

Wyoming Tourism Master Plan

Summary of Recommendations

This summary of Master Plan recommendations includes a brief overview of each recommendation.

1.0 Product Development

Product development encompasses both new and existing infrastructure as well as events and attractions both public and private.

1.1 Create a consistent and systematic approach to identify and fund new product development opportunities.

Model legislation based on “Vision Iowa” leveraging private and public sector resources to develop new product to retain and attract new visitors to Wyoming. A special review board should be established to review applications and determine and set criteria within legislative parameters. Funding should be front loaded and require a financial commitment from the applicant. Operational elements should be incorporated into the Wyoming Business Council.

1.2 Work with the Wyoming Business Council’s Loan Programs to target existing tourism related businesses that want to upgrade and or expand.

Reconfigure current information in a format and context that is readily understood by travel businesses, attractions and organizations to encourage them to utilize the current program and develop a program to regularly publicize these programs. Place prominently on Wyoming Tourism Industry web site.

1.3 Develop more events and festivals.

Critical to any tourism product mix are its events and festivals. Supporting existing events and developing new events can generate greater revenue from travelers and at the same time provide new opportunities for residents. For events already in existence, provide support for festival and event management training and education. For the development of new festivals a matching grant program should be considered that would be made available as seed money for creating the new event or festival. This should be targeted toward smaller communities in the state and an application and criteria needs to be established as well as funding levels.

1.4 Complete and implement comprehensive technology platform for residents and visitors.

Engage and work with appropriate agencies and organizations to develop and expand cell service compatible with the surrounding landscape throughout the state of Wyoming. With the changing technology and use of smart phones to access information both by residents and visitors it is critical that cell service throughout the state be expanded and implemented as soon as possible. Long term growth for additional spending by visitors will be limited, and opportunities for growth, especially with lesser known destinations and attractions in the state, will be limited.

1.5 Create a partnership program for community beautification.

Work with the Wyoming Business Council to expand its current guidelines of Community Assistance to include improving the look and feel of the entrances to Wyoming communities as well as throughout the community. First impressions are critical to retaining visitors and encouraging them to get off the beaten path during their trips. Entrance appeal for destinations, especially those that are considered more pass through destinations, can get visitors to use the services and businesses at a higher rate than those that do not have an appealing entrance. Consideration should also be given to expanding the current Certified Tourism Community program that was started recently with the Wyoming Office of Tourism Office.

1.6 Develop excursion train service.

Undertake a feasibility study to determine best location and financial viability for an excursion train. A number of states have worked with the private sector to develop this type of attraction. Currently such an attraction does not exist in Wyoming but could be an added draw for communities involved. The feasibility study would be the basis for the private sector investment to develop a new excursion train. Develop and support ways to strengthen railroad history and heritage.

1.7 Develop scenic boat trips in underutilized waters.

Conduct an assessment of current scenic boat operations in the state vs. current and future use patterns on Wyoming waterways to identify gaps in service and to seek out new concessionaire opportunities, including dinner cruise and non motorized concepts.

1.8 Expand air service and bus service development.

Air service is especially critical to the long term growth of tourism over the next 10 years. A coordinated approach needs to be developed to engage the airlines with the tourism industry to look for solutions. A special industry task force should be created, working with the Wyoming Office of Tourism Office (WOT) and the Wyoming Department of Transportation, to review current efforts and expand and identify new incentives and opportunities in partnership with the airlines to increase services. This group could also review the limitations and barriers for ground transportation (bus) service within the state or create a separate task force. These activities would benefit not only visitor access and volume, but also provide added value to the residents of Wyoming and the business community in general.

1.9 Develop a state park to interpret "Ranching"—living working ranch

Undertake a feasibility study to determine viability of creating a new attraction and preserving a significant element of Wyoming's culture and heritage. Based on our assessment, this is a critical gap in the current offerings to visitors in the state and would serve the dual purpose of interpreting the ranch history of the state, as well as, providing a necessary new travel product. As part of the study an overall status and inventory of current working farms and ranches should be included with the development of concepts to support them.

