

EXPLORE MINNESOTA TOURISM
STATE OF MINNESOTA



MINNESOTA TRAVEL GREEN TASK FORCE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Minnesota Travel Green Task Force Report and Recommendations

Executive Summary

State legislation passed in 2007 directed Explore Minnesota Tourism, the state's tourism promotion office, to develop a Minnesota travel green program based on the input of related agencies, organizations and businesses. The emphasis of a travel green program is to protect the environment, promote tourism business practices that reduce environmental impact, educate travelers, and promote Minnesota travel. Explore Minnesota Tourism organized a task force of 22 representatives from various tourism associations, state agencies and businesses to analyze existing travel green programs and develop recommendations for Minnesota.

A survey by the Travel Industry Association of America found that U.S. travelers have an interest in patronizing travel companies that are environmentally friendly, but that other factors go into selecting a travel business as well, and that travelers are willing to pay only a little more for services from "green" businesses. An overview by the Minnesota Travel Green Task Force found that several states have developed voluntary programs to denote tourism businesses as "green," but that only one state has an official environmental certification program for tourism businesses.

A survey conducted by Explore Minnesota Tourism and the University of Minnesota Tourism Center found that consumers are interested in knowing that a tourism business is environmentally friendly, but were less interested in a travel green certification program. A second survey of the travel industry found high levels of interest in marketing Minnesota as a green destination and in implementing green business practices, but less interest in participating in a certification program.

As a result of this assessment and research, the Task Force focused on development of a Minnesota travel green program aimed at increasing the environmentally beneficial practices of Minnesota tourism businesses and at directing consumers seeking "green" businesses to those that are implementing green practices.

Specific recommendations and next steps include:

1. Educate tourism businesses about “being green.” This would include information about best environmental practices provided in print, online, and through education sessions, such as the annual Sustainable Tourism Conference.
2. Create a self-reporting system to add “travel green” information for businesses and attractions included in the state’s Explore Minnesota travel Web site, to allow consumers to search for businesses utilizing green practices.
3. Promote the availability of Minnesota green travel information to consumers, increasing awareness of Minnesota tourism industry efforts to operate in an environmentally sensitive way.

Introduction

In this time of escalating awareness and concern about the environment and climate change, almost everyone wants to be “green.” The travel industry is one business sector that has increasingly turned toward environmentally friendly practices, in part because of their financial benefits, but also because they are positively perceived by their customers. Travelers have long had an interest in vacations based on enjoying nature, choosing destinations rich in outdoor recreation, such as Minnesota’s lakes and trails. Increasingly, they also appreciate and seek out tourism destinations and experiences that are “green,” though this can mean a variety of things to different consumers.

As consumer interest in energy efficiency and the environment has grown, various certification programs and marketing tools have arisen to guide consumers to products that claim to be better for the environment. Definitions and criteria vary, as do programs, measurements, evaluation criteria and certifications. However, products that are identified in some way as being environmentally friendly are positively perceived in the marketplace. Increasingly, this is true for travel destinations and experiences, as well.

During the 2007 Minnesota legislative session, S.F. 1131 was passed directing Explore Minnesota Tourism, the state’s tourism promotion arm, to develop a Minnesota travel green program, based on the input of related agencies, organizations and businesses. As a result, Explore Minnesota Tourism organized a task force of more than 20 representatives of various tourism associations, state agencies and businesses with environmental programs. The Travel Green Task Force analyzed various aspects of green travel programs and developed recommendations for Minnesota.

Defining Green Travel

What does “green” mean? Being green is a popular concept today, and the word is used to describe a wide variety of activities and practices. Specific definitions can vary widely, depending on who is using the term. The common element to almost all uses of the term is that the product or practices are environmentally friendly – beneficial for the natural environment.

In the travel industry in particular, several related terms and trends have emerged, including sustainable tourism, geo-tourism, ecotourism, responsible tourism and nature-based tourism. These describe travel that not only helps preserve the

environment, but may also promote experiencing and supporting local culture, learning about the people and heritage of the destination, and enhancing the environment.

