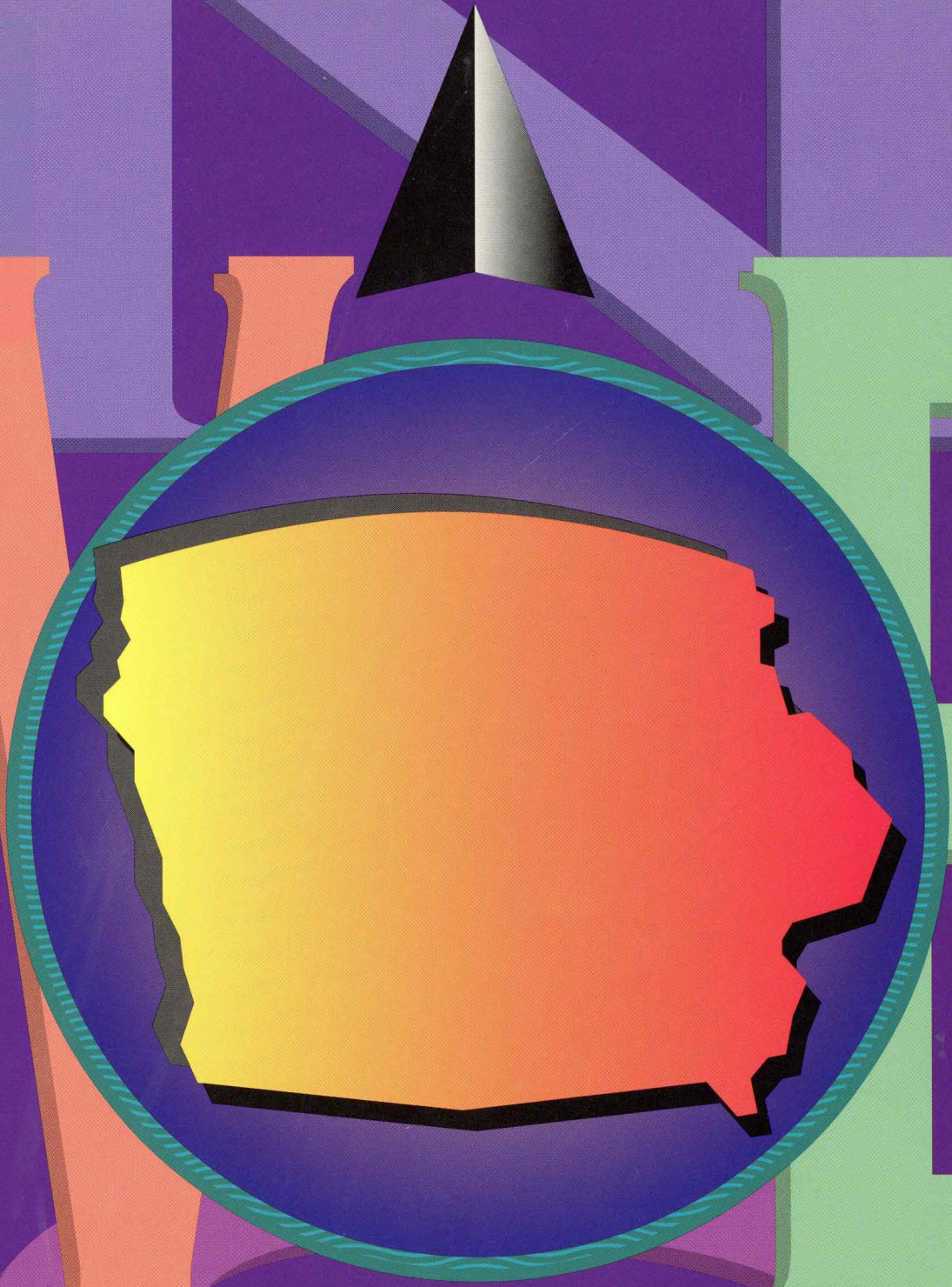


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T A S K F O R C E R E P O R T



Margaret Roetman  
Department of Transportation  
800 Lincoln Way  
Ames, IA 50010

RECEIVED  
OFFICE OF PROJECT PLANNING  
MAR 24 1994

March 22, 1994

Dear Margaret,

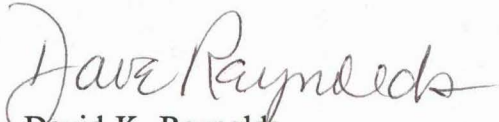
Thank you for being a member of the TOURISM 1999 Task Force. Your leadership and dedication enabled us to achieve a very difficult goal, producing the TOURISM 1999 Task Force Report. You were given the challenge of researching, analyzing, discussing, organizing, reporting, planning, and prioritizing goals on fourteen specific areas of tourism in Iowa and you responded beyond the call of duty.

TOURISM 1999 Task Force was comprised of over eighty members, from throughout the state and from many facets of tourism, that volunteered hundreds of often thankless hours to this project. The results have given us valuable information and guidelines for developing the five-year plan for Iowa tourism.

The results of your hard work are enclosed--the TOURISM 1999 Task Force Report and Appendixes A & B. Committee reports have been summarized and presented in the Task Force Report and Appendixes A & B include each of committee's actual reports (where available) and tourism industry research.

As we complete this phase, we look forward to working together even more to develop and execute our five-year plan. We are at a very exciting and critical point in Iowa tourism. Together we can set the course for Iowa tourism's future.

Cordially,



David K. Reynolds  
Administrator  
Division of Tourism

## **TOURISM 1999 TASK FORCE**

“... charged with the responsibility of investigating the current state of the tourism industry and making recommendations for future direction.”



## Dear Friends of Iowa Tourism,

February 1994

**W**ith the printing of this final Task Force Report, a very important project in the history of Iowa tourism has come to a close. Over a year in the making, this final report is the work of over 100 individuals who spent innumerable hours doing research, preparing reports, attending committee meetings, and listening to reports.

The process was long and difficult at its best; impossible and boring at its worst. But, they hung in there and completed each project. They are to be applauded for their time and their efforts.

Even though the final report is a fairly simple document, it was a comprehensive effort and opens the way for numerous new possibilities for Iowa tourism. You will notice that there has been no editorializing within the actual reports and recommendations. You are left to draw your own conclusions as to what some of those new possibilities might be. The purpose of the work that the Task Force did was to review, evaluate, and recommend. The task which lies ahead is to evaluate all the research, reports, and recommendations and to develop the next Five-Year Plan.

