



TOURISM 2030

SUSTAINABLE
JOURNEYS AHEAD



Government of
Northwest Territories



TOURISM
2030
SUSTAINABLE
JOURNEYS AHEAD

Mandate commitment of the 20th Legislative Assembly

FRONT COVER PHOTO: DEHCHO - DARREN ROBERTS/NWTT

K'áhshó got'jne xadā k'é hederi ʔedjht'é yerinowę ni dé dúle.
Dene Kádá

ʔerihth'ís Dēne Sų́lné yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theʔą ʔat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yóftı.
Dēne Sų́lné

Edı gondı dehgháh got'je zhaté k'éé edat'éh enahddhę nıde naxets'é edahfı.
Dene Zhaté

Jii gwandak izhii ginjik vat'atr'ijáhch'uu zhit yinothtan jı', diits'át ginokhii.
Dinjii Zhu' Ginjik

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqluta.
Inuvialuktun

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Inuktitut

Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.
Inuinnaqtun

kıspin ki nitawihtın ē nıhıyawıhk ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.
nēhiyawēwin


Tıjchọ yatı k'èè. Dı wegodi newọ dè, gots'ó gonede.
Tıjchọ

Indigenous Languages
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GLACIER LAKE - BEN WELAND/NWTT

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ZENDERFELL - SAMER HOBEIKA/ANVT

Message from the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment

Honourable Caitlin Cleveland

Tourism in the Northwest Territories is more than an industry, it is a gateway to our land, our cultures, and our people. It connects visitors to the magic of our aurora-lit skies, pristine waterways, and rich traditions that make our territory unique.

As we turn the page on Tourism 2025: Roadmap to Recovery, we are charting a bold new course with Tourism 2030 – a five-year strategy to drive sustainable growth, strengthen community-based tourism, and build resilience for the future.

This strategy will be shaped by those who know tourism best: our operators, guides, Indigenous governments, and communities. Together, we will grow tourism in a way that benefits every region while offering visitors what they seek – authenticity, immersion, and adventure.

Tourism is more than an economic driver; it is a storyteller. It shares our landscapes, cultures, and histories in ways that are real and deeply impactful. By fostering collaboration and supporting local entrepreneurs, we can build a tourism industry that strengthens our economy, empowers communities, and secures the NWT's reputation as a world-class destination for generations to come.

Honourable Caitlin Cleveland

Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment

LENORA BARRETT/NWTT



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This five-year strategy extends the vision and work of our previous 5-year strategy, Tourism 2025.

While that strategy focused on recovery and rebuilding, this plan celebrates the resilience and adaptability of tourism operators and businesses in the wake of critical global and local events such as COVID-19 and community flood and wildfires, and establishes a vision for tourism products, services and visitor experience across the Northwest Territories (NWT).

Tourism plays a key role in the NWT economy, contributing to job creation, community development, and creating opportunities for visitors and local communities to share and learn from each other's traditions, stories, and ways of life. Through strategic investments and coordinated efforts, this strategy aims to identify new opportunities, attract new markets, and create a thriving tourism sector in the territory.

This strategy helps the NWT succeed over the long term by growing tourism in a way that protects the environment, supports communities, and respects local culture

The strategy is built around five key priorities.

1. Capacity building is key to the success of the sector. Building and strengthening community developing and skilled and knowledgeable workforce through mentorship and training opportunities will support continuous economic prosperity. Encouraging youth to pursue careers in tourism will ensure sector sustainability.
2. Improving visitor experience through safe, consistent and high-quality activities and services will result in extended stays, repeat visits and positive promotion of the NWT as an unforgettable travel destination.
3. Investments in community infrastructure projects and product diversification across the regions and the seasons, as well as immersive recreational and cultural experiences, will create benefits for both visitors and residents.
4. Strengthening regional and community level marketing of core assets such as parks and cultural events will help attract more visitors as will the promotion of the NWT as a location for business meetings and conferences.
5. Ongoing research will help identify current and future employment, infrastructure and product needs. Continuing performance monitoring will help us stay on track and measure our success.

People in the NWT are the heart of the tourism industry and have a key role in its success. By partnering with tourism operators and businesses, community members can help create a destination that feels truly welcoming and delivers unforgettable unique experiences. Interactions with residents inspire visitors to return to the territory and champion the NWT as a must-see tourism destination.



CAMERON FALLS - SARAH PRUYS/NWTT

TOURISM LANDSCAPE

Why tourism is important

The tourism industry is important to the residents of the Northwest Territories (NWT) for several reasons:

- 1. Economic contributions:** Tourism supports job creation across sectors such as hospitality, guiding, transportation and retail. It also supports capacity development by equipping residents and businesses with necessary skills and generating revenue.
- 2. Infrastructure development:** Tourism can lead to improvements in infrastructure at the community and territorial level such as airports, road access, and accommodations. These investments benefit both visitors and local residents by enhancing connectivity and quality of life.
- 3. Cultural appreciation:** Authentic experiences set the NWT apart as a truly distinctive destination that celebrates the richness and uniqueness of the cultural heritage. Tourism promotes knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures and traditions while supporting the preservation of historical sites ensuring they remain vibrant for future generations.
- 4. Environmental awareness:** Eco- and Indigenous tourism help raise awareness of the importance of environmental conservation for natural landscapes and wildlife.
- 5. Local development:** Tourism supports regional and community development by attracting investment and creating opportunities beyond major centres.
- 6. Social benefits:** Tourism can foster community pride and improve quality of life through better services and amenities.





SAHTU - ANGELA GZOWSKI/NWTT

THE ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

The Tourism 2030 Strategy was shaped by ideas and feedback from industry, NWT residents and governments.

