing;
- To review and discuss the current status of tourism in Tumbler Ridge, including:
 - The status of initiatives that were identified in the 2008 Tourism Plan,
 - Tourism destination and product strengths,
 - Key tourism markets,
 - Key strengths and challenges with regard to tourism development and marketing; and,
- To facilitate a discussion regarding objectives, strategies and tactics that can be implemented to address key opportunities and challenges.

1.3 Workshop Participants

The workshop was attended by 15 tourism stakeholders. April Moi represented Northern BC Tourism/Destination BC and Jennifer Nichol facilitated the workshop on behalf of Destination BC.

Community Representatives

Carmen Drapeau	Chamber of Commerce
Duncan McKellar	Tumbler Ridge Community Forest
Jerrilyn Schembri	Peace River Regional District and Emperors' Challenge Committee
Curtis Yamaoka	Trend Mountain Hotel
Jim Kingaid	Tumbler Ridge Resident
Jessi Hurley	Trend Mountain Hotel
Joanne Kirby	Tumbler Ridge Days Society
Sue Pittman-Kangas	Realtor
Trent Ernst	Tumbler Ridge News
Ray Proulx	Teck Coal (Quintette)
Joy McKay	District of TR

Lisa Buckley	PRPRC
Richard T. McCrea	PRPRC
Tim Snyder	Tumbler Ridge Council
Chris Leggett	Tumbler Ridge Council/ Lake View Credit Union
Roxanne Gulick	Chamber of Commerce Wild River Adventure Tours
Charles Helm	TR Aspiring Geopark/Museum Foundation
Steve Tory	Dino High Tech Solutions
Klans Schuerkamp	Tumbler Ridge Resident
Tim Bennett	Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
John Seweryn	Tumbler Ridge Resident
Aleen Torraville	District of Tumbler Ridge
Mila Lansdowne	B&B Owner/Operator

Destination BC Representative

April Moi	Destination BC/Northern BC Tourism Association
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Facilitator (provided by Destination BC):

Jennifer Nichol	Community Tourism Foundations Facilitator
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1.4 Workshop Structure

The workshop commenced with an overview of the role of Destination BC and Northern BC Tourism in Community Tourism Development and Marketing. Trends related to global tourism and visitation in Northern BC were presented next, to provide a context for discussions regarding tourism in the Tumbler Ridge area. Participants were then asked to provide information regarding Tumbler Ridge's current tourism markets. Specifically, participants provided input regarding:

- Types of visitors;
- Their place of origin;
- When they visit; and,
- Primary purpose for the visit.

The Tumbler Ridge Visitor Centre statistics helped inform the above-noted discussions regarding current tourism markets.

Participants then discussed transportation, access and key tourism organizations and initiatives in the Tumbler Ridge areas. This was followed by a discussion about the strengths/unique features and weaknesses/issues/concerns the region faces with regard to tourism coordination, development and marketing.

The status of initiatives identified in the 2008 Tourism Plan was then discussed.

Based on these discussions, the participants were asked to identify objectives for tourism, in addition to strategies and tactics to help achieve those objectives within a 12 to 18-month timeframe.

This Plan presents the background research used to prepare for the workshop, in addition to the results of the workshop proceedings. The facilitator has provided supplemental research and analysis to ensure that the research, strategies and tactics are detailed enough to enable the Tumbler Ridge tourism stakeholders to select and implement priorities.

1.5 *Structure of This Plan*

This Plan is broken down into the following components.

- Introduction and Methodology
- Destination Overview
- Visitor Overview
- Overview of Tourism Leadership/Organization
- Tourism Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities
- Tourism Vision
- Tourism Objectives, Strategies and Tactics
- Implementation
- Conclusions and Next Steps

Appendix A: Northern BC Tourism Overview

Appendix B: 2012 In-Market Research Report – Northern BC

Appendix C: Guidelines for Tourism Working Group Membership

2 DESTINATION OVERVIEW

Tumbler Ridge is a small town located in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies in northeastern BC. It is a district municipality and a member municipality of the Peace River Regional District. The municipality covers 1,558 square kilometres and has a population of 2,710 people. The town was built in 1981 by the provincial government to service the coal industry as part of the British Columbia Resources Investment Corporation's Northeast Coal Development.

2.1 *Location and Access*

A table summarizing the distances to/from Tumbler Ridge and selected communities is provided below.

Selected Communities	Distance	
Dawson Creek, BC	73 miles	118 km
Fort St. John, BC	105 miles	169 km
Prince George, BC	248 miles	399 km
Edmonton, AB	403 miles	648 km
Calgary, AB	561 miles	903 km
Watson Lake, YK (near BC/Yukon boarder)	633 miles	1018 km
Vancouver, BC	735 miles	1183 km
Whitehorse, YK	931 miles	1,499 km
Anchorage, AK	1,634 miles	2,630 km

Two driving routes through Northern British Columbia stop at Tumbler Ridge: the Alaska Highway and the Great Northern Circle Route. The region is typically accessed by private or rental vehicle: automobile, recreational vehicle (RV), and/or motorcycle. Access and transportation services are summarized below.

Transportation Services
Car/RV: Drive to Tumbler Ridge along winding roads, through gently rolling valleys, past ridges, wetlands and forested areas. Travellers coming from southern British Columbia through Chetwynd will head southeast to Tumbler Ridge (94 km/58 mi) on Highway 29, and will pass over the Pine River and wind along the Sukunka River Valley past Gwillim Lake Provincial Park. Vehicle rentals are not available in town, but are found in surrounding communities. Mile "0" of the popular Alaska Highway is located in Dawson Creek, approximately 118 kilometres northeast of Fort Nelson. The main access route to visit Tumbler Ridge is via Highway 52 or Highway 29 from Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, or Fort St. John.
Public Transportation: While there is no public transportation directly to Tumbler Ridge, Greyhound buses do stop in the nearby communities of Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Prince George, Grand Prairie and Alberta
Train: There is no passenger service to/from Tumbler Ridge, only freight service. Tumbler Ridge is the northern railhead for Canadian National (CN).
Plane: Tumbler Ridge Airport, 11 km (6 mi) south of town, has a paved 4,000-ft. runway and terminal building, taxiway, apron lighting, lighted windsocks and non-directional beacon. However, regular passenger service is not available at the local airport, but at the North Peace Regional Airport in Fort St. John or the Dawson Creek Airport.

2.2 The Tumbler Ridge Area "Tourism Experience"

A key feature of the Tumbler Ridge Region "tourism experience" include the rolling foothills of the Rocky Mountains near the confluence of the Murray and Wolverine Rivers in northeastern BC. Tumbler Ridge offers outstanding natural features and terrain that support adventure and nature-based tourism activities. The area offers alpine meadows, seasonal wildflowers, glaciated peaks, forested valleys, clear alpine lakes and many scenic waterfalls. Hiking is a key activity of the region, with forty-seven designated trails offering a range of hiking experiences that appeal to the amateur and the most experienced hikers.

The area is also growing in prominence for its paleontological discoveries and research. Discoveries over the last 10 years have prompted the establishment of the Dinosaur Discovery Gallery which opened in 2007. This is the only facility of its kind in BC. The geological and paleontological significance of the area is captured well in the following excerpt from *A Brief Geological Summary of the Tumbler Ridge Area*.

A network of hiking trails lead to twenty-one destination areas (forty-three geosites) of geological and aesthetic interest, including waterfalls, rock formations, alpine meadows and lakes, canyons, mountain summits and caves. The research program of the Peace Region Palaeontology Research Centre has allowed for the creation of the adjoining Dinosaur Discovery Gallery in Tumbler Ridge, which forms the centrepiece attraction for visitors in interpretation, programs and education.

- 1) *The Dinosaur Discovery Gallery houses exhibits and interpretation of the fossil discoveries from the area.*
- 2) *Exhibits in the Community Centre focus more on the human history of the area, which ultimately is related to the geological history that preceded it.*
- 3) *The Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation's guided tours to dinosaur track ways close to town provide an experience of these sites in their pristine valley settings, complemented by educational camps.*
- 4) *The hiking trail brochures developed by the Wolverine Nordic and Mountain Society describe geological phenomena. Bergeron Falls and Bergeron Cliffs, Boulder Gardens and the Shipyard, the Stone Corral, Windfall Lake, the Cascades, and the Murray Canyon Overlook hikes are of particular geological interest. In winter, skiing up Flatbed Creek allows appreciation of the anticline and sedimentary formations.*
- 5) *For the motorist, the viewpoints at Kinuseo Falls allow appreciation of rock folding and a great waterfall, while trips up or down the Murray River by boat pass through canyons and rock faulting features. Helicopter tours offer another means of enjoying the geology.*
- 6) *For the adventurous there is an abundance of wilderness, glaciers, peaks, cirques, caves and canyons¹.*

Additional details that describe the Tumbler Ridge tourism experience, facilities and services are provided in the remainder of this section.

2.3 Activities

The Tumbler Ridge Region offers a range of activities, primarily centered around recreation. The majority of activities are pursued independently and/or offered by tourism operators. The types of activities available are noted in the following table.

¹ *A Brief Geological Summary of the Tumbler Ridge Area, Lorraine Funk, Tumbler Ridge News, 2014.*

Adventure Activities	
Summer Activities	• ATVing • Canoeing and Kayaking • Camping • Dinosaur Experiences • Fishing • Golf • Hiking • Riverboating • Waterfalls • Birding • Caving • Canoeing • Cycling • Nature Photography
Winter Activities	• Skiing • Ice Climbing • Snowmobiling • Snowshoeing • Dogsledding

2.4 Meeting Facilities and Services

Meeting Facilities

Venue	Capacity/Description
Trend Mountain Hotels and Conference Center	• A meeting room for 15 people. • Large banquet and conference room for 300 people. • Catering services available.
Tumbler Ridge Inn	• Banquet and meeting facilities. • 140 seat restaurant.
Wilderness Lodge Tumbler Ridge	• A conference and meeting space for 300 people.
Tumbler Ridge Community Service	• 89,000 square foot recreation center including an arena, curling link, weight room, courts, aquatic center, youth center, seniors center, library, meeting room and offices.

Services and Shops

Name of Establishment	
Tumbler Ridge Visitor Center	Tangles Salon & Spa
Country Lane Creations	TRU Hardware & Building Center
Jarick Image	Tumbler Alpha Fire & Safety Inc.
KC's Dollar Store, Furniture, & More	Tumbler Ridge Cold Beer & Wine Store
Kinuseo Gift Shop	Tumbler Ridge Golf and Country Club
MegMar Maintenance Ltd.	Tumbler Ridge Shell
Moonstone Barber Shoppe	Shop Easy Foods
Northern Metallic Sales Ltd.	Alegria Yoga Studio

Food and Beverage Services

Name of Establishment	
Dragon Palace	Fern's Finery Cafe
Kinuseo Café & Dining Room Ltd.	One Stop Pizza
Subway	Western Steakhouse
Cup A Saurus Cafe	Sheila's Place
Vinnie's Video & Food Court	Tags Convenience Store
Coal Bin Pub & Grill	

2.5 Festivals and Events

The Tumbler Ridge Region stages several festivals and events each year.

Festival/Event Name	Month
Ridge Ramble Cross-Country Sky Race	February
Wolverine Challenge Sled Dog Race	March
Ridge Ramble Biathlon (Running and Cycling)	June
Grizzly Valley Saddle Club Annual Poker Ride & Gymkhana	June
Men's & Ladies' Open Golf Tournament	TBA
Grizfest Musical Festival	August
Emperor's Challenge	August
Ridge Ramble Cross-Country Run	Fall
Halloween Haunted Experience	October
Craft Fairs	November
Holly Jolly Christmas Celebration	December

2.6 Natural Attractions

The Tumbler Ridge Region features many lakes and rivers which support a range of outdoor adventure activities, while also providing outstanding scenery. The workshop participants indicated that many of the rivers and lakes are surrounded by mountain views, forests, fresh air and wildlife. Most of the natural areas are typically uncrowded. Many of the lakes and rivers have historical significance. Many trails also exist in the area. Provincial and regional parks are also key natural attractions in the area, and offer hiking, recreation and camping opportunities for residents and visitors. Of particular scenic interest are the areas waterfalls, the main ones of which are listed below.

Waterfalls	Comments
Kinuseo Falls	• On the Murray River in Monkman Provincial Park, 63 km south of Tumbler Ridge.
The Cascades	• 10 waterfalls on Monkman Creek. All in the space of a few kilometres.
Bergeron Falls	• At 100 m, this is one of the highest known waterfalls in Northern British Columbia, and one of the closest to Tumbler Ridge.
Quality Falls	• Located in a tranquil forest setting close to the Tumbler Ridge townsite 10 m step falls.

2.7 Accommodation

The Tumbler Ridge Region has six accommodation properties, offering approximately 217 fixed roof accommodation rooms. Four campgrounds with a total of 131 sites are also available in the area. Accommodation properties and facilities are listed below. Workshop participants noted the current lack of sufficient accommodation – both fixed roof and camping/RV sites – which is particularly challenging during festivals and on weekends.

Hotels, Motels and Lodges	Capacity / # Rooms	Accommodation Guide Listing
Tumbler Ridge Inn	52	Yes
Wilderness Lodge Tumbler Ridge	50	Yes
Trend Mountain Hotels and Conference Center	102	Yes
Mila's Bed & Breakfast	2	No
Twilight Lodge Motel & Dining	8	No
Seven Springs B&B	3	No

Campgrounds and RV Parks	# Sites	Accommodation Guide Listing
Lions Flatbread Campground	45	Yes
Monkman RV Park	15	Yes
Monkman Provincial Park Kinuseo Falls Campground	22	Yes
Gwillim Lake Provincial Park Campground	49	Yes

2.8 Unique Features

During the workshop, participants were asked to identify the features that make the Tumbler Ridge area unique and competitive from a tourism perspective. The resulting input is shown below. The first table shows the truly unique features. The second table shows the features that are very important, but not necessarily unique to Tumbler Ridge.

Most Competitive Features (unique to Tumbler Ridge)
Kinuseo Falls
Combination of dinosaur prints, trails, waterfalls
Emperors' Challenge Trail/Mountain Running Race
De-facto Geopark (formal application in process)
Strong and growing foundation in palaeontology
Attributes that support a Geopark
Opportunities to twin with a Chinese city through Geopark status
Grizfest Music Festival
Arm of the Peace River that is totally unobstructed

Other Features that are Important (but not necessarily unique to Tumbler Ridge)
Well-designed/master planned downtown - good opportunity for "place making"
Heritage routes - transition mountains to prairies including historic trails through the Rockies:
• Monkman Pass • Driving tour (Beaver Lodge to Kinuseo Falls) • Hiking route through the Rockies to Kinuseo Falls
Overlapping bird population (eastern & western species)
Well-designed Community Centre
Friendly residents
Large, expansive terrain
Opportunities to "get away from it all" – not a tourist trap
Available space that provides opportunities for motorized and non-motorized activities
Accessible hiking for a range of abilities and interests
No conflict between industry and tourism
Good trail infrastructure
River boating, quading, ATVing, snowmobiling
Outdoor adventure
Wealth of wildlife
Strong volunteer base – supporting the hiking trail network and the museum

Other Features that are Important (but not necessarily unique to Tumbler Ridge)
Abundance of real nature
Rock climbing and ice climbing
Boulder Gardens Hiking Trail, featuring the shipyard and the coalmine (potential to combine tours)
Resident pride in the community, particularly given that the community was almost abandoned

2.9 Conclusions

Tumbler Ridge is a small town located in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies in northeastern BC. It is a district municipality and a member municipality of the Peace River Regional District. The municipality covers 1,558 square kilometres and has a population of 2,710 people. The town was built in 1981 by the provincial government to service the coal industry as part of the British Columbia Resources Investment Corporation's Northeast Coal Development.

The Tumbler Ridge Region offers significant wilderness areas, parks, campgrounds, trails, scenic vistas, and outdoor activities that appeal to both residents and visitors. Examples of these include the following waterfalls: Kinuseo Falls, The Cascades, Bergeron Falls and Quality Falls.

The Tumbler Ridge region's tourism experiences are characterized by a range of summer and winter activities, primarily centred around outdoor recreation. Additional tourism experiences include cultural and heritage activities, sport activities and year-round festivals and events.

The area is also growing in prominence for its paleontological discoveries and research. Discoveries over the last 10 years have prompted the establishment of the Dinosaur Discovery Gallery which opened in 2007. This is the only facility of its kind in BC.

With regard to tourism services, the Tumbler Ridge Region operates a seasonal Visitor Centre. The region offers several fixed-roof accommodation properties, in addition to tenting and recreational vehicle camp sites. Workshop participants noted the current lack of sufficient accommodation – both fixed roof and camping/RV sites – which is particularly challenging during festivals and on weekends. The region has some meeting venues. The region provides several other facilities and services, including a new recreation centre, retail shops and a performing arts theatre.

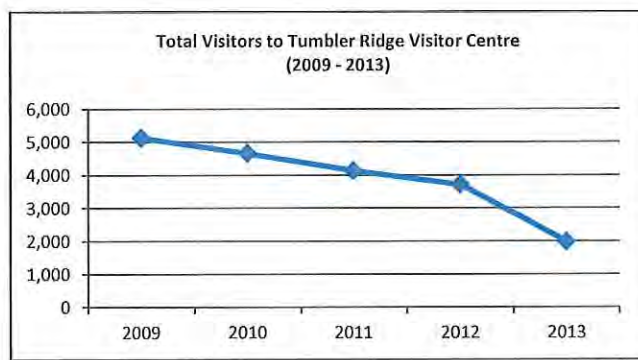
3 VISITOR OVERVIEW

This section presents statistics and information pertaining to the Tumbler Ridge area's existing tourism markets, based on Visitor Centre statistics and input from workshop participants. It also presents high-level results from the 2005 Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Visitor Research Project.

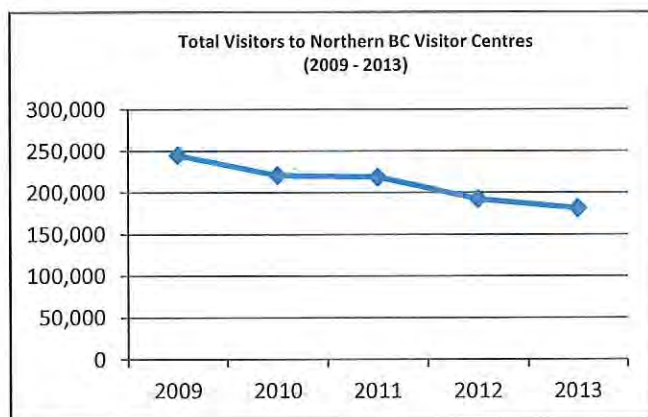
3.1 Visitor Centre Statistics

Estimating the number of total annual visitors to Tumbler Ridge is difficult as no one organization or business measures the number of visitors that travel to the community. However, useful indicators that reflect tourist visitation trends are statistics provided by the Tumbler Ridge Visitor Centre².

The following graphs present the number of visitors to the Tumbler Visitor Centre and to all Northern BC Visitor Centres combined from 2009 to 2013. The statistics indicate a downward trend in visitation from 2009 to 2013. While it cannot be determined conclusively, possible reasons for the downward trend are: declining tourism visitation as a result of economic conditions in key source markets, rising gas prices, and a declining propensity to utilize Visitor Centres as the popularity of smart phones and mobile technology rises.



Source: Destination British Columbia

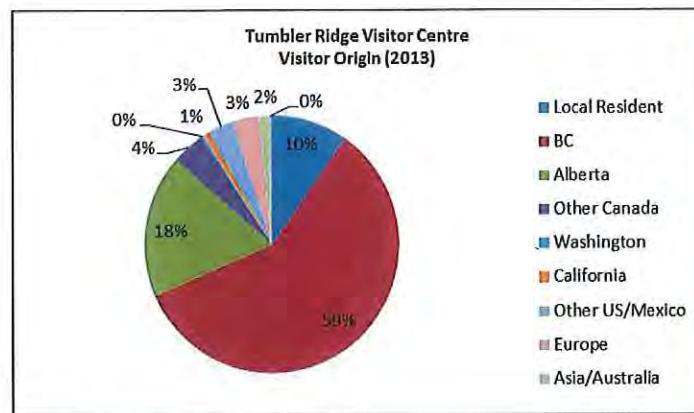


Source: Destination British Columbia

² The reader is cautioned when reviewing these statistics, as they do not represent the full cross-section or the total number of visitors to the region, but only those who visited the Visitor Centre. Some of these visitors may not be staying in Tumbler Ridge, and may simply be seeking information about the broader region and/or another destination.

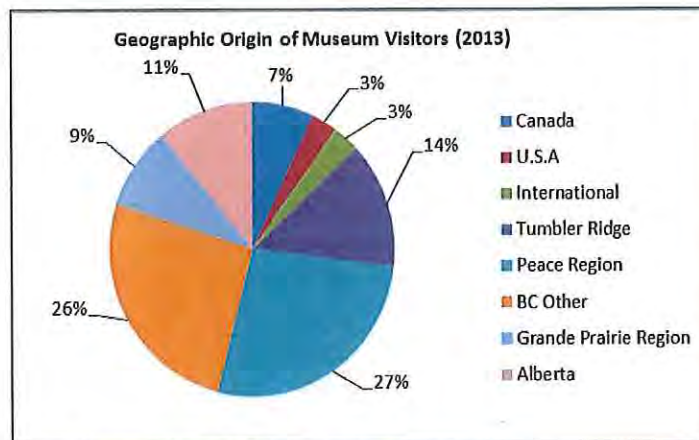
The following graph shows a breakdown of the geographic market origin for visitors to the Tumbler Ridge Visitor Centre for 2013. When considering the overall mix of visitors to the area, it should be noted that regional visitors from Northern BC may be under-represented as regional visitors are not as likely to stop at the Visitor Centre as are visitors from more distant locations.

The statistics indicate that the largest proportion of visitors to the Visitor Centre is comprised of BC residents (69%), 10% of which are local residents of Tumbler Ridge. It should be noted that many visits to the Visitor Centre from local residents may be longer-term workers that are temporarily stationed in the area. Alberta was the next largest source market, with 18% of visitors to the Visitor Centre.