TOURISM 1999 officially begins in the spring of 1995 and will carry us through 1999. The Task Force's work has paved the way. I think the future is bright and I look forward to getting started.

It is important that each of you reading this report recognize and thank each person who participated in the committee process and especially those who chaired sub-committees. On the following pages is a list of those people.

It was worth our time to assist them in the process; we hope that it was worth their time to participate. Thank you!

Sincerely,

**David K. Reynolds**  
Administrator  
Iowa Division of Tourism





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TOURISM 1999 TASK FORCE

## MEMBERS

### Iowa Division of Tourism

David K. Reynolds, Division Administrator  
Nancy Landess, Research and Welcome Center Manager  
Mike Murwin, Cooperative Advertising and Special Events Manager  
Mark Eckman, Group Travel Manager  
Cory Fleming, Community Outreach Manager  
Kathy Bowermaster, Publications Manager  
LuAnn Reinders, Product Development

### Committee Chairs

Michael S. Gould Burlington Area Convention & Tourism Bureau Chair: Funding	Mary Jensen Iowa Department of Transportation Chair: Scenic Byways
Jana DeBrower Eastern Iowa Tourism Association Co-Chair: Group Travel	Tami Kuhn Department of Cultural Affairs Chair: Arts And Culture
Fern Carlson Country Relics Little Village Co-Chair: Group Travel	Rich Mills Tourism Consultant Chair: Gaming
Ross Harrison Department of Natural Resources Co-Chair: Consumer Information	Steve Ohrn Department of Cultural Affairs Chair: Historic Sites
Michele Walker Western Iowa Tourism Region Co-Chair: Consumer Information	Carole Moll Timberline Best Holiday Travel Park Chair: Lodging
Linda Maughn Central Iowa Tourism Region Chair: Cooperative Advertising	Gerry Schnepf Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation Chair: Trails
Wendy Ford Iowa City-Coralville Convention & Visitors Bureau Chair: Regions	Michael Carrier Department of Natural Resources Chair: Outdoor Recreation





TOURISM 1999 TASK FORCE

## SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dean Alexander	Rick Knupfer
Alice Anderson	Steve Kolbach
Mimi Askew	Gary Kraft
Bonnie Baldwin	Jo Ann Krammer
Shirley Beakler	Tracey Kuehl
Leilani Bernard	Rebecca Lane
Bill Billings	Peter LoLusich
Dave Bohlke	Linda Maughn
Don Brazelton	Tom Neenan
Violet Breeling	Dave Olson
Dick Bruns	Kay Owen
Nancy Burns	Nancy A. Pitt
Robin Buthmann	Ollie Pleggenkuhle
Mary Ellen Chamberlin	Eldon Ranney
Cyndi Chizek	Bill Riley
Angie Cool	Laurie Robinson
Marvin Diemer	Margaret Roetman
Kathy Dirks	Bill Rooney
Jane Echternach	Mary Schissel
JerryENZler	Peggy Slaughter
Jim Green	Randy Sliva
Lanny Haldy	Michael J. Smith
Ross Harrison	Arnie Sohn
Rich Harter	Lore Solo
Robin Hennes	Deb Stanton
Darrell Henning	Mary Helen Stephaniak
Joan Hern	Naomi Stovaal
Norma Hiles	Bob Sturgeaon
Bill Hillman	Kay A. Swan
Brian Holt	Kathie Swift
Kim Hovey	Joe Taylor
Barbara Humeston	Jo Van Gorp
Barb Johnson	Craig Walter
Steve Kennedy	Diane Weiland
Richard Kissin	Mickey Willroth



In the fall of 1987, the final report of the Recreation, Tourism and Leisure (RTL) Interim Study Committee was submitted to the General Assembly of the state of Iowa. The RTL report was the culmination of over two years of research and study into the status of recreation, tourism and leisure in Iowa. In short, the study found that "...recreation, tourism and culture were far more significant to Iowa's society than many had previously believed." The committee summarized their findings by stating that they (recreation, tourism and culture) "...offered a promising economic potential in the state's initial efforts to diversify an economy so strongly vested in agriculture." The report offered numerous recommendations to the General Assembly of ways to capitalize on the "economic potential" of tourism.

By the summer of 1988, a basic five-year plan for tourism promotion had been drafted and a funding strategy had been adopted. The funding plan, developed by the Department of Economic Development in conjunction with the Iowa Travel Council, used the recommendation of the RTL Report to project funding levels of \$2 million in FY 1989; \$3 million in FY 1990; \$4 million in FY 1991; and \$5 million in FY 1992 and 1993. This funding was to be tied to proceeds from the Iowa Lottery.

For the first three years of the five-year strategy, funding levels held close to the RTL recommendation. In FY 1989, \$1.785 million was appropriated followed in 1990 by a \$2.875 million appropriation and \$3.45 million in 1991. Then, in FY 1991 two very significant events occurred. First, funding for marketing programs in the Department of Economic Development was taken out of the lottery and returned to the General Fund. The second and far more critical event occurred in February of 1991. At this time, the Governor announced how extensive the state's budget deficit was and, subsequently the first of several budget reductions and deappropriations. During the next 18 months, the budget for Tourism marketing was actually reduced by over 40% to a low of \$2.14 million in FY 1993. For the next two years marketing plans for the Division of Tourism concentrated on program reductions rather than program expansion. Then, in FY 1994, \$300,000 was added to the marketing budget bringing the total to \$2.47 million. For FY 1995 an additional \$300,000 increase has been requested which would bring the total marketing budget to approximately \$2.77 million. This total, though respectable, is still less than the appropriated amount in FY 1990. Hopefully, two years of budget growth signifies that the bottom has been reached and that there is a new commitment to tourism on the part of the Iowa Legislature.





TOURISM 1999 TASK FORCE

## STUDY COMMITTEE

"The Study Committee was established by the Legislative Council to review state tourism programs to determine their ability to attract private participation, involve the tourism industry, and increase in-state and out-of-state travel to Iowa tourism sites and to seek tourism industry input on ways to improve Iowa tourism programs and coordination between state and private tourism efforts."