This feedback helped to establish the goals for the next five years and to identify the strategic priorities, as well as the actions required to achieve them. The new strategy will serve as a guide for the GNWT from 2026 to 2030, with a goal to strengthen the tourism industry and increase visitor spending for all NWT regions.

From November 5, 2024, to April 29, 2025, we held a variety of engagement activities to give community members, tourism operators, and partners a chance to share their ideas about tourism in the NWT, including:

- ◆ Tourism sector-specific facilitated sessions, an ideas café and wall poster questions offered during the NWT Tourism Annual General Meeting and Conference;
- ◆ In-person and virtual community engagement sessions held with tourism industry representatives, Indigenous governments, organizations and the general public;

- ◆ Virtual interviews with tourism partner organizations, a tourism funding partner, tourism sector-specific representatives and territorial and municipal staff; and
- ◆ A publicly accessible online survey for industry and residents.

A detailed list of engagement activities is provided in Appendix A.

Who engaged with us:

Through these activities, we engaged with 285 individuals and organizations.

- ◆ Tourism Businesses
- ◆ Community Members
- ◆ Municipal and Indigenous Governments
- ◆ Tourism Partner Organizations
- ◆ Tourism Funding Partner
- ◆ GNWT Departments



FRONTIER LODGE - PAT KANE



TUKTOVAKTUK - TERRY PARKER/NWTT

75,600
visitors
in 2024





VISION

To position the Northwest Territories as a premier destination for authentic northern experiences —

Where spectacular landscapes, vibrant Indigenous cultures, and sustainable tourism practices come together to create meaningful journeys for visitors and lasting benefits for communities.

Tourism is essential for the NWT. Tourism has demonstrated remarkable resilience over the last five years, showing itself to be an adaptable industry with the capacity to endure and evolve. The tourism sector contributes to growing economic revenue, empowers communities through capacity development and entrepreneurship, promotes cultural knowledge and awareness, stimulates infrastructure development and supports sustainability.



FRED HENNE TERRITORIAL PARK - UPLIFT MEDIA/NWT PARKS

MARKETING

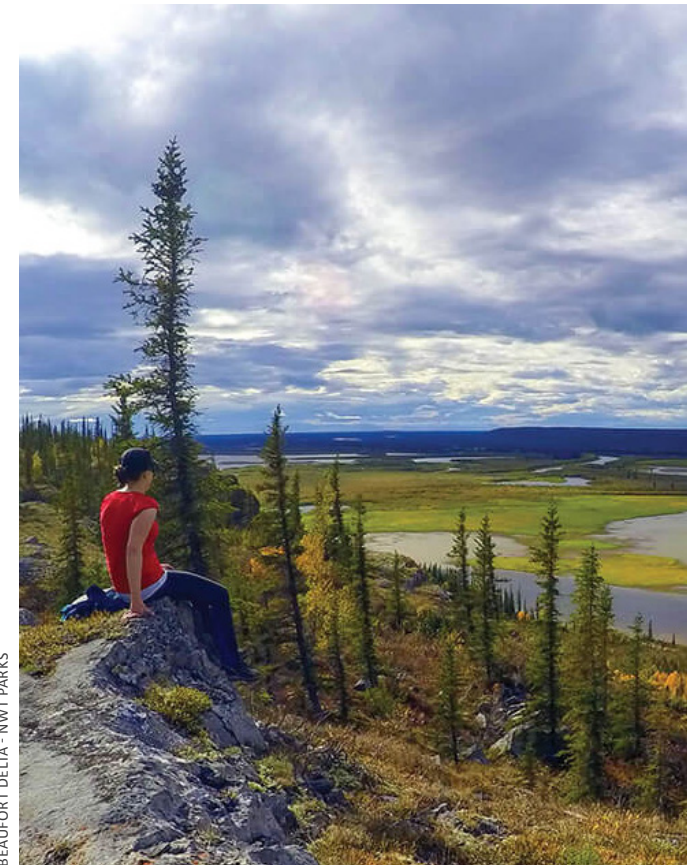
Northwest Territories Tourism (NWTT) leads destination marketing under the Spectacular NWT brand, working in partnership with the GNWT, Indigenous governments, communities, and industry.

Marketing investments are directed toward building destination awareness, supporting economic diversification, and attracting high-value, low-impact travellers who contribute to year-round and sustainable tourism.

Destination marketing supports the goals of Tourism 2030 by strengthening the NWT's reputation as a distinctive northern destination while guiding tourism growth in a way that aligns with community priorities, industry capacity, and territorial values.

NWTT will continue to develop annual destination marketing plans in collaboration with the GNWT and tourism industry partners. These plans will provide transparency, accountability, and alignment with the long-term objectives of Tourism 2030.

In an increasingly competitive global environment, strategic marketing remains essential to supporting industry stability and long-term growth. Marketing under Tourism 2030 will be data-informed, adaptive, and responsive to external factors such as climate events and broader global influences on travel.



BEAUFORT DELTA - NWT PARKS



BLACKSTONE TERRITORIAL PARK - BRANDON MACK/NWTT

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Empowered local communities

Tourism strengthens local pride and supports people in leading their own growth. Tourism has the potential to uplift communities through economic opportunities such as job creation, entrepreneurship and revenue generation that stays within the community. Education and skill development in tourism activities and support services strengthen local capacity and encourage future growth.

Sharing culture with visitors is not just an exchange, it's a celebration of life in NWT communities. These authentic connections foster pride, strengthen community identity and showcase the uniqueness of the north. Empowerment grows when our community members are involved in decision-making and planning tourism initiatives that reflect their values.

