

Tłįcho Tourism Region

Tłįchǫ Region Economic Development Working Group Client Services Department Behchokò, NT



September 2018

Final Tłįcho Region Tourism Strategy

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1. Introduction



Tourism is an important industry not just in the Northwest Territories (NT), but also in Canada. As worldwide tourism continues to grow, tourism alone contributes 615,000 jobs in Canada, and \$32 billon to Canada's GDP, with \$82 billion in revenue.

In 2015 and 2016 approximately 94,000 people travelled to the NWT for business and leisure, generating approximately \$146.6 million for the local economy. Tourism numbers reached record heights in the Northwest Territories (NWT) in 2016-17. For the first time, visitor spending surpassed the \$200 million mark and over 100,000 visitors travelled to the NWT.

In the NWT, tourism is the 2nd largest export industry after mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction.

In 2016, the Tłįchǫ Regional Economic Development Working Group (TREDWG) prepared a Tłįchǫ Region Training and Economic Development Strategy to support and direct the economic development, training initiatives and opportunities for the Tłįchǫ Nation.

The Mission Statement of the TREDWG is to:

Develop collaborative partnerships in the Tłįchǫ region for the development of a long term, ongoing framework, and strategic economic development plans that meet client, community, and regional goals and objectives.

Objectives of the Tłįcho Region Training and Economic Development Strategy are:

- The traditional economy of the Tłįcho Nation should be maintained and strengthened; and
- The Tłycho Nation should be economically self-sufficient.

Tourism is identified as a key opportunity for economic development and growth for the Tłycho Region.

The following Tłıcho Region Tourism Strategy is part of the implementation plan for the overarching Tłıcho Regional Training and Development Strategy and has been prepared to support the objectives of the TREDWG.

1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the Tłįchǫ Region Tourism Strategy is to:

- Support the implementation of the Tłįcho Regional Training and Economic Development Strategy and guide the Tłįcho Region Economic Development Working Group as they develop tourism in the Tłycho Region.
- Help coordinate tourism initiatives for all four Tłıcho communities by identifying key strength's
 in each community that are unique but also complement the overall tourism brand for the
 region.
- Help identify key tourism strengths, assets and opportunities within the Tłįcho Region. The
 unique features will help to guide the development of marketable tourism products,
 experiences and activities.



1.2 Tłįcho Nation Overview

The Tłįchǫ traditional territory lies between Great Slave Lake in the south and Great Bear Lake in the north. The westernmost range of the Tłįchǫ territory extends into the eastern edge of the Mackenzie River lowlands. These traditional lands are known to the Tłįchǫ as the Mowhì Gogha Dè Nijtlèè. This territory is filled with pristine lakes, rivers, boreal forests, and an abundance of wildlife that has sustained the Tłįchǫ people for generations.

Tłįchǫ are Dene, part of the Athapaskan language family. Tłįchǫ were a traditional nomadic culture, who used birch bark canoes to travel to the barren lands to hunt caribou in the fall and moved below the treeline during the cold winters to wait for the warmth of spring. They travelled the land in winter by dog sled, catching fish, hunting caribou and trapping fur bearing animals. Traditional trails and transportation routes followed the seasonal migration patterns and lifecycles of the animals, particularly the caribou, which could be considered the basis of Tłychǫ culture and way of life. Tłychǫ have traditionally relied on

the environment to provide them with their subsistence needs, including food, fresh water, medicine, clothing, shelter and housing.

Tłįchǫ lands are home to 3,000 people, living in one of the four established communities of Behchokǫ, Whatì, Gamètì and Wekweètì. Less than 50 years ago, most Tłįchǫ people lived on the land practicing a traditional way of life. People did not move into settled communities until the introduction of public schools and the requirement for children to attend school in the 1960s. Many Tłįchǫ citizens still have a strong connection to the land and their traditional way of life.

On August 5, 2005, the Tłįchǫ Nation, Federal Government and Government of the Northwest Territories signed the Tłįchǫ Nation's Land Claim Settlement and Self Government Agreement (Tłįchǫ Agreement) which includes 39,000 km² of surface and subsurface land rights. Tłįchǫ lands are mostly undeveloped and remain in a pristine natural state.

The Tłįcho's authentic culture and vast natural territory makes the region appealing to several different demographics of tourists.



2. Tourism Overview

2.1 Northwest Territories

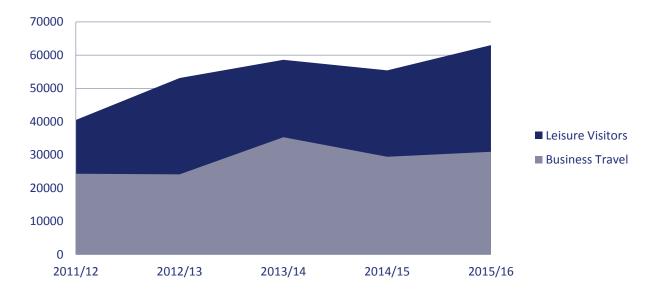
The Northwest Territories tourism sector has increased at a steady rate over the past five years (Graph 1: Growth of the NWT Tourism Sector). In 2011/2012, 64,780 people visited the Northwest Territories. In

2015/2016 93,910 visitors travelled to the Territory, representing a 45% increase in visitors. In 2016/7 108,480 visitors travelled to the NWT.

Visitors travel to the Northwest Territories for two primary reasons: 1) leisure visits (~63,000 visitors in 2015/2016) and 2) business travel (~31,000 visitors in 2015/2016) (please refer to Graph 1). The growth in tourism has made the tourism sector an important part of the Territorial economy. The GNWT's investments and initiatives under the Tourism 2015: New Directions for a Spectacular Future has built the tourism sector to a \$146.6 million industry and employs 2.500 people.

The Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Industry Tourism and Investment (ITI) has worked steadily with NWT Tourism to promote the NWT as a "spectacular" world-class tourist destination. ITI provides resources and supports the tourism industry through different initiatives including marketing, Indigenous tourism, infrastructure, skills development, research and planning (ITI website, 2017). Tourism 2020: Opening our Spectacular Home to the World is the latest guiding investment strategy launched in Fall 2016. The strategy's overarching goal is to build the industry beyond \$207 million by 2020.

In 2015, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) announced investments to support tourism development in the Northwest Territories. The investments are intended to promote the NWT at home and abroad as a tourist destination while helping communities develop and sustain tourism in their area. Investments are to support the efforts of Northwest Territories Tourism to promote the NWT to target markets in Asia, Europe and North America with the aim to increase the number of tourists.