Source: Destination British Columbia

The following graph shows the market origin of visitors to the Dinosaur Discovery Gallery/Museum. While the Museum uses a slightly different market breakdown, when combined for comparison purposes, the percentage breakdown is quite similar. This is demonstrated in the table following the graph (see next page). BC (67%) and Alberta (20%) are the largest source markets for the Dinosaur Discover Gallery/Museum.

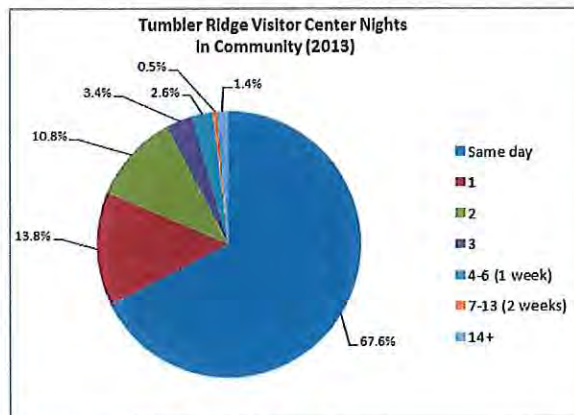


Source: Dinosaur Discovery Gallery/Museum

	VC	Museum
Local	10%	14%
Other BC	59%	53%
AB	18%	20%
Other Canada	4%	7%
US	4%	3%
Other Int'l	5%	3%

Source: Destination British Columbia and the Dinosaur Discovery Gallery

The next graph shows "nights in the community" for visitors to the Visitor Centre in 2013. The fact that 68% of visitors to the Visitor Centre are "same day" visitors suggests that a significant proportion of visitors to the Visitor Centre are spending a limited amount of time in the area or they are passing by/through. An estimated 28% of visitors are staying one to three nights in the community. It should be noted that many of the longer-stay visitors may be workers who are temporarily stationed in the Tumbler Ridge area.



Source: Destination British Columbia

As shown in the next table, the most frequently requested types of information by visitors to the Visitor Centre were for: hiking, Kinuseo Falls and dinosaurs/the Museum. These statistics are important as they provide an indication of:

- What is currently popular for visitors to the area; and/or
- What visitors are currently aware of with regard to popular activities and attractions in the area.

Tumbler Ridge Visitor Centre		
Community Specific Info	# of Requests	%
Hiking	405	36%
Kinuseo Falls	367	33%
Dino/ Museum	282	25%
Mining	28	2%
ATV/Snowmobile	22	2%
Comm. Center	22	2%
Total	1126	100%

Source: Destination British Columbia

3.2 Input from Workshop Participants

Resulting input from the workshop participants on visitor markets by specific activity segments is summarized in the two tables below. All of the markets noted below currently exist in the Tumbler Ridge area. The majority of tourism activities in the area are un-guided.

Current Tourism Markets

Segment	Geographic Origin	Notes	Season
Touring - Independent	BC, AB, US, some EUR		May – Sep
School Groups	Regional BC	Lions Camp	Jun, Sep/Oct
Guided Tours (bus)	1 or 2 buses per year, Seniors groups from AB	Aging population Seniors tours	Jun, Sep/Oct
Industrial Tours	Historically offered : -Coal Mine -Capital power (wind power/ farms)	Need mayor/ Council to encourage mines to offer tours again	
Outdoor Adventure (winter)	AB (High Court, Beaver Lodge, Grand Prairie, Fort McMurray BC (400km radius)	-Snowmobile - Cross Country Ski - Snowmobiling quality in BC: 1)Valemont 2)Revelstoke 3)Powder Mountain 4)MacKenzie 5)Tumbler Ridge	Winter
Outdoor Adventure (non winter)	BC, AB, Regional	- Hiking - Visiting the waterfalls - Wildlife viewing	Non winter
Camping (not lakes)	BC, AB, Regional, Locals	Capacity Issue, especially around events (e.g., Griz-Fest)	May- Sep
Sport Tourism	Mainly regional Broader market reach with Emperors' Challenge		Depends on specific sport
Cultural/Heritage Events	Local, BC, Regional, AB	Grizfest Multicultural fest Banff Mountain Film Festival Geopark could be catalyst for growth in this area	
Conventions/ Meetings	Depends on type of convention/meeting	Docs & Dinos Paleontological –Symposium - very successful	Spring and fall
Educational Tourism	Initially regional (including northern Alberta) and provincial	As Geopark "develops", opportunities for educational tourism will likely increase	
Hunting	Regional and BC		Spring and fall

With regard to existing and future importance, the workshop participants indicated that:

- **Camping** (not on lakes) is of high importance currently and is of high importance with regard to future opportunities;
- **Outdoor adventure** – both winter and non-winter – are of moderate importance currently and of high+ importance with regard to future opportunities; and,
- **Cultural and heritage events** are of moderate importance currently and of high importance with regard to future opportunities.

This information should help guide future product enhancement/development efforts, in addition to future marketing efforts.

Tumbler Ridge Markets: Existing Importance and Future Opportunities

Segment	Existing Importance*	Future Opportunity*
Camping (not lakes)	H	H+
Outdoor Adventure (winter)	M+	H+
Outdoor Adventure (non-winter)	M	H+
Cultural/ Heritage Events	M	H+
Touring - Independent	M+	H
Conventions/Meetings	L	H
Educational Tourism	L	H
Industrial Tours	N/A	H
School Groups	L	H
Guided Tours (bus)	L	M
Sport Tourism	L (with exceptions)	M
Hunting	L	L

* "H+" = highest importance; "H" = high importance; "M" = moderate importance; "L" = low importance

3.3 Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Visitor Research Project

During the workshop, selected results from the 2005 Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Visitor Research Project³ were also presented. Given the predominance of the touring market to communities on the Alaska Highway and its arterial routes it is valuable to review study results related to the touring visitor. Selected highlights from this study are shown below. It is acknowledged that this study was completed in 2005 with survey data collected in 2003; however, aspects of the findings are likely still relevant and valuable today.

- On the BC portion of the Alaska Highway, a total of 139,700 vehicles were estimated to be travelling on the highway between May 15 and September 23, 2003.
- Of these, 120,142 vehicles (86%) were estimated to be non-commercial vehicles.
- There were an average of 2.7 people per vehicle which translates into an estimated 324,383 leisure travellers.
- Overall, visitors reported a positive experience.
- Visitors did indicate, however, that **better coordination between communities could improve their experience.**
- 40% of respondents indicated that they were "very flexible" and 27% indicated they were "moderately flexible" with regard to changing their itineraries en route. This presents an opportunity for communities and operators to influence these visitors to stay longer in the region.
- Visitor Centre counsellors, The Milepost, brochures, past experience, advice from locals and fellow travellers, and the Internet were important sources of information used for planning prior to and during the respondents' trip.

³ Tourism BC/Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Visitor Research Project, Alberta Economic Development, Alberta North Tourism Destination Region, Canadian Tourism Commission, Doig River First Nation, Fort Nelson First Nation, Northern Rockies – Alaska Highway Tourism Association, Northern Rockies Regional District, Public Works & Government Services Canada, Sci-Tech North, Tourism Dawson Creek, 2005.

- Activities that respondents indicated they were interested in participating in while on their trip included (only those activities that 50% or more of respondents selected are shown below):
 - Visiting a park (85%)
 - Visiting a museum, heritage or historic site (81%)
 - Walking, hiking or cycling (75%)
 - Unguided outdoor activities (71%)
 - Shopping (66%)
 - Day cruise/boat trip (65%)
 - Aboriginal cultural attraction or event (56%)
 - Fair, festival or exhibition (56%)

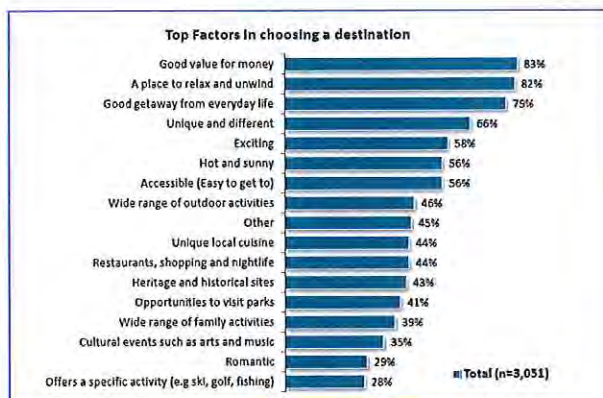
The above selected study results reveal that this market is quite flexible with regard to changing travel routes during their trip, which is important for a community such as Tumbler Ridge and for the Northern Rockies region as a whole. Clearly, there are opportunities to influence these visitors during their travels, possibly attracting them to attractions or events in the region. The results also indicated important sources of travel information for these visitors, with Visitor Centres, The Milepost, past experience, word-of-mouth and the Internet playing important roles in planning and itineraries.

3.4 2012 In-Market Research Report – Northern BC

In-Market studies were conducted for each tourism region in BC. The purpose of the studies was to “provide the Province and the six tourism regions with market profiles and brand attitudes from key regional markets”⁴. Charts and highlights from the 2012 In-Market Research Report for the Northern BC Tourism Region that indicate top factors in selecting a BC destination, familiarity with Northern BC – by Origin, Activities Participated In and Motivating versus Participating Activities - are provided below.

Top Factors in Choosing a BC Destination

The top three factors in choosing a destination in BC are good value for money, a place to relax and unwind and that the destination is a good getaway from everyday life. In comparison, the least important factors in choosing a destination are that it offers a specific activity, is romantic or has cultural events such as arts and music.



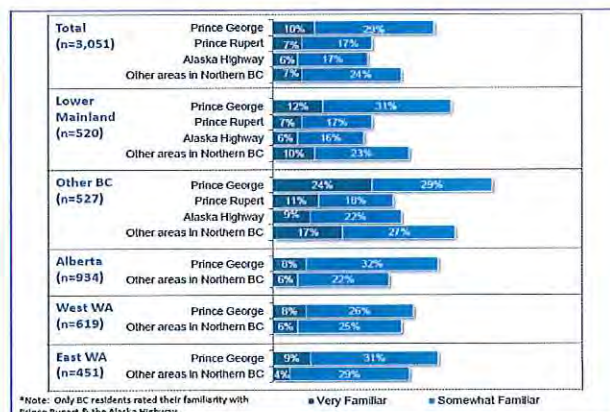
Source: 2012 In-Market Research Report – Northern BC

Familiarity with Northern BC – by Origin

Respondents to the In-Market Research study were asked about their familiarity with Northern BC destinations. The Alaska Highway was a key destination with which BC residents rated their familiarity. While respondents were most familiar with Prince George as a Northern BC destination, 23% of BC's

⁴ 2012 In-Market Research Report. 2012. Tourism BC and ENRG Research Group.

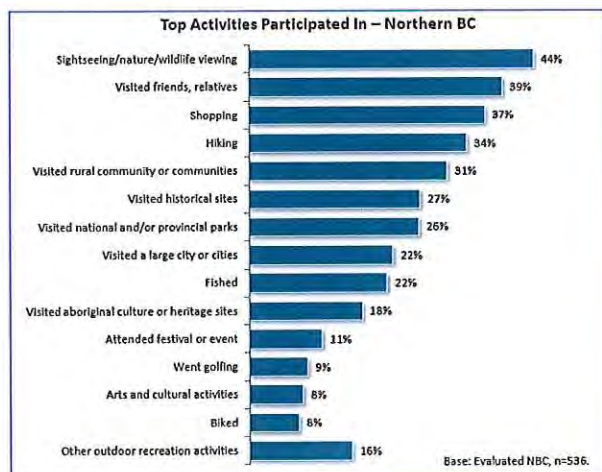
Lower Mainland respondents and 31% of Other BC respondents were either very familiar or somewhat familiar with the Alaska Highway.



Source: 2012 In-Market Research Report – Northern BC

Activities Participated In

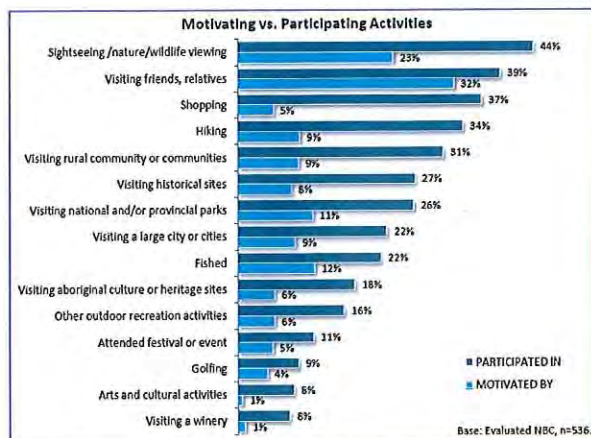
The top type of activity that respondents participated in while visiting Northern BC was sightseeing/nature/wildlife viewing, followed by visiting friends and relatives. The activity participated in the least was biking.



Source: 2012 In-Market Research Report – Northern BC

Motivating vs. Participating Activities

Visiting friends and relatives and sightseeing/nature/wildlife viewing were both the top motivating and participating activities for Northern BC. While many travellers were not motivated to visit Northern BC for other activities, they participated in a range of these activities, including shopping, hiking, and visiting rural communities, historical sites and parks.



Source: 2012 In-Market Research Report – Northern BC

3.5 Conclusions

The Visitor Centre visitor volume statistics show that:

- Visitation to the Tumbler Ridge Visitor Centre experienced an overall downward trend from 2009 to 2013, which was consistent with trends in Northern BC as a whole.

With regard to geographic market origin, Visitor Centre statistics show that:

- BC residents generated the largest number of visitors to the Visitor Centre (69%) in 2013, followed by Alberta (18%). Dinosaur Discovery Gallery/Museum statistics also show that BC is the largest generator of visitors to the attraction, followed by Alberta.

In 2013, 68% of visitors to the Visitor Centre were "same day" visitors suggesting that a significant proportion of visitors to the Visitor Centre are spending a limited amount of time in the area or they are passing by/through. This presents an opportunity to encourage visitors to spend more time in the community and the area.

Discussions amongst workshop participants revealed that the following markets are important to the area's tourism industry.

Tumbler Ridge Markets: Existing Importance and Future Opportunities

Segment	Existing Importance*	Future Opportunity*
Camping (not lakes)	H	H+
Outdoor Adventure (winter)	M+	H+
Outdoor Adventure (non-winter)	M	H+
Cultural/ Heritage Events	M	H+
Touring - Independent	M+	H
Conventions/Meetings	L	H
Educational Tourism	L	H
Industrial Tours	N/A	H
School Groups	L	H

* "H+" = highest importance; "H" = high importance; "M" = moderate importance; "L" = low importance

4 OVERVIEW OF TOURISM LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

One of the issues that Tumbler Ridge faces – that many communities in BC face – is the coordination of efforts to ensure that tourism initiatives are as effective as possible, given limited human and financial resources.

While Tumbler Ridge does not have a formalized destination marketing/management organization (DMO), the local government, in addition to several organizations, play an important role with regard to tourism development and visitor servicing.

This section provides an overview of existing support for tourism in Tumbler, in addition to several initiatives related to tourism that are underway in the area. The majority of this information was provided by workshop participants, with some supplemental research provided by the facilitator, prior to and following the workshop.

4.1 Organizations and Support Related to Tourism

Promotional activities have historically included:

- Web content provided on *HelloBC.com* and on the Northern Rockies Tourism website;
- Ads placed in several publications; and,
- Several projects funded through Community Tourism Opportunities partner funding

A summary of tourism-related organizations and initiatives is provided below. This is based on information provided during the Tourism Workshop and research conducted by the facilitator.

Organization	Comments
District of Tumbler Ridge	• Operates Community Centre • Funds Visitor Centre • Note that the Chamber of Commerce has applied to operate the Visitor Centre year-round • Funds the museum (museum matches funding) • Provides in-kind services for some events • Provides primary funding for tourism advertising • Owns Community Forest • Manages District hiking trails • Operates Monkman RV Park • Operates golf course
District of Tumbler Ridge Community Development Office	• The Economic Development Officer (EDO) position was lost in 2010/2011 • The District is in the process of hiring a new EDO
First Nations	• No First Nations settlements • Treaty Land Entitlement Extension – West Moberly First Nations is looking into this • Occasionally an ad-hoc First Nations group has organized a Summer Solstice event and other events

Organization	Comments
Alaska Highway Community	- The Alaska Highway Initiative is focusing on achieving the National Historic Site designation - Involves communities directly on the Alaska Highway and on arterial routes - Northern BC Tourism administers this initiative through the Alaska Highway Community Society - There is no representation from Tumbler Ridge on the Board
Visitor Centre	- Run by District - Seasonal operation; however, the Chamber is looking into operating the Visitor Centre year round - A new and expanded Visitor Centre has been considered; however, there is no funding at this time
Chamber of Commerce	- Linked to the Visitor Centre - Trying to plan an outdoor living show for the fall - The Chamber is quite new; need to raise the profile of businesses - After it is fully established, the Chamber wants to plan for the future - Planning membership drive - Now have 25 members
Tumbler Ridge Days Society	Organizes Grizfest and the Pumpkin Patch
Saddle Club	Responsible for the poker ride and the gymkhana
Tumbler Ridge Aspiring Geopark Committee	- Coordinated the application which was submitted in November 2013 - Expect to receive feedback by April 2014 - An international delegation will visit in summer 2014 - Hoping to be designated in December at International Symposium in New Brunswick - Would present good spin-off opportunities - Would be the first Geopark in Western North America - Opportunity to work with other satellites in northeastern BC - Opportunity to link to Alaska Highway initiatives - The Committee is also looking at interprovincial connections - The area is operating as a de-facto Geopark now
Lions Club	Operates Flat Bed Campground
Rock & Ice Climbing Group	The Province does not sanction this group, due to risk
Ethnic Groups	Filipino Community and other ethnic groups exist in the area
Arts Council	Coordinates/stages plays, visual arts events, music events
Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation	12 people are on the board - Employs Rich and Lisa, in addition to summer staff - Operates the Research Centre and Dino Discovery Gallery - Operates Dino track-way tours – night and day - Works with school groups - Develops and manages 30 exhibits in Community Centre - Serves as the anchor for the Geopark - The Museum operates railway exhibit by Visitor Centre

Organization	Comments
Wolverine Nordic Mountain Society	• Maintain trails outside Provincial Parks (70 km) • Stages the Emperors' Challenge through a subcommittee • States the triathlon through a subcommittee • Develops brochures and manages the website • Promotes a "Healthy Lifestyle" destination concept • Liaises with industry regarding specific threats to trails or areas • Submits photos to social media (Birgit)
Grizzly valley ATV Club	• Has been operating for one year • Working to get trails designated • Submitted a proposal to council to allow ATV activity in town to access nearest trail head and golf course
Ride riders	• The Snow Mobile Club recently re-formed to manage trails and related events

4.2 Conclusions

While Tumbler Ridge does not have a formal destination management or marketing organization (DMO) that oversees tourism development and marketing, the District of Tumbler Ridge, in addition to several other organizations, actively support tourism through the operation of a Visitor Centre, funding for some tourism promotion, the operation of the Museum/Dinosaur Discovery Centre, the Community Centre, the hosting of several flagship events, in addition to other initiatives. Destination BC, through Northern BC Tourism, provides support to tourism development and marketing in Tumbler Ridge through the CTF program, the Community Tourism Opportunities program, in addition to other programs offered by Northern BC Tourism and Destination BC.

There are opportunities to enhance current efforts to support tourism through:

- Tourism stakeholder communication and coordination with regard to tourism initiatives;
- Tourism stakeholder input regarding tourism priorities;
- Increased collaboration and partnerships with regard to positive tourism initiatives, such as the Alaska Highway Community Initiative/Alaska Highway Community Society; and,
- Continued support for positive initiatives such as:
 - The ongoing evolution of the Dinosaur Discovery Centre and associated initiatives,
 - The Geopark initiative and associated opportunities; and,
 - Flagship events such as the Emperors' Challenge and Grizfest.

5 REVIEW OF 2008 STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

During the March 2014 workshop, the participants reviewed aspects of the 2008 Tourism Plan and made observations regarding what has changed with regard to strengths, challenges and opportunities. The results of this feedback from the workshop participants are presented in this section.

5.1 *Review of 2008 Strengths*

As shown below, there are several key strengths that workshop participants would like to add to those that were identified in 2008. Overall, this is very positive for Tumbler Ridge as it continues to evolve as a tourism destination.

2008 Tourism Strengths	Are these still relevant in 2014? Do we want to add more?
- Rich in natural resources and features, natural history and cultural history - Existing tourism base focus on outdoor environment and paleontological discoveries	- This is still a key strength, and, even more-so now with the Geopark proposal - Increase in press interest in the research/ discoveries - Discover Centre enhancements
- Existing system of trails, waterfalls, provincial parks and other natural features ideal for all forms of outdoor adventure - Of particular importance: - Kinuseo Falls and 4 provincial parks - Monkman Pass Memorial Trail and other trails (37 hiking trails) - Paleontological discoveries	- This is still a key strength, which has been enhanced with the addition of more trails - Strength of attraction is stronger because of the dinosaur discoveries; there have been many discoveries since 2008
- Economic Development Office (EDO) has the mandate for tourism development: - Product development - Industry development - Destination marketing - Visitor services	The EDO Position has been empty, but will likely soon be filled
Core funding is adequate to achieve planning objectives for tourism, however, increased project objectives create capacity issues	- Northern Development Initiatives Trust has provided some funding - The District has been providing funding for tourism – for the Visitor Centre, Museum and festivals - There has been Regional District funding for the museum - Provincial funding is now being sought for the museum – in particular, long-term funding for long-term planning is needed
Newly adopted Tourism Investment Strategy has identified product development potential that meets growing market demand	The Strategy needs to be updated and needs a champion

New Strengths Added During 2014 Workshop

- De-facto Geopark and associated opportunities, particularly if the application is successful
- ATV and snowmobile clubs have become stronger
- The Chamber just starting up which is great for bringing groups and representatives together
- There are a few new operators
- There are some helicopter tours and river boat operators
- There is a new hotel
- Tumbler Ridge is now on the Great Northern Circle Tour (although not featured prominently)
- A Community Forest is up and running, presenting opportunities to obtain funding for a building and other initiatives
- The international workforce is growing; these people can be advocates for Tumbler Ridge when they go home
- The Community Centre was upgraded in 2012
- The classification of Highway 97 has been upgraded and, as a result, maintenance standards will go up
- The Highway between Chetwynd and Dawson Creek has new rest stops

5.2 Review of 2008 Challenges

Workshop participants indicated that the key challenges noted in 2008 still exist today. In addition, several more challenges were identified.