Environmental, economic and socio-cultural sustainability

Sustainable tourism aims to create balance; meeting the needs of our visitors, communities, and the environment in a way that benefits all. It promotes tourism that conserves natural resources, supports local economies, and respects Indigenous history and cultural traditions. By promoting nature-based experiences and eco-tourism, the concept of travelling in a way that respects nature and local communities, tourism can support environmental conservation, minimize impact, and encourage responsible visitor behaviour.

Tourism drives economic sustainability through job creation, encouraging small business development, and diversifying sources of income in small or remote communities. Tourism helps preserve social and cultural traditions through the sharing of Indigenous stories and visitors' interest in local arts and crafts and festivals.

\$155 Mil.
visitor
spending
2024/25



THAIDENE NENE - HOOKÉ/NWTT



POWDER POINT - NWT PARKS

Quality experiences

Quality experiences are the foundation of a successful tourism sector. In the NWT, this means more than just good service, it's about creating spectacular moments that visitors will never forget. High quality experiences in the NWT include having knowledgeable and friendly staff that provide clear and accessible information, as well as facilities that are clean, safe and well-maintained.

It's about ensuring every activity and site feels secure and inviting, while offering opportunities for visitors to connect with local people in meaningful ways. When guests feel inspired by the experience and care provided, they leave with stories worth sharing, leading to repeat visits, positive word-of-mouth, and long-term economic growth for our entire territory.

Strategic partnerships

Helping to make sure that the tourism industry remains a key economic driver in the NWT requires strong partnerships rooted in a shared vision of success. Collaborations are essential, bringing together the GNWT, private businesses, Indigenous governments, community organizations, and educational institutions, to spark innovation and leverage resources.

These partnerships don't just grow tourism, they create a destination that feels welcoming, authentic and vibrant. When we work together, we build an NWT that attracts visitors from around the world while delivering lasting benefits for the people who call it home.

Market responsiveness

Adapting to changing visitor preferences and trends is important in a highly competitive and evolving tourism industry. Market responsiveness is essential for us to stay current and to anticipate what travellers want, attracting diverse audiences, and delivering experiences that resonate with visitors.

Being responsive requires real-time data to guide product development and service improvements, continuous monitoring of emerging national and global travel trends, and offering diverse experiences across the seasons and landscapes. Working closely through collaboration with tourism operators, businesses, and communities to ensure the needs and expectations of visitors are met will inspire them to return in the future.

SAHTU - J. F. BERGERON/NWTT





HAY RIVER TERRITORIAL PARK - COLIN FIELD/NWT PARKS

Innovation and technology

Innovation and technology are shaping the tourism industry, changing the way people travel. Today's travellers want to plan, experience, and share their trips in their own way through digital platforms.

The GNWT will leverage innovation and digital tools to improve planning, marketing, research and visitor management. Through technological innovation, we can build stronger connections to inspire travellers around the world by showcasing the NWT.

Resilience and adaptability

Resilience and adaptability are important qualities for the tourism industry. The tourism industry faces unique challenges from unpredictable weather and climate change impacts to global economic shifts and health emergencies. By being adaptable, the industry can evolve with changing conditions and visitor expectations.

By investing in emergency preparedness, diversifying our markets and tourism offerings, and committing to long-term environmental and cultural sustainability, our tourism industry will maintain its world class experiences like aurora viewing, Indigenous tourism, and epic outdoor adventures and continue to grow and thrive regardless of what lies ahead.





FRED HENNE TERRITORIAL PARK - UPLIFT MEDIA/GNWT.ITI



FRED HENNE TERRITORIAL PARK - UPLIFT MEDIA/GNWT.ITI



SHAMBAA DEH-FALLS TERRITORIAL PARK - BEN WELAND/NWTT/NWTT PARKS

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

Tourism is a dynamic, resilient industry that drives economic growth, supports cultural traditions, protects the environment, and strengthens community well-being.

To help the NWT realize all the benefits tourism can bring, Tourism 2030 identifies five strategic priorities that will guide our actions over the next five years. These priorities are designed to enhance visitor experiences, protect natural and cultural assets, and ensure lasting benefits for communities and partners across the territory.

1. Capacity Building
2. Enhance Visitor Experiences
3. Expand Sustainable Tourism Product Offerings
4. Strengthen Marketing and Communications
5. Leverage Data

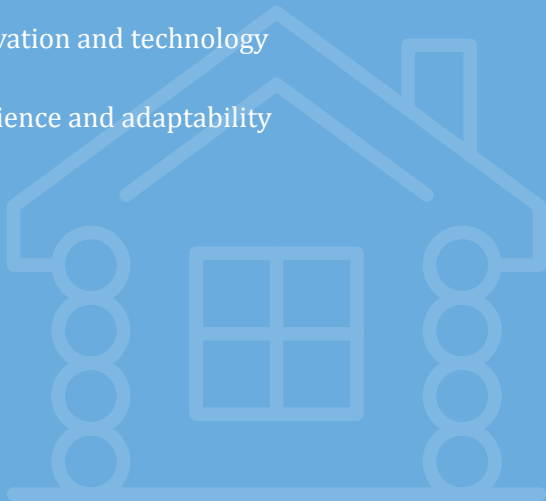
These strategic priorities are interconnected and will shape how resources, programs, and initiatives are delivered over the next five years.

Together, these priorities ensure tourism in the NWT remains strong, sustainable and positioned to take advantage of future opportunities, while safeguarding the natural landscapes, cultural traditions and vibrant communities that make our territory so extraordinary.

Tourism is an integral component of the NWT economy.