2.0 Partnerships

Partnerships include the concepts of collaboration, cooperation, coordination and integration related to all elements of the tourism industry including local, state, and federal agencies and the private and non-profit sectors of the Wyoming economy.

2.1 Develop a “Best in Class” State of Wyoming Tourism Industry web site.

Expand the revised “industry” (not consumer) website to provide more information to the tourism industry not only from WOT, but also from a variety of other agencies (state, federal, nonprofit) that have an involvement in tourism. Information should include rules and regulations, strategic plans, research and studies as well as programs and services that might be of interest to tourism businesses, organizations and attractions.

2.2 Expand research capacity and services.

Create a “comprehensive research database” with all agencies (state, federal, local and nonprofit) contributing and posting on “Tourism Industry” web site. In addition, WOT should conduct more “trends” research to support the Master Plan over time and to provide more benefit to local tourism communities and businesses. Periodic surveys should be done at state and local visitor centers to add to the information already collected by WOT. Consideration should be given to developing more research partnerships with the University of Wyoming. To accomplish this WOT will need to add a research person to their team who can coordinate this and provide additional services.

2.3 Establish a “Marketing/Product Development Council” for state/federal agencies.

This should be modeled off of the Wyoming Recreation Action Team (REACT) organization and focus on coordinated marketing and product development needs for the tourism industry and the effected agencies. Consideration should be given to common bidding for advertising/marketing services to reduce duplication, maximize resources and leverage marketing partnerships. This council would review marketing and product development plans and strategies annually by participating agencies to coordinate and maximize time and resources. Ultimately, WOT could become the “marketing agency” for the state and provide expertise to all agencies related to attracting visitors and residents to their sites. This is being considered by several states and they could be used as an additional model for creating council. Additional staffing will be required for this concept to be successful.

2.4 Expand incentive and cooperation to further develop film industry.

The competition for locating film and video production in state locations has accelerated over the past 10 years. Wyoming has great venues but needs to increase its incentives to compete. Consideration needs to be given to expanding the current incentives, working with federal agencies and developing additional services that the state offers film and video production companies including access to services in the state.

2.5 Develop more cooperative programs with agricultural interests statewide—Product Development/Marketing.

Agricultural Tourism is becoming more developed and can especially support and add value to rural communities. Travelers are looking for unique experiences and a number of states have expanded their programs to incorporate this new area. This activity could include farmers markets, wine trails, farm stays and the development of bed and breakfast establishments. A task force of agencies and organizations

should be organized to explore the opportunities and barriers to overcome in developing this concept for Wyoming.

2.6 Develop additional events and programs to involve young people in outdoor recreation activities including hunting and fishing.

Looking at recent trends of declining participation, it is critical to identify new venues for young people to engage in outdoor activities, especially hunting and fishing. Current programs should be expanded and supported. Research is underway to help determine better ways to engage young people through a REACT initiative but it is not complete. The results of these surveys need to be analyzed and recommendations should be given serious consideration.

2.7 Annually review strategic and long range plans of partner agencies and organizations to determine areas of coordination and cooperation, reducing any duplication of efforts and identify collaborative opportunities.

3.0 Communications/Education

Communications includes information, training and advocacy related to the Wyoming tourism industry.

3.1 Develop a program to engage residents of Wyoming on the importance of tourism in supporting the overall economy, as well as, understanding of the benefits of the tourism industry in the state.

The awareness, benefits and impacts of tourism are not as widely understood as they should be both within the industry and among the general public and decision makers. In order to change this WOT should expand its National Tourism Week programs and develop an in-state public relations campaign on the importance and value of tourism and how it touches and impacts residents of Wyoming. Consideration should be given to establishing an “ambassadors” program that will support and help Wyoming residents extol the virtues of traveling and vacationing in Wyoming. Additionally, a survey of residents annually would allow for measurement on this program and provide broader input.

3.2 Expand existing educational and training programs in Wyoming high schools through WLRA.

The Wyoming Lodging and Restaurant Association has been conducting a program in high schools for a number of years. It needs to be expanded to incorporate mentoring programs and other benefits to keep students engaged in the program and considering a career in Wyoming tourism. Currently programs are offered in the accommodations and restaurant areas that need to be expanded. Consideration should be given to developing a program in destination marketing.