Graph 1: Growth of the NWT Tourism Sector

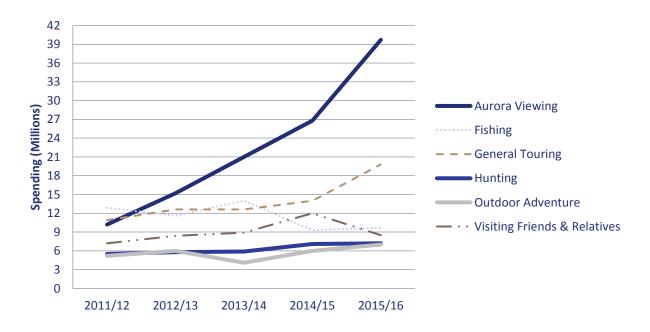
The following provides a breakdown of the top reasons people visit the Northwest Territories and regions:

- Aurora Viewing (67%)
- General Vacationing/Touring (12%)
- Other (6%)
- Business (5%)
- Visiting Friends (3%)
- Return (4%)
- Fishing (1%)
- Outdoor Adventure (1%)



There has been an increase in tourism expenditures over the past 5 years as indicated below and in Graph 2: Tourist/Vacation Expenditures per Activity in the Northwest Territories (all 2014/2015 data per the GNWT):

- Aurora viewing 28% increase in expenditures by visitors
- Fishing 24% increase in people visiting the territory primarily for fishing
- Hunting 20% increase in expenditures year over year
- Outdoor adventure \$6 million in expenditures (46% improvement year-over-year)
- Visiting friends and relatives \$12 million (35% increase year over year)
- General touring



Graph 2: Tourist/Vacation Expenditures per Activity in the Northwest Territories

2.2 North Slave Region

The North Slave Region is the most populous region in the Northwest Territories. The region consists of eight communities with the regional offices situated in Behchokò and Yellowknife. This centrally located region encompasses both boreal and tundra terrain, stretching between the territory's' two biggest lakes. This is home to the Tłįcho, and Akaitcho Dene, along with a diverse group of residents from across the country and the globe, which together weave a rich cultural tapestry in the territory's capital city (NWT Art Council Website, 2017).

The North Slave Region has 68 licensed tourist operators providing tourism services in diverse areas.

A sample of tourism operators includes:

- Aurora Tours.net Cultural Activities, Nature Viewing, Aurora Viewing
- Aurora Village Aurora Viewing, Cultural Activities
- B Dene Adventures Cultural activities
- Beck's Kennels Tours Dog Sledding
- Bob Turner Enterprises Traditional Gill Net Fishing, Aurora Viewing
- Great Slave Adventures Fishing
- Great Slave Lake Tours Commercial Fishing, Aurora Viewing
- North Star Adventures Aurora Viewing, Cultural Activities
- Rabesca's Outfitting Company Fishing, Aurora Viewing, Cultural Activities
- Yellowknife Outdoor Adventure Tours Fishing, Outdoor Adventures

Festivals and tournaments draw tourists to the region including popular events such as:

- Folk on the Rocks (July)
- Old Town Ramble and Ride (August)
- Long John Jamboree (March)
- Snow King Festival (March)
- Hand Games Tournaments (March)
- Sports Tournaments (Year-round)

2.3 Yellowknife

Visitors

The capital city of Yellowknife is the hub for tourism, commerce, industry, and government activity in the Northwest Territories. Yellowknife could be considered the gateway to the North as it hosts the largest

airport in the territory welcoming tourists and visitors from across Canada and around the world.

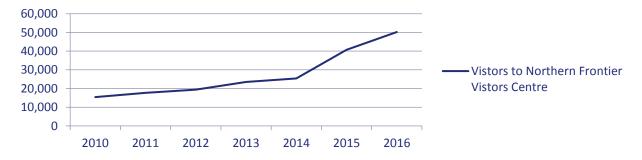
Key tourist attractions in and around Yellowknife include (Visit Yellowknife Web -2017):

- Aurora
- Boating and canoeing
- Camping
- Dog sledding
- Fishing
- · Heritage and culture
- Hiking
- Hunting

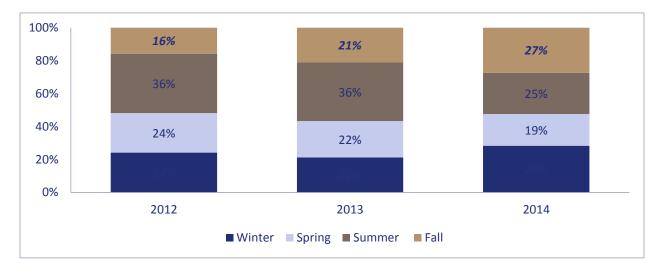
Visitors to the Northern Frontier Visitor's Centre have increased by 226% from 2010-2016 as illustrated in Graph 3: Visitor's to Northern Frontier Visitor's Centre. Walk-ins at the Visitor's Information Centre in Yellowknife are highest from June to September and December to March as illustrated in Graph 4: Visitor Information Centre Walk-ins. There has been a 31% increase in visitors from 2012 to 2014. As illustrated in Graph 5: Yellowknife Airport Visits, the majority of visitors to the Yellowknife airport also come between June and September and December to March. These peak travel periods coincide with key seasonal tourist activities including Aurora viewing in the winter months and fishing, camping, and hiking in the summer months.

It is an assumption that the 50,000 visitors recorded by the visitors centre is a conservative estimate as not every single visitor coming to the Yellowknife area would be recorded through their walk ins. Based on research indicators we can generalize that 80% of people are flying to the NWT where as 20% are driving.

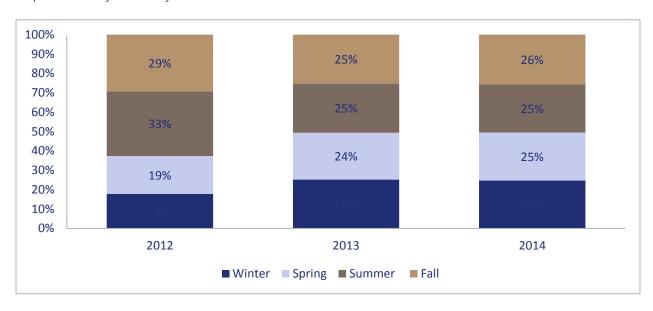
Vistors to Northern Frontier Vistors Centre



Graph 3: Yellowknife Visitors Information Centre Visits (2010-2016)



Graph 4: Yellowknife Visitors Information Centre Walk-Ins



Graph 5: Yellowknife Airport Visits

Trip Planning

According to the 2016 Road Visitor Survey Findings produced by the GNWT, ITI, visitors planned their trip eight months in advance. The most common reasons travellers come to the NWT for: general touring, unguided outdoor adventure; and visiting family and friends. 55% of visitors used the internet to plan their travel. Road travellers to the NWT have been categorized into the following visitor groups: outdoor adventurers (22%), wilderness wanderers (19%), vocation voyageurs (17%), cultural connoisseurs (18%), fair weather voyageurs (17%), and roaming retirees (8%). Road travellers on

average spend an average of 7.5 days. The majority of business travellers added extra days to their business trip for leisure tourism.