2008 Challenges	Are these still relevant in 2014? Do we want to add more?
• <i>"Bad press" about the downturn in mining</i>	• This is still relevant
• <i>Extraction based economy and associated need for accommodation, which may result in a shortage of accommodation for leisure visitors, particularly during the high season and specific festivals and events</i>	• Yes – oil, gas, wind power, mining, forestry • During festivals and on some weekends, there is typically a shortage of accommodation, both fixed roof and camping/RV sites
• <i>Need for new tourism product development</i> • <i>However, investment in community will have initial "chicken and egg" dilemma whereby demand is not yet present to justify private sector investment</i>	• There is still a challenge to start new tourism businesses –visitors typically "do it themselves" • Anchor for Geopark only has year-to-year funding, making it difficult to conduct long term planning • Visitors to the region not always spending money in the community • Downtown core is not strong; there are opportunities to improve this as a central focus of the town
• <i>Organizational and business capacity building is required for business retention and expansion</i>	• This is still a challenge • The District EDO, once hired, and Chamber can help with this

New Challenges Added During 2014 Workshop

- The Official Community Plan (OCP) is in place, but no one person is managing plan implementation; there needs to be coordinated efforts for recreation areas
- Transportation services to/from Tumbler Ridge are weak
- A District contact is needed to assist with business development
- There is a need for a provincial fossil management framework to support the geo park
- The road to Kinuseo Falls is very poor (unpaved) and discourages people from visiting it, which is further complicated by the fact that the image of these falls is used in local, regional and provincial tourism promotional literature – as such, the falls are well-known, but could be a better draw for the area if they were more accessible

5.3 Review of 2008 Opportunities

Workshop participants indicated that the opportunities identified in 2008 are still very relevant today. Opportunities with regard to fossil discoveries are more significant today, given recent discoveries and given the progress Tumbler Ridge has made with the fossil archive and the Dinosaur Discovery Centre. The efforts made to apply for the Geopark also present a significant opportunity that did not exist in 2008.

2008 Tourism Opportunities	Are these still relevant in 2014? Do we want to add more?
• <i>There is an existing tourism market to build on, despite the limited selection of services</i> • <i>The natural attractions and events provide a foundation to build tourism and provide positive visitor experiences</i>	• Yes • Yes
• <i>Paleontological attributes form a rich and diverse resource that confirms the region's status as one of the world's finest fossil areas</i> • <i>These assets are relatively accessible and strategically located for further research and visitor interpretation</i>	• Yes • Yes
• <i>Opportunity to take leadership position for housing fossil discoveries in BC</i> • <i>Opportunity to address the gap created by rich fossil resources being removed to elsewhere</i>	• Yes, progress has been made since 2008 • The gap noted in 2008 is starting to be addressed; Tumbler Ridge has the only active fossil archive in BC • However, there is a weakness with regard to funding challenges to support this; also, the Royal BC Museum can take over this function at any time, as Tumbler Ridge is providing this service in trust on behalf of the Province – most provinces have multiple institutions handling this – fossils in BC are the property of the Province
• <i>Global awareness of Kinuseo Falls creates a strong iconic image to symbolize brand identity for Tumbler Ridge</i>	• Yes • However, as noted under new challenges, road access to Kinuseo Falls is poor (not paved), making it challenging for visitors to

2008 Tourism Opportunities	Are these still relevant in 2014? Do we want to add more?
	access
• <i>These assets are relatively accessible and strategically located for further research and visitor interpretation</i>	• The Geopark presents a significant opportunity

5.4 Conclusions

The review of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities was very positive. While several challenges still exist today, overall, the strengths and opportunities identified in 2008 appear to be stronger today and several new strengths and opportunities were identified during the workshop. The most significant strengths and opportunities that Tumbler Ridge plans to capitalize on include:

- The ongoing activities related to the area's paleontological resources and the Dinosaur Discovery Centre;
- The application for the UNESCO Geopark designation, and potential opportunities related to regional satellite Geoparks and ties to other countries, such as China; and,
- The existing system of trails, iconic waterfalls, provincial parks and other natural features ideal for all forms of outdoor adventure.

6 REVIEW OF 2008 VISION

During the March 2014 workshop, the participants reviewed the vision that was created in 2008 and discussed whether the vision was still appropriate today. The key question posed was: Does this vision represent the desired future state for tourism in the Tumbler Ridge area?

6.1 *Review of 2008 Vision*

Workshop participants agreed that the tourism vision created in 2008 is still relevant today. However, they did expand on the element of the vision that describes the desired future state of Tumbler Ridge as a tourism destination. The original vision is presented below, with the additional wording shown in red font.

- *Tumbler Ridge has achieved economic diversification in part through tourism development, which provides entrepreneurial opportunities and job creation.*
- *Tourism development enhances quality of life for residents by providing more services and recreational and cultural activities.*
- *By retaining the character of the community as a mountain village atmosphere, Tumbler Ridge continues to be a welcoming community with both the hospitality of the people and tourism development planning.*
 - *Tumbler Ridge is recognized as a centre of excellence for natural history education*
 - *Tumbler Ridge offers a thriving Geopark*
 - *Tumbler Ridge instils a sense of awe and wonder for residents and visitors*
 - *Tumbler Ridge is not a "side trip" but a "destination"*
 - *Tumbler Ridge is multicultural*
 - *Tumbler Ridge offers opportunities for healthy lifestyles*
- *Tourism stakeholders cooperate and collaborate to realize this tourism vision in partnership with local and regional organizations, government at all levels, residents and the business community.*
- *The industry is supported in local government policy for growth and sustainability of our environment. Tourism is organized and well represented and the tourism management function is well balanced with broad stakeholder representation and is supported by research-based planning and sustainable funding.*

7 TOURISM GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

This section presents objectives, strategies and tactics to address the primary strengths, weaknesses and opportunities identified earlier and to focus tourism stakeholders in their efforts to further develop and market the Tumbler Ridge area as a tourism destination.

Goals state the desired outcome(s) to be achieved to help attain the vision.

Objectives are results – usually quantifiable – that an individual, an organization/group, a community or a business plans to achieve the goal(s). Objectives should be realistic, achievable, yet challenging. They should be measurable to the extent possible. If statistics, such as absolute numbers of visitors, are difficult to obtain and attribute to specific tactics, other indicators can be used, such as increases in numbers of visitors to an attraction or to a Visitor Centre, or increases in the number of enquiries to a Visitor Centre.

Strategies describe the direction that a community or organization will take to achieve the stated objectives. Strategies look longer term and may not change from year to year, while **tactics** include shorter term actions designed to achieve the implementation of a strategy.

The three objectives and several of the strategies and tactics were developed during the workshop. The facilitator has also proposed several additional strategies and tactics to help ensure that a well-rounded set of strategies and tactics are provided to assist Tumbler Ridge in further developing its tourism industry.

The facilitator has also expanded upon tactics that were discussed in the workshop, to help ensure that sufficient detail is provided to enable implementation. The type of additional information provided for each tactic includes:

- Intended outputs;
- Intended outcomes;
- Quantifiable measures (if possible);
- Relation to objectives;
- Action steps;
- Lead role;
- Potential partnerships;
- Timeframe; and,
- Budget/resources (if applicable).

It should be noted that all issues and opportunities identified through the workshop and research are not addressed in the following strategies and tactics. This recognizes that there are limited time and financial resources to implement tactics.

7.1 Tourism Goals and Objectives

Overarching Goal: The overarching goal that the workshop participants identified was to **diversify the Tumbler Ridge economy** through tourism development and marketing.

Workshop participants discussed three tourism objectives that they would like to achieve collectively which will help them work towards achieving the overarching goal noted above.

Objective 1: Increase the length of stay of existing visitors

Visitor Centre statistics indicate that a high proportion (68%) of visitors are “same-day” visitors who are either staying for a few hours or passing through/by. Approximately 14% are staying for one night. **Workshop participants indicated that there are opportunities to increase visitor length-of-stay, focusing primarily on the touring market.** This can be achieved, in part, by ensuring existing products and attractions are enhanced to offer a more rounded tourism experience and by increasing awareness about Tumbler Ridge’s tourism assets in key markets. Several of the tactics identified on the following pages aim to enhance existing tourism products and increase awareness in key markets.

Measures of success for this objective:

Two possible indicators to monitor changes in visitor length-of-stay are:

- Changes in Visitor Centre statistics, specifically an increase in the proportion of visitors who are staying in Tumbler for longer than a day; and,
- Periodic monitoring of accommodation occupancy statistics (Although, caution is advised here as accommodation can be heavily used by those in the mining sector, so, occupancy and room demand statistics may not always reflect leisure visitation.).

Objective 2: Increase the number of visitors focusing on those people who visit outside of the main events which are typically at capacity, such as the Emperors’ Challenge and Grizfest
The second objective is to increase the overall number of visitors to the Tumbler Ridge area.

Measures of success for this objective:

This is a challenging objective to measure, as there is no mechanism for monitoring the total number of visitors to the area. Indicators that may help gauge changes in overall visitor volumes include:

- Changes in the total number of visitors to the Visitor Centre (Although, it should be acknowledged that regional visitors may be under-represented in Visitor Centre statistics as this market segment seems to have a lower propensity to use BC Visitor Centres, relative to longer-haul markets. Furthermore, usage of Visitor Centres overall may be declining, with the continually increasing use of the Internet, smart phones and mobile technology to assist in travel planning and obtaining real-time travel information while on vacation.); and,
- Periodic monitoring of accommodation occupancy statistics (Although, caution is advised here as accommodation can be heavily used by those in the mining sector, so, occupancy and room demand statistics may not always reflected leisure visitation.).

Objective 3: Increase the number of higher-yield visitors

The third objective is to increase the number of higher-yield visitors that are willing to pay for higher-end tourism experiences. It should be noted that this is a longer-term objective.

Measures of success for this objective:

One indicator that may help gauge changes in overall visitor volumes from these markets include:

- Tracking by accommodation properties, focusing on higher-yield leisure visitors.

7.2 Tourism Strategies and Tactics

Strategies and tactics intended to help achieve the two objectives fall into the following categories.

- A. Organization, Communication and Leadership
- B. Product and Experience Development and Enhancement
- C. Market Development and Marketing
- D. Research and Evaluation

CATEGORY A: ORGANIZATION, COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP

Strategy A-1: Increase coordination of and communication related to tourism initiatives

As shown in the section on "Overview of Tourism Leadership/Organization", Tumbler Ridge has a number of organizations and entities that contribute to tourism development and promotion. However, communities can always benefit from efforts to enhance coordination between such groups/entities.

There are opportunities to enhance coordination, which will help the industry in meeting the three objectives. For example, such coordination helps create opportunities to:

- Improve the effectiveness of ads and other promotional activities by presenting a more unified image and message;
- Encourage cross-selling and the development of some guided tours to attractions such as Kinuseo Falls;
- Encourage information and idea sharing that may lead to improvements to products, festivals and events and marketing activities; and,
- Increase the number and effectiveness of partnerships.

At the same time, it should be recognized that private sector operators, society volunteers, and local government staff have limited time and financial resources. The District is in the process of hiring a new Economic Development Officer, which may help with this initiative.

- Meet with the new Economic Development Officer once hired to gauge their potential commitment to being involved with aspects of the Tourism Plan and the Tourism Working Group (TWG)
- Invite individuals to participate on Tourism Working Group
- Assign/nominate a chair person
- Define the terms of reference for the Working Group
- Decide upon frequency of communication and/or meetings
- Identify method for meeting/communicating
 - In-person participation
 - Skype and/or teleconference participation
- Note that, given time restrictions, the schedule for communicating and/or meeting should be as practical as possible; it may be most practical to hold one annual meeting and then communicate via teleconference and/or in writing monthly or quarterly

Tactic A-1-1	Establish a Tumbler Ridge Tourism Working Group
Brief description	• Workshop participants agreed that a Tourism Working Group should be established to: ○ Oversee implementation of priority tactics from the Community Tourism Plan ○ Monitor progress and results ○ Discuss marketing and promotional tactics ○ Discuss how to address issues of concern to the industry • At the same time, workshop participants were cautious about the need to control the amount of time required by people to contribute to this Working Group, recognizing how busy people are

Tactic A-1-1 Establish a Tumbler Ridge Tourism Working Group	
Intended output(s)	- Established Tourism Working Group and regular communication with stakeholders - Regular meetings and initiatives to coordinate the industry, particularly with regard to implementing priority tactics in the Community Tourism Plan
Intended outcome(s)	- More effective implementation of tactics and other tourism-related issues - More cohesive and collaborative industry
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Ability to implement, monitor and report on priority tactics
Relation to objectives	Supports all objectives
Action steps	- To maintain communications with the tourism industry a new Tourism Working Group (TWG) would be comprised of tourism stakeholders representing industry, government, and key organizations - The TWG would meet with the economic development office no less than three times per year to provide insight and receive updates on the progress of the Tourism Plan implementation - The TWG is intended to represent a cross-section of tourism stakeholders including businesses, organizations, government and First Nations representation (if applicable) with liaison connections to other agencies as appropriate - Next steps with regard to this tactic include: - Establishing a terms of reference and meeting schedule for the TWG - Inviting representatives of key sectors to participate on the TWG - Determining the first chairperson for the TWG - Note that guidelines to help determine who should be invited to participate on the TWG are provided in Appendix C
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge (potentially the new EDO) and Northern BC Tourism Association
Potential partnerships	Tourism stakeholders
Timeframe	Commence in June 2014
Budget/Resources	In-kind contribution of time and meeting venue

CATEGORY B: PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Strategy B-1: Further develop and enhance the range and types of tourism products and experiences for visitors

Tactic B-1-1 Build on the initiative to attain UNESCO Geopark designation	
Brief description	- The Tumbler Ridge Aspiring Geopark Committee prepared and submitted an application to attain UNESCO Geopark status in November 2013 - Expect to receive feedback by April 2014 - An international delegation will visit in summer 2014 - This would be the first Geopark in Western North America and would present opportunities to work with other satellites in northeastern BC - This also presents an opportunity to link to Alaska Highway initiatives - This tactic focuses on: - Ensuring there is continued support and momentum for this initiative as it evolves - Ensuring that opportunities to leverage this for marketing, awareness and product packaging are fully explored and acted upon
Intended output(s)	- UNESCO Geopark designation - Spin-offs will flow to the District - Spin-off initiatives will result from the designation - The Management Plan and Marketing Plan will complement the District tourism initiatives - Linkages to a range of other initiatives, such as the Alaska Highway Tourism

Tactic B-1-1 Build on the initiative to attain UNESCO Geopark designation	
	Corridor Planning initiative and National Historic Event designation
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	• Achievement of designation • Activities that link this initiative to other initiatives • Visitor Centre statistics that show that a larger proportion of visitors are staying for more than one day
Relation to objectives	• Supports all objectives
Action steps	• Continue to support initiatives related to obtaining UNESCO Geopark status • Develop a succinct annual budget and marketing plan, once the designation has been obtained • Identify and act on opportunities to capitalize on the designation • In order to fully capitalize on the significant opportunities that are expected to result from the designation, it will be important to establish a dedicated position – a "Geopark coordinator – to manage initiatives related to the Geopark ◦ Develop terms of reference for this position ◦ Seek funding for this position ◦ Ensure this position coordinates with the new EDO, the Tourism Working Group and related tourism product enhancement and marketing initiatives
Lead	• Tumbler Ridge Aspiring Geopark Society • New Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	• District of Tumbler Ridge • Northern BC Tourism Association
Timeframe	• Ongoing
Budget/Resources	• TBD

The three objectives – and particularly the objectives related to increasing visitor length of stay and increasing the number of higher-yield visitors – require that visitors have more to see and do while they are in the area and have the opportunity to participate in more experiential types of tourism (e.g., activities that involve "doing" rather than only observing). This is important with regard to all of Tumbler Ridge's existing and potential markets, but in particular those markets that ranked as "H+" in terms of future market opportunity. The following table shows the market rankings that was presented earlier.

Tumbler Ridge Markets: Existing Importance and Future Opportunities

Segment	Existing Importance*	Future Opportunity*
Camping (not lakes)	H	H+
Outdoor Adventure (winter)	M+	H+
Outdoor Adventure (non-winter)	M	H+
Cultural/ Heritage Events	M	H+
Touring - Independent	M+	H
Conventions/Meetings	L	H
Educational Tourism	L	H
Industrial Tours	N/A	H
School Groups	L	H

* "H+" = highest importance; "H" = high importance; "M" = moderate importance; "L" = low importance

The following tactics are intended to increase the market readiness of several adventure and ecotourism attractions and programs and cultural tourism experiences. This, in turn, will support efforts to encourage visitors to stop in the region and stay longer, ultimately generating increased visitor spending.

Tactic B-1-2 Develop a visitor experience plan that links the diversity of experiences available	
Brief description	- As documented earlier in this Plan, the area has a significant wealth of assets – trails, waterfalls, wildlife and paleontological resources – that appeal to several markets - There is an opportunity to further coordinate product offerings for visitors, which will help attract more visitors and encourage them to stay in the area longer - The focus of this tactic is to develop a visitor experience plan that links the diversity of experiences in the area Phase 1: Visitor Experiences Audit - The intention of Phase 1 is to conduct a visitor experiences audit to: - Gain an understanding of how well the existing visitor experiences (products, facilities and services) are meeting the needs of visitors - Gain an understanding of how well and accurately these experiences are reflected in marketing materials and in promotional literature for visitors - Gain an understanding of any gaps that exist and opportunities to enhance products, services and facilities to meet and exceed visitor expectations Phase 2: Tourism Experience Action Plan - The results of the visitor experiences audit can then be used to support the preparation of a tourism experience action plan
Intended output(s)	- Phase 1: Visitor Experiences Audit - Phase 2: Tourism Experience Action Plan
Intended outcome(s)	- Valuable information to inform tourism experience enhancement and development, ultimately leading to: - Enhanced experiences for visitors - Visitors staying longer in the region
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	New and/or enhanced visitor experiences offered
Relation to objectives	Supports all objectives
Action steps	- Working with the EDO and Tourism Working Group, identify a steering group to guide the process Phase 1: Visitor Experience Audit - Talk to Tourism Dawson Creek and Northern BC Tourism about the visitor experience audit that they have conducted - Discuss with Northern BC Tourism the opportunity to engage an experienced consultant to conduct the audit - Source the funding to engage the consultant - Engage the consultant and work with this individual to conduct the audit Phase 2: Tourism Experience Action Plan - Use the results to help develop a Tourism Experience Action Plan: - Identify who should lead Phase 2 and who would like to participate in the development and implementation of the action plan - Host a workshop to: - Review the results of the Visitor Experience Audit - Identify specific projects that can be implemented to provide interesting tourism experiences that will appeal to visitors and given them reasons to stop and spend more time in the area and, ultimately, have an enriching tourism experience that they will tell others about - Develop an action plan for priority projects, including responsibilities, timelines, budget (if applicable) and how to monitor and measure implementation - Ensure the Action Plan explores key opportunities, such as: - Opportunities to offer guided trips to Kinuseo Falls (via water or vehicle) - Opportunities to develop the mountain biking market over time, linking into

Tactic B-1-2 Develop a visitor experience plan that links the diversity of experiences available	
	the Destination BC initiative related to the Mountain Biking Sector Group ○ Opportunities to offer guided activities that build on the Geopark ○ Opportunities related to the Dinosaur Discovery Centre and the wealth of paleontological resources in the area
Lead	• District of Tumbler Ridge and Tourism Working Group and identified Steering Group
Potential partnerships	• Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC, • Tumbler Ridge Aspiring Geopark Committee • Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation • Wolverine and Nordic Mountain Society • Dinosaur Discovery Centre • Chamber of Commerce
Timeframe	• Phase 1: plan audit in June 2014 and conduct audit in summer 2014 • Phase 2: host Tourism Experience Action Plan workshop in fall 2014 and implement action plan in 2015
Budget/Resources	• Phase 1: Approximately \$15,000 to \$20,000 • Phase 2: TBD

Tactic B-1-3 Actively support activities related to the nomination of the Alaska Highway as a National Historic Site and the development of an Alaska Highway Tourism Corridor Plan	
Brief description	• A process is currently underway for the Alaska Highway to receive National Historic Site designation ○ The lead for the nomination process is the Alaska Highway Community Society ○ Core funding (3 years) is being provided by the Peace River Regional District ○ The project administrator is April Moi, Northern BC Tourism Association ○ The heritage consultant advising on the project is Contentworks Inc. • The goals of the process relate to: ○ Authenticity: Sharing and communicating stories about lives lived in the corridor ○ Integrity: Protecting areas of significance ○ Relevancy: Linking heritage to other parts of regional life, such as tourism, nature, learning and recreation • Achieving the National Historic Site designation will present significant opportunities for communities along the Alaska Highway and its arterial routes ○ It will increase awareness about the Alaska Highway and the regions and communities associated with it ○ It will present opportunities to take advantage of National Historic Sites of Canada Cost-Sharing Programs to foster the public's understanding and appreciation about the site's historical significance ○ It will present opportunities for increased collaboration amongst the communities located along the Alaska Highway • This tactic involves ensuring that the tourism stakeholders in Tumbler Ridge actively support activities related to achieving the National Historic Site designation by: ○ Providing input when requested by Northern BC Tourism ○ Developing and communicating the Northern Rockies Region's "story" or "stories" related to the Alaska Highway ○ Identifying projects relating to the Alaska Highway's natural, historical, recreational and cultural resources ○ Supporting initiatives to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Alaska Highway in 2017 ○ Working with the District of Tumbler Ridge to ensure a representative from the community is appointed to the Board of Directors of the Alaska Highway Community Society • There is also an initiative that has just commenced to develop an Alaska Highway

Tactic B-1-3	
Actively support activities related to the nomination of the Alaska Highway as a National Historic Site and the development of an Alaska Highway Tourism Corridor Plan	
	- Tourism Corridor Plan, which ties in with this tactic - It will be important for Tumbler Ridge to support this initiative as it will tie in well with initiatives such as the application to attain UNESCO Geopark status
Intended output(s)	Coordinated effort by the Tumbler Ridge tourism stakeholders to support activities related to achieving the designation, the 2017 commemoration and the Alaska Highway Tourism Corridor Planning process
Intended outcome(s)	- An accurate reflection of the Tumbler Ridge's "story" or "stories" related to the Alaska Highway in relevant materials, inventories and projects resulting from the process to designate the Alaska Highway as a National Historic Site - Coordinated regional marketing and product offerings over time
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Tumbler Ridge content in related materials, inventories and projects
Relation to objectives	Indirectly supports the three objectives by providing a stronger foundation for the further development of cultural and heritage tourism, which, in turn will enhance the appeal of the region and provide reasons for visitors to stay longer
Action steps	- District of Tumbler Ridge to appoint a community representative or Councillor to the Alaska Highway Community Board of Directors - Develop and provide relevant information and ideas throughout the process
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge and Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- Northern BC Tourism - Alaska Highway Community Society - Other tourism, heritage and culture stakeholders
Timeframe	2014 – to project end
Budget/ Resources	Time and possibly some financial resources (TBD)

Strategy B-2: Enhance the experience for visitors

The intention of product development initiatives outlined above (Tactics B-1-1, B-1-2, and B-1-3) is to encourage visitors to stop, stay and spend money in the area. To complement these tactics, it is important to improve signage and improve road-side facilities for these visitors. This is the focus of this strategy and the following tactic.