From the legislation (S.F. 1131) directing this analysis, the emphasis for a travel green program is to protect the environment, promote tourism business practices that reduce environmental impact, educate travelers, and promote Minnesota travel.

National Perspective on Green Travel Promotion

A 2007 survey conducted for the Travel Industry Association of America found that eight of ten U.S. adults consider themselves to be “environmentally conscious.” More than half indicated that they would be more likely to patronize travel companies (airlines, car rental agencies or hotels) that they considered to be environmentally responsible. On the other hand, only 14 percent of respondents said they would actually select a travel company because of their environmental practices. Just 13 percent would definitely be willing to pay higher rates or fares to environmentally responsible companies, although 56 percent said they might. The amount of the extra cost appears to be a key factor; the majority of respondents indicated they would pay up to five percent more.

“The results of the survey suggest that awareness of a travel service supplier’s efforts to operate in an environmentally responsible manner may be sufficient to attract additional patronage, but not at a significantly higher fare or rate,” according to Suzanne Cook, Travel Industry Association of America’s Senior Vice President of Research. “The ‘value assessment’ consumers ascribe to any travel service transaction appears to remain the primary determinant of their actual purchase behavior.”

Some state tourism agencies have begun to promote some aspects of green travel. Most states market some elements of nature-based travel, and a few states promote sustainable tourism or ecotourism. Several states have developed some type of voluntary program to ascribe some kind of environmental label to tourism businesses. Only one state has developed a full-scale certification program based on “green” practices.

Environmental Certification Programs

Certifications or other stamps of approval are being developed in part as marketing tools to assure consumers that “green” features of a product or business are really effective. Even with the existing certifications or ratings, a great deal of variability exists in areas of emphasis, degree of rigor and applicability to all sizes and types of businesses.

The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Rating System is a program of the U.S. Green Building Council. It uses third-party verification to confirm that new construction and remodeling projects meet specified criteria. However, LEED does not recognize or address business practices that may have a positive environmental impact. For instance, for lodging businesses, these could include linen re-use, elimination of mini-bottles and tubes for shampoos and lotions, and other efforts that impact day-to-day operation of tourism businesses.

Some programs more specific to tourism/hospitality businesses do exist. Green Seal (www.greenseal.org), an independent nonprofit organization that certifies more than 40 types of products and services according to environmental standards, has developed standards for lodging business purchases and practices. At this point, about 50 lodging properties in 10 states have the Green Seal (none in Minnesota). With an emphasis on sustainable tourism, the Green Globe Programme (www.greenglobe.org), based in Australia and popular in Europe, helps tourism businesses and communities improve their environmental performance; its benchmarks address economic, social and environmental areas.

At the state level, Travel Green Wisconsin is a voluntary program that reviews and certifies tourism businesses that have made a commitment to continuously improve their operations to reduce their environmental and social impact. This program helps businesses evaluate their operations, set goals and take specific actions aimed at environmental, social and economic sustainability. A sliding scale participation fee ranges from \$75-950. At this point, about 70 businesses participate in the certification program.

Within Minnesota, Green Routes, a green travel program of Renewing the Countryside, focuses on businesses selected by regional advisory groups made up of business owners, community leaders, and community-based organizations.

Each advisory group reviews applications and nominations of businesses and decides which to include in Green Routes materials based on how each business meets the following criteria:

- Contributes to the local economy by employing local residents, using local products and growers, and supporting local businesses
- Conserves and/or enhances our natural resource base (e.g. through use of renewable energy, recycling, green building techniques, wildlife habitat protection, etc.)
- Uses sustainably produced or organically grown products
- Engages customers and visitors through active, personal, and meaningful participation in nature, people, places, history, and/or cultures

After considering consumer and industry input, the Minnesota Travel Green Task Force does not view certification as a viable step into the promotion of green travel in Minnesota. The task force does not consider certification as key to encouraging businesses and organizations to implement green travel practices and may actually be an obstacle, given the needed time and financial resources that the certification process requires on an annual basis.

Although tourism businesses recognize green travel as a growth area for consumers, they do not currently view green practices as a means to significantly increase sales. Tourism businesses do view green practices as a means to cut costs and to protect the environment, both of which are important to them.

