



Working together on Tourism issues in North Western Ontario

NWOTA/KDCA Working Group
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KDCA/NWOTA Progress report 2009 update

(KDCA/NWOTA update 2009)

An Organization that is getting attention

- 4/9/09 KDCA/NWOTA made a presentation to Ontario's Sunset Country Board of Directors seeking support for 3 recommendations. They were all carried.
1. Formation of Region 12 which is the present Sunset Country Region.
 2. That OSCTA be the DMMO for Region 12
 3. That OSCTA take over the responsibility of DMF for Region 12. This would include,
 - a. Advocate and promoting DMF in the new region.
 - b. Develop incentives to encourage participation in DMF.
 - c. Work with local DMF to develop a strategy that insures local and regional marketing support.
- 4/8/09 KDCA/NWOTA released our second survey to assess the current state of the tourism industry of NW Ontario.
- March 09 KDCA/NWOTA purchased a one year subscription to *GoToMeeting* to reduce our yearly communication costs. We estimate we can reduce our communication costs by thousands of dollars but more importantly assist our organization in communicating both visually and with audio.
- March 09 We started work on completely redesigning the KDCA/NWOTA web site in an attempt to clearly document our positions and progress on issues impacting our industry. A major effort that is still underway.
- March 09 March, developed documents to support the addition (to Sorbara 11 regions) of Region 12. KDCA/NWOTA sent resolutions both chamber and municipal to every community in SSCTA and released a press document with our position.
- 2/27/09 KDCA/NWOTA representatives Bob and Peg Hunger traveled to Thunder Bay to hand Mr. Sorbara our document on why we thought a region 12 was needed.
- Spring 09 Spring of 2009, KDCA/NWOTA started working on a strategy that would give us the ability to show how Canada's border policy is devastating the tourism industry. The strategy include the ability to do background checks ourselves, clearly documenting incidents that eventually would allow us to make a meaningful presentation to Greg Rickford, the MP for Kenora riding.



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- Spring 09 Spring of 2009, KDCA/NWOTA developed a set of policy documents to help us with the issues we are trying to improve.
1. Road map for rebuilding the tourism industry in Western Northwestern Ontario.
 - a. We listed 7 issues and made 20 recommendations we felt were important in rebuilding improving the tourism industry in Western Northwestern Ontario.
 2. A document on the cost of the border issue to Northwestern Ontario.
 - a. This document clearly hi-lighted the impact of the border by comparing growth in Western Northwestern Ontario to growth in NE Minnesota.
 3. A document on the tourism profile of NW Ontario.
 - a. This is a review of visitors to our region, what they spend and where they come from.
- Spring 09 During the fall of 2008 and spring of 2009 the deer committee met often and developed a KDCA/NWOTA position paper.
- 1/20/09 January 20th Harald and Jerry traveled to Thunder Bay for the unveiling of Ontario's 4 year Tourism Marketing Strategy and a meeting with Ms Smith the Minister of Tourism.
- Jan 09 Spring of 2009, KDCA/NWOTA submitted the document "Road Map for rebuilding the tourism industry in Northwestern Ontario" to the Sorbara commission.
- 11/14/08 Received word from Greg Rickford MP Kenora riding that he wanted to meet with us this December to talk about the DUI issue.
- 11/13/08 Received word from Minister Smith that she would meet with us in January.
- 9/30/08 Attended a meeting with Greg Sorbara who is chairing the tourism Competitiveness study and presented our discussion paper to the.
- 9/26/08 Started work on updating www.canadawelcomesyou.com. Please review the site and pass on anything you think needs attention.
- Sept
- Sent a copy of the position paper to OTMPC
 - Asked for and received support for the position paper from Sunset Country and Pat Region, NWOTA and KDCA board.
 - Finalized a position paper we intend to present to Fonseca.
 - Started work on the KDCA/NWOTA web site, target finish date is spring of 2009.
- 7/31/08 A second letter to Fonseca requesting a meeting.
- 7/2/08 Surveyed 15,000 attendees to last years NMMA sports shows in the mid west. Preliminary results will be available by end of September.
- June Asked Hampton, Boshcoff, Gravel, Murdoch, and Mauro, to intercede with Fonseca for a meeting with KDCA/NWOTA.

- 4/21/08 Received a response to our Feb 24 letter to Fonseca stating he will keep our request for a meeting in mind should he have an opportunity to do so.
- 4/20/08 KDCA/NWOTA bought a 1 year subscription to Survey Monkey, an secure online survey company. This will give us a valuable tool to gain information directly from not only our industry but from the visiting public. Our first survey was to the RBT industry to get a better understanding of the economic trends in recent past. The survey was sent to approx 360 businesses with a 26% response rate. Our next survey will be a joint effort with NMMA using their customer list, to get an understanding of visitor concerns.
Estimated cost will be around \$500.
- 4/4/08 KDCA/NWOTA met with Murray Hardie Consul and trade commissioner and Graham Rush, Senior Trade Commissioner at the Canadian Consulate office in Minneapolis.
The talk focused on ways to improve tourism trade to NW Ontario. Sever good ideas came from the meeting and work will begin this summer.
- 2/24/08 Sent letter to Minister Fonseca (MTR) asking for an opportunity to speak on behalf of tourism in NW Ontario.
- 2/08/08 KDCA/NWOTA met with the Ontario Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. We focused on three main issues
 - Tourisms Role in the economy of NOW. A review of the economic impact study and the more important role of tourism with the downturn of the forest industry.
 - Infrastructure funding opportunities for accommodation industry especially for unfunded mandates like water, sewer and other.
 - Infrastructure funding for the traveling public like historical markers, wayside rest areas and development of more travel destinations.