*From the Final Report of the Tourism Study Committee dated January 1993.*

**O**n December 15, 1992, a Tourism Study Committee met with individuals of the tourism industry. The Committee was chaired by Senator Leonard Boswell and Representative Dennis Black, and was composed of the following members: senators Jack Hester, James Riordan, Harry Slife, and Albert Sorensen; and representatives Bill Bernau, Chuck Gipp, Mark Haverland, and Bill Royer. The Committee was authorized to meet two times and was formed to begin to address some of the issues facing the tourism industry in Iowa. Only one meeting was actually scheduled and during that four hour meeting the following public and private industry representatives were called upon to comment on various aspects of the industry: Dave Reynolds and Nancy Landess discussed the Division of Tourism programs; Michele Walker and Joe Taylor discussed Region programs; Marion Lucas talked about the Iowa State Fair; Rich Harter represented the Iowa Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus; Dale Jackson talked about the Bed and Breakfast industry; Tami Kuhn discussed the Arts in Iowa; Carole Moll represented private campground owners; Jana DeBrower represented the Iowa Group Travel Association and the group travel industry; Craig Walter represented the lodging industry; Bill

Fisher and Lisa Riggs represented Iowa attractions; Kirk Tyler and Bill Rooney represented cooperative opportunities and sponsorships; Don Shoup talked about the importance of the state promotional effort to the Amana Colonies; Tom Kuhlman talked about how the state effort has affected the Iowa Great Lakes; and Rich Mills talked about the private and public relationship represented by the Iowa Travel Council. As a result of the meeting, a Senate subcommittee for tourism was formed chaired by Senator James Riordan and a House subcommittee for tourism was formed chaired by Representative Roger Halvorson.

Following the December 15th meeting, the Division of Tourism organized a Task Force, made up of private and public officials, charged with the responsibility of investigating the current state of the tourism industry and making recommendations for future direction. The calendar year of 1993 was then designated a study year for Iowa tourism and the Task Force was appropriately named TOURISM 1999. The final outcome of the Task Force will be the development of a new five-year plan to begin in the spring of 1995.





**T**he Task Force began work in February of 1993 with the formation of 14 separate subcommittees. The subcommittees were Group Travel, Cooperative Advertising and Special Events, Publications, Funding, Trails, Outdoor Recreation, Arts and Culture, Historic Sites and Attractions, Signage, Welcome Centers, Scenic Byways, Regions, Gaming, and Lodging. The appointed chair of each subcommittee was given the responsibility to add as many committee members as deemed appropriate. Each subcommittee had as its charge to review the state of their specific topic area and to make recommendations back to the Task Force. Guidelines for the specific subcommittee process were established by the subcommittee itself. A Division of Tourism staff member was appointed to each subcommittee to serve as a liaison to the Division. Following the completion of the subcommittee work and submission of recommendations, each Task Force member was asked to attend a series of full Task Force meetings where oral presentations were made by each subcommittee and final discussions took place. These meetings were held every Friday in September 1993.

### **Industry and Public Input**

At the same time the subcommittees were at work, two other important processes were taking place. The first was to obtain community involvement. This was achieved through two projects, an Industry Survey and Community Meetings. It was the intent of the Task Force to include as many people in the Task Force process as possible. These two projects offered the opportunity for participation to a number of different people. The Industry Survey was developed by the Task Force consultant, Pete Everett, an instructor at Des Moines Area Community College. The Survey consisted of three formats. One format was specifically designed for chambers of commerce and convention and visitors bureaus, one for the private sector, and one for organizations. Over 2000

surveys were distributed either in person or through the mail. In the end, 322 surveys were completed and returned. Results of the Industry Survey are included in the Appendix to this report.

The second project intended to solicit public input was a series of community meetings. The community meetings were planned over a two week period in July and August in 16 communities throughout the state. Those communities participating were Fort Madison, Postville, Davenport, Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, Story City, Des Moines, Mason City, Ottumwa, Orange City, Sioux City, Council Bluffs, Carroll, Ruthven, and Creston. The Community Meetings were more timely than ever imagined because they fell during the three weeks immediately following the most devastating floods in Iowa history. The tourism industry was severely impacted all the way through the remainder of 1993 and the Community Meetings helped establish an all-important communications network. The meetings were hosted by a local tourism organization and facilitated by a Task Force committee chair with help from a Division of Tourism staff member. In the end, over 300 people participated in the Community Meetings and the input from these meetings was supplied to each subcommittee. Information on the Community Meetings is also included in the Appendix to this report.

### **Research**

The gathering of external research was also taking place while the Task Force subcommittees were working. This included working with Longwoods International to update their 1991 research. This study examines Iowa's overall competitive position within the United States pleasure market. It provides a detailed profile of the Iowa vacationer, data on the places people visit and the things they see and do when they travel in Iowa. It also provides infor-



mation on Iowa's tourism image and an evaluation of Iowa's product and how well it delivers against expectations. The United States Travel Data Center County by County Economic Impact study was also updated. This study provides estimates of the economic impact of U.S. travel on all 99 counties in Iowa. The estimates include total travel generated expenditures, employment, wage and salary (payroll) income, state tax revenue, and local tax revenue generated by traveler spending. Both of these documents are included in the Appendixes to this document.

### **Legislative Input**

Finally, the Task Force placed a high priority on legislative input. Through the entire process, an open invitation was made to any member of the Iowa General Assembly to participate but especially those members of the two tourism committees. It is appropriate to thank each member of the House and Senate tourism committees, chaired by Representative Roger Halvorson and Senator James Riordan, for agreeing to serve on their respective committees and their interest in tourism in Iowa. It is also appropriate to specifically thank those that took part in the actual Task Force process. These include representatives Roger Halvorson, Jack Drake, Gary Blodgett, and Janet Metcalf; and senators Leonard Boswell, Jim Riordan, Al Sorensen, Lyle Zieman, and Merlin Bartz. Without their insight and input the process would not have been complete.

### **Ranking of the Recommendations**

Once all subcommittees submitted their final reports, each Task Force member was asked to rank each recommendation according to their individual perceived priority. A 1 to 5 ranking was given to each recommendation with 1 indicating an immediate priority and 5 as the least important. A ranking of

2, 3, or 4 established a priority order for the list. In the end, all rankings were input into a computer and an average ranking of the final 80 recommendations was created. In order to establish a final priority listing, any recommendation that received an average of 2.5 or less was considered to be an immediate priority. Approximately twenty-five recommendations fell into this category.

### **Special Consideration**

Two recommendations from the original list of 80 received special consideration from the Task Force. These were the issues of funding and gaming. During the last official meeting of the Task Force on September 26, 1993, a unanimous vote was given to make funding for the state tourism effort the number one initiative to come out of the Task Force effort. Earlier, the Funding subcommittee, chaired by Michael Gould, had recommended a new funding mechanism be established by legislative action that would provide a long-term, consistent source of funding for the Division of Tourism. The plan, which calls for a percentage of the tax growth in the tourism industry to go towards the state promotional effort, is modeled after a similar plan in Missouri. That plan, HB 188, was introduced, passed by both Houses, and signed into law by the Governor of Missouri during the 1993 session.