Of the road trippers, 18% participated in Indigenous tourism activities.

Those visitors were typically: 1st time visitors, 55 years and older, 76% had a college or university degree. 61% viewed an Indigenous cultural display, 55% attended an Indigenous celebration, 43% experience traditional food.

Local Residents Protocols

As noted in the GNWT Department of Lands study – Outdoor Activity and Land Use Demand (2015), outdoor activities are a very popular pastime for people living in Yellowknife with 85 % of households participating in outdoor activities in 2015. Yellowknifers tend to participate in outdoor activities year round enjoying a variety of interests.

The top outdoor summer activities include:

- Hiking / Trail Walking (54.5%)
- Fishing (56%)
- Camping / Overnight Experiences (52.9%).

The top outdoor winter activities include:

- Hiking / Trail Walking (41.5%)
- Snowmobiling (38.7%)
- Cross Country Skiing (24.6%)

Camping is another favourite Yellowknifer activity with 55.5% of households camping an average of 12.6 times per year for an average of 3.69 nights per trip. It is estimated that 2,620 households camp each year resulting in approximately 131,600 group nights per year. There is also a strong interest in cabin based experiences in the Ingraham Trail region. Almost half (43%) of households in the study area use cabins and the majority of whom rent cabins rather than own. A public meeting/world café held in February of 2015 in Yellowknife, highlighted that there is a 'huge demand' for more recreational cabins. The Tłįcho Region could explore the demand for a unique and remote cabin rental package for Yellowknifers and their visiting family and friends.

Outdoor activities create considerable economic impact for the region. In 2015, households spent \$68 million on outdoor activities (excluding capital purchases) generating \$48 million in GDP, 830 full time jobs and \$38 million in labour income.

2.4 International and National Tourists

The Northwest Territories attracts visitors from across Canada and around the world.

Graph 5: Where are People Coming From?, highlights where are our global visitors are from.

As noted in the graph, the majority of international travellers are from Asia at 63% followed by the USA in a distant second at 6%. Canadian visitors represent 27% of the people travelling to the territories. Australia/Pacific, Central/South America, and Europe represent 4% of people visiting the Northwest Territories.

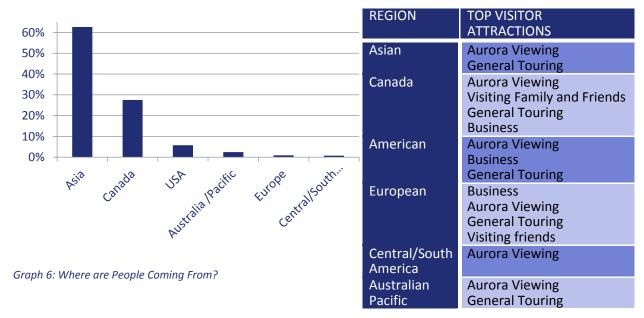


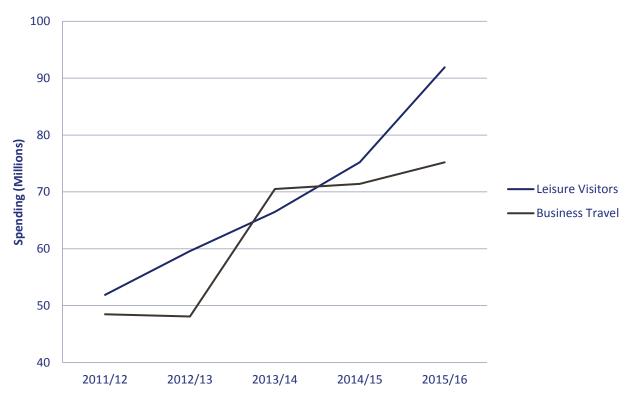
Table 1: Top Visitor Attractions by Region

Across the world, most people travel to the Northwest Territories to experience the Aurora Borealis. General Touring has gained popularity as many visitors site this as a top attractor to the region

2.5 Spending

In 2015/2016 visitors spent \$167.1 million in the NWT, in 2016/7 visitors spent \$201.40 million. In 2015/2016, Aurora viewing is the primary tourism revenue generator with general touring second. Visiting friends, fishing, hunting and outdoor adventures have provided similar tourism revenue. In the

past 5 years leisure and business travellers have increased spending with leisure visitors spending more as show in Graph 7: Tourism Spending.



Graph 7: Tourism Spending by Traveller Type

2.6 Indigenous Tourism

The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) completed the National Aboriginal Tourism Research Project in 2015 where they estimated that the Aboriginal tourism sector in Canada:

- Employs approximately 33,100 workers in all provinces and territories (but excluding Northwest Territories), equivalent to 2.0% of the total tourism sector employment in the country;
- Generates \$2.65 billion of gross output in the economy, which is equivalent to about \$1.4 billion of the country's GDP;
- Contributes over \$870 million in employee wages and salaries
- All levels of governments benefit through almost \$67 million of consumption tax revenue.

Indigenous tourism continues to grow and play a significant role in the Canada tourism industry. This market expansion could provide unique opportunities for tourism growth in the Northwest Territories and the Tłycho region.

Visitors who are most interested in Indigenous tourism are those from outside North America, particularly Europe and Australia. The majority of visitors tend to be female, well educated, and financially secure (Yukon Government, Department of Tourism and Culture, 2012).

Typically, those interested in Indigenous tourism are looking for products that provide unique experiences, authentic adventures, include a lot of time outdoors, are unstructured, and involve their active participation. Conversely, products that are entertainment oriented and distance people from the experience itself are of lesser value and interest (Canadian Tourism Council (CTC)).

Indigenous tourism is not currently the main reason tourists visit Canada – rather, it is considered a "value-added" experience. Surveys of European travelers found that they are interested in short inexpensive experiences (2-3 hours). However, some seek longer experiences (half day to overnights), may be willing to travel a bit farther to reach out-of-the-way places, and are more flexible in price. The Yukon Government found that Canadian and American travellers are also most interested in short experiences that fit into their overall travel itinerary. In this scenario, the most successful Indigenous businesses/operators are those who provide a short affordable experience in a location that is on a travel route (Yukon Government, 2012).