Goals

- ◆ Empowered local communities
- ◆ Environmental, economic and socio-cultural sustainability
- ◆ Quality experiences
- ◆ Strategic partnerships
- ◆ Market responsiveness
- ◆ Innovation and technology
- ◆ Resilience and adaptability



Strategic Priorities

1. **Capacity Building:** Build capacity to strengthen service quality to supports high-quality visitor experiences and sustainable industry growth
2. **Enhance Visitor Experiences:** Create memorable, high-quality experiences that encourage repeat visits, extend stays and attract new visitors
3. **Expand Sustainable Tourism Product Offerings:** Diversify experiences and strengthen service infrastructure to attract and retain new markets and increase lengths of stays in the NWT and across the regions
4. **Strengthen Marketing and Communications:** Inform and engage with target audiences and partners through clear and consistent messaging that promotes awareness of tourism in the NWT and strengthens operator collaborations
5. **Leverage Data:** Use research insights to guide decisions and improve services



LOUISE FALLS CAMPGROUND - COLIN FIELD/NWT PARKS



PRIORITY 1

Capacity Building

A thriving tourism sector starts with a strong foundation.

Building capacity across the industry through training, mentorship, and collaborative initiatives ensures operators, entrepreneurs and communities have the tools and knowledge to deliver exceptional visitor experiences and drive sustainable growth. Capacity building for staff, emerging businesses and those looking to expand their existing skills will enhance service quality, strengthen professionalism and empower local economies through entrepreneurship and small business success.

Tourism 2030 will continue to offer funding programs that support skill development and inspire youth to pursue careers in the tourism industry as well as continue to support ongoing training initiatives. We are building a resilient future, anchored in a strong, adaptable workforce that can meet the challenges of an evolving industry.

The GNWT will support the tourism industry by promoting tourism as a career path for youth through exploring partnerships with the high schools and Aurora College and by providing more youth training opportunities in the industry.



KAKISA RIVER - COLIN FIELD/NWT PARKS

Programs and initiatives

Tourism Mentorship Programs:

Mentorship programs provide structured opportunities for emerging tourism operators, entrepreneurs and professionals to learn directly from experienced leaders in the industry.

Through one on one guidance, knowledge sharing and practical skill development, participants gain insights into best practices, operational strategies, and technical expertise that are critical for success in the NWT's unique tourism environment.

Mentorship strengthens the tourism sector over the long-term through building capacity, encouraging collaboration and networking, and improving confidence and leadership. By investing in mentorship programs, the tourism sector ensures knowledge transfer across generations, cultivates resilience, and positions the NWT as a destination known for professionalism and excellence.

The two programs are:

- 1. Business Mentorship:** This program is designed to strengthen the capacity of tourism businesses in the NWT by providing targeted support for skill development and business growth. It offers one on one mentorship with experienced professionals who share their expertise and guidance on topics selected by the participating tourism businesses.
- 2. Youth Mentorship:** This program encourages youth to explore tourism as a viable and rewarding career path by providing hands on learning opportunities with experienced operators. Through on the job mentorship, participants gain practical experience, industry knowledge, and professional guidance, helping to build confidence and skills that support long term success in the sector.

REID LAKE TERRITORIAL PARK - DAVID BROSHA/NWT PARKS





Tourism Training Fund:

This fund supports short-term training opportunities for tourism workers to gain new skills or to upgrade skills. It targets specialized training needs of tourism businesses and their staff such as activity-specific certifications, safety training, tourism-related workshops, and re-certifications.

Training workshops and workbooks:

Regional training and workshops are facilitated across the NWT on key topics such as NorthernMost Host and the newly updated Business, Market and Trade Ready (BMT) standards. To support self-directed learning, a series of workbooks are available to those interested, including Tourism Product Development, Tourism Product Packaging, and Marketing Your Tourism Products.

In addition, a new webinar series will be introduced to address training needs identified by tourism businesses, ensuring operators have access to timely, relevant, and practical resources to strengthen their capabilities and competitiveness.

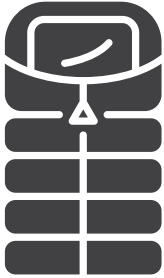
On-the-Land Collaborative Program:

This is a Collaborative focused on supporting community driven, land-based programming. The Collaborative is a partnership with many other organizations such as Regional Indigenous governments, MakeWay, the McConnell Foundation, NWT Recreation and Parks Association, Nature United, Dragonfly Ventures, BHP, DeBeers, Rio Tinto and the GNWT.

Tourism 2030 will support Indigenous tourism-related projects that promote and share cultural knowledge and build on-the-land skills to benefit the future of Indigenous tourism.

CONTINUED ON PG. 32

80,470
overnight
visitors in
NWT Parks
in **2024**



Industry Capacity Support Program:

This new program will be developed in response to the findings of gap analysis conducted in year-one of the strategy. Its primary aim is to strengthen the foundational capacity of the NWT tourism sector by addressing critical challenges that limit growth and competitiveness. Targeted supports will focus on improving operator readiness, enhancing service delivery standards, mitigating workforce shortages and overcoming infrastructure limitations that impact visitor experiences.

By closing these gaps, the program will enable tourism businesses to meet evolving market expectations, foster regional equality in service quality and build a resilient industry capable of sustaining long-term growth.

Academic partnerships:

Enhanced collaborations with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) and Aurora College will create opportunities to promote tourism as a career path for students and to offer educational supports such as accredited courses aimed at building local tourism capacity.

FRED HENNE TERRITORIAL PARK - DAVID BROSHA/NWT PARKS



PRIORITY 2

Enhance Visitor Experience

Improving and adding value to visitor experiences is critical to expanding tourism across the Territory.