3.3 Develop additional joint programs with Workforce Services specific to tourism.

Consideration should be given to developing new programs in the area of tourism. Current processes should be reviewed on existing programs to see how they can be more streamlined to more effectively meet the need of the tourism industry in Wyoming.

3.4 Ongoing customer service/hospitality training programs.

Customer service is a critical component of the visitor experience. It can impact where visitors spend their discretionary travel dollars; but even more important, it can impact future visits. In the current social network environment, a negative experience can reduce future business when it is spread virally to a large audience. Consideration should be given to developing a program with WLRA to provide community

customer service training rather than having the WOT provide it. Beyond training in direct tourism establishments, there is a need to engage employees from other businesses, such as retail and service stations. This should be incorporated into a customer service training program as well. Consideration should be given to a regional approach to these programs on an annual basis.

3.5 Visitor center staff FAM (familiarization) tours to learn more about different parts of the state.

There are many state and locally run visitor centers in Wyoming. To better coordinate and develop new content at all visitor centers on a statewide basis, a program should be set up for staff exchanges between state and local centers.

3.6 Conduct Tourism Industry listening sessions annually throughout the state.

Communications between the WOT and tourism industry are critical in the future. The WOT should conduct annual listening sessions in the five regions of the state. In addition to WOT, other agencies should also be involved. The agendas for the meetings should include updates from the agencies, a review of the Master Plan and strategic plans of the agencies, as well as, ample time to get feedback and input from the industry.

3.7 Expand educational participation programs related to outdoor recreation, habitat and wildlife.

Because of the critical nature of outdoor recreation, habitat and wildlife to the overall tourism industry, there is a need to expand education in these areas to residents and visitors alike. A strong understanding of the challenges, opportunities and value of these is important to the tourism industry long term growth and well being.

3.8 Develop communications strategies to respond to natural occurrences and other emerging landscape issues that may have a negative impact on the tourism industry in Wyoming.

A coordinated communications strategy is needed to explain what is being done or can be done to mitigate the impacts of the bark beetle to Wyoming over the next 10 years, as well as, an understanding of natural progression. This strategy should be directed to the traveling public and residents informing them about how the landscape is changing and why. Consideration should be given to issues that may impact the landscape over the next ten years.

3.9 Develop more education and training programs related to preservation and stewardship including economic viability.

Since so much of Wyoming's tourism strengths involve open spaces, wildlife, outdoor and historic preservation must be continued. Expanded training and education programs will help communicate an understanding about the relevance that open spaces have to the growth of tourism now and in the future. A task force should be established to review current programs and devise new ways to introduce these concepts in schools and communities of Wyoming. Consideration should be given to utilizing the community colleges as part of the program development and implementation.

4.0 Marketing

Marketing includes the concepts of being global and the application and development of technology to support overall tourism programs at local, state and federal agencies and organizations.

4.1 Develop comprehensive database - federal, state, local, all events, activities and attractions.

With ever changing demands and needs for travel information 24/7, the state needs to have a comprehensive database of all private and public attractions, events, accommodations, sites, etc. Currently some of this data is stored separately and is not easily accessible. In order to meet the needs of travelers, an effort should be made to consolidate or link these databases.

4.2 Continue to develop “Best in Class” Wyoming Tourism consumer web site.

Destination web sites have become one of the most critical elements for any state tourism program or destination. With the fast pace of every changing technology, there is a continual need to invest in web site development, navigation, content and usability by the traveler. Regular user reviews need to be conducted to make sure that the site is meeting the needs and expectations of users. Annual reviews should be conducted of competitor’s sites and benchmarked against national standards to ensure that site is not only meeting user needs, but exceeding them. As prospective travelers become more segmented in their interests there will be a strong need for more niche content in the web site.

4.3 Develop meaningful mobile strategies, applications and services that would provide real time information to travelers and recreationists.