Consumer and Industry Surveys on Green Travel

Explore Minnesota Tourism and the University of Minnesota Tourism Center conducted two online surveys in September, 2007: one assessed consumer attitudes regarding green travel, and the other sought input from the Minnesota tourism industry regarding potential elements of a travel green state program.

In the consumer survey, Explore Minnesota Tourism customers responded that they are interested in knowing that a tourism business employs practices that protect the environment. However, consumers were less interested in whether a tourism business was part of a green travel certification program, and most were not willing to pay more for travel that is part of a green travel program.

The second survey gathered input about potential green travel program elements from almost 500 tourism businesses and organizations: chambers of commerce, visitors' bureaus, lodging businesses, festivals and attractions. There were high levels of interest in educating consumers about green practices, marketing Minnesota as a green destination and in learning about resources and tips for implementing green business practices. They were least likely to participate in a green travel certification program.

A previous tourism industry survey, conducted by the University of Minnesota Tourism Center in spring 2007, assessed attitudes and practices related to sustainable tourism. Overall, the majority of respondents perceived the benefits of adopting sustainable tourism practices, and many were already minimizing waste, purchasing environmentally beneficial products, and using positive landscaping features. The major challenges to adopting environmentally friendly practices, according to survey results, were the initial cost and the time and energy involved.

Current Perspectives on Travel Green

Minnesota travelers:

- In general, consumers are positively inclined toward destinations, experiences and businesses they perceive as environmentally friendly.
- Consumer demand for green travel certification is not currently a significant market force.
- Consumer interest in green business practices appears to be growing.

Minnesota tourism industry:

- Tourism businesses do not currently view green practices as a means to significantly increase sales.
- Tourism businesses do view green practices as a means to cut costs and to protect the environment.
- Tourism businesses seek best practices tips and education as a means to save money.
- A variety of resources exist at the private, local, state and federal level to help businesses and organizations guide green operating practices.
- The majority of tourism businesses are not interested in certification, based on surveys to date.

Minnesota green travel:

- Green travel can mean different things to different people; there is not a consistent definition of green travel.
- A role of the state is to facilitate self reporting of green practices by businesses and to make that information available to consumers interested in green travel.

Recommendations/Next Steps

The primary goal of a travel green program is to increase the environmental (green) practices of Minnesota tourism businesses and organizations. The Minnesota Travel Green Task Force recommends the following steps to support this goal:

1. Educate tourism businesses about "being green"

- Include green travel practices information in conferences and seminars
- Provide Web site links to resources and programs
- Include "best practices" tips in newsletters and trade journals
- Create a centralized Web site of available resources
- Create recognition programs that encourage green practices and help promote these concepts within the tourism industry

Education on green practices already occurs in a variety of levels and formats. The Sustainable Tourism Conference sponsored by the University of Minnesota Tourism Center is a day-long program held each April (2008 will be the third year for the conference) focusing on sustainable tourism, from global to local, with an emphasis on hands-on application of sustainable tourism practices. The annual Explore Minnesota Tourism Conference is another venue for carrying the green travel message.

A wealth of information is available in print and online to aid businesses and organizations in implementing green business practices. It is provided by federal and state agencies, as well as a variety of businesses and nonprofit organizations. (See the appendix on Travel Green Business Resources as an initial listing of some of these information sources.) Links to these information sources provided on a single Web site could provide easy, quick access to this information for Minnesota tourism businesses.

Other potential educational resources include speakers' bureaus, energy fairs, case studies and tips in newsletters. Trade journals also provide a significant opportunity to inspire best practices.

New in 2008, Explore Minnesota Tourism will be giving the first Sustainable Tourism Award to recognize a person, company, or institution for outstanding efforts to sustain, protect and enhance Minnesota's environment while promoting tourism. A concept to consider in the future is a highbred Minnesota Travel Green recognition program developed from existing models, such as one by the

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, but tailored to sustainable practices in the tourism industry. Through this type of recognition program, early adopters can become examples for others.