Creating memorable, high-quality experiences encourages repeat visits, extend stays and attract new visitors. Unforgettable experiences also generate positive social media content and word-of-mouth recommendations, which are among the most powerful marketing tools.

Residents are essential to achieving this goal as they influence the overall visitor experience through regular interactions and hospitality, making them integral partners in tourism development. Strengthening awareness of tourism's economic and cultural benefits will foster pride, support, and active participation in local initiatives, creating a welcoming environment that reflects the authenticity of the NWT.

Visitor experiences are improved by increasing the number of flights to and within the NWT, expanding local support services (hotels and restaurants), investing in basic infrastructure (washrooms, wi-fi in public spaces), beautifying communities, enhancing public safety, improving signage, and increasing access to online information.



FRED HENNE TERRITORIAL PARK - UPLIFT MEDIA/GNWT.ITI

Programs and initiatives

Community Tourism Coordinators Program:

This program supports regional tourism development by funding a dedicated position to focus on growing tourism at the community level. These coordinators work with local businesses and partners to create tourism products and packages, enhance visitor experiences, and attract more visitors to a specific region with the aim of growing the local economy.

Interpretive programming in NWT Parks:

This programming delivers experiential, creative, and educational activities in territorial parks that showcase the culture, history, and environment of the NWT.

By engaging local residents and knowledge holders as interpreters, it creates authentic Indigenous and community-based experiences, fosters pride, and promotes stewardship, reconciliation and local storytelling.

This programming supports the development of new tourism products and partnerships while building connections between communities and the tourism economy.

Value of Tourism Awareness Campaign:

This new initiative will highlight the positive impact of tourism on the NWT by sharing authentic stories of what visitors love most about their experiences here. By showcasing how meaningful connections with residents create lasting memories, the campaign will help foster pride and appreciation within communities.

Residents will see that their hospitality and everyday interactions are a vital part of the visitor experience, while also understanding that tourism brings significant economic benefits supporting local businesses, creating jobs, and contributing to the overall prosperity of the territory.



PRELUDE LAKE - DAVID BROSHA/NWT PARKS



ALEXANDRA FALLS - COLIN FIELD/NWT PARKS



REID LAKE TERRITORIAL PARK - UPLIFT MEDIA/GNWT/ITI





MUSKRAT JAMBOREE, INUVIK - SHERRY OTT/NWTT

PRIORITY 3

Expand Sustainable Tourism Product Offerings

Investments in tourism product and service enhancements along with diversifying experiences across the regions and seasons have the power to inspire more travel to and throughout the NWT.

Upgraded visitor amenities and community infrastructure, combined with authentic cultural experiences and immersive outdoor adventure will create deeper connections to the land and the people of the NWT.

To attract and retain more visitors to the NWT, the GNWT and its partners could diversify products to include more Indigenous, environmental and sport activities, create tourism packages within and across regions, offer products across the seasons, extend the park season, and invest in local infrastructure such as roads, trails, docks, and camps.



DEHCHO - TAWNA BROWN/NWTT

Programs and initiatives

Tourism Product Diversification and Marketing Program (TPDMP):

This program is a driver of innovation helping tourism operators and businesses re-invent, enhance, and expand their offerings to meet future market demand. Through funding for business planning, product development, packaging, marketing and safety upgrades, TPDMP supports businesses to create unique experiences that attract visitors year-round.

By stimulating private sector investment and leveraging additional dollars from partners such as federal agencies, Indigenous governments and lenders, the program builds a more competitive, sustainable industry for the future.

Community Tourism Infrastructure Contribution (CTIC):

This program helps communities bring their tourism vision to life by funding innovative infrastructure projects such as museums, municipal parks and campgrounds, trails and other attractions. It also supports the

development of facilities like conference and event centres, recognizing that business travellers represent the largest share of visitor spending. These investments help attract and retain visitors and generate economic benefits supporting sustainable communities across the NWT.

Indigenous Tourism Development Officer:

This position strengthens the economic health and diversity of NWT communities by advancing the Indigenous tourism sector. The Officer supports programs and initiatives with Indigenous businesses, organizations, and governments to build capacity, enhance knowledge, and develop infrastructure that supports authentic, sustainable experiences.

These efforts create jobs and increase participation of Indigenous businesses in tourism, raise awareness of authentic Indigenous products, and diversify experiences generating deeper connections to the land and the people of the NWT.



LADY EVELYN FALLS - COLIN FIELD/NWT PARKS

 **159**
licensed tour
operators

PRIORITY 4

Strengthen Marketing and Communications

Tourism 2030 will build awareness and excitement for tourism through clear consistent messaging that celebrates what makes the NWT remarkable.

By amplifying regional and territorial marketing that highlights iconic tourism assets such as NWT parks, local cultural events and conference facilities, we will attract more visitors and encourage year-round travel. Through strong collaborative marketing and communication strategies, we will share the value of tourism, inspiring residents to champion and actively participate in local experiences.

Marketing natural assets such as parks, waterfalls, rivers and heritage sites as well as local events like festivals and cultural celebrations will help to attract visitors.

SOUTH SLAVE - NICK FITZHARDINGE/NWTT



Programs and initiatives

Tourism Week:

Each year during National Tourism Week, the GNWT hosts activities across the regions so that residents can learn more about the NWT tourism industry in their community. These activities include a range of displays and events to rekindle the enterprising spirit of locals who want to take part in this ever-growing industry. Tourism week provides an opportunity to make residents aware that tourism creates jobs, supports local businesses, and helps share and celebrate our culture and way of life.

Outreach / Regional engagement:

These activities involve the sharing of information about current research and the economic benefits of tourism, promoting tourism as a business development opportunity for communities, encouraging participation in our programs and services, and engaging in meaningful dialogue with our partners including tourism operators and businesses, funding partners, Indigenous governments, communities and NWT residents.