With the continued expansion of smart phone usage by individuals to get information, it is critical that WOT be able to meet this need. Individuals will be relying more and more on their smart phones. As we saw the explosion in the use of PCs with the advent of the Internet, the same is and will be happening with smart phones. WOT must be positioned to take advantage of this. The comprehensive data base, expanded cell service and niche content will drive the ability to take advantage of the available information. Increased investments in these areas will be instrumental in future growth of the industry and play a more important role in marketing. Niche content development will be critical in delivering target information to smart phone users. A clear opportunity exists for state parks, wildlife and outdoor recreation activities. Consideration should be given to adapting the “Cutt-Slam” program by Wyoming Game and Fish Department to other activities.

4.4 Continue and expand enhanced GIS/GPS systems for all of tourism.

WOT has developed a great deal with GIS and is ahead of a number of destinations but continued investment and expansion need to take place. Coordination with other agencies and the comprehensive database and the GIS systems need to be expanded to provide the necessary information to be “Best in Class” with web site and mobile applications.

4.5 Create “loop tours” covering the whole state in consultation with local tourism communities and organizations.

During the process it was clear that there is a need to find ways to get travelers “off the beaten path” to visit lesser known destinations and attractions. A successful strategy is to develop a series of loop tours, one to four day itineraries that are connected or highlighted by common venues, as well as, geography. Examples of these could be art galleries and art attractions, museums, parks, historic sites, monuments, attractions or activities such as biking, boating, birding, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife watching, fishing,

or hunting. A review of all possible common venues should be undertaken, prioritized and then deployed on all platforms. Consideration should be given to incorporating federal, as well as, state and local sites.

4.6 Develop improved content coordination between web site and travel guide.

To ensure continuity, annual reviews should be made so printed materials such as the travel guide and the web site have coordinated content. This has already been started by the WOT.

4.7 Provide resources to create a national marketing program.

In order to grow tourism over the next ten years, additional investments will need to be made in marketing. Currently there is a need but no budget to expand the number of markets that are covered by WOT. Chicago was added this last year; but to truly grow, new markets must be added. In order to compete in a given market there needs to be a minimum investment. Wyoming needs to consider adding up to 10 new markets over the next 10 years while staying competitive in their existing markets.

4.8 Expand shoulder and off season marketing.

This was identified as a need by a number of destinations and businesses during the process. It is critical to understand the availability and accessibility of tourism attractions and businesses during non-peak times. An assessment needs to be made statewide on lodging availability and hours of operation for attractions and other tourism venues in order to identify the best time by region for this expansion, as well as, to determine minimum service availability to make meaningful impact.

4.9 Expand "Destination Specialist" program to cover local capacity for social networking connections and information fulfillment and response.

With the changing need of information delivery from tradition sources such as mail and phone to the web sites and smart phones, there is critical need to address the new delivery of information through social networks. Recently WOT launched a "Destination Specialist" program. Consideration should be given to expanding the current program to incorporate social networking and the building of local capacity to meet this need. In the past, destinations had large mail rooms and phone and calls centers; today and going forward they will need an e-mail center/social networking/text center. By modifying and incentivizing the "Destination Specialist" program they can create a distributed information response systems that will meet future needs.

4.10 Develop marketing programs to increase the number of hunting and fishing licenses and developing new marketing programs to increase hunting and fishing opportunities throughout the state.

There is a great opportunity to increase the participation in hunting and fishing programs, but there is lack of marketing support to achieve this. Targeted programs need to be designed that will reach segmented audiences for hunting and fishing. They should approach the overall markets, but also be species specific based on those segmented audiences. A marketing program would also help to support the need of participation rates of younger people and expand the diversity of participants. Utilize new technology and marketing to broaden the agencies reach.

4.11 Expand international marketing.

Recently the federal government passed the Tourism Promotion Act which will create an opportunity to leverage resources and expand partnerships internationally. Wyoming is well positioned with its national parks and other attributes to take advantage of this. Additional funding at the state level for international

marketing will leverage at least an equal amount in federal support and allow WOT to grow the international market for the state. Consideration should be given to more multi lingual information both in print and electronic. Incorporate international programming through Rocky Mountain International into tourism industry web site.

5.0 Outdoor Recreation/Wildlife

Outdoor Recreation/Wildlife includes elements relating to natural resources, open spaces and the concepts of adventure.