We did mention the lack of marketing for NW Ontario but acknowledged the 2008 effort in Chicago And the \$30 million additional funding announced by MTR for Ontario (even though it appears NW Ontario will not receive any of it.
- 12/7/07 MP Roger Valley called a meeting attended by CBSA and tourism. From the meeting Roger asked CBSA representative James Cameron 6 key questions.
 1. What is the protocol for the code of conduct for the Canadian Border Services officers when a client comes to the border to cross into Canada?
 2. What information or assistance does the officer have to provide?
 3. Can this information be posted as an on-line service?
 4. How many Temporary Visitor Permits are issued annually in Canada, broken down by region?
 5. Is there room for flexibility in Tourist Camp Owner work permits so that three year permits may be issued, therefore cutting down on the amount of paperwork?
 6. He ask for a 2 year exemption from the \$200 Temporary Visitor permit fee at both the Fort Frances and Rainy River border crossings to aid in the recovery of the financial losses to the tourism industry.
- 9/24/07 Letter to Hon. David Ramsey on the cost of the outdoor card and the negative impact it will have on our customers who have already had major changes in the cost to travel to Canada.
MNR plans to introduce an on line point of sale license system for Non-Resident fisherman. It will be similar to the resident system. It will be a huge cost savings for MNR and it is felt that the additional cost should be absorbed.
- 9/18/07 Submitted a resolution to NOACC on the border issue.
Ontario Chamber has had two studies on the negative impact of the Canadian border to Ontario. When asked, no one had ever sent a resolution from either Fort Frances or NOACC on the trouble we are seeing at Fort Frances.

- 9/18/07 Asked to represent NW Ontario on the border committee of Ontario Chamber of Commerce.
OCC has an open spot for a representative in the west and no one is on it.
- 9/15/07 The Honorable Stockwell Day sent a letter to Mr. Ken Boshcoff with a chart from CBSA stating 6 visitors turned back at Fort Frances in 2006.
KDCA/NWOTA contacted a few operators (9) who together showed 43 people were turned back and an additional 81 that went with them. KDCA/NWOTA sent the findings to Ken Boshcoff. All 9 operators agreed to share complete information on their guests.
- 9/9/07 Letter to Stockwell Day outlining the economic impact of the minor criminal issue to NW Ontario.
This was not only negatively impacting RBT but property owners that can't vacation nor run their business.
- 8/24/07 Dr. Rosehart was assigned by the McGuinty government to identify ways to improve growth in Northwestern Ontario. KDCA/NWOTA met in Dryden on August 24th to make a power point presentation to Dr. Rosehart on 4 issues.
 - The US/Canadian Borders of NW Ontario.
 - Lack of Government Marketing Support.
 - Lack of public travel destinations attractions and infrastructure.
 - Increase in provincial incentives for tourism industry to upgrade and modernize facilities.
- 8/20/07 Letter to Jim Bradley on two issues.
 - Dedicated marketing funding for Northwestern Ontario. OTMPC Northern Committee should be split in half so NW Ontario could be managed as a separate entity.
 - Ontario tourism center at Fort Frances should be moved and more welcoming to visitors.
- July 27, 2007 Opened a checking account exclusively for KDCA/NWOTA money. Prior it flowed through the NWOTA checking account.
- July 07 Met with OTMPC's Chris Milner & Jim Grayston along with Mike Bilsbarrow and Gerry Cariou to discuss the 2008 special marketing plan for northern Ontario. It would be approx 1 million and would be spent in a major US Midwest market.
- 6/22/07 Bud Dickson is a representative for NW Ontario on the OTMPC board. We sent letter to Bud asking that OTMPC move the Ontario information Centre and make it more welcoming to visitors crossing into Ontario.
- 5/17/07 KDCA/NWOTA was invited by Mr. Ken Boshcoff to made a presentation to the Outdoor and Border Caucus, in Ottawa. This effort included;
 - Three documents Information, issue and recommendations.
 - We prepared a pre Ottawa media release to all area news outlets.
 - We sent thank you letters to every leader attending the caucus meeting (12).
 - We worked closely with other accommodation advocates like HAC,
 - With the help of PAT region we were also able to help quantify the loss to NW Ontario from 2002 to 2006.
- May 2007 Endorsed common voice, a NOMA initiative to improve the economy of NW Ontario.
KDCA/NWOTA is working with NOMA to form the tourism committee. This effort may have a huge impact on the growth of tourism in NW Ontario. We also joined the tourism committee called Northwestern Ontario Regional; Tourism Council.
- May 2007 Working closely with TIAC we were able to salvage the GST invoice rebate for RBT.
No one including NOTO knew we were rebating customer directly on the invoice, more importantly because of how we had to report this the federal government was not aware it was being used.
- Summer KDCA/NWOTA put their organizations behind the already formed Deer Committee.
 - Held numerous conference calls paid for by KDCA/NWOTA,
 - Sent a letter to Ramsey.

September 06 through June 07 we worked closely to get DMF up and running.

Raised \$38,000 to get the project off the ground.

9/6/06

Made a presentation to OTMPC asking.

- Support our Destination Marketing effort.
- More marketing money for NW Ontario.
- That money should not include partnership buy-ins.

2006

* Collaborated on the Land Use Permit (LUP) issues.

* Working with CBSA and with the help of FED NOR through Rainy River Future Development Corp. we developed a new web site
www.canadawelcomesyou.net.

* Held a conference call with every provincial outfitter association across Canada (FCOA) to discuss the border issue and its economic impact.

2005

* Signed a 5 year memorandum of understanding at the KDCA/NWOTA spring meetings.

* Made a presentation in Thunder Bay on the lack of destination marketing for Northwestern Ontario. Everyone involved with tourism was invited and most attended by either phone or in person.

* Attended the Federation of Canadian Outfitters Association (FCOA) meeting in Ottawa because Ontario was not represented.