The second issue, gaming, was discussed at the final Task Force meeting. Several professional promoters of gaming in Iowa had requested a reconsideration of the original ranking of gaming as #74 on the priority list. These individuals asked for and received time at the final meeting to present additional information to the Task Force. In the end, a vote for reconsideration was asked for and a new ranking of #5 was established.

B. Continue agreements with the locally owned centers to keep them as part of the welcome center system.

C. Develop partnerships with the private sector for special promotions at the welcome centers.

## GROUP TRAVEL

Co-chairs: Jana DeBrower, Eastern Iowa Tourism Association  
Fern Carlson, Country Relics Little Village

### I. Work statement

To review the role of the Iowa Division of Tourism within the state's group travel industry.

### II. Situation analysis

A. Group travel provides a substantial economic impact which increases the local tax base and employment opportunities. Each motorcoach staying one day and one overnight in the state spends over \$7,000.

B. Iowa is situated between major Midwestern metropolitan centers and is centrally located in the U.S., placing it in a strong position to attract group tours.

C. The Division is active within the National Tour Association, American Bus Association, Travel Industry Association of America, and Ontario Motor Coach Association and regularly attends their respective marketplaces.

D. The Division offers a variety of quality collateral materials to facilitate tour planning, including a group tour manual, agricultural tour manual, video, itinerary brochures, agricultural lure pieces and slide sets.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

A. The Division of Tourism relies on local communities/attractions/lodging to deliver a satisfactory product.

B. A more aggressive sales effort and follow-up requires additional staff and budget.

C. Motorcoach marketing does not translate into immediate results, but requires a long term commitment.

D. Agricultural tours represent a promising opportunity for Iowa.

E. Iowa lacks a hub or international gateway airport, which is a challenge for international marketing.

### VII. Subcommittee members

Division of Tourism Staff

### IV. Priorities

A. The Division of Tourism should continue its alliance with the Iowa Group Travel Association (IGTA) as the key provider of group travel-related education for Iowa's tourism industry, while still offering group-related education sessions during the annual tourism conference.

B. The Iowa Group Tour Manual should be updated during the next fiscal year.

C. The Division of Tourism should focus domestic marketing efforts on prospective clients rather than current customers; complementing, rather than duplicating, the efforts of IGTA and other Iowa group travel suppliers. The Division should focus international marketing on agriculture, aiming now for the Japanese and Canadian markets, with more emphasis over the next three to five years on Europe, South America and Australia.

D. The Division should develop a continuous familiarization tour schedule for group travel buyers so that at least one is offered per year.

E. The Division should increase the number of marketplaces attended and encourage further attendance by Iowa suppliers. The Division of Tourism and Iowa Group Travel Association should coordinate an Iowa group travel showcase, inviting tour planners to appointment sessions with Iowa suppliers.

### V. Legislative action required

None

### VI. Cooperative efforts

The Division of Tourism and the Iowa Group Travel Association should continue to coordinate complementary group travel promotions and activities.

### VII. Subcommittee members

Alice Anderson, Cedar Rapids Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Kathy Dirks, Western Iowa Development Association

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Mark Eckman



## CONSUMER INFORMATION

Co-chairs: Ross Harrison, Department of Natural Resources

Michele Walker, Western Iowa Tourism Region

### I. Work statement

Mission: Develop an efficient and effective consumer information plan for Iowa tourism that 1) coordinates the efforts of state agencies and regional tourism associations, 2) serves Iowa's tourism industry, and 3) addresses the needs of both in-state and out-of-state customers.

### II. Situation analysis

A. A large number of different publications are produced for travel consumers by several different agencies and organizations.

B. The Division of Tourism's publications are generally well-received within the tourism industry, and have not been radically changed for the past few years.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

A. Because the tourism industry is growing so quickly, it is difficult to decide what information should be published and distributed in state agency materials, and what format would most suit the traveler.

B. State and local agencies have been working together successfully on cooperative projects for tourism, and try to balance what materials should be produced privately and which should be produced by state agencies.

### IV. Priorities

A. Publish a comprehensive listing of Iowa's public and private campgrounds.

B. Publish a comprehensive listing of Iowa's lodging facilities, including hotels, motels, inns, and bed and breakfasts.

C. Establish more conservative criteria for inclusion in the Visitors Guide.

D. Include the Iowa calendar of events in all packets mailed to in-state travelers.

E. Test-market a new publication presenting tourism attraction information in a different format, such as

smaller travel regions or driving routes/loop tours.

F. Create a publications review committee made up of public information coordinators of appropriate state agencies (DED, DOT, DNR, DCA) which would meet regularly to share information on tourism-related publications.

G. Continue to give a high priority to historical attractions through our existing materials.

H. Recognizing that the electronic "high-tech" dissemination of tourism information is the wave of the future, follow the progress of other organizations already using these methods, and explore future possibilities for using electronic technology for tourism information.

### V. Legislative action required

The Legislature should continue to fund the Division of Tourism, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Cultural Affairs and Department of Transportation at adequate levels to produce effective publications for travelers. Provisions should continue to be made for joint agency projects.

### VI. Cooperative efforts

A. Create a publications review committee made up of public information coordinators of appropriate state agencies (DED, DOT, DNR, DCA) which would meet regularly to share information on tourism-related publications.

B. Continue to work closely with the regional tourism organizations, county conservation boards and other travel industry associations to better serve the traveler.

### VII. Subcommittee members

Don Brazelton, Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards

Robin Buthmann, Harrison County Museum/Welcome Center

Barbara Humeston, Midwest Living Magazine

Lore Solo, State Historical Society of Iowa

Kathie Swift, Iowa State Fair

Joe Taylor, Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Kathy Bowermaster

## COOPERATIVE ADVERTISING

Chair: Linda Maughn, Central Iowa Tourism Region

### I. Work statement

To study effectiveness of current and past cooperative advertising and special events and identify needs of the Iowa tourism industry.

### II. Situation analysis

A. The Iowa legislature requires the Iowa Division of Tourism to "to the fullest extent possible, develop cooperative efforts for advertising" Iowa tourism.

B. The Iowa Division of Tourism provides a variety of newspaper and radio co-op advertising options to the tourism industry of Iowa.

C. The private sector investment in Iowa tourism marketing has grown from less than \$200,000 annually in 1988 to over \$700,000 cash and in-kind contributions in FY 1993.