A task force will develop plans to implement an educational process for tourism businesses and organizations on green practices. Focus will be on best practices, existing resources, and generating industry participation. A strategic plan for green education will be developed by June of 2008 with a goal of providing Minnesota tourism businesses with the tools and resources to be leaders in green travel practices. Resource needs will be identified as part of the plan. Implementation of the plan will be ongoing, and will include a focus on sustainable tourism at the 2009 statewide conference on tourism.

Given the baseline that has been established with the 2007 State of Sustainable Tourism in Minnesota survey, repeating this survey annually would be a means to have ongoing measurement of changes in adoption of green travel programs and practices.

2. Create a self-reporting system to add "travel green" information to Explore Minnesota business and attraction listings, to allow consumers to search on the state travel Web site for businesses utilizing green practices

- Determine technology needs and develop a database of criteria of tourism businesses that promote green business practices.
- Allow consumers to select their green criteria to find appropriate destinations.

Thousands of lodging businesses and tourism attractions are already included on the Explore Minnesota Tourism Web site (exploreminnesota.com). Detailed listing information and descriptions are provided and updated by the businesses and attractions themselves. The Web site is the focus of the Explore Minnesota marketing campaign, and is used by thousands of consumers planning trips to Minnesota. It is the ideal venue for providing consumers with information on "green" businesses and destinations.

Given that there is no consistent definition of effective green travel practices, marketing of travel green practices needs to be done on an individual (personalized) basis to allow the consumers' interests to be matched with business practices. The recommendation is to develop an "amenity" grid on the Explore Minnesota Tourism Web site that allows consumers to check the practices they are looking for in a business or destination, e.g. recycles, uses LED lighting, local

purchasing, rainwater system, etc., and allows the business or destination to list their current practices. The resulting list of potential destinations will be those that, after a sort, provide a match between consumer and business.

This will allow potential travelers to connect with the destinations that meet their definition of green, rather than labeling something as “green” without clear and consistent definitions to back it up. In addition, trade associations such as the Bed and Breakfast Association, will encourage their members to post their green policy in their guest rooms.

Explore Minnesota Tourism will be responsible for implementation of this “travel green” self-reporting system. The content and design of the reporting system will be determined by June of 2008.

Representatives of the tourism industry would review the plan, including travel green practices proposed as options in the self-reporting system. After content is finalized and the database in place, Explore Minnesota Tourism would promote availability of the travel green self-reporting system to the industry, and businesses and organizations would begin to add their “green” profiles to their Explore Minnesota listings. These steps would take place from July to November, 2008, if financial resources are available.

If resources are insufficient, a budget request will be prepared for the 2009 session. If an “amenity grid” database is developed to promote to consumers, it will also provide an opportunity to monitor business postings in Explore Minnesota Tourism database and track changes in participation in green travel practices.

3. Communicate to consumers travel green business and attraction practices

- Promote the availability of Minnesota green travel information to consumers.

Explore Minnesota Tourism would market green travel to consumers, based on this new inventory of the green practices of each reporting business and organization. This would not only link consumers with these businesses, but would also create awareness of Minnesota tourism industry efforts to operate in an environmentally sensitive way.

Marketing and communication will be led by Explore Minnesota Tourism and coordinated with tourism organizations throughout the state. Timing will be dependent upon database development, with an ideal target of 2009 for marketing green travel to consumers.

APPENDIX A: Travel Green Legislation

TRAVEL GREEN

Chapter 131, S.F. 1131 (2007 Legislative Session):