NWT Parks marketing:

This initiative focuses on promoting and marketing one of the NWT's key tourism assets, our spectacular parks. With territorial parks in every region, this activity is a key driver of regional growth and development. It includes strengthening our online presence and promoting regional attractions and activities such as interpretive programming in the NWT Parks.



NAHANNI MOUNTAIN LODGE - BEN WEILLAND/GNWT



BLACKSTONE TERRITORIAL PARK - BEN WEILLAND/NWTT

Convention Bureau:

This initiative supports a dedicated role within NWT Tourism focused on attracting meetings, incentives, conferences and events (MICE) to the territory. By promoting the NWT as an extraordinary alternative to traditional urban venues, the Convention Bureau encourages delegates to experience our world-class destination for business events, offering cultural authenticity, breathtaking natural settings, and modern amenities.

Business travellers represent the largest share of visitor spending, making this market a significant driver of economic growth. By increasing delegate visits, extending stays, and encouraging participants to explore the NWT's unique experiences, the Convention Bureau strengthens the tourism economy and creates lasting benefits for communities and local businesses across the territory.

SLAVE RIVER RAPIDS - DARREN ROBERTS/NWTT





FOLK ON THE ROCKS, YELLOWKNIFE - TOMMY JORGE/NWTT

PRIORITY 5

Leverage Data

Current, accessible tourism data is essential for territorial and municipal governments, tourism businesses, and Indigenous governments and organizations as it will allow for increased understanding of visitor trends and preferences.

It will facilitate the forecasting of future needs such as employment, infrastructure, accommodations, and transportation.

Real time data collection and performance tracking will inform how we invest our money in tourism products and services.



NORTH SLAVE - PAT KANE/GNWT

Programs and initiatives

Ongoing research and reporting:

Ongoing research and data collection will be carried out to ensure relevant information is available for the tourism industry and other stakeholders.

Reports such as Tourism: Year in Review and NWT Parks Seasonal Highlights will continue to be published annually as will fact sheets presenting tourism visitation and spending data, visitor demographics and information on tourism operator licenses. This information will help guide tourism planning and decision making moving forward.

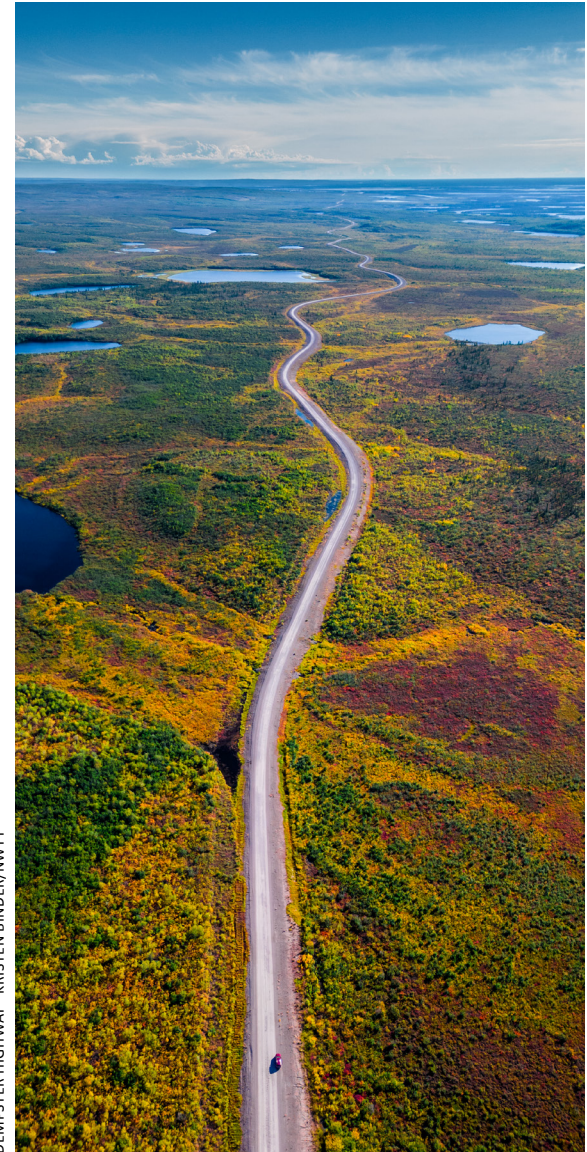
Industry Gap Analysis:

This one-year research initiative will identify critical challenges limiting the NWT tourism sector's ability to meet rising visitor expectations. The analysis will focus on recurring capacity issues across regions, especially in small and underserved communities, and will highlight opportunities to strengthen tourism products

and experiences so they align with market demand. This analysis will guide the creation of an Industry Capacity Support Program, ensuring future investments directly address the needs of operators and visitors. Communications about this new program will roll out in the second year of the strategy.

Tourism 2030 monitoring and evaluation:

To help ensure the work we do is effectively supporting our vision, we have set clear goals, key performance indicators and feedback mechanisms that will allow us to track progress, adapt programs and initiatives as needed, and evaluate success. Information from the following streams will be gathered in support of these activities: visitor data and research (e.g., visitor exit survey and visitor centre data); industry research (including trend monitoring); and resident data and research.