When planning their holiday, most travellers do not specifically research Indigenous products and services rather they find information on Indigenous tourism while researching other parts of their holiday. For those who do specifically research Indigenous tourism, the internet is the primary source of information followed by word-of-mouth, and magazines. Quite often, travellers find specific information related to Indigenous tourism once they arrive at their destination (e.g., through pamphlets and other marketing materials) (Yukon Government and CTC).

Throughout their report, the CTC provided a variety of constraints and challenges impacting Indigenous tourism; however, an overarching barrier seemed to be the lack of awareness of Indigenous tourism products, experiences, and services. To improve awareness the CTC suggests developing centralized Indigenous tourism marketing websites, creating marketing brochures such as the one published by *Aboriginal Tourism BC*, having a presence of Indigenous tourism operators, products, and experiences at

travel trade shows, and forming partnerships with non-Indigenous operators.



2.7 Summary Findings

- Tourism is a growing industry in the NWT
- Business travellers represent a significant portion of the people visiting the NWT
- Aurora Viewing is the predominant tourist attraction in the NWT
- Most people visit the NWT in the Summer and Winter months
- More tourists are visiting the area to hunt and fish than before
- The North Slave Region hosts a spectrum of events drawing in visitors from across Canada
- Yellowknife is a tourist hub with most people starting and/or ending their visit in the City
- There is a compliment of tourist outfitters in the North Slave Region; however, there is a gap in providing day excursion or overnight experiences to close (yet remote) communities around Yellowknife
- Residents of Yellowknife like to participate in outdoor recreation activities
- Most International travellers come from Asia (60+%)
- Indigenous tourism is a growing sub-sector of the tourism industry in Canada and is considered a "value-added" experience

3. Individual Community Situation Analysis

3.1 Regional Overview

The Tłįchǫ Nation is made up of four distinct communities: Behchokǫ, Whatì, Gamètì, and Wekweètì. Collectively the four communities make up this Regional Strategy. Ideas for community tourism came from the engagement completed as part of the Tłįchǫ Regional Training and Economic Development Strategy, individual community brainstorming sessions, and interviews with key senior staff and Economic Development Officers. The following section provides an overview summary of each community using information that was collected during the background review and engagement activities.

3.2 Behchokò

Behchokò is the Tłıcho capital and the largest community with approximately 1,900 people. It consists of three distinct neighbourhood communities:

- Rae, located on Marian Lake, is the largest community where most people live and services are located;
- Edzo, a small community located just off of Highway No.3 the main transportation corridor

to the City of Yellowknife;

• Frank's Channel, a residential area located on the tip of the North Arm of Great Slave Lake and an important water way that connects Marian Lake and Great Slave Lake



3.2.1 Unique Features and Access

Unique Feature and Assets

- Behchokò is the largest Indigenous Community in the Northwest Territories and is only 90 kilometers, by road, from the City of Yellowknife
- Tłįchǫ Online Store stocks and sells a variety of authentic Tłįchǫ arts and crafts, has store front presence and online social media following
- North Arm Territorial Park A territorial park located on the shore of Great Slave Lake pull off from main highway. Area is available for day use, picnicking, nature viewing. Could be developed to accommodate a variety of campers, tourism activity on the lake as well as local businesses wishing to service tourists
- North Arm Protected Area Dinaga Wekwehodi, a joint initiative to permanently protect areas
 of interest within the North Arm area. Major progress towards this establishment has been
 made over 10 years
- Frank's Channel is a popular spot for paddlers to start their canoe trips through the North Arm of Great Slave Lake
- Fishing the community location is a good fishing spot
- Traditional Gathering Place Tłıcho Nation traditionally gathered in Behchokò during the summer months. It is still an annual gathering place for the Tłıcho, with regular cultural events

Access and Communication

- Road Access accessible to tourists travelling to the Northwest Territories by road, and residents and tourists travelling from Yellowknife seeking remote wilderness
- Edzo Airport an active airstrip that can accommodate planes, including chartered flights.
- Cell-service is available

Internet is available

3.2.2 Tourism Potential

Community Tourism Ideas

- Create a cultural museum showcasing artefacts and the living history of the Tłycho people.
- Develop a visitors centre to take advantage of the community location along the highway.
- Enhance community signage to represent the Tłįchǫ culture.
- Develop the North Arm Park as a destination for Behchokò.
- Expand North Arm Park to host campers and potentially recreational vehicles.
- Create a campground to take advantage of the community's location along the highway capturing vehicle travellers coming to and from Yellowknife. Draw in residents of Yellowknife looking for other camping locations.
- Enhance programing and services to attract visitors to spend more time and money in North Arm Park.
- Maximize cultural events such as Indigenous Day celebrations and draw people to Behchokò.
- Position Behchokò as a gateway to Dinàgà Wek'èhodì outdoor adventure and cultural experience.

3.2.3 Community Readiness

The GNWT Department of ITI has developed a standard, qualitative process for community tourism development. The diagram below represents the processes. The represents where Behchokò is in the process; the represents actions that have the community has started. A list of tourism planning activities that have occurred is below the diagram.



Community Tourism Planning Actions as of 2017

Host a community tourism Open House and planning meeting.

- Take inventory of community tourism assets (e.g. hiking trails, nature viewing areas, crafters etc.) to develop a self-guided walking map of the community.
- Identify individuals interested in guiding activities.
- Ko Gocho Centre is already developed and built. The museum has a determined space inside of this centre.
- Develop business arm that could house all interested local guides.
- Identify tourism packages and products to develop out of community tourism planning process.



3.3 Whatì

Whatì is the second largest of the Tłįchǫ communities with approximately 470 people. Located on Lac La Marte, one of the largest lakes in the Northwest Territories, Whatì is known for fishing and making dry fish. The lake boasts ideal fishing year round, with large lake trout and northern pike. It is also situated along the North American north-south bird migration routes. Community members actively participate in traditional activities including hunting, fishing, trapping, and arts and crafts.