D. The Iowa Division of Tourism plays a leadership role in a number of special events including tourism month, the State Fair, tourism conference, and tourism mini conferences.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

A. Floods of 1993 damaged tourism revenues and crippled the marketing budgets of many Iowa attractions and events. Iowa attractions and events need to advertise more extensively than ever to combat the negative national and regional media impact but many have with reduced marketing budgets.

B. The Division of Tourism must continue to offer co-op advertising at a cost that is affordable to the tourism industry.

### IV. Priorities

A. Keep improving the effective co-op programs now offered by the Division of Tourism and include them as part of the five-year marketing plan.

B. Develop programs with a lower cost or more limited scope for those who have smaller budgets yet still wish to advertise.

C. Develop new programs involving corporate sponsorship money.

D. Develop ways to provide marketing grants directly to attractions and events as well as through the regional tourism association grant programs.

E. Continue Division of Tourism special events such as tourism conferences, tourism mini conferences, State Fair exhibits, and tourism month.

### V. Legislative action required

None

### VI. Cooperative efforts

Examine the development of a cooperative advertising package with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Department of Cultural Affairs.

### VII. Subcommittee members

Bill Rooney, Radio Iowa News Network  
Rich Harter, Des Moines Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Linda Maughn, Central Iowa Tourism Region

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Mike Murwin

## REGIONS

Chair: Wendy Ford, Iowa City-Coralville Convention and Visitors Bureau

### I. Work statement

To study Iowa's regional tourism system and determine how it could and should operate.

### II. Situation analysis

A. Iowa has regional tourism associations in western, central, and eastern Iowa. Each region is funded through a contract with the Division of Tourism and member-

ship fees. A regional office staffed by an executive director and administrative assistant is located in each region.

B. Each of the three tourism regions exists today with a similar mission: to enhance the visitor industry in the region through marketing and education. The perception by many is that the regions serve to connect counties, businesses, and smaller organizations to the state tourism office. The committee operated under the assumption that existing regional boundaries would continue to serve their regions effectively.



C. In all three regions, marketing has played a major part in the program of work. Region-wide marketing programs are helpful for members with smaller budgets that might not otherwise be able to afford to promote their attractions.

### **III. Challenges and opportunities**

A. Some groups of counties and communities have taken the initiative to form their own tourism organizations. These "county clusters" occasionally overlap the three large tourism regions. There are differing opinions as to the effectiveness and value of the county clusters, but it is agreed that they need to be incorporated into tourism promotional efforts with a formalized connection to the regional efforts.

B. The three tourism regions rely primarily on the state for operational funds. Membership dues compose the rest of the regions' budgets. Conflicts arise when state contract requirements and membership requirements do not correspond.

### **IV. Priorities**

#### **A. Communication**

1. Improve communication between regions and the Division of Tourism through annual focus groups that examine region and state needs. Continue to hold community meetings and mini-conferences to communicate with the statewide tourism industry.
2. Improve communication between counties and their regions by implementing reporting procedures.
3. Improve communication between regions and other county cluster groups.

B. Achieve an appropriate balance between state-contracted activities and individual region initiatives.

1. Allow each region flexibility within contracted activities, so that programs may be tailored to specific region needs.
2. Eventually reduce state funding to the regions to enable more direction by membership.
3. Determine state needs and fund those accordingly.

#### **C. Continue marketing and public relations**

1. Plan activities that enhance, rather than duplicate, the Division of Tourism's long-range marketing plan.

2. Act as a public relations clearinghouse for region, communicating the activities of the region to the private sector and assisting region members in public relations activities.

D. Continue technical assistance, education, and networking.

1. Region directors would coordinate opportunities with the Iowa Division of Tourism and other organizations, and serve as resources for specific educational needs.
2. Implement more networking with county cluster groups.
3. Continue regular regional meetings that provide networking and education experiences.

### **V. Legislative action required**

None

### **VI. Cooperative Efforts**

Cooperative efforts needed between Iowa Division of Tourism, region organizations and county cluster groups.

### **VII. Subcommittee Members**

Cyndi Chizek, Clear Lake Convention and Visitors Bureau and Top of Iowa Tourism

Diane Weiland, Iowa Aviation Preservation Center and Southern Nine Tourism

Robin Hennes, Iowa City-Coralville Convention and Visitors Bureau and Eastern Iowa Tourism Association

Steve Kolbach, Northeast Iowa Tourism and Recreation and Eastern Iowa Tourism Association

Dave Olson, Carroll County Conservation Board and Western Iowa Tourism Region

Ollie Pleggenkuhle, Fayette County Tourism Council and Eastern Iowa Tourism Association

Eldon Ranney, CAHAPOSHAU Tourism and Western Iowa Tourism Region

Mary Schissel, Area Community Commonwealth and Top of Iowa Tourism

Jo Van Gorp, Newton Visitor and Conference Bureau and Central Iowa Tourism Region

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Cory Fleming

## SCENIC BYWAYS

Chair: Mary Jensen, Iowa Department of Transportation

### I. Work statement

The goal of the Scenic Byways subcommittee was to collect and present 1) information on current state and national scenic byways programs, 2) a summary of Iowa's pilot program, and 3) recommendations for further action to integrate scenic byways into the Tourism Marketing plan.

### II. Situation analysis

A. The concept of designating scenic drives or routes throughout a state is not a new one in Iowa. The Great River Road, which travels Iowa's eastern border, was one of the first and is one of the most unique scenic byways in the U.S. There is a National Scenic Byways Program, and also local efforts in Iowa to designate and sign specific scenic routes in certain areas of the state.

B. The Iowa Legislature directed the Iowa DOT to develop a pilot scenic byways program, and to sign and monitor four pilot routes for their ability to attract tourists. The Iowa Division of Tourism is a partner in this effort, and is creating brochures to promote the four routes. The Division of Tourism will also develop a plan to monitor and evaluate the impact of the routes on tourism in the state. The DOT will report back to the Legislature in 1995 on the effects of this program.

C. The Scenic Byways subcommittee believes scenic byways are a valuable resource for the State of Iowa.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

A. Maintaining the scenic integrity of the routes while still providing services and enhancements for travelers.

B. Coordinating information and promotion of all scenic byways activities in the state.

C. Developing a program that will sign and promote only the most scenic routes in Iowa – maintaining quality routes rather than a large number of routes.

### IV. Priorities

A. Information on scenic byways should be developed and published – either separately or in combination

with information on recreational trails, parks, water recreation and other outdoor activities – and be distributed through the DED and welcome centers.

B. The DED should include scenic routes signed by local governments, as well as the state-designated routes, in its tourist publications.