Sec. 93. **MINNESOTA TRAVEL GREEN PROGRAM.**

- 50.10 (a) The director of Explore Minnesota Tourism shall develop a Minnesota travel
50.11green program to recognize tourism businesses that have made a commitment to reduce
50.12their environmental impact. A Minnesota travel green program must be a voluntary
50.13program designed to promote the Explore Minnesota brand and give the state and
50.14hospitality business participants a marketing edge, promote smart business practices,
50.15reduce costs, educate travelers, promote Minnesota travel, and protect the environment.
50.16 (b) In developing the program, the director shall actively seek the ideas, advice,
50.17and participation of:
50.18 (1) the Minnesota travel and tourism industry;
50.19 (2) the Explore Minnesota Tourism Council;
50.20 (3) the University of Minnesota Tourism Center;
50.21 (4) the commissioner of natural resources;
50.22 (5) the commissioner of the Pollution Control Agency;
50.23 (6) the Minnesota Environmental Initiative;
50.24 (7) the International Ecotourism Society;
50.25 (8) Renewing The Countryside organization;
50.26 (9) statewide lodging and hospitality associations;
50.27 (10) private industry sponsors; and
50.28 (11) other interested organizations.
50.29 (c) The director shall:
50.30 (1) research other states' similar programs;
50.31 (2) determine criteria that must be met in order for a business to participate in the
50.32program;
50.33 (3) determine who will evaluate the criteria in relation to a particular business;
50.34 (4) estimate the level of private sector partnership participation;
51.1 (5) determine the marketing techniques that will have the most impact; and
51.2 (6) establish a timeline and budget to get the program up and running.
51.3 (d) The director shall present the recommendations to the legislative committees
51.4with jurisdiction over the environment and tourism, along with draft legislation to codify
51.5the program.

APPENDIX B: TRAVEL GREEN TASK FORCE

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APPENDIX C: INDUSTRY SURVEY

Prepared by the University of Minnesota Tourism Center
and Explore Minnesota Tourism
Fall 2007

Minnesota Tourism Industry Interest Regarding 'Travel Green' as legislatively defined

Overview:

492 questionnaires were completed online by Minnesota Tourism industry organizations represented in Explore Minnesota Tourism's database.

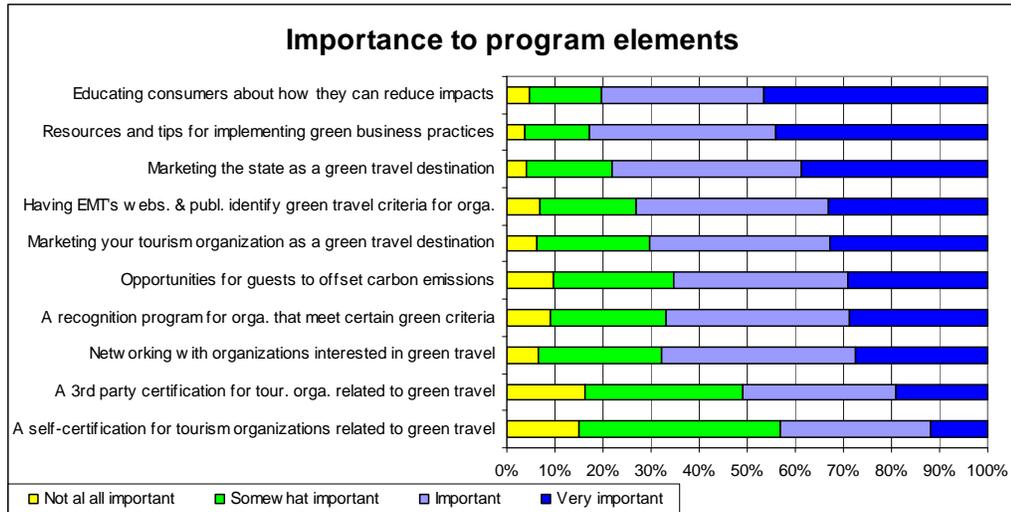
Results indicate: 1) all potential program elements are somewhat important to respondents, 2) three are most important to all respondents: consumer education, resources/tips, and marketing the state as a green destination, 3) all potential program elements are likely to have some industry participation, 4) industry is most likely to participate in two areas: consumer education and obtaining resources/tips for businesses/organizations.

Self or third-party certification was of least interest to respondents. Only 24% were willing to pay for a 'Travel Green' Program and, of those, most frequently identified payments were between \$76 and \$100 or between \$26 and \$50. Significant differences regarding importance and participation exist between industry entities that participate in green programs and those who do not. Comments from respondents were most frequently positive, but given the response rate and cautions about the sample, the true percent of positive responses should be further explored.

Questions of interest:

What potential elements of a 'Travel Green' program are important to MINNESOTA tourism industry respondents?