3.3.1. Unique Features and Access

Unique Features and Assets

- Whatì Falls a beautiful natural waterfall is a popular spot for picnic's and cook-outs. Road access from the Community of Whatì allows the falls to be accessible for most of the year. The ice road access in the winter attracts residents of Yellowknife to the area where they can hike and ski around the falls.
- Lac La Marte is a lake well known for fishing and other activities
- Lac La Marte River is a beautiful river that is an important historical travel route for the Tłıcho people. It is a good route for other activities such as birdwatching, and canoeing
- Lac La Marte Fishing Lodge is located on an island near the centre of Lac La Marte. It is operated by a private company called Lac La Marte Adventures but is partly owned by the Tłycho

- **Investment Corporation**
- Bed & Breakfast There are 3 Bed and Breakfasts available that hold 2-3 bedrooms, shared kitchen, internet and satellite T.V
- Hotel an 8 room hotel is currently under construction, once complete it can accommodate tourists
- Pop-up Café a small pop-up café features traditional food run by a young entrepreneur
- Bi-annual Charlie Zoe Nitsiza Men's Handgame Tournament
- Annual lake boat trip where families come together and travel around the lake to enjoy traditional activities

Access and Communication

- Regular scheduled flights all year
- Winter road access for approximately 8 weeks February/March
- All-season road access expected in the foreseeable future
- Cell and Internet Service

3.3.2. Tourism Potential

COMMUNITY TOURISM IDEAS

- Grow tourism focused on the Whatì Falls and Lac La Marte
- Develop a campground or day use area around the Whatì Falls
- Provide guided fishing tours on Lac La Marte
- Develop a hotel and café (or other forms of accommodations and food services)
- Opportunity to service the all season road:
 - Transportation, accommodations, food services, retail services, guided tourism activities, cultural awareness training,
 - Will also stimulate other economies that will assist tourism development i.e. lumber mill
 - Long term Infrastructure needs could be met through road or mine opportunities i.e.
 'run of the river' turbine
- Create a visitors centre focusing on cultural activities and museum-type displays
- Develop a culture camp
- Guided tours and cultural demonstrations (e.g., hide tanning)
- Develop a traditional arts and crafts store

3.3.3. Community Readiness

The GNWT Department of ITI has developed a standard, qualitative process for community tourism development. The diagram below represents the processes. The represents where Whatì is in



the process; the represents actions that have the community has started. A list of tourism planning activities that have occurred is below the diagram.



Community Tourism Planning Actions as of 2017

- New hotel is under construction
- EDO and CDO have advertised for hospitality training

3.4 <u>Gamètì</u>

Gamètì has approximately 350 people. It is located along the chain of waterways connecting Great Slave Lake to Great Bear Lake. Situated between Faber and Hottah Lake, Gamètì is the mid-way point between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake in a traditional hunting area of the Tłįchǫ and Sahtu Dene people. Traditionally Gamètì was as a temporary camp, but in the 1970's it became a formal community when an airstrip, school and log houses were built.

3.4.1 Unique Features and Access

Unique Features and Assets

- Bed & Breakfast and Hotel provide comfortable accommodations for visitors
- Community Garden and Greenhouse Gamètì has become a leader in northern agriculture and a model community for growing local food products such as potatoes, vegetables, eggs and other products
- Golf-course a nine-hole golf course that is currently used by the community members
- Sandy beaches the built area of the community is built on sandy soil and is surrounded by water. Key locations have beautiful sandy beaches located
- Development of healing camp is underway

Access and Communication

- Regular scheduled flights all year
- Winter road access for approximately 6 weeks in February/March
- Cell Service
- Internet

3.4.2. Tourism Potential

Community Tourism Ideas

- Create destination tourism opportunities to draw more people into the community providing them with multiple tourist options for short and long-term stays
- Develop a culture camp focussing on traditional activities
- Engage Tłįchǫ people to complete hospitality training
- Engage potential tour guides to undertake wilderness safety training
- Create more Bed and Breakfasts establishments
- Host traditional workshops
- Develop community gardens and commercial agriculture ventures to foster culinary tourism
- Plan for a cultural camp that will be used mostly as a treatment centre for people dealing with substance abuse, traumatic experiences and other areas that require treatment
- Host cultural events at the centre including sewing, crafts, art
- Host presentations where people can connect with traditional teachings, medicine, games and other knowledge and practices

3.4.3. Community Readiness

The GNWT Department of ITI has developed a standard, qualitative process for community tourism development. The diagram below represents the processes. The represents where Gamètì is in the process; the represents actions that have the community has started. A list of tourism planning activities that have occurred is below the diagram.





Community Tourism Planning Actions as of 2017

- Application submitted for funding to develop a central structure for the treatment centre
- Held the Aurora College Retail and Hospitality Course April 24-June 8, 2017

3.5 Wekweètì

Wekweètì is the smallest and most isolated of the Tłįchǫ communities with approximately 110 people. It is located on Snare Lake, a long and pristine lake. Wekweètì is the closest settlement to the Barrenlands, located on the cusp of the tree line. Grizzly Bear Observations.

3.5.1. Unique Features and Access

The community has a number of unique features and existing assets that can attract tourists:

Unique Features and Assets

 Culture Camp – an established camp on outskirts of town with 6 log sleeping cabins, a cooking cabin, conference cabin, and an open gazebo. The camp is available for rent and sits on the edge of Snare Lake



- Community History Wekweètì was settled to keep people close to the land and tradition
- Proximity to Tundra close to the treeline which allows for a nature and wildlife viewing experience
- Snare Lake Lodge is a comfortable hotel that has 5 bedrooms with shared bathroom, lunch and supper are included.
- Golf Course a nine hole golf course is maintained by the community

- Community beaches 3 separate beaches with beautiful white sand provide access to the water, but also places for people to gather and for recreation. Second beach is complete with picnic shelter, grills and life guard stand. Third beach has a picnic shelter, grills, life guard tower, volleyball net and play area for kids.
- Northern Lights Lookout a viewing platform that provides a beautiful view of the community and the surrounding natural area.
- Cooking Arbour centrally located within the community.

Access and Communication

- Regular scheduled flights all year
- Dock for float plane access
- Community Taxi Service
- Winter road access for approximately 6 weeks February/March
- Internet
- Cell service expected in the summer of 2017 Tourism Potential

3.5.2. Tourism Potential

Community Tourism Ideas

- Develop cabins at the Culture Camp with shower stalls, bathrooms, and kitchens to service both tourists and local mining operations and government agencies.
- Provide guided tours in the community that include traditional story telling
- Dog sled tours
- Guided canoe trips

3.5.3. Community Readiness

The GNWT Department of ITI has developed a standard, qualitative process for community tourism development. The diagram below represents the processes. The represents where Wekweètì is in the process; the represents actions that have the community has started. A list of tourism planning activities that have occurred is below the diagram.



