

Nunavut tourism worth \$30 million

Feds invest millions in national marketing campaign

Just under 14,000 tourists visit territory

by Guy Quenneville
Northern News Services
Nunavut

Tourism contributes nearly \$30 million to Nunavut's economy during a normal year, according to Nunavut Tourism.

According to the first phase of the GN's Nunavut Tourism Sector Development Strategy, "Tourism is particularly important because it is essentially an export industry, bringing income into the territory from outside. Unlike federal fiscal transfers or direct investment by southern firms, tourism income is self-generated, using Nunavut's own natural and cultural resources, and flows more directly to lower-income Nunavummiut with traditional skills, such as hunters and artisans. In this way, it helps play a more valuable economic role than standard GDP figures indicate."

The territory is receiving significant federal money aimed at advertising Nunavut to other parts of Canada.

In February, CanNor announced it will fund a \$3.5-million Northern mar-

keting campaign.

The money, stretched over four years, will go to the Pan North Consortium, made up of Nunavut, the NWT and Yukon and headed by Nunavut Tourism.

The campaign will promote Canada's North as a unique travel destination to outdoor adventurers and cultural explorers from Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

The latest numbers on the territory's tourism sector cover the period from June to October of 2008.

According to a Nunavut exit study conducted by the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, a total of 33,378 passengers (air and cruise) traveled to Nunavut during that time.

That's up from the 28,802 passengers who traveled to Nunavut between June and October of 2006. Of the 2008 passengers, 13,889 were visitors (non-residents) to Nunavut, up 27 per cent from 2006.

In 2008, 25 cruise ships carrying 2,096 passengers

sailed to Nunavut, down from 27 ships carrying 2,926 people in 2006.

Cruise passengers accounted for 17 per cent of all visitors, while air visitors represented 83 per cent.

The average age of all visitors to Nunavut was 46.

Similar to 2006 findings, the majority of visitors in 2008 were men which, according to the department, is a reflection of the high percentage of business travellers coming to the territory.

The study found 74 per cent of business travellers are male, while 58 per cent of leisure travellers are female.

Canadians continue to make up the majority of visitors to Nunavut.

Among business travellers, 96 per cent are from Canada.

Among leisure travellers, 72 per cent are from Canada, 20 per cent from the United States and 8 per cent are from other countries.

September and July are the two largest visitor months. Combined they account for over 46 per cent of visitor departure dates.

The study found that 63 per cent of all visitors went to the Qikiqtaaluk (Baffin) region – dominated by travel to Iqaluit. Of the rest, 11 per cent visited the Kivalliq region, seven per cent visited the Kitikmeot region and the remaining 19 per cent took Arctic cruises that included stops at various Nunavut communities.

The Kivalliq region has the highest percentage of visitors coming for business, 76 per cent.

Vacation is the most frequently reason cited for visiting the Kitikmeot region, while visiting friends and relatives is the most prominent reason for travelling to the Baffin region. This is different from 2006, when Baffin had a more varied mix of reasons for people visiting.

Total spending not including the cost of transportation between June and October of 2008 amounted to \$4.6 million, compared to \$4 million during the same period in 2006.

However, spending by cruise ship passengers declined during the same period to

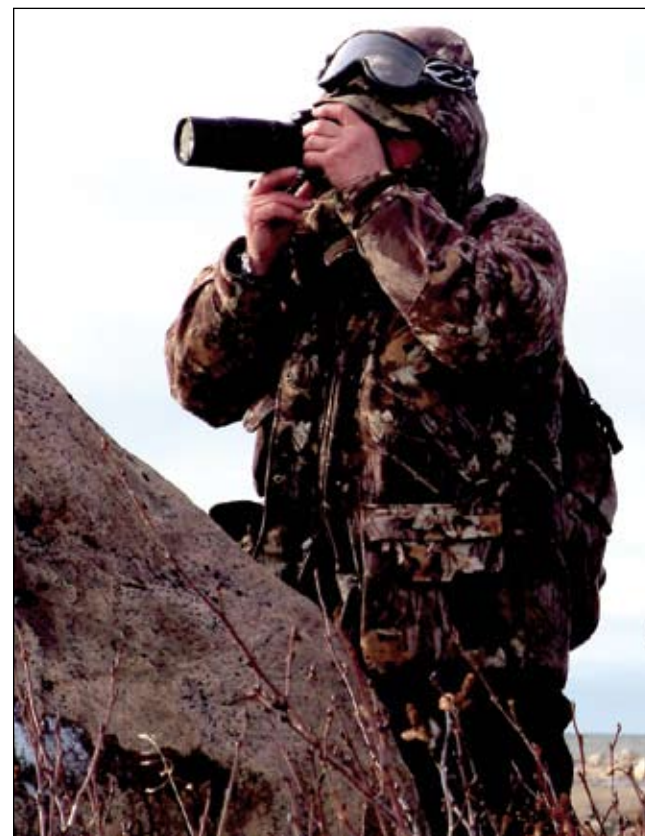


photo courtesy of Jason Curley

During a normal year, tourism is worth \$30 million to the Nunavut economy.

\$95,000 from \$170,000.

Shopping for art, carvings or local products was the top area of spending reported by visitors.

Total visitor spending including transportation costs was approximately \$24 million in 2008.