5.1 Promote wildlife viewing areas and develop new opportunities—10 “best places” to spot Wyoming wildlife.

Wyoming’s wildlife presents a great opportunity to increase awareness of the state and provide unique experiences to travelers. Greater emphasis on web sites and mobile applications will generate even more interest. Consideration should be give to more web cameras at specific locations and better communications to the traveling public on the best wildlife viewing areas.

5.2 Increase aggregation of wildlife content and information sources for web sites—user based.

There is a great deal of information on the Internet specific to wildlife in Wyoming. The information is spread across numerous sites and is hard to access. A program should be put in place that will aggregate this information into one site. This will increase awareness and generate greater interest in wildlife in Wyoming. It will also provide an opportunity to increase the marketing of wildlife to make it more accessible to the traveler and generate greater travel to the state for wildlife viewing.

5.3 Development of extreme sports venues and/or events.

Extreme sports continue to be a growing area of interest, especially among young people. Participation rates are growing and Wyoming has a number of locations that could be developed to generate greater opportunities and engage young people with other outdoor recreation activities. Considerations should be given to a feasibility study that would match the current and future market with possible locations or events within the state and identify current venues and events already taking place in Wyoming.

5.4 Expand interpretive programs for Outdoor Recreation and Wildlife.

With the growing demand by travelers to have an “experience” not just a vacation and the desire to have more educational programs as part of their trip, expanding interpretive programs in the outdoor recreation and wildlife areas is necessary. Review current programs to consider expansion and identify new opportunities for development.

5.5 Make Wi-Fi services available in all developed parks and recreation areas.

In order to meet the growing demand for Internet access wherever and whenever someone is traveling and to engage young people, consideration should be given to ensure that Wi-Fi access is available at all developed parks and recreation areas. This would help to extend stays and provide for greater customer satisfaction.

5.6 Develop and promote more non-consumptive wildlife festival, events and programs.

There is an opportunity to increase travel by individuals looking for non consumptive wildlife venues. Bird watching, photography and other activities can be better promoted and communicated. Web sites should be adapted with more information on these activities from a user/participant perspective. Mobile opportunities also will be growing for this area. A number of destinations have developed events and festivals around these activities and Wyoming clearly has an opportunity to develop this type of event and generate greater travel. Consideration of this type of event should be part of the recommendation on creating a festivals and event grant program.

5.7 Complete and expand multi-jurisdictional trails (like the Continental Divide).

Multi-state marketing and venue development are growing and present another opportunity to increase visitation. Travelers are more and more making decisions based on the experiences they want to have. They are less interested if something is state, federal or local. Shared resources among states and other jurisdictions help to reduce the overall cost for providing the trail experience and enhance the participant's experience. Finishing the Continental Divide Trail will be a benchmark for future opportunities. A review should be made of similar opportunities which could then be prioritized. This can go beyond trails and extend to waterways and other common venues.

5.8 Develop three and/or seven day nonresident fishing licenses.

Developing additional fishing licenses would provide more opportunity for nonresidents to consider fishing while on their trip to Wyoming. It could lead to additional revenue opportunities and improved usage. A study should be conducted to determine the opportunities and barriers to make these additional licenses available based on specific user interests and the ability for the changes to generate greater revenue.

5.9 Develop alternative funding mechanisms to operate and maintain trails and parks.

There is a strong need to maintain Wyoming's parks and trails. Additional funding mechanisms should be explored including the interim study now being conducted. The long term implications of not being able to maintain the parks and trails systems will have negative impacts on tourism overall in the state. Ensure that contingency plans are in place to remain open in case of natural disasters, such as floods, etc.

5.10 Develop and improve services at Wyoming lakes.

Consider more rock barriers around ramps for improved boat safety. Develop more campsites, restrooms and facilities, including fishing stations and other amenities to support anglers and identify any gaps in access.

5.11 Accelerate wildlife "over" "under" pass program.

As wildlife is a critical element to Wyoming's tourism industry, consideration should be given to accelerating the current construction needs of the "over" "under" pass program and complete them as soon as possible. Web cameras should be placed at all current and future locations.

6.0 Culture/Heritage

Culture/Heritage is all inclusive including history, the arts, as well as, the concepts of “western and “authentic”.