Tactic B-2-1	
Improve signage	
Brief description	- Workshop participants indicated that there are opportunities to improve and coordinate signage related to: - Hiking trails - ATV trails - Town gateways (workshop participants indicated that the signs at the three access roads give the impression that you are arriving at a 1980s coal mining town) - The purpose of this tactic is to address issues related to signage
Intended output(s)	Coordination with municipal and provincial authorities to improve signage
Intended outcome(s)	An increase in the number, quality and effectiveness of signs
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Adequate number of appropriate and informative signs
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	- Obtain and review previous reports prepared by the District of Tumbler Ridge in 2011 and determine if any actions have been or should be implemented - Work with municipal government and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to improve signage

Tactic B-2-1 Improve signage	
	Obtain procedure for assessing improvements to signage from Ministry Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, Senior Tourism Development Officer, Bruce Whyte
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge and Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure - Ministry Jobs Tourism Skills & Training
Timeframe	Ongoing
Budget/Resources	To be determined

Tactic B-2-2 Continue support for road and highway improvements for connecting roads and access routes to/from the Tumbler Ridge area	
Brief description	- Given that Tumbler Ridge is not on a main thorough fare and given that several of the area's iconic attractions are "off the beaten track", such as Kinuseo Falls, further development of the area's tourism industry is very dependent on well-maintained access roads - This tactic focuses on: - Maintaining a good working relationship with relevant government ministries, such as the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Ministry Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, and the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, Skills, Training - Identifying and prioritizing an inventory of road and highway improvements and being prepared to communicate these to the Province - Allocating resources, where possible, to support priority projects, such as improvements to the Murray River Forest Service Road and access to Kinuseo Falls and the Monkman route to the Alberta border, in addition to others
Intended output(s)	- Regular communication between representatives from Tumbler Ridge and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Ministry Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, and the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills, Training - Up-dated inventory of prioritized road, access route and highway improvements required to support the flow of visitors to, from and within the Tumbler Ridge area
Intended outcome(s)	- Improved access to, from and within the Tumbler Ridge area and, in particular, to and from key attractions, such as Kinuseo Falls - Better flow of visitors
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Increased level of visitation to/from key attractions and Tumbler Ridge
Relation to objectives	Supports all objectives
Action steps	- Identify who should lead this initiative - Together with key stakeholders, develop an inventory of prioritized transportation improvements - Communicate these to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on a regular basis
Lead	This will likely be led by representatives from the District of Tumbler Ridge and Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure - Tourism stakeholders
Timeframe	Ongoing
Budget/Resources	Time

Tactic B-2-3 Examine the feasibility of improving services offered through the Visitors Centre by operating year-round and possibly expanding the facility	
Brief description	- Workshop participants indicated that steps have been taken to improve Visitor Centre services and facilities - Year-round operation of the Visitor Centre is expected to commence in the future - Discussions regarding the potential for expanding the Visitor Centre have occurred, including the potential to include a gift shop featuring products from local artisans - The District is developing a strategy to make the Visitor Centre a focal point in the community - The purpose of this tactic is to ensure that the options to operate year-round and expand the Visitor Centre are carefully considered with regard to the feasibility of these initiatives and their potential benefits for the visitor, the community and the local economy
Intended output(s)	- Operation of the Visitor Centre year-round - Expansion and relocation of the Visitor Centre - Possible inclusion of other services and facilities at the Visitor Centre
Intended outcome(s)	Better visitor servicing year-round
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Difficult to measure the outcome in a quantifiable manner
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	Continue to explore the feasibility of these options for visitor servicing
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge and the new Chamber of Commerce
Potential partnerships	Tourism Working Group
Timeframe	Ongoing
Budget/Resources	To be determined

CATEGORY C: MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

Strategy C-1: Increase awareness about the Tumbler Ridge Areas' tourism assets and experiences

The workshop provided an opportunity for the Tumbler Ridge tourism stakeholders to discuss opportunities to coordinate their efforts and share ideas regarding how to increase awareness about the area. There are opportunities to increase awareness about Tumbler Ridge, which, in turn would support the three objectives. It would also support a key addition to the vision, which is to encourage more people to visit Tumbler Ridge as a distinctive destination, rather than a place that one stops by en route to another destination.

Tactic C-1-1 Evaluate marketing and promotional initiatives to ensure they support the objectives of the Tourism Plan and other priorities of the Tourism Working Group	
Brief description	The purpose of this initiative is to conduct a review of effectiveness of marketing and promotional investments periodically and make adjustments based on the results of the review
Intended output(s)	- Periodic review of marketing and promotional initiatives (annually or biannually) - Possible changes to marketing and promotional initiatives and investments, as a result of the review
Intended outcome(s)	Effective and relevant marketing and promotional initiatives
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Difficult to quantify in a cost-effective manner
Relation to	Supports all three objectives

Tactic C-1-1 Evaluate marketing and promotional initiatives to ensure they support the objectives of the Tourism Plan and other priorities of the Tourism Working Group	
objectives	
Action steps	Commit to a schedule to conduct periodic reviews
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge and the Chamber of Commerce
Potential partnerships	Northern BC Tourism and the Tourism Working Committee (once formed)
Timeframe	Ongoing
Budget/Resources	Time

Tactic C-1-2 Refresh the tourism brand, brochure and website	
Brief description	- The Tumbler Ridge tourism brand and brochure were created several years ago - Given the rich paleontological discoveries of the past several years, the evolution of the Dinosaur Discovery Centre and the developing Geopark concept, workshop participants indicated that it may be prudent to: - Examine the tourism brand with the intention of either validating it or refreshing it - Update the content of the Tumbler Ridge brochure, to reflect new product and attraction developments and, if required, a new brand: - Note that some jurisdictions are cutting back on the number of hard-copy brochures they are producing, giving the growing prominence of the Internet, smart phones and mobile technology to assist with travel planning and bookings - The new brochure – or a version of it—should tie into the website and should be available to download - Examine the web site to determine the viability of developing a tourism web site or updating tourism information on District web site. - Update content to reflect brand refresh and new product and attraction developments
Intended output(s)	- Validated or refreshed brand - A tourism web site or improved tourism information on District web site - Updated brochure that ties into the brand and the website
Intended outcome(s)	The ability to more accurately represent the Tumbler Ridge area and its assets to existing and potential visitors, with the intention of attracting more visitors, encouraging visitors to stay longer and enhancing the overall visitor experience
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Difficult to measure the outcomes of this in a cost-effective manner
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	- Discuss the logistics, possibility and cost of doing this with Northern BC Tourism and Destination BC - Develop a budget and timeline to complete this tactic
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge EDO, Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC
Timeframe	- Commence discussions in Fall 2014 - Complete the updates by early 2015, in time for the 2015 high season
Budget/Resources	To be determined

Tactic C-1-3 Formalize approach to working with the travel media to enhance media coverage of the region	
Brief description	- Several prominent initiatives that are or will be taking place will present opportunities to attract further media attention, most notably: - The recent and ongoing paleontological discoveries; - The potential UNESCO Geopark designation; and, - The initiatives related to the Alaska Highway National Historic Site designation and the Alaska Highway Tourism Corridor Planning - These types of initiatives can serve to attract media attention and, in turn, enhance awareness about the area's other assets - The purpose of this tactic is to formalize initiatives related to the travel media
Intended output(s)	Regular coverage in targeted travel media
Intended outcome(s)	- Increased awareness about the unique attributes of the region - Increased visitation
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	- Difficult to measure changes in awareness in a cost-effective manner - Measurement of the advertising dollar equivalent of the media coverage can be undertaken
Relation to objectives	This tactic supports all three objectives
Action steps	Commit to submitting story lines on a regular basis to Northern BC Tourism (Susan Hubbard), who works with Destination BC's travel media team
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge and the Chamber of Commerce
Potential partnerships	- Tourism Working Group - Northern BC Tourism travel media representatives and Destination BC travel media team - Tumbler Ridge Aspiring Geopark Committee - Other tourism stakeholders
Timeframe	Ongoing
Budget/Resources	Minimal

Tactic C-1-4 Coordinate online tutorials to build the capacity to effectively utilize social media	
Brief description	- Social media is becoming an increasingly influential factor related to "word-of-mouth" marketing in many sectors and industries, including tourism - This tactic involves: - Organizing an online tutorial that will enable tourism stakeholders to increase their knowledge about how to capitalize on the social media trend - Adding and continually updating blog content for Tumbler Ridge; include outstanding images that represent the region's tourism experiences - Encouraging visitors, friends and family to add blog content
Intended output(s)	- Organization of an online tutorial for social media training - Increase social media presence
Intended outcome(s)	Increased awareness about Tumbler Ridge and its unique features/events through social media
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	- Measuring any increase in awareness is difficult to do in a cost-effective manner - Measure business owner engagement to responding to TripAdvisor
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	- Coordinate this with Northern BC Tourism - Assign one person to encourage and oversee additions to social media and blog content - Ensure that all tourism stakeholders are aware of the online tutorial

Tactic C-1-4 Coordinate online tutorials to build the capacity to effectively utilize social media	
Lead	Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- Northern BC Tourism - Destination BC
Timeframe	2014/2015
Budget/Resources	In-kind – time to coordinate

CATEGORY D: RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Strategy D-1: Monitor the performance of the Tumbler Ridge area's tourism industry

There are simple and cost-effective ways to collate research statistics and monitor the performance of the community's tourism industry both locally and in partnership with the Destination BC Research, Planning and Evaluation Department. There are also opportunities for organizations within Tumbler Ridge to coordinate the collection of statistics; for example, the Dinosaur Discovery Centre and the Visitor Centre both collect visitor statistics.

Tactic D-1-1 Coordinate the collection of visitors statistics and monitor the performance of the tourism industry	
Brief description	- This tactic involves: - Collating, reviewing and communicating statistics related to the performance of the community and region's tourism industry and related to the objectives and tactics of this plan - Coordinating the collection and reporting of visitor statistics, so that the visitor categories used by the Dinosaur Discovery Centre and the Visitor Centre are consistent and are reported regularly in a combined document - At this time, the main source of relevant data is the Visitor Centre and the Dinosaur Discovery Centre - Destination BC also publishes relevant provincial and regional tourism research on a regular basis (available at www.destinationbc.ca/Research)
Intended output(s)	Collation and analysis of Visitor Centre and Dinosaur Discovery Centre statistics and relevant Destination BC research on a semi-annual basis
Intended outcome(s)	Increased understanding about changes in the performance of the community's tourism industry
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Research results
Relation to objectives	Will enable tourism stakeholders to adjust tactics to achieve objectives and/or revise objectives, based on a review of industry performance
Action steps	- Prepare simple format for collating and reporting Visitor Centre statistics, Dinosaur Discovery Centre statistics and relevant Destination BC statistics - Email research results to tourism stakeholders twice per year (possibly each January and July)
Lead	Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Centre and Dinosaur Discovery Centre
Potential partnerships	- District of Tumbler Ridge - Northern BC Tourism - Destination BC - Tourism Working Group
Timeframe	Ongoing
Budget/Resources	Staff time

Tactic D-1-2 Measure the visitor experiences and spending at key events and festivals	
Brief description	- This tactic involves: - Conducting a survey of visitors to festivals and events - At this time, there is limited tracking of visitation to the events
Intended output(s)	Collation and analysis of attendance, visitor satisfaction and economic impact at major events on a semi-annual basis
Intended outcome(s)	Estimate visitor satisfaction, identify what they liked and what they would like improved, estimate the direct spending generated by the event
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Research results
Relation to objectives	- Will enable tourism stakeholders to adjust marketing and promotional campaigns to encourage repeat visitation - Will help organizers make more informed decisions - Produce estimates of the tourism economic impact generated by visitors who the event - Help event planners justify requests for support from private and public sector sponsors
Action steps	- Contact Destination BC Research and Planning team to determine guidelines for the visitor study http://www.destinationbc.ca/getattachment/Research/Resources-for-Researchers/How-To-Guides/Introduction_to_the_Guidelines.pdf.aspx - Determine support and funds required to conduct research - Schedule research for 2015 - Share results with stakeholders and event planners
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge EDO, Tourism Working Group and Event Organizers
Potential partnerships	- District of Tumbler Ridge - Northern BC Tourism - Destination BC - Tourism Working Group - Event organizers
Timeframe	Ongoing
Budget/Resources	\$8,000 - \$10,000

CATEGORY E: ADDITIONAL PROJECTS IDENTIFIED POST-WORKSHOP TO HELP ADDRESS ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

Strategy E-1: Encourage tourism industry development and growth through targeted projects/initiatives

Shortly after the CTF workshop which was held on March 5th, 2014, Walter Energy decided to idle two coal mines in northeastern British Columbia due to difficult market conditions and declining prices for metallurgical coal. One of these mines – Wolverine Mine – is located near Tumbler Ridge. The idling of this mine has resulted in over 425 job layoffs, which is negatively impacting the economy of the Tumbler Ridge area.

Since Tumbler Ridge is considered to be a community in transition, several potential projects/initiatives have been added to this Community Tourism Plan. These projects are proposed for consideration, as they have the potential to encourage tourism growth and, as a result, contribute to the community's economic transition strategies.

The projects/initiatives listed below are based on input from Destination British Columbia, the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and other community stakeholders. They need to be further discussed, prioritized and defined immediately following the establishment of the Tourism Working Group.

Tactic E-1-1 Improve reservation system for camping and increase the number of dry and serviced RV sites	
Brief description	- This tactic involves: - Assessing and improving the reservation system for local campgrounds - Assessing the current supply of campgrounds for special events such as Grizfest, identifying and establishing optional dry camping sites as required for special events - Assessing the feasibility of developing serviced RV sites
Intended output(s)	- Improved reservation system for visitors - Improved availability to campsites that will accommodate increased visitation at key events and Geopark - Evaluate feasibility of developing more serviced campsites - Long-term potential to develop new serviced campsite
Intended outcome(s)	Growth in tourism due to increased visitation at events and to Geopark
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Overall value of tourism growth; festival attendance growth; visitation to Geopark, and accommodation occupancy rates during events and over season;
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	- Seek guidance from BC Lodging and Campground Association to determine the best approach for addressing the issues http://www.travel-british-columbia.com/ - Assess current reservation system and other reservation options and implement enhancements - Assess current availability and capacity of sites at key events, review non-serviced campsites options and establish if necessary - Conduct a feasibility study to determine viability of developing another campground with serviced sites - Implement recommendations from feasibility study
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge & Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- District of Tumbler Ridge - Northern BC Tourism - Destination BC - Ministry Jobs Tourism Skills Training - Tourism Working Group
Timeframe	Commence as soon as possible
Budget/Resources	- Staff time. Volunteer hours Tourism Working Group. - Funding for feasibility study to be determined.

Tactic E-1-2 Determine whether to proceed with developing a mountain bike tourism experience	
Brief description	- In recent years, northern BC has experienced substantial growth in the development of mountain bike trail networks, bike parks and related infrastructure and tourism services. - The three benefits of mountain biking tourism include: - Economic: by attracting riders from out of town - Environmental: trail system and management leads to sustainable use of trails and a decrease in unauthorized use - Social: promotes a healthy lifestyle and engages youth and families - Trails are a core component of the mountain biking experience. There is the potential that established hiking trail systems and terrain around Tumbler Ridge could appeal to the mountain biking market. - The Northern BC Regional Mountain Biking Strategy that has been developed with the Mountain Bike Tourism Association could be revised to encompass communities in northeastern BC. - This tactic includes the following: - Develop a business case for growing mountain biking tourism - Based on the recommendations, collaborate with other northeast communities to explore options for growing mountain biking tourism
Intended output(s)	Market assessment

Tactic E-1-2 Determine whether to proceed with developing a mountain bike tourism experience	
	- Stakeholder meeting - Infrastructure and trails assessment - Service and product review - Possible next steps: - Create a sustainable product - Strengthen supporting infrastructure - Develop and implement marketing strategy - Business, packaging, education program development
Intended outcome(s)	Business case to proceed with developing mountain bike tourism
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Business case completed
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	- Work with Northern BC Tourism (NBC) to expand Northern BC Regional Mountain Biking Strategy to include Tumbler Ridge and other northeast BC communities - Work with NBC and Mountain Bike Tourism Association to explore the viability and potential opportunities for mountain biking tourism in Tumbler Ridge
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge EDO
Potential partnerships	- District of Tumbler Ridge - Northern BC Tourism - Mountain Bike Tourism Association - Tourism Advisory Committee
Timeframe	Commence as soon as possible
Budget/Resources	- Staff time. - Additional funding requirements for workshop and consultant fees to be determined.

Tactic E-1-3 Develop an Events and Festivals Framework	
Brief description	Stakeholders who attended the session to review the draft CTF plan discussed several issues around coordination, the lack of marketing and lack of capacity of volunteer support for local festivals and events. The group agreed to include a tactic to provide direction to help maintain and grow local events and festivals. - Events and festivals stimulate the local economy and increase awareness about the assets around the community. - Event procurement, management and support can be provided by the District, local groups and in some cases or are operated by a commercial entity. - The District of Tumbler Ridge plays a key role in helping community organizations attract and support events through city provided services and/or cash and in-kind services. This tactic will involve a review of existing event activities and policies to assess options for developing an events and festivals framework that can include the following areas: - Strategic Direction: Develop a proactive approach to event procurement and support that is consistent with the District's objectives - Core Events: Determine process for maintaining key events and responding to new one-of-a-kind events - Volunteer Support for Events: Enhance volunteer support for events by setting up processes and systems to attract and retain volunteers - Regulatory/Facilitative: Identify application and approval process for existing event renewal, new event application, collaboration with event organizers and regulatory requirements, procedures for event evaluation and review, and clarify policies and procedures for film requests. - Resources: Identify programs and services available to support maintaining existing events. This can include an assessment of human resources, funding grants, base budget allocation, information sharing and capacity and other opportunities.
Intended output(s)	A event and festival framework that for the District and community groups

Tactic E-1-3 Develop an Events and Festivals Framework	
Intended outcome(s)	Improvements to event procurement, coordination, marketing and attracting and retaining volunteers
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Event attendance; Visitor satisfaction; Accommodation occupancy levels during events; Increase overall value of tourism
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	- Identify cost and determine funding sources to cover costs for hiring a consultant to develop the framework - Prepare a request for proposals (RFP) to hire a consultant to develop the framework - Issue the RFP and select the most suitable consultant - Review of existing event activities and policies and work with stakeholders to assess options for developing an events and festivals framework - Present the framework - Work together to implement
Lead	District Tumbler Ridge EDO, Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- Northern BC Tourism - Destination BC - Event organizers
Timeframe	Commence as soon as possible
Budget/Resources	Staff time

Tactic E-1-4 Support the development of authentic aboriginal cultural tourism experiences	
Brief description	Aboriginal cultural experiences are highly sought after by the touring market in particular visitors from European countries. However, it is important to note that these experiences must be authentic and of consistent high quality before they are promoted. The Tumbler Ridge Aspiring GeoPark is located in Treaty 8 Territory and First Nation engagement is a key aspect of the project. - Sharing of knowledge about the First Nation - TR Museum Foundation and Wolverine Nordic Mountain Society are working with Kelly Lake Cree First Nation to develop a recreational trail.
Intended output(s)	- Increased knowledge about the traditional territory and traditions of the aboriginal people within the area - Support for projects that are developed in partnership with local First Nations - Recreational trail that highlights aboriginal history
Intended outcome(s)	- Stronger relations with First Nation communities - Increased knowledge about aboriginal traditions in and around Treaty 8 Territory - Increased interest in aboriginal cultural tourism experiences
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	- Increase trail usage - Overall growth in value of aboriginal cultural tourism
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	- Support the ongoing work of the Wolverine and Nordic Mountain Society, TR Museum Foundation and Geopark project to collaborate with Kelly Lake Cree First Nation to develop a recreational trail - Pursue other opportunities for collaboration with First Nation communities
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge, Wolverine Nordic Mountain Society, TR Museum Foundation, Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- Kelly Lake Cree First Nation - Treaty 8 Tribal Association - Northern BC Tourism - Aboriginal Tourism BC
Timeframe	Ongoing

Tactic E-1-4	Support the development of authentic aboriginal cultural tourism experiences
Budget/Resources	Staff time