DEMPSTER HIGHWAY - KRISTEN BINDER/NWTT





NORTH SLAVE - JULIEN SCHRODER/NWTT

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO, AND WHEN

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO	WHEN WE'LL START
DEVELOP SKILLED WORKFORCE	
Increase awareness of tourism training and mentorship programs, especially in small communities, through ongoing outreach and engagement	Year 1
Deliver skills development programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Tourism Business Mentorship Program ◆ Youth Mentorship for Tourism Program ◆ Tourism Training Fund ◆ Training Workshops and Workbooks 	Year 1
Support the On the Land Collaborative Program	Year 1
Deliver Industry Capacity Support Program (NEW)	Year 3
Collaborate with ECE and Aurora College to promote tourism as a career path for youth and to offer tourism-related education and training supports	Ongoing
ENHANCE VISITOR EXPERIENCE	
Deliver Community Tourism Coordinators Program	Year 1
Continue to support interpretive programming in NWT Parks with a focus on stewardship, reconciliation and local storytelling	Year 1
Develop the Value of Tourism Campaign	Year 1
Create themed and self-guided itineraries (e.g., culinary, heritage, nature)	Year 3
Promote safe, consistent and high-quality visitor standards through workshops, updates to NorthernMost Host and safety planning support, and development of cultural awareness training templates	Ongoing
EXPAND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCT OFFERINGS	
Deliver key programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Tourism Product Diversification and Marketing Program ◆ Community Tourism Infrastructures Contribution 	Year 1
Foster partnerships between operators and local businesses to support the creation of tourism packages	Year 2
Support regional operators and businesses to develop year-round products and services	Year 2
Improve signage, wayfinding and accessibility across the NWT	Year 2
Monitor trends in tourism product development	Ongoing

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO	WHEN WE'LL START
STRENGTHEN MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION	
Collaborate with NWT Tourism to market NWT Parks	Year 1
Maintain the Conference Bureau with NWT Tourism to attract meetings, incentives, conferences and events	Year 1
Enhance communications and collaborations with internal partners: ECE, Aurora College, MACA, INF, and ITI	Year 1
Maintain strong relationships with external partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ NWT Tourism ◆ CanNor ◆ Destination Canada ◆ Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada 	Year 1
Develop and share tourism information with operators and businesses, Indigenous governments and organizations, and communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Program availability ◆ Training opportunities ◆ Value of tourism ◆ Sector gap analysis results ◆ Tourism Week 	Year 1
Identify opportunities to partner with outside sectors such as: producers to promote the NWT as a filming location, cold weather testing, etc.	Year 2
LEVERAGE DATA	
Conduct tourism sector gap analysis	Year 1
Conduct regular visitor satisfaction surveys (e.g., exit surveys, visitor centre feedback)	Year 1
Monitor achievement of performance measurement indicators	Starting Year 2
Develop annual summary reports and fact sheets	Starting Year 2
Evaluate survey and data collection methodology	Year 2



DEHCHO BRIDGE - TASHINA WEAGLE/NWTT



NORTH SLAVE - KAITLYN VICIAN/NWTV

LOOKING AHEAD

Tourism 2030: Sustainable Journeys Ahead is the next step to supporting future growth and success.

Over the next five years, we will continue to invest in tourism programs and infrastructure to maximize the opportunities within our tourism sector.

By prioritizing visitor experiences, leveraging innovation, and closely collaborating with our partners we can achieve the greatest possible impact from the tourism industry.

We will continue to monitor and evaluate our activities and initiatives and make adjustments as needed to ensure that the industry is making progress and is aligned with national and international trends. If we balance the needs of visitors, communities, and the environment we will further strengthen our resilience and adaptability and guarantee that tourism becomes a shared success story for residents and visitors alike.

THAIDENE NENE - HOOKÉ/NWTT





APPENDIX A: WHO WE SPOKE WITH AND WHEN

COMMUNITY/EVENT	GROUP	DATE	NUMBER OF ATTENDEES
NWT Tourism Conference	Tourism sector-specific	November 5, 2025	31
Inuvik	Tourism industry	February 4, 2025	8
	Community members	February 5, 2025	5
Fort Simpson	Tourism industry	February 11, 2025	3
	Community members	February 11, 2025	3
Behchokoq	Tourism industry	February 13, 2025	10
	Community members	February 13, 2025	0
Yellowknife	Tourism industry	March 6, 2025	28
	Community members	February 17, 2025	6
	Community members	March 3, 2025	8
Norman Wells	Tourism industry (in-person and virtual)	February 20, 2025	4
	Community members (in-person and written)	February 20, 2025	8
Hay River	Tourism industry	March 4, 2025	3
	Community members	March 4, 2025	0
Łutselk'e	Combined tourism industry and community members	March 5, 2025	4
Fort Smith	Tourism industry (virtual)	March 6, 2025	15
Interviews	Municipalities	April 11 to May 1, 2025	2
	Tourism support sector		5
	Tourism partners		5
	Tourism funding partner		1
Online survey	Tourism industry	February 1 to March 31, 2025	17
	Community members		95
GNWT	ITI, ECC, MACA, Infrastructure, Culture and Heritage, Aurora College	February 5 to March 18, 2025	24
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS			285

APPENDIX B: INTENDED IMPACTS

This table highlights the key inputs, activities and outputs of Tourism 2030 that will lead to the intended impacts.