6.1 Develop and promote more Wyoming products and crafts.

There are a number of products produced in Wyoming that given more visibility would add to the awareness of the state for visitors and residents alike. Present information on web sites that are visited by travelers. Products should be displayed and potentially sold at visitor’s centers and other venues and locations that are frequented by visitors. This would provide both leverage to support other industries in the state and bring a value-add to the visitors and more awareness of Wyoming. Consider aggregating all of them onto one consumer web site. Coordinate with the Wyoming First Program.

6.2 Further develop downtown walking and biking tour opportunities.

Programs being developed to meet the need of a growing number of walkers and bikers are being used more and more by travelers. Educational programs are available to communities to support this concept and to bring additional value to the tourism businesses in their communities, along with serving residents. Initially incorporate a community education program through the Wyoming Business Council/Wyoming Main Street Rural Development Council Community Assessments.

6.3 Continue to develop travel venues and opportunities with tribal governments.

Native American tourism product opportunities continue to be sought by travelers, especially international visitors. With the passage of the Tourism Promotion Act nationally there will be greater opportunity to increase visitation to Native American venues, events and activities. Currently WOT has only a partial position devoted to this and additional staff resources would be needed to keep up with current and growing demands.

6.4 Develop an interpretive program around the energy and extraction industries.

Energy and extraction have and are playing a significant role in Wyoming’s economy. They provide a unique perspective and an effort should be made to interpret their significance to the state and its people. There are numerous examples of tours of mining operations around the country that could be adapted for Wyoming. This would foster greater communications between the tourism industry and the extraction and energy industries and add a potential new product for visitors and residents to experience.

6.5 Develop and promote additional “oral history” programs.

The continued expansion of social media, and the need for not only written content but also audio and video in promotion, will continue to grow. A number of states have developed “oral history” programs around significant areas or cultures within the state. These audio and/or video programs preserve the history of an area, industry and people for future generations and at the same time create new content that can help promote a destination or venue. Identification should be made of significant areas to consider for a program such as this then prioritized for implementation over time. Consideration should be given to the increased promotion of “oral histories”.

6.6 Develop new interpretive content programs and increase utilization of existing interpretive programs.

As travelers look for more experiential travel they will be looking for more ways to be educated as well as experience a new destination. Interpretation and involvement will be important for them as part of that

experience. A review should be made of existing interpretive programs to determine what can be expanded and to identify new locations and venues that would benefit from enhanced interpretation.

6.7 Develop more “niche” marketing programs to support culture, heritage and arts, as well as, more topical tour opportunities that focus on specific elements of culture, history and heritage.

Culture, heritage and arts should be incorporated and given special attention within the development of the “loop tours” concept. This would also apply to mobile applications and web site content. Culture, heritage and arts should be marketed electronically to targeted audiences. Initially there needs to be an identification of specific elements of the culture, heritage and arts market that are prioritized and paired with the interests of the prospective traveler.

6.8 Create a cultural coalition and develop a statewide annual Culture and Heritage Tourism Summit.

In order fully integrate culture and heritage in the tourism industry it will be important to create an annual venue that will bring both groups together where they can share current trends and issues and develop future partnerships opportunities. To better coordinate the messages around culture, heritage and the arts, a coalition would allow for better coordination of current efforts and lead to greater involvement by individuals and organizations. Consideration should be give to developing webinars to reach smaller groups throughout the state.

6.9 Explore opportunities to support and encourage sesquicentennial celebrations that will be occurring in communities in 2017 and 2018, as well as, the sesquicentennial for the creation of the Wyoming Territory 2018.

In 2017, Cheyenne will be 150 years old, and in 2018, Laramie, Rawlins, Green River, and Evanston will have their sesquicentennials. All of these events were brought about by the building of the Union Pacific railroad in 1867 and 1868 through what was formerly unsettled land in Dakota Territory. Coordination will be vital to maximizing the benefit of these celebrations. Considerations should be given to developing a coordinating committee to help reduce duplications and leverage resources.

7.0 Visitor Services

Visitor services include the concepts of customer service, quality and hospitality.