Community Tourism Planning Actions as of 2017

- Held initial community tourism workshop in March 2017
- Municipal government to hire recreation coordinator, who will manage cabin rental bookings
- Cabin rentals could be marketed and booked summer of 2017 to Yellowknifers' and visiting family and friends to start a test market
- Application for funding to develop cabins, shower stalls and a kitchen
- Apply for funding to develop cabins, shower stalls, bathrooms and a kitchen

4. Tourism Opportunities

The Tłįchǫ region is well positioned to benefit from tourism. Tourism potential in the Tłįchǫ region includes but is not limited to:

- The Tłıcho Region is in close proximity to the City of Yellowknife which already draws in Canadian and International travellers.
- Very rich culture, heritage, spirituality, stories, legends and strong preservation of the language
- National protected area under development.
- Portions of the region are accessible year-round by road and are easy to access.
- The popularity of the ice road over recent years could be a draw to entice people to visit Tłįcho communities on the ice road route.
- The authentic Tłįchǫ culture could be a large attraction for tourists wanting to experience Indigenous -based tourism events and activities.
- Existing cultural events (e.g., Hand Game Tournaments, Trails of our Ancestors) could be leveraged to draw in more non- Tłycho members who are interested in Indigenous culture.
- The natural pristine landscape will draw outdoor enthusiasts.
- The Tłycho territory is home to world class fishing.

- Many Tłıcho citizens still practice traditional activities and may be willing to share experiences with visitors to the region.
- Conference facilities and amenities could appeal to companies wanting to provide different venues for staff travelling to the Yellowknife area.
- Historical trails and canoe routes, used by the Tłįchǫ people could be utilized for guided tours.
- Opportunities to promote outdoor recreational activities, venues, and locations to Yellowknife residents.
- Communities have deep history but can we build tourism around the different stories of each community.
- Opportunity aligns with the GNWT's priorities for diversifying the NWT economy.
- Major development projects will commence in 2018 to bring infrastructure to the region.



5. Regional SWOT Analysis

The following is an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as they relate to sustainable tourism development for the Tłįchǫ Nation.



Regional Strengths (Characteristics that provide an advantage)

The Tłıcho region has key strengths that could help build a strong tourism industry. Specifically the Tłıcho have a strong living culture, they are located in close proximity to the City of Yellowknife which is the largest tourist hub in the NWT, and the existing infrastructure can support the beginning of a sustainable tourism industry.

Key strengths that have been identified:

- The Tłįcho's authentic culture exists and many Tłįcho citizens still practice traditional and cultural activities.
- The Tłıcho language is still spoken and is an integral part of the culture.
- Tłıcho Nation has a lot of pride in their culture and history and there is a desire to share that with other people.
- Many Tłįcho citizens still participate in traditional activities and have strong skill sets that could be applied to tourism activities.
- Arts and crafts making is still a prominent part of the Tłįchǫ culture. Products are currently being developed and sold at fair value. Sewing, beading, drum making and other related workshops are held in each of the communities to continue training. An Artisan and Artists Strategy has been developed to help foster and further develop opportunities.
- Behchokò is located before Yellowknife by road travel. Visitors could stop in Behchokò before reaching their final destination.
- Existing events such as hand game tournaments, annual gatherings and drum dances already

- draw visitors to the communities.
- Sporting events at the Ko Gocho Centre in Behchokò will draw people to the community.
- Behchokò Community Bylaws do not restrict alcohol, which allows operators and restaurateurs to serve alcoholic beverages.

Regional Weaknesses (Characteristics that are a Disadvantage)

The Tłįchǫ communities have very limited existing tourism services in their communities and have not established a base on which to build market-ready tourism products. In order to build a tourism industry significant investment is required to develop the local capacity (both people and infrastructure) to deliver professional tourism services and experiences.

Key weaknesses that have been identified include:

- There are limited personnel resources to coordinate tourism efforts in the region. There is no
 key individual or organization that has the time and effort to champion the development of a
 tourism industry.
- Each Tłįcho community has identified ideas for tourism, but none have developed community tourism plans. There has also been limited community engagement for tourism.
- Tłįchǫ citizens see their communities as their own and assume that people are not interested in coming to visit. As a result may lack a service-minded approach to visitors.
- Three communities are fly-in only, the added expense and logistics will make it more difficult to travel to.
- Local accommodations are limited and may not be able to handle increased demand.
- Local accommodations are used for businesses travellers and do not provide a level of service that might be expected by tourists.
- There are currently limited existing tourism products or services.
- Infrastructure has been developed, like the Wekweètì Culture Camp and the San Naj Kew Lodge, but is not being used to their fullest potential because marketing plans and business operating procedures have not been developed. Example: rental pricing and visitor terms of use.
- Community readiness there is limited community ownership for tourism opportunities. As a result many proposed activities are not being realized.
- Very few people have formal hospitality training. Example: National Food Safety training
- There are limited tourism operating and outfitting licences

Regional opportunities (elements in the environment that could exploit its advantage)

The existing tourism market in the City of Yellowknife can create significant opportunities for the Tłįcho Nations. Visitors already coming to the region create an opportunity to coordinate with existing opportunities. The limited authentic indigenous cultural experiences available in the existing market provides an opportunity provide a unique services that compliments the existing services.

Key opportunities that have been identified:

- Opportunities to provide employment that would allow many Tłįchǫ citizens to use their traditional skills.
- Close proximity to the City of Yellowknife to collaborate and offer complimentary experiences for visitors in the region.
- Behchokò is the largest Indigenous community in the Northwest Territories and it is accessible
 from the City of Yellowknife for day trips. Existing tourists can travel a short distance outside of
 Yellowknife and experience something completely different.
- The existing traditional trails and popular travel routes can service independent travellers that are looking for low budget travel opportunities that do not require a lot of support or coordination.
- Key natural features and exiting cultural events that are already marketed by NWT Tourism and hot spots for people living in the NWT. This includes:
 - o Frank's Channel
 - Whatì Falls
 - Marian Lakes/Camsell River
 - Stagg River
 - Winter Road access
 - Men's Handgame Tournament
 - (held in Behchokò, Whatì and Gamètì)
 - Trails of Our Ancestors Canoe Trip
 - Annual Assembly
 - o Indigenous Day Celebrations



The Tłycho Online Store exists and provides a venue for arts and craft sales in the region.

Regional threats (elements that could cause problems)

It will take a collective effort to develop a sustainable tourism industry in the Tłıcho region. The lack of existing tourism services and a central group or agency that is ready to champion the development of an industry could threaten the potential.