Tactic E-1-5	Support the sustainability of the Peace Region Palaeontology Research Centre (PRPRC)
Brief description	- There is no equivalent vertebrate paleontology research centre in British Columbia - The PRPRC serves as a repository for fossils from all areas in the province of BC - The PRPRC research facility and Dinosaur Discovery Gallery serve as an anchor for the proposed Aspiring Tumbler Ridge Geopark under the following categories which are considered in application to the Global GeoParks Network: - Research, information and education scientific activity in Earth sciences within the territory to include at least one scientific/academic institution, at least one student final report in the Applicant's area per year, at least one of the PhD thesis on Applicant's area with the past three years and at least five scientific or tourism focused academic papers from the worth within the Applicant's area during the last 5 years - Museum infrastructure - Scientific experts to promote further research - Environmental education programming for children, primary, elementary, secondary/high school classes, and university students - Educational materials including exhibits - Guided tours, teacher training - Qualified experts and interpretive guides - This tactic suggests that the lead organizations work together to identify a sustainable funding model for the operation of the PRPRC and include the recommendation in the Tumbler Ridge Aspiring Geopark Master Plan.
Intended output(s)	- Lead organizations work the Tumbler Ridge Geopark Society to look at sustainable funding model for the PRPRC - Identify potential sources of funds (private sector, grants, loans, sponsorships, advertising sales, ticket sales etc.) - Include the funding model in Tumbler Ridge Geopark Master Plan
Intended outcome(s)	Sustainable operation and funding model for the PRPRC
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Secure adequate funding to support sustainable operation of the PRPRC that will contribute to increase visitation
Relation to objectives	Will contribute to all three objectives
Action steps	- Arrange a meeting with District of Tumbler Ridge Mayor and Council, Tumbler Ridge Geopark Society, Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation and Tourism Working Group - Review operation of PRPRC, recent research findings and other opportunities that will strengthen political and public support for the paleontological resources and research activities - Identify potential funding models and sources of funding model - Develop a strategy - Include PRPRC sustainability in the Tumbler Ridge Geopark Master Plan - Work together to implement recommendations
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge, Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation, Tourism Working Group, Tumbler Ridge Geopark Society
Potential partnerships	- Community Futures Peace Liard - Peace River Regional District - Northern BC Tourism - Ministry of Jobs Tourism Skills & Training - Ministry Forest Lands Resource Operations - Northern Development Initiative Trust - Destination BC

Tactic E-1-5 Support the sustainability of the Peace Region Palaeontology Research Centre (PRPRC)	
Timeframe	Commence as soon as possible
Budget/Resources	Staff time; Volunteer hours

Tactic E-1-6 Develop and launch social media strategy and campaign for Nordic Activities	
Brief description	The quality of Nordic activities around Tumbler Ridge offers a unique advantage that should be promoted and developed. NBCTA notes that the ice climbing experience is a unique offering. To capitalize on content acquired from the spring 2014 video/photo shoot of Nordic activities, this tactic involves increasing awareness about the Nordic activities through social media. - Social media is becoming increasingly important as a tool for communicating and stimulating interest with those target markets that share a common passion about a specific experience. - This tactic will build on recommendations identified in March 2013 Social Media Content Plan developed by Channel and NBCTA, which suggests "key messaging on the social platforms reflect the target markets and that content focus on highlighting Tumbler Ridge's many recreational opportunities (e.g. hiking, biking and snowmobiling), the abundance of natural attractions (e.g. parks and waterfalls) and paleontological discoveries."
Intended output(s)	- Social media strategy - Social media campaign to highlight Nordic Activities
Intended outcome(s)	Increased awareness about Tumbler Ridge Nordic activities through social media
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Monitor, interpret and share results
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	- Engage consultant (possibly NBCTA) to develop a social media strategy - Utilize content – images, video segments acquired April 2014 - Create a network of Tumbler Ridge ambassadors who will participate in regular updates - Launch and manage presence with frequent and intriguing updates
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge EDO & Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- Northern BC Tourism - Destination BC - Community stakeholders
Timeframe	Commence as soon as possible
Budget/Resources	Staff time; Estimate \$5,000

Tactic E-1-7 Coordinate a Community Heritage Values Workshop	
Brief description	The Provincial Heritage Branch Community Heritage Planners can help local governments; residents and key stakeholders identify and understand why and how the community values the history of its development. A key quality of this understanding is that it is generated from and acknowledged by the whole community. A heritage conversation planning program built on the community's stated commitment to its past has a sound, sustainable mandate. Heritage planners lead community stakeholders in a voluntary workshop which underscores the need to approach cultural heritage from the perspective of community values. In the past, heritage in many places was often defined by experts using criteria such as "finest", "oldest", or "last of its kind". Now communities are encouraged to consider everything that contributes to a greater understanding and appreciation of historic contexts as potential heritage resources. Communities are given the responsibility for determining what should be protected by weighing opportunities, benefits and risks for present and, to the best of their ability, future generations.
Intended output(s)	Community Heritage Values Workshop facilitated by Provincial Heritage Branch Heritage Planners
Intended outcome(s)	Workshop results will: raise community awareness about heritage resources and history of

Tactic E-1-7 Coordinate a Community Heritage Values Workshop	
	- development - help guide statements about land use in the municipality and contribute to the Official Community Plan - support the Geopark project - contribute to overall results of the March 2013 North East BC Community Values Workshop and Alaska Highway Heritage Project - possibly support proposals for sustainable funding for tourism initiatives
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	Difficult to quantify
Relation to objectives	Will enable tourism stakeholders to adjust tactics to achieve objectives and/or revise objectives, based on the value stakeholders place on heritage resources
Action steps	- Ask NBC to assist with organizing the workshop - Contact Pam Copley, Community Heritage Planner, Pam.Copley@gov.bc.ca - Determine date and cost - Coordinate workshop - Distribute results to stakeholders and present to Mayor and Council
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge, Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- Ministry Forest, Lands Resource Operations, Heritage Branch - Northern BC Tourism - Destination BC
Timeframe	Commence as soon as possible
Budget/Resources	Staff time; Volunteer hours; Estimate \$3,000 for workshop

Tactic E-1-8 Investigate the opportunity to collect the Municipal and Regional District Hotel Room Tax or ("Additional 2% Hotel Room Tax")	
Brief description	An annual investment must be made in order to continue to grow tourism and generate long-term sustainable returns. Collection of the 2% Additional Hotel Room Tax can be investigated as an industry generated source for tourism marketing which can be leveraged for greater returns. After the elimination of the Hotel Room Tax on July 1, 2010, the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT, also known as the Additional Hotel Room Tax) continued as a standalone 2% tax on accommodation. As noted on the following web site: http://www.jtst.gov.bc.ca/tourismstrategy/policy_legislation/policylegislation.htm. "The tax is implemented by a provincial regulation and a local government bylaw, following an endorsement process with local accommodation providers. Non-profit organizations are also eligible to collect the tax under special application rules. Approximately 45 communities are authorized to charge the tax on accommodation and use the revenues to fund tourism marketing, programs and projects. For a list of participating communities and for more information, click here. When the <i>Provincial Sales Tax Act</i> is implemented on April 1, 2013, organizations who receive the municipal and regional district tax (MRDT) will continue to receive their payments in the same manner as they currently receive them. Receiving organization are not required to make any changes to their systems. Some organizations that receive the MRDT may be required to register to collect the provincial sales tax (PST) if they sell taxable goods or provide related services, legal services, telecommunication services or accommodation." For consideration:

Tactic E-1-8 Investigate the opportunity to collect the Municipal and Regional District Hotel Room Tax or ("Additional 2% Hotel Room Tax")	
	- The estimate for collecting the Additional Hotel Room Tax that is generated by the accommodation sector in Tumbler Ridge is modest. - Therefore, working collectively as a region within the Peace River Regional District could potentially generate more resources.
Intended output(s)	A collective approach would provide an opportunity for greater leveraging with partners such as NBCTA and increase impact in target markets
Intended outcome(s)	Increased investment in funds for product/market development
Quantifiable measures (if applicable)	increase in visitation; increase in accommodation occupancy levels; increase overall value of tourism
Relation to objectives	Supports all three objectives
Action steps	- Engage with other tourism organizations and communities within the Peace River Regional District to investigate the interest level in working together to establish the 2% AHRT - Create a draft business plan for investment of AHRT funds to allow communities/accommodations operators to understand potential investment returns arising from utilizing AHRT funds to grow tourism. - Create a draft governance model for management of the AHRT to address concerns regarding representation and in put to decision making processes - Engage with accommodation sector to secure petition of majority of rooms/majority of properties defined in the region - Consideration for NBCTA to both leverage and potentially manage marketing
Lead	District of Tumbler Ridge and Tourism Working Group
Potential partnerships	- Northern BC Tourism - Destination BC - Ministry Jobs Tourism Skills & Training - Accommodation sector - Communities and tourism organizations within Peace River Regional District
Timeframe	2014 beyond
Budget/Resources	Staff time and Tourism Working Group volunteer hours

8 IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents suggested roles, responsibilities and timing for implementing the tactics contained in the Tumbler Ridge Community Tourism Plan. The assignment of roles and responsibilities is proposed by the facilitator. This should be reviewed carefully and adjusted as needed by workshop participants following the review of the Community Tourism Plan and final decisions regarding appropriate roles.

CATEGORY A: ORGANIZATION, COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP

Strategy A-1: Increase coordination of and communication related to tourism initiatives	Roles	Timing
Tactic A-1-1 Establish a Tumbler Ridge Tourism Working Group	Lead: - District of Tumbler Ridge (potentially the new EDO) and Northern BC Tourism Potential Partnerships: - Tourism stakeholders	Commence in June 2014

CATEGORY B: PRODUCT AND EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Strategy B-1: Further develop and enhance the range and types of tourism products and experiences for visitors	Roles	Timing
Tactic B-1-1 Build on the initiative to attain UNESCO Geopark designation	Lead: - Tumbler Ridge Aspiring Geopark Society, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships: - District of Tumbler Ridge and Northern BC Tourism	Ongoing
Tactic B-1-2 Develop a visitor experience plan that links the diversity of experiences available	Lead: - District of Tumbler Ridge, Tourism Working Group, identified steering committee Potential Partnerships: - Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC, Tumbler Ridge Aspiring Geopark Committee, Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation, Wolverine and Nordic Mountain Society, Dinosaur Discovery Centre, Chamber of Commerce	- Phase 1: plan audit in October and conduct audit in summer 2015 - Phase 2: host Tourism Experience Action Plan workshop in winter 2014 and implement action plan in 2015

Tactic B-1-3 Actively support activities related to the nomination of the Alaska Highway as a National Historic Site and the development of an Alaska Highway Tourism Corridor Plan	Lead: - District of Tumbler Ridge, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships: - Northern BC Tourism, Alaska Highway Community Society, other tourism, heritage and culture stakeholders	2014 – to project end
Strategy B-2: Enhance the experience for visitors		
Tactic B-2-1 Improve signage	Lead - District of Tumbler Ridge, Tourism Working Group Potential partnership - Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Ministry of Jobs Tourism Skills & Training	Ongoing
Tactic B-2-2 Continue support for road and highway improvements for connecting roads and access routes to/from the Tumbler Ridge area	Lead - District of Tumbler Ridge, Tourism Working Group Potential partnerships - Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Ministry Forests Lands and Natural Resource Operations, Ministry Jobs Tourism Skills & Training and tourism stakeholders	Ongoing
Tactic B-2-3 Examine the feasibility of improving services offered through the Visitor Centre by operating year-round and possibly expanding the facility	Lead - District of Tumbler Ridge, Chamber of Commerce Potential partnerships - Tourism Working Group	Ongoing

CATEGORY C: MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

Strategy C-1: Increase awareness about the Tumbler Ridge Area's tourism assets and experiences	Lead: - District of Tumbler Ridge and the Chamber of Commerce Potential Partnerships: - Northern BC Tourism and the Tourism Working Group, once formed	Ongoing
Tactic C-1-1 Evaluate marketing and promotional initiatives to ensure they support the objectives of the Community Tourism Plan and other priorities of the Tourism Working Groups	Lead: - District of Tumbler Ridge EDO, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships: - Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC	- Commence discussions in Fall 2014 - Complete updates by early 2015, in time for the 2015 high season
Tactic C-1-2 Refresh the tourism brand and brochure		Ongoing

Strategy C-1: Increase awareness about the Tumbler Ridge Area's tourism assets and experiences	Roles	Timing
Tactic C-1-3 Formalize approach to working with the travel media to enhance media coverage of the region	Lead: District of Tumbler Ridge, Chamber of Commerce Potential Partnerships: Tourism Working Group, Northern BC Tourism travel media representatives and Destination BC travel media team, Tumbler Ridge Aspiring Geopark Committee, other tourism stakeholders	
Tactic C-1-4 Coordinate on-line tutorials to build the capacity to effectively utilize social media	Lead: - Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships: - Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC	2014-2015

CATEGORY D: RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Strategy D-1: Monitor the performance of the Tumbler Ridge area's tourism industry	Roles	Timing
Tactic D-1-1 Coordinate the collection of visitor statistics and monitor the performance of the tourism industry	Lead: - Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Centre and Dinosaur Discovery Centre Potential Partnerships: - District of Tumbler Ridge, Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC, Tourism Working Group, once formed	Ongoing

CATEGORY E: ADDITIONAL PROJECTS IDENTIFIED POST-WORKSHOP TO HELP ADDRESS ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

Strategy E-1 Encourage tourism industry development and growth through targeted projects/initiatives	Roles	Timing
Tactic E-1-1 Improve reservation system for camping and increase the number of dry and serviced RV sites.	Lead: - District of Tumbler Ridge, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships: - Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC, Ministry of Jobs, Tourism & Skills Training	Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-2 Determine whether to proceed with developing a mountain bike tourism experience.	Lead: - District of Tumbler Ridge, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships: - Northern BC Tourism, Mountain Bike Tourism Association	Commence as soon as possible

Strategy E-1 Encourage tourism industry development and growth through targeted projects/initiatives	Roles	Timing
Tactic E-1-3 Develop an events and festivals framework	Lead: - District Tumbler Ridge EDO, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships - Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC, event organizers	Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-4 Support the development of authentic aboriginal cultural tourism experiences	Lead: - District Tumbler Ridge EDO, Wolverine & Nordic Mountain Society, TR Museum Foundation, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships - Kelly Lake Cree First Nation, Treaty 8 Tribal Association, Northern BC Tourism, Aboriginal Tourism BC	Ongoing
Tactic E-1-5 Support the sustainability of the Peace Region Palaeontology Research Centre (PRPRC)	Lead: - District of Tumbler Ridge, Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation, Tourism Working Group, Tumbler Ridge Geopark Society Potential Partnerships - Community Futures Peace Liard, Peace River Regional District, Northern BC Tourism, Ministry of Jobs Tourism Skills & Training, Ministry Forest Lands Resource Operations, Northern Development Initiative Trust, Destination BC	Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-6 Develop and launch social media strategy and campaign for Nordic activities	Lead: - District of Tumbler Ridge EDO, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships - Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC, community stakeholders	Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-7 Coordinate a Community Heritage Values Workshop	Lead: - District Tumbler Ridge EDO, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships - Ministry Forest Lands Resources Operations Heritage Branch, Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC, Tumbler Ridge Museum Foundation, Tumbler Ridge Aspiring GeoPark Society, community stakeholders	Commence as soon as possible
Tactic E-1-8 Investigate the opportunity to collect the Municipal and Regional District Hotel Room Tax or ("Additional 2% Hotel Room Tax") Program	Lead: - District Tumbler Ridge EDO, Tourism Working Group Potential Partnerships - Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC, accommodation sector, communities and tourism organizations within Peace River Regional District	2014 and beyond

9 NEXT STEPS

The next steps with regard to the Tumbler Ridge Community Tourism Plan are for tourism stakeholders to:

- Review the Community Tourism Plan in detail;
- Identify and agree upon priority tactics (if certain tactics are not priorities at this time, place them on a “holding list” to be revisited at a later date) and create an Action Plan;
- Identify who should lead and who should support the implementation of priority tactics;
- Define the budget requirements for priority tactics;
- Identify funding sources and secure funding;
- Possibly hold a “Community Forum” to present and discuss this plan and priority initiatives; and,
- Proceed with implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

APPENDIX A: NORTHERN BC TOURISM OVERVIEW

Overview

In 2010, overnight tourism in British Columbia generated 15.7 million person-visits* and \$8.1 billion in related spending. Northern British Columbia, one of six tourism regions in the province, represents 5% of provincial overnight visitation and 5% of related expenditures.

This profile provides a general overview of the region and summarizes the latest data available about overnight travellers visiting Northern British Columbia.

Top markets for Northern BC

British Columbia residents make up the largest share of overnight visitation (65%) and spending (56%) in Northern British Columbia. Those familiar with the region will not be surprised that German travellers are included in the top markets for visitation and spending, one of two regions that have this market in their "top five" list.

Top five markets of origin (2010)		Share in Northern BC	
		Visitation	Spending
1	British Columbia	65%	56%
2	Alberta	12%	12%
3	Alaska	2%	1%
4	Germany	2%	3%
5	Washington	1%	3%

About this tourism region

British Columbia's largest tourism region covers 569,000 km² of the province, and has more than 60 provincial, national and marine parks, and wildlife refuges that offer access to globally unique ecosystems and priceless cultural heritage treasures. The population of Northern British Columbia has remained virtually unchanged from 2006 and continues to be characterised by a younger demographic than the province as a whole, with 60% aged 44 years or younger compared to the province average (54%).



The region	2011	% change (2006-11)	Age groups ¹	2011	% change (2006-11)
Population ¹	253,521	-0.1%	0-19 years	27%	-7%
Population as % of BC	6%	+0.4 point change	20-44 years	33%	-5%
Avg annual earnings (2006) ²	\$28,044	n/a	45-64 years	29%	6%
Unemployment rate ³	6%	n/a	65+ years	11%	20%

Tourism industry	2012	% of BC
Businesses (2011) ⁴	1,158	6%
Employment (2011) ⁴	6,459	5%
Accommodation sector revenue (\$000s) ⁴	\$327,023	10%
Room revenue (\$000s) ⁴	\$50,794	n/a
Campsites		
Private/municipal ⁵	2,579	10%
Provincial ⁶	2,006	16%
National ⁷	0	0%
Custom entries ⁸	46,054	1%
Visitor centre parties ⁹	106,909	7%

Transportation	2012	% change (2011-12)
Airport passengers ¹⁰	136,305	6%
Fort St. John	418,589	4%
Prince George	73,059	12%
Smithers	262,931	4%
Alaska Ferry passengers ¹¹		
BC Ferries passengers ¹²		
Route 10/40	44,816	-1%
Route 11	35,552	3%
Highway traffic volume (000s) ¹³		
Route 16	1,054	5%

Please see page 4 for data sources

*A traveller may visit several locations on one trip to British Columbia; each stay represents a person-visit.

Travellers in Northern British Columbia

Trip characteristics by origin

Northern British Columbia received 919,000 overnight person-visits in 2010 and generated \$383 million in related spending. Domestic overnight travellers accounted for 80% of visitation and 75% of related spending. International travellers accounted for 20% and 25%, respectively.

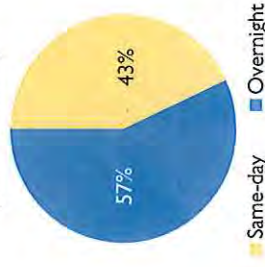
On average, domestic travel parties in Northern British Columbia stayed 3.8 nights and spent \$130 per night during their trip. US travel parties stayed 3.5 nights and spent \$304 per night during their trip, and Other international travel parties stayed 5.3 nights and spent \$167 per night during their trip in Northern British Columbia.

OVERNIGHT VS SAME-DAY TRAVEL

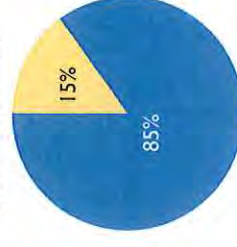
Same-day travel encompasses travellers who enter and leave a destination (i.e. region) in less than 24 hours.

Same-day travellers accounted for 43% of visitor volume and 15% of visitor expenditures in Northern British Columbia.

Traveller volume
(Total = 1.6 million)



Traveller expenditures
(Total = \$453 million)



	Total		% change (2009-2010)		Share of total	
	Overnight visitors (000s)	Spending (\$000s)	Overnight visitors	Spending	Overnight visitors	Spending
All travellers in Northern BC	919	\$383,027	5%	-4%	100%	100%
BC residents	599	\$215,845	18%	6%	65%	56%
Other Canadian residents	139	\$70,627	-14%	-16%	15%	18%
US residents	117	\$62,715	-20%	-8%	13%	16%
Other international residents	64	\$33,840	6%	-20%	7%	9%
Leisure travellers in Northern BC	442	\$204,415	12%	-4%	100%	100%
BC residents	271	\$103,331	34%	6%	61%	51%
*Other Canadian residents	50	\$26,925	-18%	-38%	11%	13%
US residents	74	\$47,827	-13%	-2%	17%	23%
Other international residents	46	\$26,332	4%	13%	10%	13%

*Due to small unweighted sample size, please use extreme caution when interpreting.

Travellers in Northern British Columbia

Trip activities

Overnight travellers who spent one or more nights in Northern British Columbia took part in a number of outdoor activities during their trip, including visiting national/provincial parks, hiking/backpacking, camping, and wildlife viewing. Some cultural activities, including visiting museums/art galleries and historic sites, also ranked as top trip activities among non-British Columbia residents.

*Top activities on the trip

	BC residents	Other Canadians	**US residents	**Other international
1	Hiking or backpacking	National, provincial or nature park	National, provincial or nature park	National, provincial or nature park
2	Camping	Hiking or backpacking	Museum or art gallery	Historic site
3	National, provincial or nature park	Wildlife viewing or bird watching	Historic site	Museum or art gallery
4	Boating/canoeing/kayaking	Museum or art gallery	Camping	Zoo or aquarium
5	Wildlife viewing or bird watching	Golfing	Zoo or aquarium	Camping

*Please note that the activities listed could have taken place anywhere on the trip, not just in the Northern British Columbia.