7.1 Improve rest stop access and amenities emergency services.

More than just restrooms, the rest stops need to provide greater availability of information through cell services, Wi-Fi and other information tools. Because of the wide open spaces and the perception of travelers, it is critical to understand that emergency services are available beyond the 511 system. A review should be made ensuring that there are no gaps in coverage, correcting any gaps and then communicating that to the traveling public. Consideration should be given to additional rest areas that would support traveler’s needs.

7.2 Ensure that current visitor centers are maintained at the federal, state and local level.

Consider standard hours of operation for all centers to provide better service to travelers. Continue to develop best practices for operations. Review current trends and benchmark against other destinations for comparison purposes and possible future enhancements. With the convergence of GPS, television, and computers—look at developing standardized wall units to access statewide web sites on a 7/24 hour basis. Support education and training opportunities for visitor center staff.

7.3 Maintain and enhance current roads, including roads in parks and forests.

Throughout the Master Plan process, the issue of maintaining roads, not only Interstate and state roads, but also roads in the national and state parks, as well as, national and state forests was raised as a critical need going forward.

7.4 Incorporate bike lane opportunities when and wherever possible—create a biking friendly state.

With increased biking, there is an opportunity to provide more bike lanes when construction is being contemplated for roadways. Planning processes should incorporate this into their considerations. This would minimize expense to create more biking opportunities and improve safety.

7.5 Continue to review and modify current signage programs within the state to meet traveler and attraction needs.

The issue of signage was identified at a number of points during the data collection. Current signage programs should be reviewed annually to determine need and effectiveness. Wyoming Office of Tourism Signage and Turnout Grant Program

7.6 Investigate the value of a centralized brochure distribution model for all public and private visitor centers in the state.

Having the right materials in place for visitors throughout the state is critical to helping to encourage visitors to stay longer and see other parts of the state. Local visitor centers need to access materials beyond their own area to provide information to travelers that can influence them to stay longer in the state. At times brochures are outdated or not available and centralized brochure distribution model may be able to help alleviate this. A task force should be organized to review what options might work best, or to determine how wide spread the problem may be.

8.0 Sustainability

Sustainability includes the concepts of preservation and stewardship.

8.1 Green Tourism policies, practices and procedures should be encourage and promoted.

Collaboration with the State Energy Office and other agencies and organizations, such as the Wyoming Lodging and Restaurant Association should be developed to identify areas of cooperation and promotion. Green practices are becoming more and more common place and will help attract travelers that look for these practices as part of their travel experience.

8.2 Ensure that archeological and geological sites are secure before marketing.

There is an untapped opportunity surrounding the archeological and geological attributes of the state of Wyoming. More effort should be made to identify these attributes and attractions and ensure that they are properly prepared for and able to accommodate travelers. With proper attention they should be able to bring in new travelers, but to also encourage travelers to stay longer.

8.3 Expand partnerships with various agencies and organizations to maintain and enhance historic preservation within the state.

Create a task force that would identify the best approach to develop marketing and communications tools to maximize traveler visitation to these sites, as well as maintain them for future use, enjoyment, interpretation and preservation.

8.4 Develop a watchable wildlife handbook.

In reviewing watchable wildlife sites many states have watchable wildlife handbooks. Wyoming appears to be an exception in not having one. Watchable Wildlife Handbooks

8.5 Provide improved communications and understanding of the requirements to ensure proper water quality needs, particularly in rural parts of the state.

Consider developing a partnership with the Wyoming Association of Rural Water Systems and other organizations to communicate a better understanding of these needs through the new tourism industry web site and other tools.

8.6 Develop and implement limits of an acceptable change planning process for destinations.

As part of the Certified Tourism Community Program, there should be additional input beyond the tourism industry by reaching out to the residents of the community as part of the overall planning process. This will help to ensure that the businesses and residents are looking at the same outcomes from the process—this will help to achieve success in the overall tourism planning within the community.

8.7 View sheds and other scenic attributes need to be reviewed and prioritized to maximize their quality for travelers, as well as, residents.

Coordinate and review management plans that have an impact on scenic views, view sheds and other visual attributes throughout the state. Consideration should be given to having the Wyoming Recreation Acton Team formalize this as an agenda item for their annual work plan.