C. Entry into the scenic byways program should continue to be by local initiative, with the DOT as a technical and educational resource for the communities involved.

D. Traveler services to support tourism should be provided in such a way that scenic integrity is maintained.

### V. Legislative action required

The subcommittee recommends that the Iowa General Assembly appropriate funds to the DOT for a statewide scenic byways plan (similar to the trails plan) and ongoing program.

### VI. Cooperative efforts

A. The DED and DOT will continue to work together on elements of the scenic byways program, to integrate the program into the Tourism Marketing Plan.

B. The DOT will continue to seek the cooperation of county and local governments on scenic byways projects within their jurisdictions.

### VII. Subcommittee members

Mimi Askew, Soil Conservation Service, Council Bluffs  
Gary Kraft, Director of Group Travel, AAA  
Rebecca Lane, Decatur County Development Network, Decatur City  
Margaret Roetman, Scenic Byways Coordinator, Department of Transportation  
Kay Owen, Iowa Bed & Breakfast Innkeepers Association, Newton

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Kathy Bowermaster



## ARTS AND CULTURE

Chair: Tami Kuhn, Department of Cultural Affairs

### I. Work statement

Develop a planning document for arts and culture as they relate to Iowa's tourism industry.

### II. Situation analysis

A. There is currently no arts and culture goal in the overall plan for tourism; although, there is evidence that these groups are working together in some ways such as incorporating Iowa artists into festivals and local artists participating in craft fairs and as entertainers. Many of these activities are superfluous and happen by accident rather than by an organized coalition of arts, humanities and cultural organizations uniting for a common purpose.

B. Tourism activities are more commercial in nature, generating large dollars from local merchants through activities such as Pancake Days, Reunions, and Homecomings. In addition, tourism often generates events using themes such as "Coal Miner's Hometown" which carry much potential for tie-ins with the humanities, arts, and cultural activities. The arts, humanities, and history are interested in content, in creating a kind of spiritual experience for the traveler which will draw them back for more.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

A. Promotion budgets for arts and cultural organizations are usually quite limited.

B. Arts and cultural organizations have opportunities to become more visible by being integrated into tourism marketing efforts.

### IV. Priorities

A. Identify cultural organizations as tourism organizations and vice versa.

B. Provide more education and training in cultural tourism.

C. Integrate high quality cultural experiences into tourism events and attractions.

D. Recognize the tourism industry as the intersection of culture with marketing.

E. Educate the tourism professionals on arts and cultures and vice versa to enhance mutual understanding of each other's programs.

### V. Legislative action required

Adequate appropriation for Division of Tourism budget to allow funds for co-op programs with arts and cultural organizations.

### VI. Cooperative efforts

A. The Division of Tourism should renew its partnership with the Department of Cultural Affairs to provide entertainment, working exhibits or other arts promotions at the State Fair Tourism Building.

B. The Division of Tourism and Department of Cultural Affairs should continue to cooperate on arts promotions at the annual Iowa Tourism Conference.

### VII. Subcommittee members

Rick Knupfer, Iowa Humanities Board

Mary Helen Stephaniak, Iowa Humanities Board

Deb Stanton, former President, Iowa Association of

Local Arts Agencies

Nancy A. Pitt, Countryside Travel

Angie Cool, Centerville Chamber of Commerce

Jane Echternach, Missouri Valley

Naomi Stovaal, Iowa Library Association

Mickey Willroth, President, Iowa Assembly of Local

Arts Agencies

Joan Hern, Land of Festivals

Kay A. Swan, formerly of the Iowa Arts Council

Lore Solo, Iowa State Historical Society

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Mike Murwin

## GAMING

Chair: Rich Mills, Tourism Consultant

### I. Work statement

To review the Iowa gaming industry and its impact on Iowa tourism.

### II. Situation analysis

A. Iowa's gaming industry is faced with crippling competition in both the intra- and interstate markets. The legislative debate focuses on moral and social issues verses the economic impact of millions of dollars in revenue for the state.

B. Iowa law mandates low betting limits and strict loss regulations on riverboat casinos, while neighboring states offer unlimited stakes and less restrictive regulations. Also, within the state, Indian tribes are allowed to operate casinos on tribal land and are tax exempt.

C. Dog tracks, horse tracks, riverboat gambling, lottery and Indian casinos within Iowa are competing against each other for gaming revenues.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

A. The race tracks would like casinos or even slot machines to supplement their gaming opportunities, but current legislation does not offer these alternatives. However, installing slot machines will cause a domino effect. If the tracks install slot machines, then bars, restaurants, bowling alleys, etc. want slot machines. Potentially, widespread growth of slot machines will reduce lottery revenues, so lottery officials want a share of slot machine revenues.

B. Riverboat gambling is an opportunity to create year-round tourism for Iowa's river cities.

### IV. Priorities

A. Recommend to the Legislature to revise riverboat gaming legislation to raise per excursion and table betting limits, to provide a larger percentage of square footage dedicated to gaming, and to revise boarding restrictions to allow entries and departure limited only by boat's capacity. Amend horse track legislation to allow tracks more flexibility in setting their own schedules.

B. Iowa tourism efforts should include promoting gaming in out-of-state markets with special emphasis on developing motorcoach tours.

### V. Legislative action required

Revise legislation so gaming can become more competitive both in and out of the state.

### VI. Cooperative efforts

The Division of Tourism should continue to work closely with the gaming industry to maximize marketing opportunities.

### VII. Subcommittee members

Randy Sliva, Bluffs Run Greyhound Park  
Barb Johnson, Waterloo Greyhound Park  
Kim Hovey, Waterloo Greyhound Park  
Mary Ellen Chamberlin, Riverboat Development Authority

Richard Kissin, WinnaVegas  
Leilani Bernard, WinnaVegas  
Bill Billings, The President Riverboat Casino  
Shirley Beakler, Prairie Meadows Racetrack  
Peter LoLusich, Sioux City Sue Riverboat Casino  
Dave Bohlke, Sioux City Sue Riverboat Casino

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Mike Murwin

## HISTORIC SITES

Chair: Steve Ohrn, Department of Cultural Affairs

### I. Work statement

Historical attractions should be defined to include geologic, prehistoric, and historic (1) buildings, structures, landscapes; (2) museums and sites (interpreted); (3) events; and (4) National Register properties and National Historic Landmarks.

Mission statement: Given that Iowa has significant historical resources and attractions which research

has shown to be major reasons for traveling in Iowa, the TOURISM 1999 Task Force should make historic preservation, education, development, and promotion of historic resources and attractions its highest priority for investment.