Key threats that have been identified:

- There are limited processes and procedures in place that will help regulate tourism activities. Currently there is no requirement for a Tłįcho Region business licences that operators are required to have need to they take tourists to the Tłįcho Region.
- There are existing leasing processes for Tłįchǫ lands but they are limited to cabin leases, if a someone wanted to open commercial businesses and develop a camp, nothing is in place for Tłįchǫ citizen
- The community readiness is low. The capacity to host tourists in most of the communities is low, the hotels/bed and breakfasts need up-grading and more consistent service, there are limited places to eat food, community members do not have a "first host" mentality and aren't use to accommodating and catering to tourists.
- There are limited market ready tourism products in the region. The desire is there, but there are almost no existing services with the exception of one outfitter based out of Behchokò.
- Internal conflicts that are a result of the rapid socio-economic changes that have occurred in the region (additions).

6. Recommendations and Next Steps

6.1 Short Term (1 to 3 months)

Recommendation 1 - Establish a TREDWG Tourism Sub-Committee that will guide and direct the development of tourism in the region.	
Description	A Tourism Sub-Committee will help coordinate tourism efforts for the whole region. The committee will be made up of representatives from TREDWG and others who have an interest or key role in the tourism industry.
Rationale	The development of a tourism industry for the Tłıcho region will require leadership and coordination. A sub-committee to TREDWG will establish this leadership, coordinate efforts between all of the communities,
Action Steps	Develop a Terms of Reference for the tourism sub-committee

	2.	Put out a call, or approach individuals who would be interested in joining the tourism sub-committee
	3.	Appoint members to the tourism sub-committee
	4.	Hold an initial meeting and set a regular meeting schedule
	5.	Seek support and guidance from an outside advisory agency to help focus the efforts of the sub-committee (like the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada)
Potential Partnerships	Tłįchǫ Government, GNWT Department of ITI, Tłįchǫ Investment Corporation (representatives from TREDWG), Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC)	
Lead Responsibility	TREDW	/G will be responsible for appointment members to the sub-committee
Timeframe	1 mont	h after adopting the Tourism Strategy
Budget	Existing	g resources
Measures of Success	A touri	sm sub-committee exists, meets and regularly.

Recommendation 2 - Hire a regional tourism coordinator		
Description	An experienced tourism coordinator will organize and drive the implementation of the tourism strategy and ensure that communities are coordinating with each other, appropriate training is happening to build the existing human resources, and products and experiences are market-ready quality.	
Rationale	The coordination and the development of a tourism industry will take professional expertise and dedicated attention.	
Action Steps	1. Secure funding for a tourism coordinator position.	
	2. Determine where the tourism coordinator will be based.	
	3. Develop a job description.	
	4. Recruit, interview and hire experienced tourism coordinator.	
	5. Design and confirm a clear plan of deliverables with the new hire to ensure there is understanding and measurable performance indicators.	
	Introduce and educate existing staff on the tourism coordinator's role and how they will work with them.	

	 Tourism coordinator should visit each community, hold open houses, and conduct informal interviews or informal survey of the community to develop a more detailed inventory of tourism assets.
Potential Partnerships	GNWT ITI
Lead Responsibility	Tourism sub-committee
Timeframe	3 months after the Tłįchǫ tourism sub-committee is formed.
Budget	\$45,000 to \$75,000 a year depending on experience/expertise and available funding.
Measures of Success	Tourism coordinator is hired and there is an increase in support and progress for proposed initiatives.

Recommendation 3 - Identify existing tourism infrastructure and opportunities and develop product pricing, operating procedures and terms of use.		
Description	Infrastructure and small opportunities that already exist and can be marketed to independent travellers need consistent pricing, schedules, procedures and personnel to manage the assets and formal terms of use.	
Rationale	Infrastructure exists that can accommodate independent travellers and groups/organizations; to maximize the economic potential, the communities must have rates for rentals and services.	
Action Steps	 Each community to identify assets and potential services that can accommodate independent travellers Contact GNWT ITI for background information of fair market prices for facility rentals and costs for services. Determine rental rates for facilities and rates for each service. Publish rates. GNWT ITI to help determine how the rates can be published. Develop operating procedures. Develop a term of reference or sample contract that can be used when renting the facility. 	
Potential Partnerships	GNWT, ITI, Tłįchǫ Government	
Lead Responsibility	Tourism Coordinator in partnership with Senior Administrative Officers (SAO's)	
Timeframe	2 months after the adoption of the Tourism Strategy	
Budget	Existing resources	

Measures of	Wekweeti Culture Camp has published rental rates and operating procedures.
Success	Other possible opportunities have published rates and a list of available
	services.

Recommendation 4 - Review the Tłıcho Agreement and the Tłıcho Land Use Plan to determine which tourism activities are permitted in the region.			
Description	A legal review of the Tłįchǫ Agreement to determine which to		
	12.10 Commercial Activities Relating to Wildlife;		
	14.3 Authorizations for Commercial Harvesting for Plants; and,		
	19.4 Commercial Access to Tłįchǫ Lands.		
	A review of the Tłįchǫ Land Use Plan will focus on defining eco-cultural tourism and what activities are acceptable based on the spirit of the land use plan and where these activities can and cannot occur.		
Rationale	Determining what commercial tourism activities can happen and where is important when considering tourism opportunities.		
Action Steps	 Tourism sub-committee to initiate the review of both documents. Develop an interpretation of each of these sections and how it relates to commercial tourism. Present interpretation to the Tłįchǫ Lands Protection Department and the Tłįchǫ Governments Implementation Facilitators for discussion and further develop a list of permitted commercial tourism activities and present it to the TREDWG. 		
Potential Partnerships	Tłլcho Lands Protection Department, Tłլcho Agreement Implementation Facilitators		
Lead Responsibility	Tourism sub-committee		
Timeframe	3 months after the Tłįchǫ tourism sub-committee is formed.		
Budget	Existing Resources		
Measures of Success	A comprehensive list of permitted tourism activities is finalized.		

Recommendation 5 - Create an inventory of culturally significant sites, trails, traditional knowledge, stories and traditions and ways-of-life that can be shared with visitors.

Description	This inventory should be collected through the individual community planning process by creating a list or inventory to consider for development and delivery to tourists. The inventory can include places, trails, experiences, people, stories, workshops and demonstrations relating to historical as well as current ways of life of the Tłıcho Nations.	
Rationale	To effectively review opportunity, a meaningful and detailed list is required to provide an understanding of available inventory to consider for delivery to visitors and guest to the Tłįcho Region.	
Action Steps	 Discuss with each community List the items and ideas Include context in terms of type of culturally significant items, what needs to be developed to make it market-ready. Consider cultural protocol for delivery, is it already delivered or is it something new for community members and elders to consider for public consumption 	
Potential Partnerships	Department of Culture and Lands Protection	
Lead Responsibility	Tourism sub-committee	
Timeframe	Internal resources	
Budget	Detailed list and effective process to continually identify tourism products and experiences with cultural significance for the tourism industry.	