**Please note that the following activities were not included in this analysis: visit friends or family, shopping, sightseeing, bar/night club, sport/outdoor activity unspecified.

Data sources for travellers in Northern British Columbia

The International Travel Survey (ITS) and the Travel Survey of Residents of Canada (TSRC) are ongoing surveys conducted by Statistics Canada in partnership with the Canadian Tourism Commission and some provinces, including British Columbia.

The ITS and TSRC provides statistics on the volume and demographics of domestic and international travellers and on characteristics of their trips such as activities, expenditures, places visited, accommodations and length of stay.

The data are based on the 2010 results for those who travelled in Canada and spent at least one night in Northern British Columbia. For more information, please visit www.statcan.gc.ca.

Other data sources are noted where appropriate and listed on page 4.

Accommodation

Over 40% of all traveller nights in Northern British Columbia were spent in the residences of friends and family for all markets of origin, except US residents. US residents spent more of their nights at camping or RV park facilities than travellers from other markets of origin.

*Accommodation while in the region

Primary accommodation	BC residents	Other Canadians	US residents	Other international
Friends and family	43%	47%	16%	46%
Hotel	20%	41%	21%	18%
Motel	2%	1%	18%	14%
Other commercial fixed roof	8%	3%	9%	6%
Camping/RV parks	10%	4%	30%	16%

*Please note this sum will not equal 100% for each market as other non-paid accommodation is not included in the table.

Seasonality

Most people travelled in Northern British Columbia during the peak summer months, particularly US residents (58%) and Other international travellers (56%). More British Columbians travelled from October to December compared to other markets of origin, particularly in the months of October and November.

Visitors to Northern BC by quarter

Season of travel	BC residents	Other Canadians	US residents	Other international
January to March	11%	13%	5%	7%
April to June	18%	31%	31%	26%
July to September	42%	47%	58%	56%
October to December	30%	9%	6%	10%

Regional comparisons

Travel characteristics by region	*Overnight visitors (000s)	Total *Spending (\$000s)	Nights (000s)	% change (2009-2010)			Regional share of total		
				Overnight visitors	Spending	Nights	Overnight visitors	Spending	Nights
All travellers in BC	15,729	\$8,070,235	74,216	6%	3%	3%			
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	484	\$105,301	1,835	15%	-1%	8%	3%	1%	3%
Kootenay Rockies	1,581	\$521,582	5,679	-1%	-1%	-2%	9%	7%	8%
Northern BC	919	\$383,027	3,575	5%	-4%	-9%	5%	5%	5%
Thompson Okanagan	3,309	\$1,098,024	11,932	2%	-6%	-4%	19%	14%	17%
Vancouver, Coast & Mountains	7,182	\$4,086,981	34,703	11%	10%	9%	42%	54%	48%
Vancouver Island	3,736	\$1,435,306	14,577	4%	-0.1%	5%	22%	19%	20%
Leisure travellers in BC	8,286	\$4,565,658	36,009	4%	2%	3%			
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	280	\$75,405	1,252	7%	-0.2%	14%	3%	2%	4%
Kootenay Rockies	1,072	\$401,642	3,826	-4%	-0.2%	-2%	12%	9%	11%
Northern BC	442	\$204,415	1,839	12%	-4%	-2%	5%	5%	5%
Thompson Okanagan	1,799	\$727,122	6,545	3%	-3%	-1%	19%	17%	19%
Vancouver, Coast & Mountains	3,669	\$2,066,686	13,787	9%	10%	8%	40%	47%	40%
Vancouver Island	1,975	\$876,645	7,462	0.1%	-2%	3%	21%	20%	21%

*Please note the visitation of all regions will not equal the provincial total as travellers can visit multiple regions on one trip and the spending of all regions will not equal the provincial total as the "unspecified" region is not included in the table.

Sources

1. 2011 Census, Statistics Canada
2. 2006 Census, Statistics Canada
3. BC Stats
4. Tourism Statistics, BC Stats
5. Destination BC
6. BC Parks
7. Parks Canada
8. Statistics Canada
9. Destination BC
10. Individual airports
11. Alaska State Ferry
12. BC Ferries
13. BC Ministry of Transportation

Data tables are based on Statistics Canada microdata which contain anonymised data collected in the Travel Survey of Residents of Canada (pooled) and/or the International Travel Survey 2009/2010. All computations on these microdata were prepared by Research Resolutions & Consulting Ltd. on behalf of Destination BC and the responsibility for the use and interpretation of these data is entirely that of the author(s).

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APPENDIX B: 2012 IN-MARKET RESEARCH REPORT



2012 In-Market Research Report

Northern BC



TourismBC



Executive Summary - NBC

This report summarizes key highlights for the Northern BC (NBC) region taken from the British Columbia In-Market study conducted in November 2011 and April 2012. A full report on the findings, plus summaries of the other BC tourism regions are available under separate covers.

- *Visitors to any BC region are looking for destinations which offer value for money, a place to relax and unwind and which serve as a good getaway from everyday life.*
- *Prince George is the most well-known NBC area to respondents. Residents of 'Other BC' regions have the highest familiarity with this region overall, followed by Lower Mainland residents.*
- *Key activities which motivated trips to Northern BC were visiting friends or relatives followed by sightseeing, nature and wildlife viewing.*
- *Visitors to the region were most likely to participate in sightseeing, nature, wildlife viewing; visiting friends or relatives, shopping, hiking and visiting rural communities on their trip.*
- *Just under four-in-ten (38%) respondents are likely to visit Northern BC in the next two years, most likely for a 'mini-vacation' (3-5 nights) or a 'Vacation' (6+ nights). The majority of future trips are planned for summer. Participating in outdoor recreation activities as well as experiencing scenery and nature are key motivators for future trips.*
- *The Internet (on a computer as opposed to a mobile device) is heavily relied-upon for pre-trip planning, while information centres and online (at accommodations) are the most popular information sources during trips.*
- *Lack of interest in visiting or returning to the region, as well as preferring to visit a different or international location are key reasons given by respondents who are unlikely to take a trip to Northern BC in the next two years.*
- *Just 36% of respondents familiar with NBC have a positive overall impression of the region, which ranks it 6th out of the 6 British Columbia Tourism regions. Lack of familiarity is a key challenge for the region.*





Background & Methodology

BACKGROUND

This document highlights the results of a two-part In-Market study conducted among residents of British Columbia, Alberta, Western Washington State and Eastern Washington State in late 2011 and early 2012. These surveys were conducted to update similar studies conducted in 2008 and 2006.

The purpose of these ongoing studies is to provide the Ministry and the six tourism regions with market profiles and brand attitudes from key regional markets.

DATA COLLECTION

The surveys were distributed to respondents on-line. Survey programming, hosting and data collection was undertaken by NRG Research, utilizing Research Now's on-line panel. A quota sample was used to ensure that each region had enough responses to create reliable profiles. In total, n=3,051 surveys were conducted in 2011/2012, with n=536 evaluations conducted for the Northern BC (NBC) region.

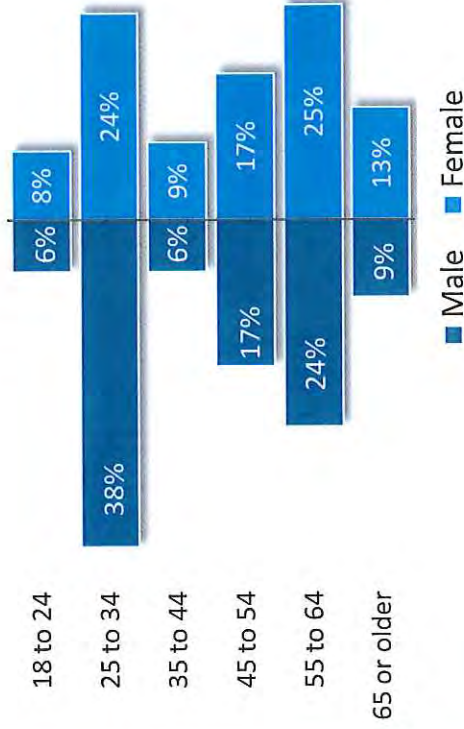
DATA ANALYSIS

The data was weighted to accurately reflect the population of travellers from each of the markets profiled, based on region, gender, age and education.

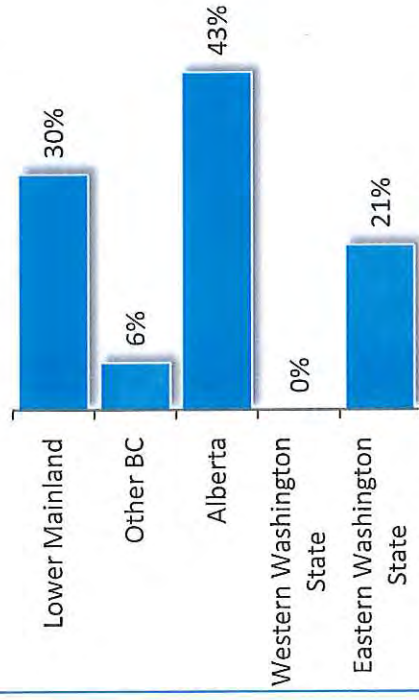
Respondent Characteristics – Northern BC

- Respondents who evaluated Northern BC (n=536) were slightly more likely to be male (55% vs. 45% female) and skewed the 25 – 34 age bracket for males. The largest group were from Alberta followed by the Lower Mainland of BC. They were predominantly post-secondary educated and represent a wide range income levels.

Gender & Age

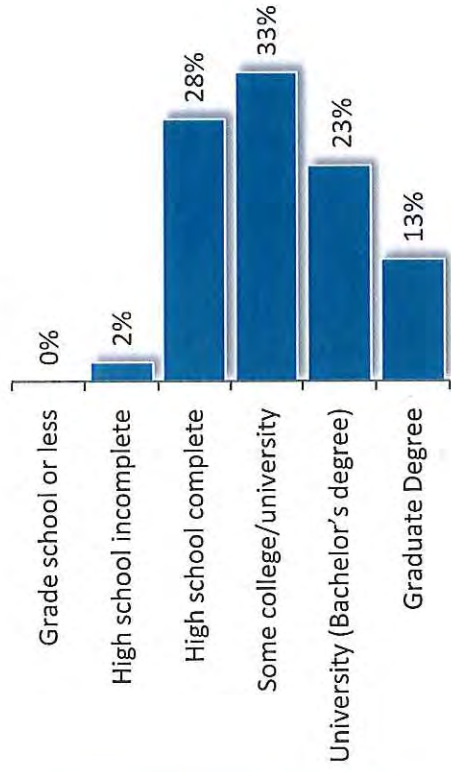


Respondent Origin

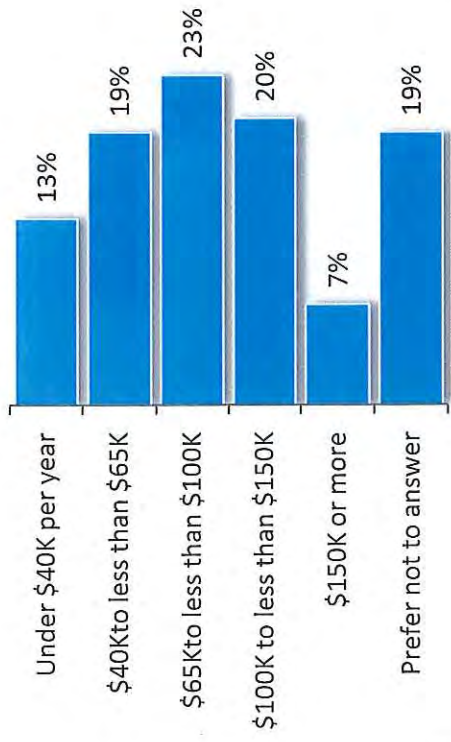


* Western Washington respondents did not evaluate NBC.

Education



Household Income

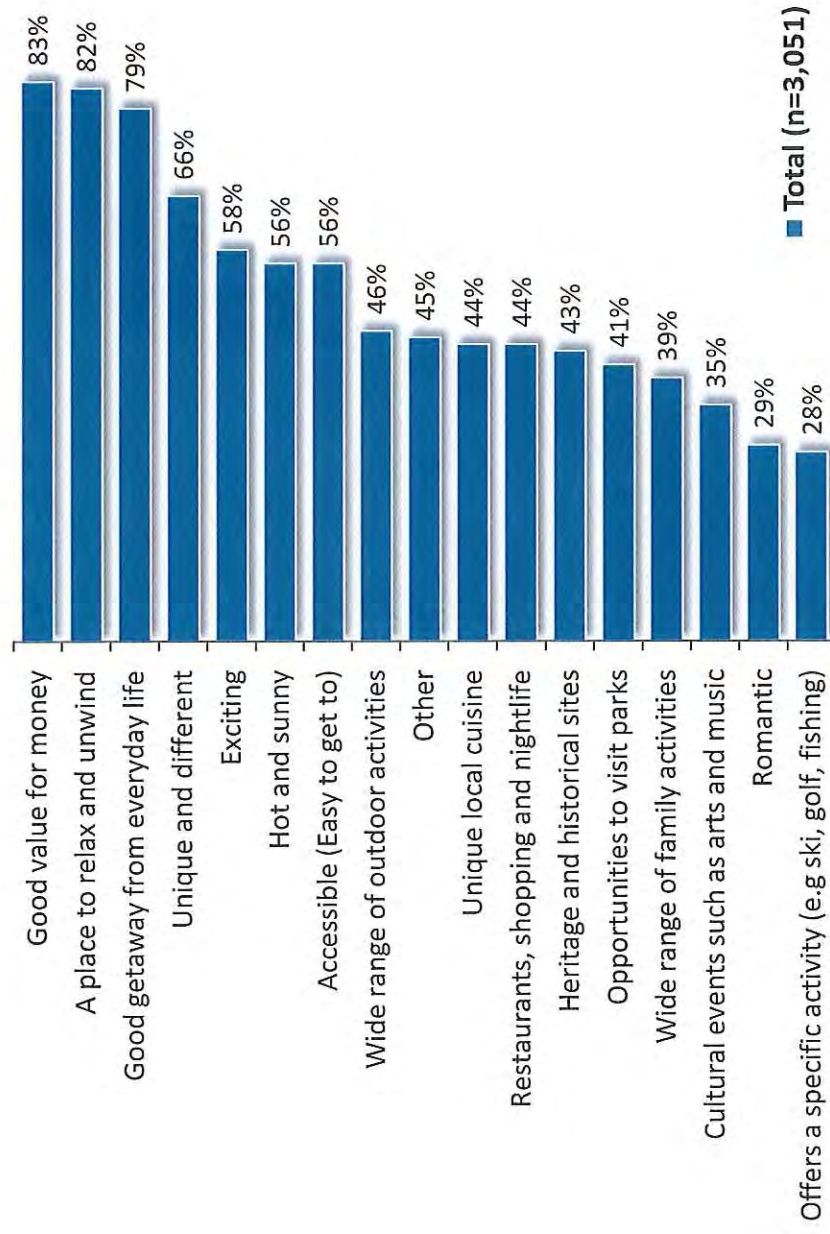




Top Factors in choosing a BC destination

- The most important factors, (top 2 box ratings*), for choosing a BC destination are those which offer good value for money, a place to relax and unwind and serves as a good getaway from everyday life. After the top three factors, there is a significant drop in the proportion of ratings to destinations which are unique and different, exciting and hot and sunny.

Top Factors in choosing a destination

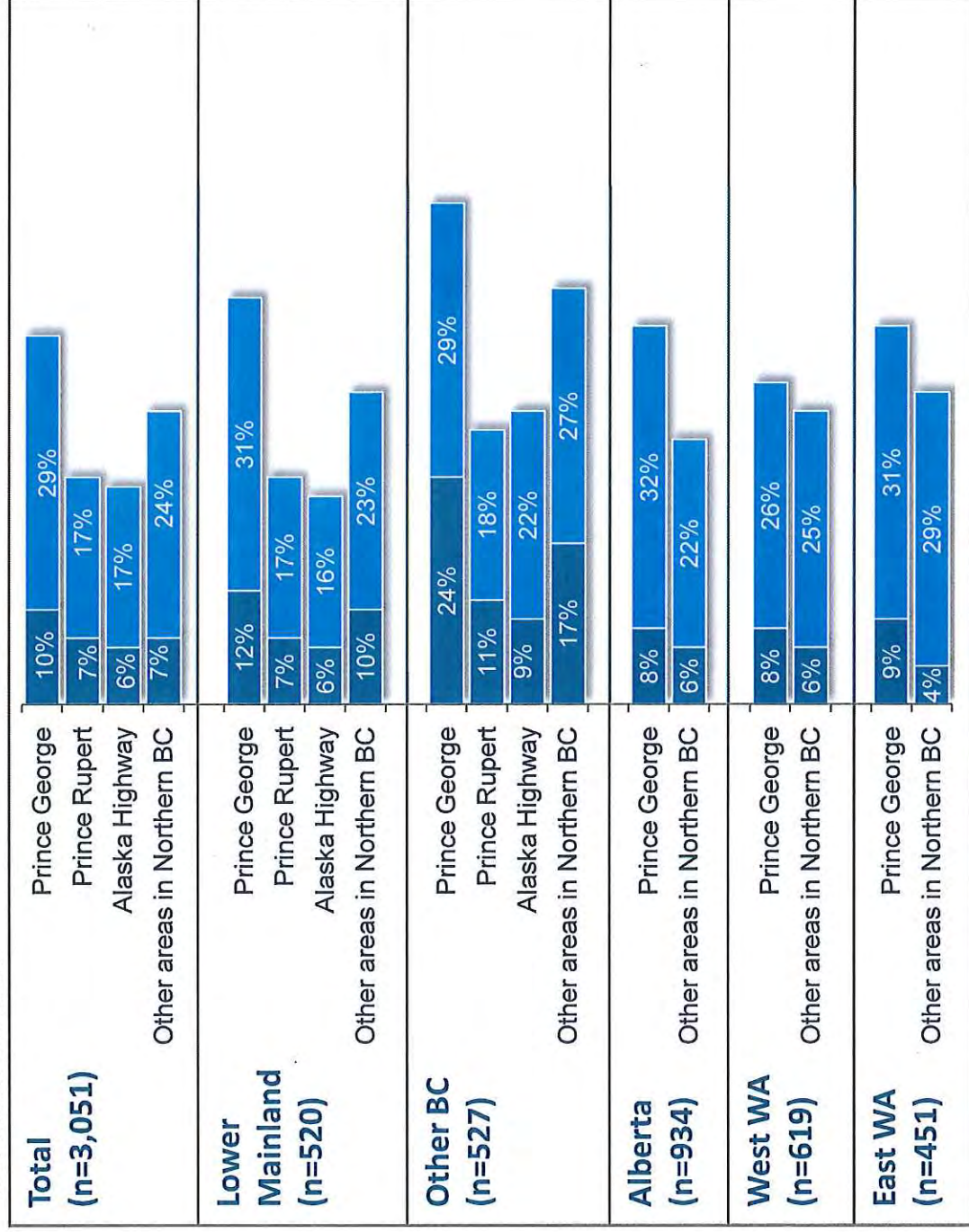


* Top 2 box includes ratings of 4 or 5 out of 5 on a 5 point scale where 1 is 'Not at all important' and 5 is 'Very important'.



Familiarity with Northern BC – by Origin

- Prince George is the most well-known Northern BC destination. Respondents from 'Other BC' are the most familiar with the region overall. Fewer than one-in-ten residents of Alberta or Washington State consider that they are very familiar with any Northern BC area.

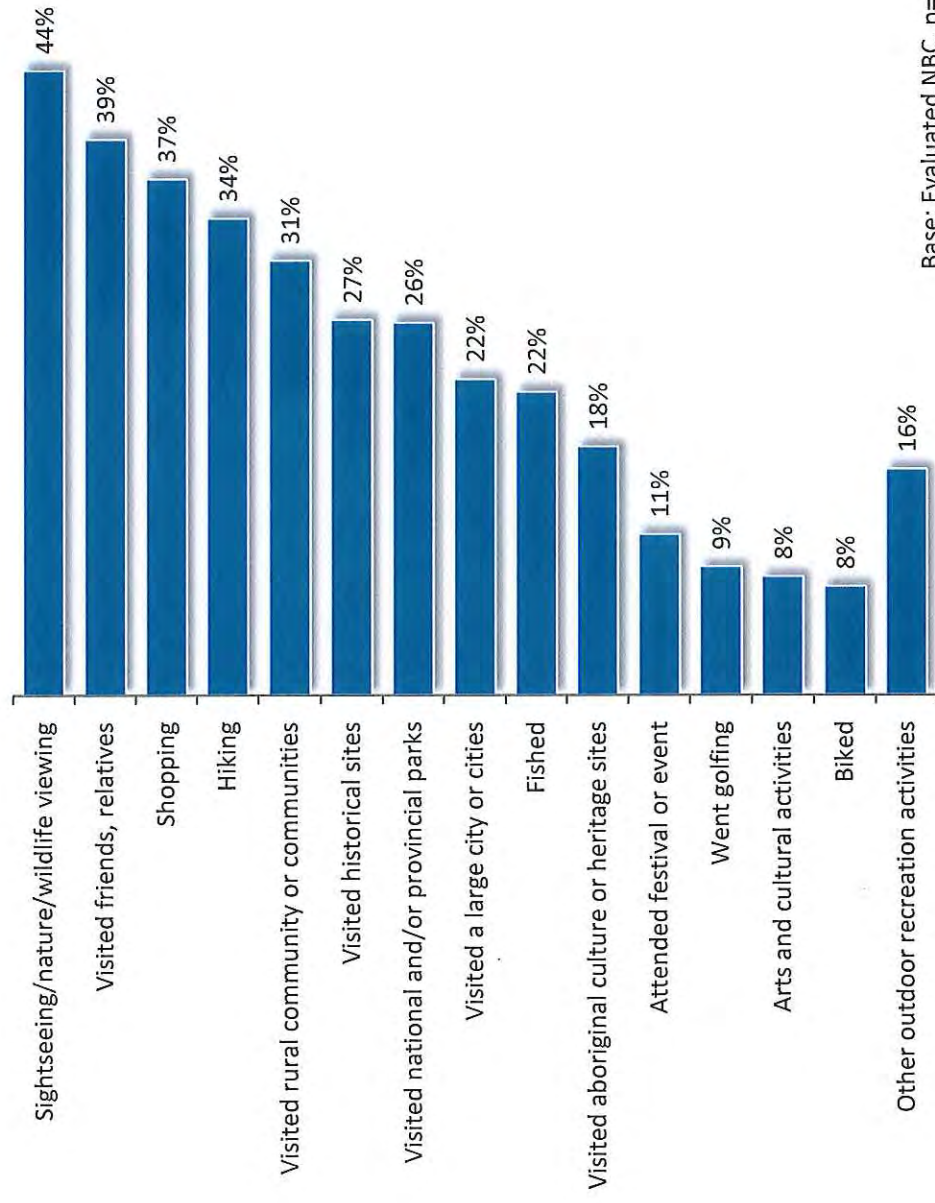


*Note: Only BC residents rated their familiarity with Prince Rupert & the Alaska Highway.