### II. Situation analysis

A. According to the 1992 Iowa Welcome Center Survey, historical attractions were the second leading interest area for surveyed travel parties in Iowa.



B. While historical sites/attractions are an economic benefit to local businesses, admissions and other proceeds fall short of making them self-supporting.

C. Iowa does not have a specific program for promoting historical or "heritage" tourism. Successful programs have been developed in Wisconsin and other states.

### **III. Challenges and opportunities**

A. Within Iowa, historical attractions vary in their quality and value. Not all are suitable for promotion – others are underpromoted.

B. Historic preservation represents a long term benefit to the tourism industry as well as to society overall.

C. Iowans are not well-informed about Iowa history, the state's historical attractions, and their inherent value.

### **IV. Priorities**

A. Given that Iowa has significant historical resources and attractions which research has shown to be major reasons for traveling in Iowa, the TOURISM 1999 Task Force should make historic preservation, education, development, and promotion of historic resources and attractions its highest priority for investment.

B. Communities should be encouraged to use hotel/motel taxes to help fund local heritage tourism programs.

C. The Iowa Community Cultural Grant program should be funded at the one million per year level as recommended by the 1987 Recreation, Tourism, and Leisure Report. In addition, the Historical Resource Development Program should be funded at one million per year.

D. State agencies concerned with heritage tourism (departments of Cultural Affairs, Economic Development, Natural Resources, and Transportation) should continue to cooperate closely. Cooperation with the tourism offices in adjoining states should also be continued.

E. The criteria used for promoting historic attractions needs to be studied and re-evaluated.

F. An Iowa heritage tourism program should be developed and implemented.

### **V. Legislative action required**

Fund the Iowa Community Cultural Grant Program and Historical Resource Development Program annually at one million dollars each.

### **VI. Cooperative efforts**

Continue support and cooperation among the Departments of Cultural Affairs, Economic Development, Natural Resources, and Transportation for heritage tourism.

### **VII. Subcommittee members**

Violet Breeling, Harrison County Preservation Commission

Jerry Enzler, Dubuque County Historical Society

Lanny Haldy, Amana Heritage Museum

Darrell Henning, Vesterheim

Norma Hiles, Liberty Hall History Center

Steve Kennedy, Iowa Great Lakes Maritime Museum

Jo Ann Krammer, Wright County Historic Preservation Commission

Laurie Robinson, Johnson County Historical Society

Michael J. Smith, Putnam Museum

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Mark Eckman

## **LODGING**

Chair: Carole Moll, Timberline Best Holiday Travel Park

### **I. Work statement**

To review the lodging industry and recommend ways to better promote that segment of the tourism industry.

### **II. Situation analysis**

A. Lodging comprises the largest percentage of expenditures by travelers in Iowa with 28 percent of the total dollars spent per day, according to the 1992 Iowa

Welcome Center Survey. Of a total of \$112 spent per day, \$31.89 is spent for lodging.

B. Sixty-three percent of Iowa hotels and motels are showing a loss according to the Iowa Lodging Association.

C. Currently, the Iowa Association of Campground Owners, Iowa Bed and Breakfast Innkeeper's Association and Iowa Lodging Association publish brochures with information on their respective members. These



are the only accommodation guides available in the state. There is no means for obtaining information on all the lodging options in Iowa.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

A. Unfair competition exists between the public and private sectors in providing lodging services. The subcommittee feels that government should not attempt to be a primary provider of services, to duplicate, or otherwise to undertake activities which lead to the offering of services that are or could be provided by private enterprise.

B. Providing the opportunity for year-round K-12 schools or extending the current school year creates the potential for a dramatic loss in travel expenditures for the state tourism industry. For each day before Labor Day that K-12 schools are in session, the economic loss is approximately \$500,000 for the Okoboji area alone, according to the Iowa Great Lakes Chamber of Commerce.

C. Taxing the intangible assets of hotels is a major concern for the Iowa Lodging Association.

### V. Priorities

A. Increase the Division of Tourism's marketing budget for both in-state and out-of-state marketing.

B. A uniform starting date for schools should be set after Labor Day.

C. A publication providing complete accommodation information (including all hotels, motels, bed & breakfast inns, and public/private campgrounds & cabins) should be printed and distributed to Iowa travelers.

D. The lodging subcommittee endorses the long range plan for the state welcome centers and advocates its full implementation.

E. The Department of Transportation should be more flexible when reviewing applications for tourism signage.

### V. Legislative action required

A. Appropriate more funding for tourism marketing.

B. Set a uniform school starting date after Labor Day.

C. Revise tax laws so that intangible assets are no longer taxed in the lodging industry.

### VI. Cooperative efforts

In order to provide complete lodging information to the public, the Division of Tourism should coordinate a cooperative effort including the Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards, Iowa Lodging Association, Iowa Bed & Breakfast Innkeepers Association and Iowa Association of Campground Owners.

### VII. Subcommittee members

Don Brazelton, Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards

Ross Harrison, Department of Natural Resources  
Kay Owen, Iowa Bed and Breakfast Innkeeper's Association

Craig Walter, Iowa Lodging Association

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Mark Eckman

## SIGNAGE

### I. Work statement

Review Iowa's current signage programs to determine their effectiveness in relation to Iowa's tourism industry.

### II. Situation analysis

A. In 1958 Congress established a "bonus program" for the control of outdoor advertising. Funds were offered to encourage states to voluntarily control signs on interstate highways. Few states opted to participate and Congress began considering mandating the states to control outdoor advertising. Immediately prior to the passage of the Highway Beautification Act of 1965, the State of Iowa chose to become one of the nation's

"bonus states." The "bonus state" regulations have much stricter provision regarding zoning than the later Beautification Act. Because Iowa is a "bonus state", it is required to maintain the more restrictive regulations to avoid possible loss of federal funds.

B. These stiffer regulations place Iowa's tourism industry at a competitive disadvantage with surrounding states. Small private tourism businesses and nonprofit attractions grow discouraged in their efforts to secure necessary signage. However, environmental groups within the state would protest if regulations became too permissive, given aesthetic concerns for the



environment. The Iowa Department of Transportation tried to lessen the impact of the federal regulations by developing other signing options in the late 1980s, including the Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) program and expanding other programs such as allowing private directional signs on the interstate and allowing logo signs on certain non-interstate routes.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

A. Balancing the need to regulate signage with the need to promote the Iowa Tourism industry.

B. Stiff federal regulations have placed Iowa's tourism industry at a competitive disadvantage with surrounding states. Commercial and directional signage is very difficult to obtain under current regulations. The State of Iowa would lose several million dollars of revenue from the federal government if it were to loosen its regulations.