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. has announced funding for three infrastructure projects that will serve as tourism products: an eco-tourism centre in Arviat; a tourist centre for cruise ship visitors in Gjoa Haven and an arts centre in Cape Dorset.

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Tourist spending tops \$111 million

Number of tourists down in NWT

Hunting sector sees biggest drop



Guy Quenneville/NNSL photo

More than half of NWT visitors every year travel to the territory in leisure.

by Guy Quenneville
Northern News Services
NWT

After four years years of declining visitor spending, the NWT's tourism sector saw a growth in visitor dollars during the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

In 2010-2011, visitors in all tourism categories spent a total of \$111 million in the territory, up from \$107.6 million in 2009-2010.

Spending went up in all visitor categories except one.

Not surprisingly, given the GNWT's ban on caribou hunting, the overall hunting industry took a hit, with spending shrinking to \$3 million from \$10.1 million the year before.

But every other category saw in a year-over-year increase: fishing (\$14.3 million from \$12.6 million); general touring (\$9.2 million from \$8.1 million); aurora viewing (\$7.9 million from \$7.2 million); and outdoor adventure (\$8.6 million from \$6.1 million).

The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment's goal is to increase the value of the industry to \$130 million by 2015-2016 – growth of \$19 million over five years.

In terms of visitors, the numbers decreased by 7.4 per cent during the last year for which ITI has up-to-date information – 2009-2010.

In total, 68,004 people visited the territory that year, down from 73,419 in 2008-2009.

Of that total, 41,823 travelled for leisure (up from 39,795 the previous year) and

26,181 were travelling for business (down considerably from 33,624 and likely attributable to the lingering effect of the economic slowdown).

The only category that saw an increase in visitors was that reserved for visiting friends and relatives (12,910 in 2009-2010).

Notably, the number of people who travelled to the NWT to hunt declined to 757 from 942.

Three former caribou outfitters accounted for half of the financial support given to Yellowknife-based businesses and organizations under the GNWT's primary business assistance program, the Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development (SEED) policy, last year.

J. Group Ltd., True North Safaris and Warburton Outfitters received \$219,300 in financial assistance during the 2009-2010 fiscal year from the Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development (SEED) policy.

J Group – which owns Peterson's Point Lake Lodge and its recent offshoot, My Backyard Tours – received \$113,000 in support, while True North Safaris and Warburton Outfitters received \$56,300 and \$50,000, respectively.

J Group – which was founded in the early 1980s as a caribou outfitting operation – used the money to diversify the company in the wake of the suspension of caribou hunting in the NWT. The company now offers photography work-

shops, tours of Yellowknife and is planning a familiarization tour for people recently moved to Yellowknife.

The number of tourism enquiries received by NWT Tourism for 2009-2010 was 9,142, down by 2,295 from the previous year.

The number of unique website visits was 408,785.

Northwest Territories Visitor Spending (in millions)

Year	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Visiting Friends & Relatives	\$3.1	\$3.2	\$3.8	\$3.8	\$5	\$4	\$5.4	\$6.5
Hunting	\$15.1	\$17.3	\$17.4	\$16.2	\$13	\$12.4	\$10.1	\$3
Aurora Viewing	\$12.2	\$12.5	\$13.4	\$9.3	\$9.6	\$7.2	\$7.2	\$7.9
Outdoor Adventure	\$6.0	\$5.6	\$7.1	\$6.8	\$6.9	\$6.8	\$6.1	\$8.6
Fishing	\$18.2	\$17.1	\$16.9	\$18	\$17.5	\$17	\$12.6	\$14.3
General Touring	\$9.1	\$8.7	\$7.5	\$7.5	\$8.5	\$8.3	\$8.1	\$9.2
Total Leisure Visitors	\$63.8	\$64.4	\$66.1	\$61.6	\$60.5	\$55.7	\$49.5	\$49.5
Total Business Travellers	\$46.1	\$50.2	\$54.7	\$78.8	\$77.4	\$74.6	\$58.1	\$61.5
Total spending (millions)	\$109.8	\$114.6	\$120.8	\$140.4	\$137.9	\$130.3	\$107.6	\$111

Source: GNWT

After three years of decline, visitor spending increased by \$4 million to \$111 million in 2010-2011.

Northwest Territories Visitation

Year	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Visiting Friends & Relatives	7,599	7,780	8,942	9,025	11,693	9,261	12,910
Hunting	1,117	1,279	1,308	1,216	984	942	757
Aurora Viewing	9,990	10,245	10,200	7,000	7,297	5,460	5,400
Outdoor Adventure	1,841	1,725	2,171	2,079	2,125	2,098	1,853
Fishing	7,759	7,521	7,216	7,726	7,470	7,274	6,403
General Touring	15,219	14,199	13,324	13,340	15,123	14,760	14,500
Total Leisure Visitors	43,526	42,750	43,161	40,386	44,692	39,795	41,823
Total Business Travellers	20,725	22,591	24,642	35,509	34,880	33,624	26,181
Total Visitors	64,251	65,340	67,803	75,895	79,572	73,419	68,004

Source: GNWT

The number of visitors declined in every sector of tourism except those visiting friends and relatives in 2009-2010, the most recent year for which the Department of Tourism has firm data.

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