CONTEXT	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	INTENDED IMPACT
	Resources	Strategic Priorities	Participation, products, goods, services	Visions results, 5+ years
WHAT DO WE WANT TO SOLVE	WHAT DO WE INVEST	WHAT DO WE DO	WHAT DO WE GET	
To ensure economic growth, diversification (fill industry gaps) and sustainability (territory, regions, communities) in the NWT tourism industry	GNWT ITI staff (HQ, regional, seasonal)	Develop Skilled Workforce Build a skilled tourism workforce that supports high-quality visitor experiences and sustainable industry growth.	Tourism Mentorship Programs: Business Mentorship and Youth Mentorship	Skilled and knowledgeable tourism workforce
	Strategy budget		Tourism Training Fund	
	Tourism operators/business		Training workshops and workbooks	
	Research & Data		On-the Land Collaborative Program	
	Parks infrastructure		Academic partnerships	
	Parks marketing	Enhance Visitor Experience Create memorable, high-quality experiences that encourage repeat visits, extend stays and attract new visitors.	Community Tourism Coordinators Program	Gold standard for visitor service experience (quality and consistency)
	Contractors		Indigenous Tourism Development Officer	
	Partnerships		Interpretive programming in NWT Parks	
			Expand Sustainable Tourism Product Offerings Diversify experiences to attract and retain new markets and increase lengths of stays in the NWT and across the regions.	Tourism Product Diversification Marketing Contribution (TPDMP)
		Community Tourism Infrastructure Contribution (CTIC)		

CONTEXT	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	INTENDED IMPACT
	Resources	Strategic Priorities	Participation, products, goods, services	Visions results, 5+ years
WHAT DO WE WANT TO SOLVE	WHAT DO WE INVEST	WHAT DO WE DO	WHAT DO WE GET	
		<p>Strengthen Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Inform and engage with target audiences and partners through clear and consistent messaging that promotes awareness of tourism in the NWT and strengthens operator collaborations.</p>	<p>Tourism Week</p> <p>Outreach / Regional engagement</p> <p>NWT Parks marketing</p> <p>Convention Bureau (NWT Tourism Conference Marketing) Program</p>	Tourism shows increased economic contribution to the NWT's GDP
		<p>Leverage Data</p> <p>Use research insights to guide decisions and improve services.</p>	<p>Ongoing research and reporting</p> <p>Tourism 2030 monitoring and evaluation</p>	Growth in tourism is supported by evidence-based data and research

APPENDIX C: WHAT WE LEARNED SUMMARY

TOURISM STRENGTHS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Northern lights ◆ Adventure tourism (dog sledding, paddling, hunting, fishing, etc.) ◆ National and territorial parks ◆ Indigenous cultural experiences ◆ Festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Proximity to nature ◆ Driving the Dempster Highway ◆ Seeing the Arctic Ocean ◆ Midnight sun
TOURISM BENEFITS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increased employment and economic development ◆ Opportunities to improve cultural understanding and showcase natural beauty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Investment in infrastructure and services ◆ Increased sense of community pride
TOURISM SUPPORTS NEEDED BY STAKEHOLDER TO GROW TOURISM	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Marketing of local products ◆ Additional funding and broader, more flexible funding programs ◆ Access to tourism data to inform decision making ◆ Coordination of tourism efforts across communities, regions and the NWT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Entrepreneurial and administrative capacity building workshops ◆ Insurance subsidies or rebates ◆ Access to a skilled workforce through immigration programs
CHALLENGES TO GROWING TOURISM	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lack of infrastructure ◆ Lack of tourism products ◆ Lack of support services ◆ High cost of travel and inadequate number of flights ◆ Inadequate tourism funding ◆ Insufficient national and international marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lack of skilled workforce to provide quality services ◆ Burdensome application and licensing processes ◆ High cost of insurance and licensing ◆ High cost of operating a tourism business ◆ Impacts of climate change on supply costs, visitor numbers, infrastructure stability and overall tourism sustainability
APPROACHES TO IMPROVING VISITOR EXPERIENCES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ More tourism products and support services ◆ More basic infrastructure ◆ Improved signage ◆ Improved access to online information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Enhanced service quality ◆ Improved safety on the highways ◆ More consistent operator hours and offerings ◆ Community beautification

WAYS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR TOURISM

- ◆ Increased understanding of the benefits of tourism
- ◆ Tourism products aimed at both visitors and locals
- ◆ Educating visitors and operators on community codes of conduct and safety
- ◆ Increasing connections between operators and local businesses
- ◆ Greater youth involvement
- ◆ Reduced degree to which tourism negatively impacts residents

OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE AND EXPAND TOURISM ACROSS THE NWT

- ◆ New tourism areas and activities associated with climate change such as sustainable, eco-friendly, net-zero/net-plus environmental tourism and beachcombing and mushroom foraging.
- ◆ Offering more tourism products
- ◆ Offering more scheduled flights to the communities
- ◆ Partnering with high schools and NWT post-secondary institutions to offer education and training programs
- ◆ Increasing access to online information and booking
- ◆ Focusing more on experiential Indigenous and cultural tourism, sport tourism, and business tourism
- ◆ Broadening the tourism clientele
- ◆ Building strong connections across operators to build tourism packages
- ◆ Promoting aurora viewing outside of Yellowknife
- ◆ Revitalizing / further developing existing sites, infrastructure and activities
- ◆ Broadening the definition of tourist to include any visitors who do not live in the NWT, the region or the community
- ◆ Expanding tourism in the territorial parks and during the shoulder seasons through extending the camping season, retrofitting buildings for winter, and offering more seasonal-specific activities
- ◆ Increasing local involvement in tourism and creating a Citizen Ambassadors Program to support local tourism
- ◆ Continuing collaboration with the film industry
- ◆ Supporting workforce development through immigration programs

PRIORITY AREAS FOR TOURISM INVESTMENT

- ◆ Building and strengthening tourism activities in small communities
- ◆ Building business administrative knowledge and skills
- ◆ Employing Community Tourism Officers in each community
- ◆ Increasing marketing efforts
- ◆ Increasing focus on Indigenous/cultural tourism, support for festivals
- ◆ Creating new tourism products and packages
- ◆ Developing tourism-related infrastructure
- ◆ Providing more education, training and employment opportunities with a focus on Indigenous youth



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