Activities Participated In – Northern BC

- Visitors to Northern BC destinations were most likely to have participated in sightseeing, nature, wildlife viewing, visiting friends and relatives, shopping and hiking. Other key activities included visiting rural communities, visiting historical sites and visiting national/provincial parks.

Top Activities Participated In – Northern BC

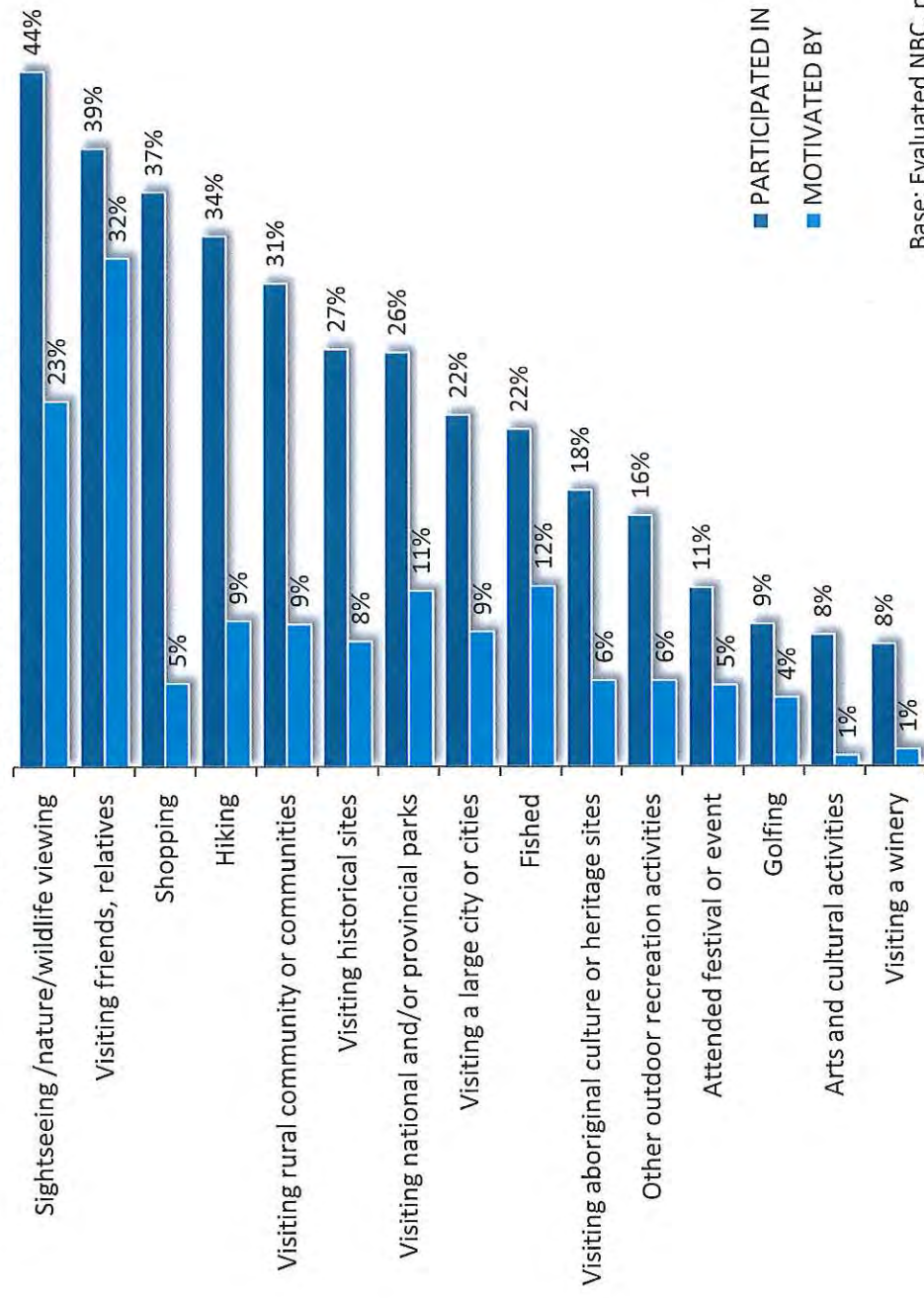


Base: Evaluated NBC, n=536.

Motivating vs. Participating – Northern BC

- Visitors to destinations in Northern BC participated in a far greater range of activities while on their trip than they were originally motivated by. Visiting friends and relatives was the key motivator, followed by sightseeing, nature, wildlife viewing, fishing and visiting national or provincial parks.
- Those activities with the largest gap in motivation vs. participation offer the largest opportunities to differentiate from competing destinations.

Motivating vs. Participating Activities



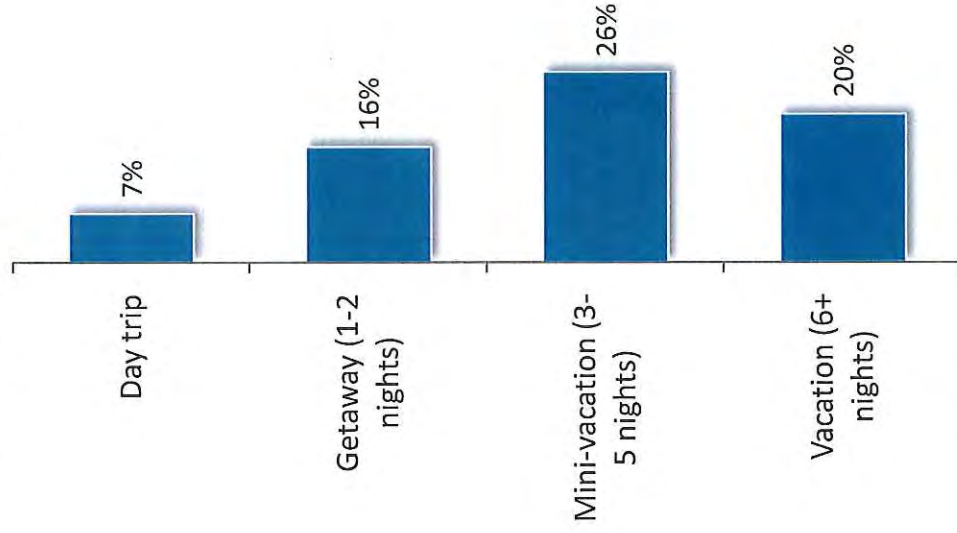
Base: Evaluated NBC, n=536.



Future Trips to Northern BC

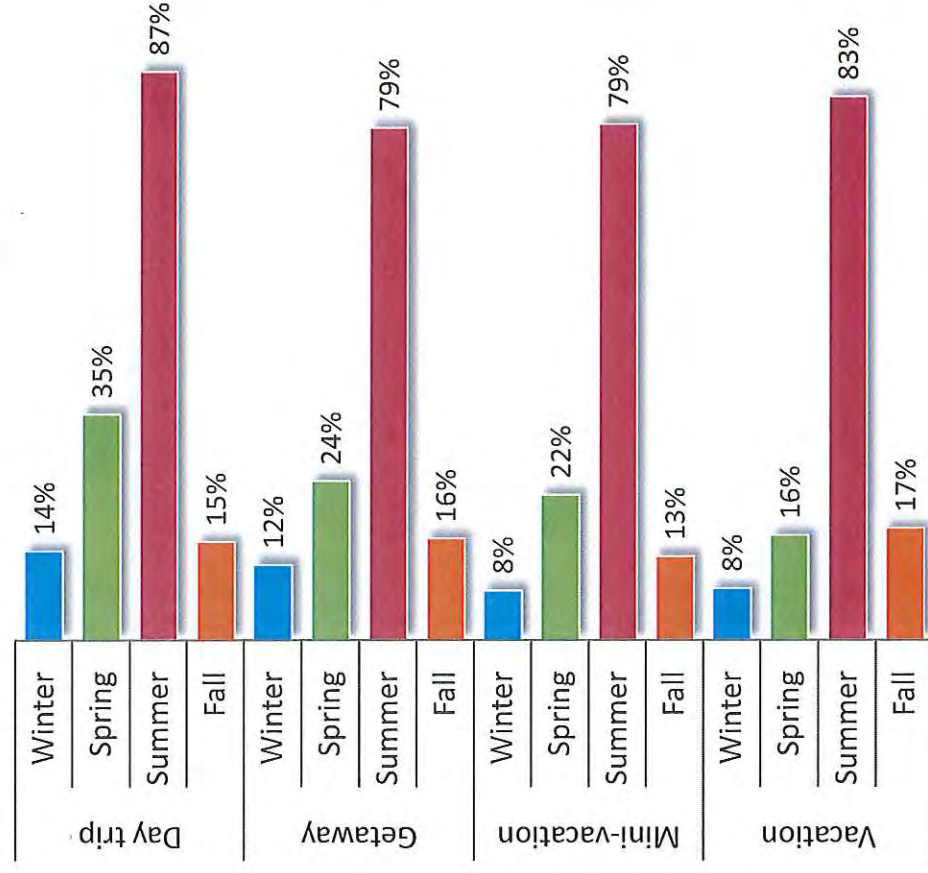
- One-quarter of respondents who evaluated Northern BC are likely to take a ‘Mini-vacation’ to that region in the next two years, while one-fifth are likely to take a ‘vacation’.
- The majority of future trips to Northern BC are planned for summer. Shorter trips are more likely to be taken in spring.

Likelihood to Take Different Trip Durations (% top 2 box)



Base: Evaluated NBC, n=536.

Season of Trip by Trip Type



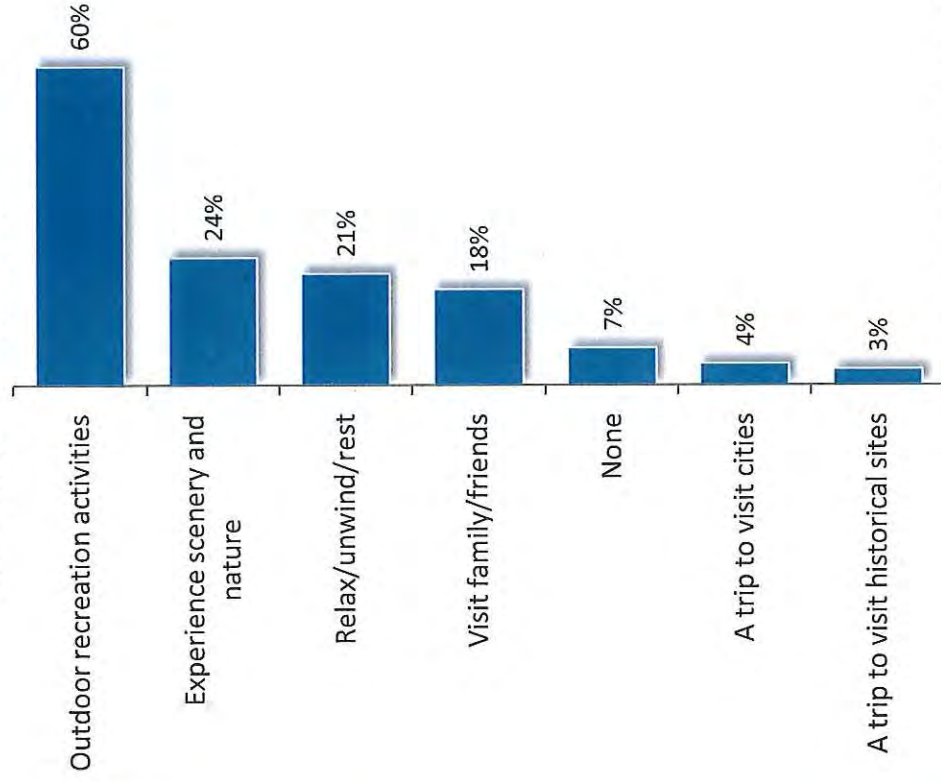
Base: Likely to take trip. Day, n=36, Getaway, n=84, Mini V, n=138, Vacation, n=107.



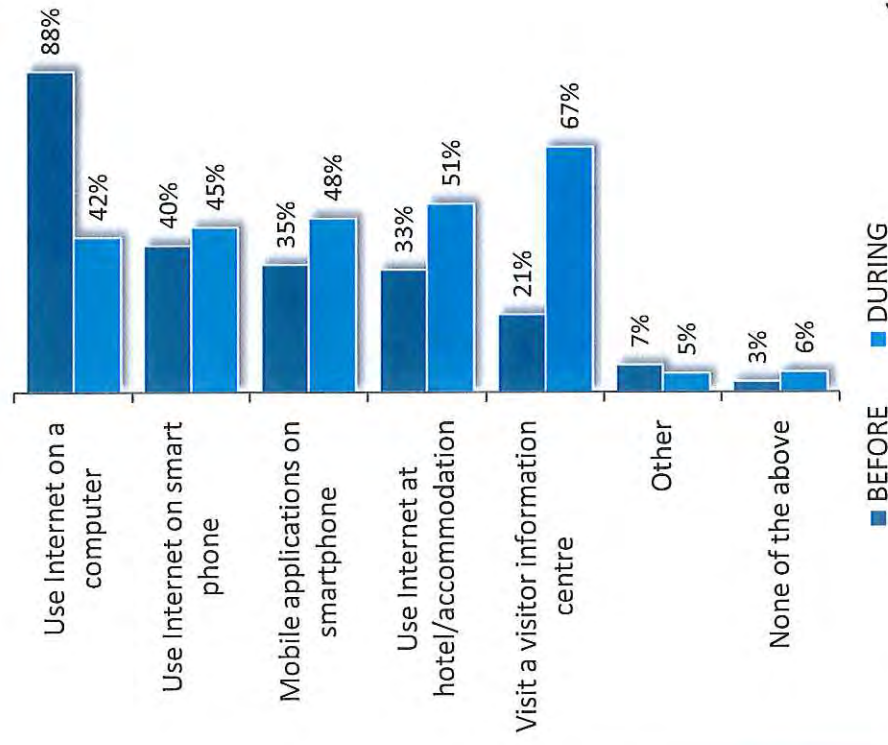
Future Trips to Northern BC

- Outdoor recreation activities are the primary motivator for future trips to Northern BC, as mentioned by six-in-ten of those likely to take a trip in the next 2 years. This is followed by a trip to experience scenery and nature and to relax and unwind.
- The Internet (accessed on a computer) is the key pre-trip information source, while visitor centres, Internet at accommodations and Internet on mobile devices would be used for information during future trips.

Main Activities for future trips



Trip Planning Tools

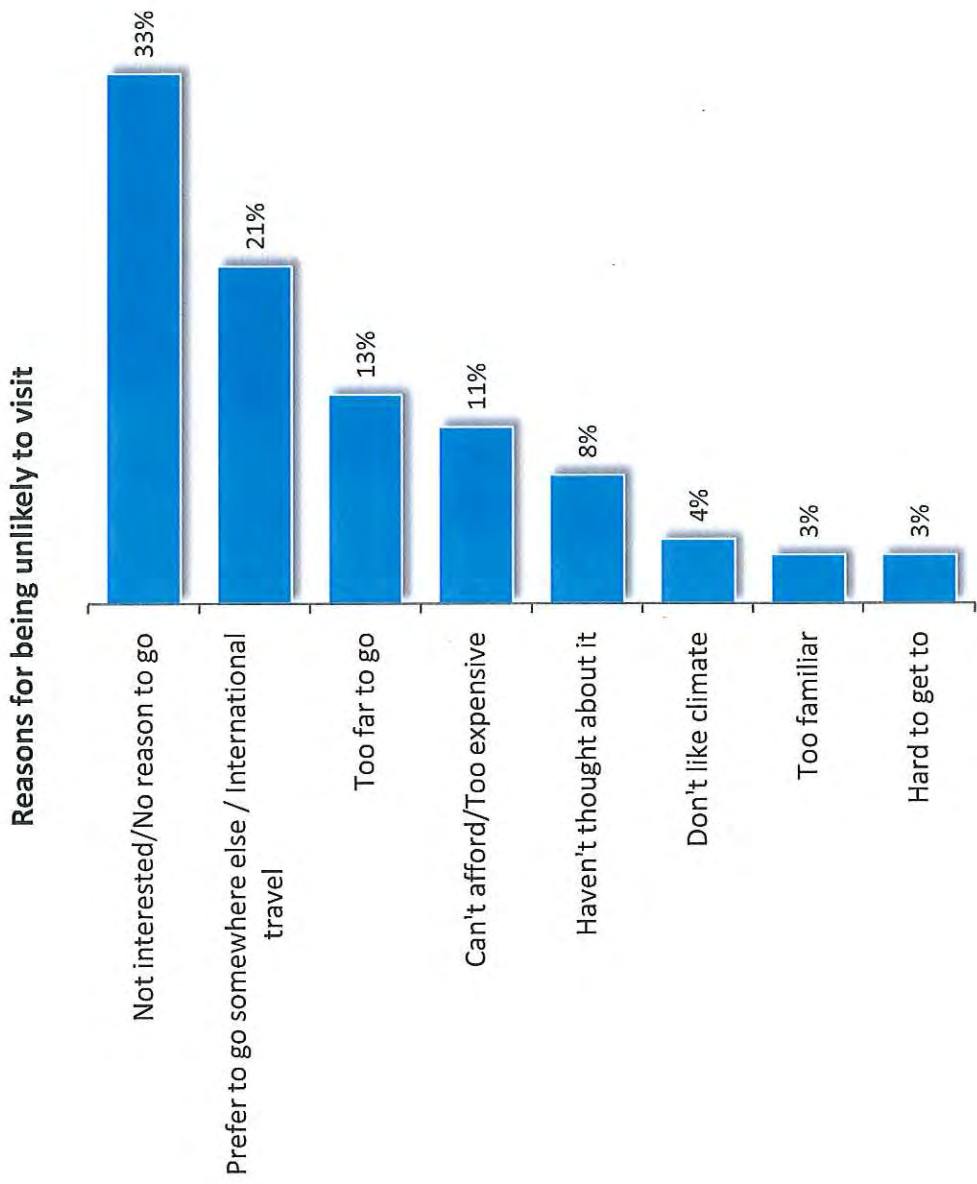


Base (Both charts): Likely to take a trip to NBC, n=202.



Reasons for being unlikely to visit - NBC

- Those not likely to visit Northern BC in the next 2 years mentioned not being interested/no reason to go and preferring to go to a different/international destination as their main reasons, followed by the distance and the cost.

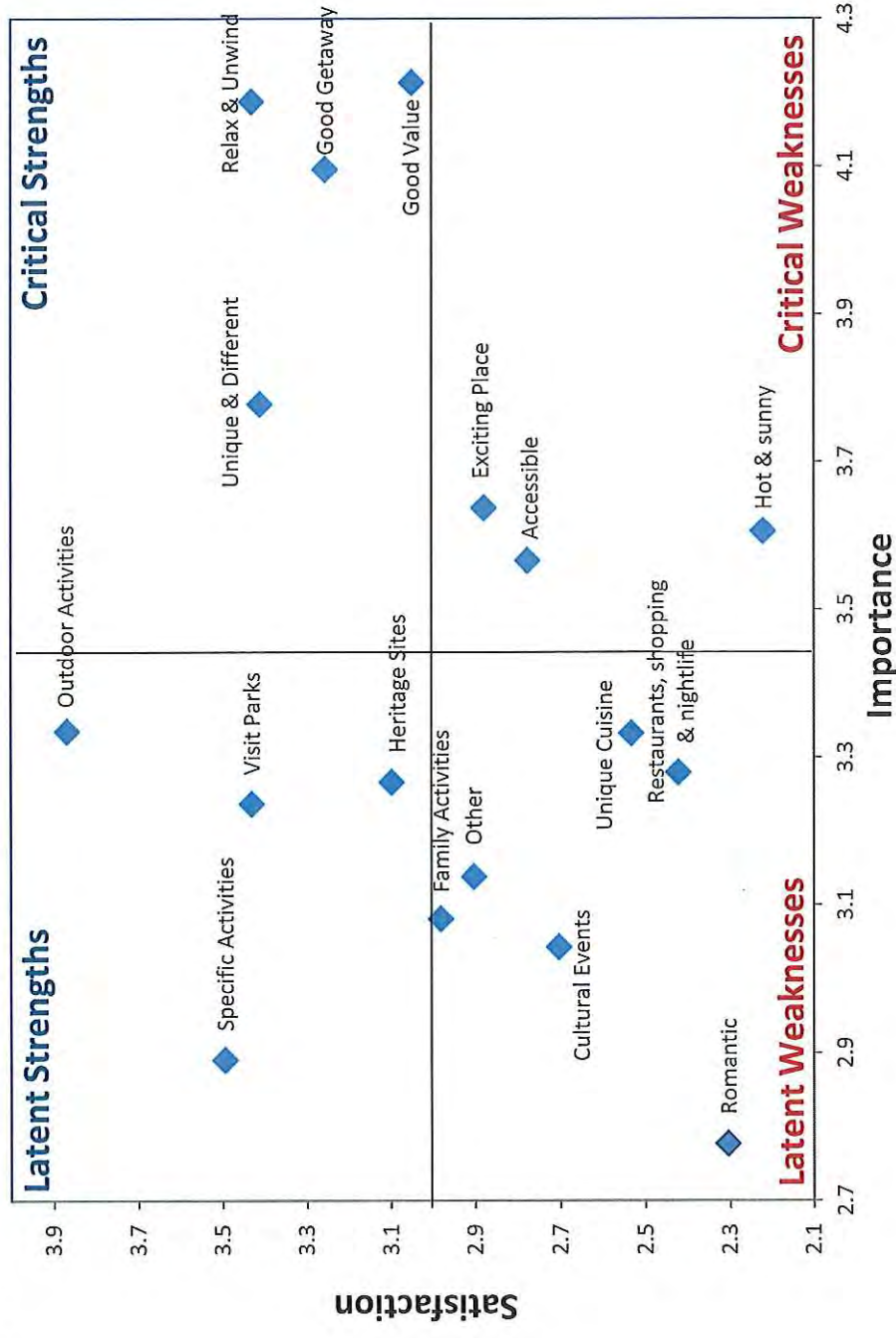


Base: Unlikely to take trip to Northern BC in next 2 years, n=334.