### IV. Priorities

A. The Travel Federation of Iowa should make promoting changes in federal highway signage requirements a priority. Among the issues that should be addressed: Allow the states to opt out of the "bonus program" without financial penalties and comply with the less restrictive Highway Beautification Act of 1965; allow state departments of transportation to regulate signage on non-interstate highways and apply federal regulations only to the interstates.

B. Review the annual visitor count criteria for Private Directional signing taking into consideration start-up tourism attractions need for highway signing. Any new criteria needs to be enforced uniformly for all signage applications.

C. Signs for tourist attractions/activities should be erected for a specified period of time and then reviewed for effectiveness. Signs which serve the traveler and the tourism industry should have priority over those which simply fit the regulation criteria. Additionally, research should be conducted on the economic impact of signage and signs that do not benefit the traveler should be taken down.

D. New logos/symbols should be adopted for all Iowa Welcome Centers to meet internationally-accepted meanings for various visitor services.

### V. Legislative action required

None

### VI. Cooperative efforts

The Iowa Department of Transportation and the Division of Tourism should continue to work together to educate members of the Iowa tourism industry about signage programs.

### VII. Subcommittee Members

Division of Tourism staff

## TRAILS

Chair: Gerry Schnepf, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation

### I. Work statement

To review the Iowa trail system and recommend priorities for development and promotion of trails.

### II. Situation analysis

A. Iowa is a leader in the nation for rail/trail conversions.

B. Iowa has a good trails funding program administered by the Iowa Department of Transportation.

C. One of the largest organized bike rides in the nation, RAGBRAI, is held annually in Iowa.

D. Iowa has a good trails mixture including snowmobile trails, equestrian trails, nature and hiking trails, canoe routes and hard surfaced county roads.

E. Sesquicentennial celebration events will occur in 1996 for the Mormon Trail across Iowa.

F. State pilot routes for scenic byways were successfully signed and routed at the state level in 1993.

G. The Great River Road is one of the most scenic byways in the nation.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

A. Designation of a route across Iowa for the American Discovery Trail. Efforts need to be made so Iowa is not bypassed with this important trail.

B. Maintaining the quality of trails in Iowa.

C. Development of the Western Historic Trails center in Council Bluffs has excellent potential for Iowa.

#### **IV. Priorities**

##### **A. Materials**

1. Identify trails on IDOT (Iowa Department of Transportation) highway maps.
2. A separate trail/bikeway map be developed by IDOT.
3. Support (financially) the Des Moines Register trails map.
4. Include an insert card with tourism packets for respondents to request more information on trails.
5. Have Division of Tourism explore a pilot project of targeted mailing/promotion to trail users.
6. Develop an informational piece for cross-country skiing.
7. Have Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and Trails Council coordinate trail guide efforts.

B. Declare an 'Iowa Trails Week' which includes National Trails Day.

##### **C. Establish a Trails Advocacy Group**

1. Participate in trail planning efforts.
2. Develop trail safety guidelines, signage and promotional programs.
3. Promote, market and organize 'Iowa Trails Week'.
4. Develop a writers bureau for stories/articles to national magazines.
5. Promote trail usage and vacations as a 'life-time' sport in Iowa schools.
6. Evaluate state leadership on selected trails with statewide and interstate significance (American Discovery Trail).

D. Update the IDOT contracted trails study and incorporate it in the IDOT Five-Year Transportation Plan.

E. Establish a Tourism Marketing Committee to improve coordination between agencies receiving requests for trails information.

F. Develop a regional marketing and development plan for trails with other midwest states.

G. Make Iowa the leader in the nation in terms of trail types, variety, accessibility and scenic quality to users.

#### **V. Legislative action required**

A. Funding to continue the trails development program.

B. Funding to update the trails study.

#### **VI. Cooperative efforts**

A. Develop a Tourism Marketing Committee between state agencies to coordinate trails promotion and information.

B. Develop a regional marketing and development plan for trails with other midwest states.

#### **VII. Subcommittee members**

Dean Alexander, National Park Service

Nancy Burns, Iowa Department of Transportation

Dick Bruns, Cedar Falls Parks and Recreation  
Department

Marvin Diemer, State Representative

Jim Green, The Des Moines Register

Bill Hillman, Southwest Iowa Nature Trails, Inc.

Brian Holt, Hamilton County Conservation Board

Steve Kolbach, Northeast Iowa Tourism

Tom Neenan, Iowa Trails Council

Bill Riley, Clear Lake

Arnie Sohn, Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Bob Sturgeon, Barr Nunn Trucking

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Nancy Landess

### **OUTDOOR RECREATION**

Chair: Michael Carrier, Department of Natural Resources

#### **I. Work Statement**

To review outdoor recreation in relation to tourism in Iowa.

#### **II. Situation Analysis**

A. Iowa offers abundant natural resources for outdoor recreation that are under promoted. Throughout the state Iowa offers public parks and lands for hunting, fishing, canoeing, camping, hiking, biking, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, boating, swim-



ming, horseback riding, etc. Public parks and lands are generally well maintained, served by hospitable employees, and are safe for visitors.

B. Information currently available consists of limited geographical areas or a portion of public facilities.

### **III. Challenges and opportunities**

A. Promote existing outdoor recreational opportunities on a limited budget.

B. Coordinate information from both public and private sectors.

C. Need for long term funding for both development and care of outdoor recreation infrastructure.

### **IV. Priorities**

A. Promote outdoor recreation when marketing Iowa tourism. Emphasize natural beauty, attractions, hospitality, visitor safety, excellent transportation along with the multitude of outdoor activities available.

B. Develop comprehensive directories and guides on outdoor recreation offered in Iowa.

C. Support long term funding for outdoor recreation infrastructure and promotion of tourism.

D. Develop opportunities for more winter recreation activities such as snowmobiling and cross country skiing to attract more seasonal visitors.

### **V. Legislative action required**

The Legislature should fund the Division of Tourism and the Department of Natural Resources at adequate levels to promote outdoor recreation, develop and acquire lands, and to maintain facilities.

### **VI. Cooperative efforts**

Department of Natural Resources and Division of Tourism, along with counties, cities and the private sector should coordinate efforts to promote outdoor recreation to tourists.

### **VII. Subcommittee members**

Arnie Sohn, Department of Natural Resources

Division of Tourism staff liaison: Dave Reynolds

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