Recommendation 6 - Engage a mentor Indigenous Nation or northern community that has developed a successful tourism industry and share their lessons learned and provide advice.		
Description	Through the tourism business mentorship program, match the regional tourism coordinator with a business mentor with CESO. The mentor can provide support for tourism product development. The Tłįchǫ can seek advice on proposed tourism services, key challenges and methods to overcome possible challenges.	
Rationale	Tourism is an unknown industry for the Tłįchǫ, learning from others who have navigated through the successes and challenges will provide a realistic insight on what to expect.	

Action Steps	 Identify possible Indigenous Nations or northern communities that have successful tourism products. Approach communities to see if they are interested in being a mentor to the Tłįchǫ. Based on community responses evaluate which community best fist the Tłįchǫ's situation. Confirm the mentorship and establish protocols for communication. 	
Potential Partnerships	Mentorship community	
Lead Responsibility	Tourism sub-committee	
Timeframe	2 to 5 years	
Budget	Existing Resources	
Measures of Success	Tłįchǫ are able to develop successful tourism products.	

Recommendation 7 - Link the <i>Artisan and Artists Strategy</i> with the implementation of the <i>Tourism Strategy</i>	
Description	The Artisan and Artists Strategy and Tourism Strategy are both sub-strategies to the overall Regional Training and Economic Development Strategy. Linking the strategies will help align and prioritize the proposed actions so that both support each other but also contribute to the Mission of the Training and Economic Development Strategy.
Rationale	Arts and crafts are important for tourism. Visitors often want a souvenir from their travels. Developing the 2 sectors together will strengthen the overall economic development in the region.
Action Steps	 Identify key action items in each strategy that can support the each other. Determine how each action item will be executed in consideration of the other strategies. Identify the role each EDO's will have in coordinating the production of Arts and Crafts and facilitating the sale of goods to different vendors (Online Store, Local Kiosk).
Potential Partnerships	GNWT ITI, Tłįchǫ Government, Tłįchǫ Investment Corporation, NWT Arts Council
Lead Responsibility	Tourism Sub-committee

Timeframe	1 year
Budget	Existing Budget
Measures of Success	Crafts are available for sale in each community (at any given time) Increase in sales on the Online Store
	Increase in Crafters

Recommendation 8 - Communities.	Develop individual community tourism plans for each of the Tłįchǫ
Description	Each community will work through the GNWT's "Community Tourism Champions' Workbook" to help engage and organize community level efforts. This will help build interest, establish a tourism committee in each community that will champion the local development and begin to identify individuals who will be actively involved in tourism development.
Rationale	The communities' plans will help generate interest and support for tourism in each of the 4 communities. With support will
Action Steps	 Establish a local partnership between the Community Government staff (SAO) and the EDO's and any other organizations that are interested in championing tourism in the community. Engage the GNWT ITI or TREDWG to help plan a community tourism workshop. Determine what other resources and support is required to help develop the tourism plans. Hold a community workshop and begin to work through the GNWT's Community Tourism Champion's Workbook.
Potential	GNWT ITI, Community Government, TREDWG
Partnerships	
Lead Responsibility	Economic Development Officers
Timeframe	Within 3 months of starting the
Budget	\$ 120,000 (\$30,000 per community)
Measures of	Community Plans are prepared with realistic action items.
Success	

6.2 Long Term (Longer than 1 year)

	Produce a clear and comprehensive tourism business development plan that
identifies market-read	dy tourism products in each of the Tłįchǫ communities.
Description	Business plan will include an understanding of topics such as: types of tourism
	experiences to focus on in each community, product/market demand overlap,
	and key support structures for each community.
Rationale	A clear, comprehensive and agreed upon strategy that considers what each
	community will focus on and the key supports available is a critical first step in a
	processes towards regional economic and cultural success.
Action Steps	Refine the list of tourism ideas proposed by each community.
	2. Hold a workshop in each community to determine their unique tourism
	identify/brand, align proposed tourism products that blend well with the
	identity.
	3. Identify market-ready products to support the community brand
	4. Draft a business plan that outlines the proposed products, actionable items to
	develop and price the products.
	5. Review strategy components and ideas for each community with TREDWG
Potential	GNWT ITI, TREDWG, CanNor
Partnerships	
Lead Responsibility	Tourism Coordinator
Timeframe	1 year after the tourism coordinator is hired
Budget	\$40,000
Measures of	Document is useable, approved by TREDWG and created a positive and
Success	collaborative approach to realistic potential for tourism in the Tłįchǫ Region.

Recommendation 10 - Identify opportunities for education and awareness that will help Tłįcho citizens prepare for tourism.		
Description	Tłįchǫ citizens have significant opportunities for employment through tourism in a variety of capacities. Proper education and awareness of appropriate service delivery and conduct around tourists is important.	
Rationale	Tłıcho citizens have had little exposure to tourists and their expectations. Proper training will be an important service mentality if need be.	
Action Steps	 Identify core training required for each of the proposed products in the tourism business plan. Identify NWT based programs that will support the training. If training is not available, identify options for how it can be provided. Identify people in each community who should take the training. Develop a training plan. 	
Potential Partnerships	Aurora College, GNWT ITI, Tłįchǫ Government, CanNor	
Lead Responsibility	Tourism Coordinator/Tourism Sub-committee	
Timeframe	3 months after tourism business plan is complete	

Budget	Existing resources
Measures of Success	Training Plan exists

Recommendation #11	Develop appropriate leasing and licensing processes to help regulate tourism business on Tłıcho Lands.
Description	Leasing and licensing procedures will help regulate commercial tourism activities on Tłįchǫ lands and provide revenue and for the Tłįchǫ Government.
Rationale	Without appropriate leasing and licensing processes, tourism development could be limited or it could develop adhoc and not in a manner that respects Tłįchǫ lands.
Action Steps	 Work with the Department of Culture and Lands to identify what type land uses will require a commercial land lease or other associated permits. Develop draft leasing processes that include annual fees and lease terms that would regulate tourism activities and development. Finalize and approve leasing processes. Work with the Department of Community Services to identify activities that could require a Tłįchǫ business licence (similar to the NWT Tourism Operators licence). This business licence would be for operations on Tłįchǫ lands. Develop a draft licensing process and determine how it works with the Community Government's businesses licensing system. Finalize and approve business licence processes.
Potential	Tłįcho Government Department of Culture and Lands, Department of
Partnerships	Community Services
Lead Responsibility	Tourism Coordinator
Timeframe	1 year
Budget	Existing resources
Measures of	Leasing and permitting processes for land use exist
Success	Tłįcho business licences