Factors Associated with NBC — Importance/Satisfaction Matrix

- The importance/satisfaction matrix divides attributes into four quadrants based on the average importance and satisfaction scores for each attribute. The axis of the matrix shows the overall average importance and satisfaction scores (out of 5) for all attributes.
- Being a place to relax and unwind, a good getaway and being unique and different and accessible are critical strengths for NBC. Good value is very important but receives an average satisfaction rating.
- Outdoor activities, specific activities, visit national/provincial parks, and heritage sites are latent strengths for the region.





Factors Associated with Northern BC

- Respondents from BC (both Lower Mainland and Other BC residents) associate the Northern BC region with heritage and historical sites, being exciting and having unique cuisine.
- For Albertan respondents, Northern BC is associated with offering a range of outdoor activities, family activities, an exciting place to be, romantic and with unique cuisine.
- Eastern Washington residents associate the region with similar factors as Albertans: Outdoor activities, unique cuisine, romantic and offering a specific activity.
- Specific associations are highlighted in the table below:

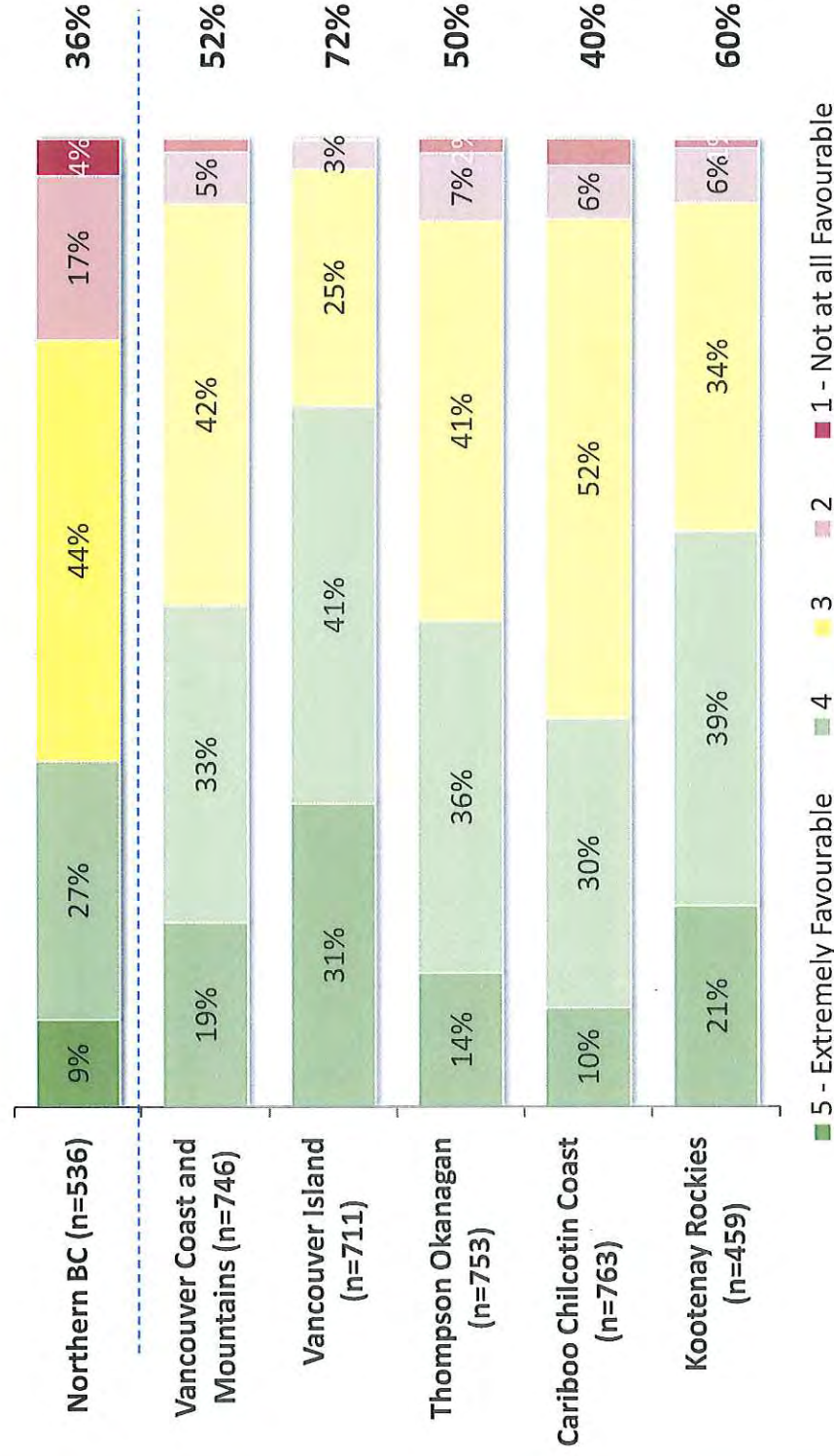
Lower Mainland/ Other BC • Heritage and Historical sites • An exciting place to be • Unique Cuisine	Calgary/ Edmonton/ Other Alberta • Offers a range of outdoor activities • An exciting place to be • Offers family activities • Unique Cuisine • Romantic
Eastern Washington • Offers a range of outdoor activities • Unique Cuisine • Romantic • Offers a specific activity	



Overall Impressions

- Just 36% of respondents who are familiar with Northern BC have a very favourable overall impression of the region.
- This region is rated the lowest in overall impressions of the six BC tourism regions.

Overall Impressions of BC Regions as Vacation Destinations Top 2 Box



* Main urban centres were omitted from the following regional evaluations:
 VCM: Vancouver, Richmond & Whistler. VI: Victoria. TOTA: Kelowna & Kamloops.

Implications to Consider

- 'Other BC' and Lower Mainland residents offer the largest potential for tourism to NBC. They have both higher levels of familiarity and closer proximity to the region. The relatively lower levels of familiarity (and therefore favourability) in comparison to other BC regions is a key challenge for Northern BC.
- Build the Northern BC brand at a regional level before highlighting the various areas within the region.
- Leverage the association the region has with outdoor recreation activities, scenery and nature to encourage future trips, in particular for sightseeing, hiking, fishing and visiting parks. However this should be tempered with messaging around more passive, comfort-oriented, relaxing activities to ensure that the interests of the wider target market are not overlooked.
- Ensure promotional material also accommodates the interests of the 'North-to-Alaska' driving demographic.
- Highlight shoulder seasons and the available activities during shoulder seasons to grow visitation to the region. This will also help address the key reasons given by those unlikely to visit: not being interested and preferring a different destination.
- Consider using promotional material that targets the different associations the various target populations have with the region. For example, residents from BC are more likely to associate Northern BC with heritage and historical sites and an exciting place to be, while residents of Eastern Washington and Alberta are more likely to consider it a place which offers a range of outdoor activities.
- Maintain exceptional quality of service, availability of information and visibility of visitor centres. Visitors to NBC tend to have a few activities planned but make most decisions about what to participate in while on their trip, placing high importance on visitor centres and other information sourced during the visit.



Appendix:

Northern British Columbia: Evaluations by Respondent Origin



Appendix - Regional Evaluations by Respondent Origin

- The tables on the following slides take a more in-depth review of the Northern British Columbia region.
- Responses have been tabulated based on the origin of the respondent who evaluated the region.
- The data in these tables uses the 'WT2' weighting scheme. That is, it accurately reflects the population of travellers from each of the markets profiled, based on region, gender and age.
- Cells that have been highlighted in either blue (higher) or pink (lower) represent a difference compared to at least one other region.
- Bases are not weighted. In a few instances, the base size is very low. As such, these results should be interpreted with caution. These cases have been highlighted with an asterisk.



Importance of Factors in Choosing a Destination Among those who have Visited NBC

Destination Attributes – Top 2 Box Importance	Origin of Respondent				
	Lower Mainland	Other BC	Alberta	West WA	East WA
Offers good value for money	85.9%	81.6%	86.6%		84.7%
A place to relax and unwind	81.8%	81.3%	74.4%		83.7%
Serves as a good getaway from everyday life	83.8%	75.6%	80.6%		76.6%
Unique and different, feels quite different from home	66.9%	64.2%	63.4%		68.7%
An exciting place to be	72.4%	61.3%	62.7%		37.5%
Hot and sunny	62.9%	50.9%	56.7%		67.0%
Accessible (Easy to get to)	57.0%	49.6%	53.1%		60.0%
Offers wide range of outdoor activities	38.2%	34.8%	40.1%		48.8%
Unique local cuisine	45.4%	36.0%	43.5%		52.5%
Restaurants, shopping and nightlife	34.4%	56.1%	40.6%		44.4%
Heritage and historical sites	33.1%	38.3%	36.8%		48.8%
Opportunities to visit national, provincial or state parks	42.1%	34.5%	43.9%		43.6%
Offers wide range of activities for the entire family	40.8%	34.3%	25.0%		52.1%
Offers cultural events such as arts and music	30.1%	31.4%	38.3%		30.4%
Romantic	32.4%	30.4%	29.3%		43.3%
Offers a specific activity (like ski, golf, fishing etc.)	33.4%	19.0%	28.7%		34.5%
Other	35.0%	37.4%	27.4%		29.1%
UNWEIGHTED BASE:	69	78	84		65
					296

Activities Participated In – NBC by Origin

Activities Participated In	Origin of Respondent					Total
	Lower Mainland	Other BC	Alberta	West WA	East WA	
Sightseeing/nature/wildlife viewing	44.2%	41.1%	39.9%		56.6%	44.3%
Shopping	40.5%	39.6%	25.4%		52.9%	36.6%
Hiking	31.5%	28.5%	30.6%		49.2%	33.8%
Visiting friends, relatives	41.4%	57.9%	42.9%		17.2%	39.4%
Visiting national and/or provincial parks	31.0%	24.4%	20.0%		32.5%	26.4%
Visiting rural community or communities	33.8%	31.9%	27.4%		31.4%	30.8%
Visiting historical sites	21.6%	21.4%	26.2%		41.4%	26.6%
Visiting a large city or cities	26.8%	17.4%	15.9%		30.7%	22.4%
Other outdoor recreation activities	15.5%	21.6%	11.9%		24.0%	16.0%
Fishing	20.0%	27.0%	20.7%		23.4%	21.5%
Visiting a winery	7.4%	0.6%	6.3%		15.9%	7.8%
Arts and cultural activities	12.9%	7.3%	3.3%		11.5%	8.4%
Participated in water sports	3.9%	7.0%	4.4%		6.1%	4.7%
Attended festival or event	9.8%	11.3%	13.0%		11.2%	11.4%
Visited aboriginal culture or heritage sites	24.4%	16.6%	8.5%		25.2%	17.6%
Biking	9.7%	6.2%	4.7%		11.2%	7.7%
Golf	11.1%	10.3%	10.6%		0.7%	9.1%
Whale watching	4.4%	2.9%	2.7%		17.0%	5.6%
Watching sporting events	4.4%	6.3%	4.7%		9.6%	5.5%
Skiing or snowboarding	2.4%	4.9%	5.3%		14.3%	5.7%
Participated in sporting events	5.4%	4.4%	3.5%		0.7%	3.8%
None of the above	6.8%	7.8%	0.0%		0.0%	3.1%
UNWEIGHTED BASE:	131	147	103		77	458

Activities Which Motivated Trips – NBC by Origin

Motivating Activities	Origin of Respondent				
	Lower Mainland	Other BC	Alberta	West WA	East WA
					Total
Sightseeing/nature/wildlife viewing	26.3%	17.3%	13.1%		44.1%
Shopping	5.8%	5.8%	2.2%		11.7%
Hiking	8.1%	9.5%	8.6%		13.4%
Visiting friends, relatives	31.5%	52.4%	37.8%		10.6%
Visiting national and/or provincial parks	12.4%	6.1%	8.5%		17.8%
Visiting rural community or communities	9.3%	8.0%	8.8%		9.9%
Visiting historical sites	8.0%	4.9%	8.4%		9.1%
Visiting a large city or cities	5.0%	3.6%	8.5%		19.4%
Other outdoor recreation activities	5.4%	9.1%	5.5%		4.1%
Fishing	8.2%	15.8%	14.2%		10.0%
Visiting a winery	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%		2.1%
Arts and cultural activities	1.3%	0.6%	0.0%		1.2%
Participated in water sports	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%		1.4%
Attended festival or event	3.3%	3.0%	8.8%		1.9%
Visited aboriginal culture or heritage sites	6.4%	5.0%	1.9%		12.2%
Biking	4.1%	1.2%	0.5%		0.6%
Golf	2.3%	1.1%	8.7%		0.7%
Whale watching	3.8%	0.6%	0.7%		3.3%
Watching sporting events	1.0%	1.3%	3.7%		2.8%
Skiing or snowboarding	0.7%	0.6%	1.5%		8.9%
Participated in sporting events	1.3%	0.5%	2.7%		0.0%
None of the above	22.3%	22.0%	0.0%		0.0%
UNWEIGHTED BASE:	131	147	103		77
					458



Participation vs. Motivation – NBC by Origin

Participation Versus Motivation	Origin of Respondent										Total	
	Lower Mainland				Other BC		Alberta		West WA		East WA	
	P	M	P	M	P	M	P	M	P	M	P	M
Sightseeing/nature/wildlife viewing	44%	26%	41%	17%	40%	13%					57%	44%
Shopping	41%	6%	40%	6%	25%	2%					53%	12%
Hiking	32%	8%	29%	10%	31%	9%					49%	13%
Visiting friends, relatives	41%	32%	58%	52%	43%	38%					17%	11%
Visiting national and/or provincial parks	31%	12%	24%	6%	20%	9%					33%	18%
Visiting rural community or communities	34%	9%	32%	8%	27%	9%					31%	10%
Visiting historical sites	22%	8%	21%	5%	26%	8%					41%	9%
Visiting a large city or cities	27%	5%	17%	4%	16%	9%					31%	19%
Other outdoor recreation activities	16%	5%	22%	9%	12%	6%					24%	4%
Fishing	20%	8%	27%	16%	21%	14%					23%	10%
Visiting a winery	7%	1%	1%	0%	6%	1%					16%	2%
Arts and cultural activities	13%	1%	7%	1%	3%	0%					12%	1%
Participated in water sports	4%	0%	7%	1%	4%	0%					6%	1%
Attended festival or event	10%	3%	11%	3%	13%	9%					11%	2%
Visited aboriginal culture or heritage sites	24%	6%	17%	5%	9%	2%					25%	12%
Biking	10%	4%	6%	1%	5%	1%					11%	1%
Golf	11%	2%	10%	1%	11%	9%					1%	1%
Whale watching	4%	4%	3%	1%	3%	1%					17%	3%
Watching sporting events	4%	1%	6%	1%	5%	4%					10%	3%
Skiing or snowboarding	2%	1%	5%	1%	5%	2%					14%	9%
Participated in sporting events	5%	1%	4%	1%	4%	3%					1%	0%
None of the above	7%	22%	8%	22%	0%	0%					0%	0%
UNWEIGHTED BASE:	131				147		103				77	
											458	

Likelihood of taking a trip – NBC by Origin

Likelihood to take type of trip (% Probably/Definitely)	Origin of Respondent					Total
	Lower Mainland	Other BC	Alberta	West WA	East WA	
Day trip	2.4%	14.7%	4.5%		14.5%	6.6%
Getaway (1-2 nights)	10.6%	16.0%	11.6%		30.6%	15.6%
Mini-vacation (3-5 nights)	17.6%	23.8%	23.7%		41.8%	25.8%
Vacation (6+ nights)	18.3%	21.3%	15.0%		32.2%	20.1%
UNWEIGHTED BASE:	165	164	160		150	639

Activities Motivating Future Trips – NBC by Origin

Main activities on future trips	Origin of Respondent					Total
	Lower Mainland	Other BC	Alberta	West WA	East WA	
A trip for outdoor recreation activities.	54.7%	48.8%	67.4%		58.8%	60.3%
A trip to experience scenery and nature	19.9%	21.0%	22.0%		30.8%	24.3%
A trip to relax/unwind/rest	13.7%	10.0%	20.5%		27.7%	20.5%
A trip to visit family/friends	24.7%	36.2%	22.1%		4.0%	17.9%
A trip to visit national and/or provincial parks	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%		3.0%	2.0%
A trip to experience restaurants and night life	1.5%	1.4%	0.0%		6.3%	2.5%
A skiing or snowboarding trip	1.7%	2.6%	0.0%		4.3%	2.0%
A trip to visit historical sites	5.8%	0.0%	0.0%		3.7%	2.6%
A trip to visit cities	2.5%	6.8%	1.6%		7.6%	4.1%
A trip to see arts and cultural activities	1.5%	2.4%	2.5%		2.6%	2.3%
A romantic getaway	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%		0.0%	0.4%
A trip to experience aboriginal culture and heritage	1.5%	1.2%	0.0%		0.6%	0.6%
A trip to experience multi-cultural life	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		0.0%	0.0%
Other	1.6%	1.2%	0.0%		0.0%	0.5%
None	3.2%	1.2%	0.0%		17.7%	6.6%
UNWEIGHTED BASE:	60	71	60		81	272

Reasons for Being Unlikely to Visit – NBC by Origin

Reasons for being unlikely to visit	Origin of Respondent					Total
	Lower Mainland	Other BC	Alberta	West WA	East WA	
Not interested/No reason to go	42.9%	26.7%	29.2%		28.0%	33.4%
Prefer to go somewhere else / International travel	15.2%	26.3%	27.0%		13.3%	21.0%
Can't afford/Too expensive	9.9%	9.2%	8.4%		22.4%	11.0%
Too far to go	10.3%	17.6%	12.4%		18.7%	12.9%
Don't like climate	6.7%	3.7%	2.4%		6.2%	4.4%
Don't have the time	2.1%	4.6%	1.9%		2.1%	2.1%
Too familiar	2.0%	3.3%	2.9%		2.8%	2.6%
Border/passport hassle	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		5.1%	0.8%
Haven't thought about it	0.0%	0.0%	17.4%		0.7%	8.2%
Hard to get to	2.7%	0.9%	2.9%		1.5%	2.5%
Health issues	2.1%	2.7%	1.3%		1.1%	1.6%
Already live there	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%		0.0%	0.4%
Other	1.5%	1.8%	0.0%		0.0%	0.6%
Don't know	10.2%	3.7%	2.5%		10.6%	6.3%
UNWEIGHTED BASE:	105	93	100		69	367

Timing of Trip Planning – NBC by Origin

	Timing of trip planning – tools used	Origin of Respondent				
		Lower Mainland	Other BC	Alberta	West WA	East WA
Before	Use Internet on a computer	82.8%	84.5%	93.3%		85.2%
	Use Internet on smart phone	39.8%	31.0%	28.9%		54.8%
	Use Internet at hotel/accommodation	32.1%	21.4%	32.2%		38.3%
	Mobile applications on smartphone	42.0%	23.7%	18.3%		50.5%
	Visit a visitor information centre	22.2%	13.4%	16.0%		27.9%
	Other	9.5%	4.5%	10.3%		3.2%
	None of the above	4.3%	15.5%	1.8%		0.4%
During	Visit a visitor information centre	73.0%	51.2%	62.6%		70.3%
	Use Internet at hotel/accommodation	49.2%	37.3%	52.1%		55.2%
	Mobile applications on smartphone	31.0%	24.8%	49.9%		61.9%
	Use Internet on smart phone	37.4%	32.1%	40.3%		58.7%
	Use Internet on a computer	49.0%	33.9%	34.0%		48.6%
	Other	7.2%	7.3%	6.5%		1.5%
	None of the above	9.9%	20.3%	3.9%		1.0%
UNWEIGHTED BASE:		60	71	60		81
						272

APPENDIX C: GUIDELINES FOR TOURISM WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

The Tourism Working Group (TWG) is intended to reflect a cross-section of tourism stakeholders including businesses, organizations, government and First Nations representation (if applicable) with liaison connections to other agencies as appropriate. Given the small number of operators in the tourism community, the mix should be flexible. The following guidelines can be used to help determine the types of representatives to invite as members of the TWG.

- Accommodation 1-2
 - 1 representing motels or hotels
 - 1 representing a B&B, RV/campground or resort
- Attractions/Events 1-2
 - 1 representing an attraction
 - 1 representing an event or festival
- Chamber of Commerce 1
 - 1 representative from the Chamber
- Education 1
 - 1 representing an educational institution or program
- Food and Beverage 1
 - 1 representing a food and/or beverage establishment
- Government 1
 - 1 representing the District Municipality
- Heritage, Arts and Culture 1-2
 - 1 representing Heritage
 - 1 representing Arts or Culture
- Recreation 1-2
 - 1 representing Leisure Services / Parks and Recreation or organization
 - 1 representing a recreation business or organization
- Retail 1
 - 1 representative from a retail business or retail business association
- Transportation 1
 - 1 representing a transportation interest
- Visitor Services 1 • 1 representing the Visitor Centre