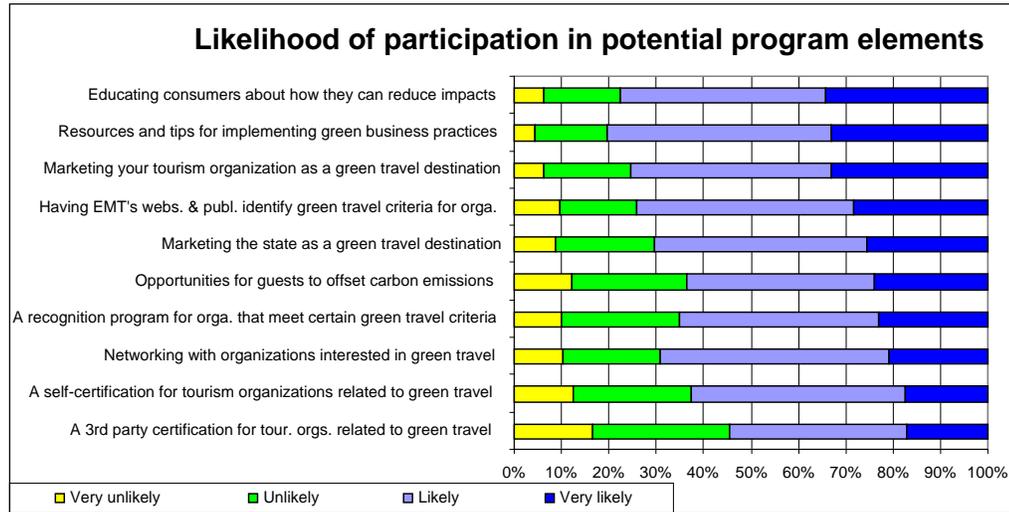
Results: All 10 program elements were deemed important by 50% or more of respondents; three elements were rated important or very important to more than 75%: educating consumers about minimizing their environmental impacts, resources/tips for implementing green practices, and marketing the state as a green destination. Certification programs were deemed least important to respondents.



Four of 10 elements did not significantly differ in their importance between respondents who did and did not participate in 'green programs': consumer education, resources/tips for implementing green practices, opportunities to offset carbon emissions, self certification.

In which 'Travel Green' program elements would industry respondents participate?

Results: The majority of respondents indicated they were likely to participate in all 10 potential. More than 75% of respondents indicated they were likely or very likely to participate in: educating consumers about minimal environmental impacts, resources and tips for implementing green business practices and marketing the state as a green destination. A significant and positive relationship exists between perceived importance of and participation likelihood in the potential program elements ($r=.80, p < .01$).



Two of the 10 elements did not differ in likelihood of participation between respondents who did and did not participate in 'green programs: consumer education and resources and tips for businesses.

What sentiments do industry respondents express about a potential Travel Green program?

General tenor: 43% +, 21% mixed, 9% negative (out of 106 who made comments)

Methods:

Overnight accommodations, attractions, festivals and events with e-mail addresses in Explore Minnesota Tourism’s database were invited to take the online Travel Green survey. The survey was administered using Zoomerang – a commercially available, web-based survey tool. An initial e-mail invitation was sent on Tuesday September 4, 2007 with follow-up e-mail reminders sent on September 7th and 11th. The survey deadline was September 12th. A total of 492 completed surveys were obtained from the 3,625 e-mail invitations, for a 13.6% response rate. Summary results can be found at:

www.zoomerang.com/web/SharedResults/SharedResultsPasswordPage.aspx?ID=L235648BVKNU

Who responded?

By sector: Respondents were most frequently associated with the lodging sector (39.5%) followed by those with events/festivals (14.4%), other (13%), government (11.3%), attractions (10.3%), CVB (7.7%), and 2% with retail.

By region: North Central West 33.0%, Northeast 22.5%, Southern 23.2%, Metro 21.3%

Participation in 1+ 'green' programs: 45%

Summary: Good sector and regional representation across Minnesota. At least 4/10 tend toward eco-tourism as evidenced by their participation in some 'green' program

APPENDIX C: CONSUMER SURVEY

Prepared by the University of Minnesota Tourism Center
and Explore Minnesota Tourism
Fall 2007

Consumer Interest Regarding 'Travel Green' as Legislatively Defined

Overview:

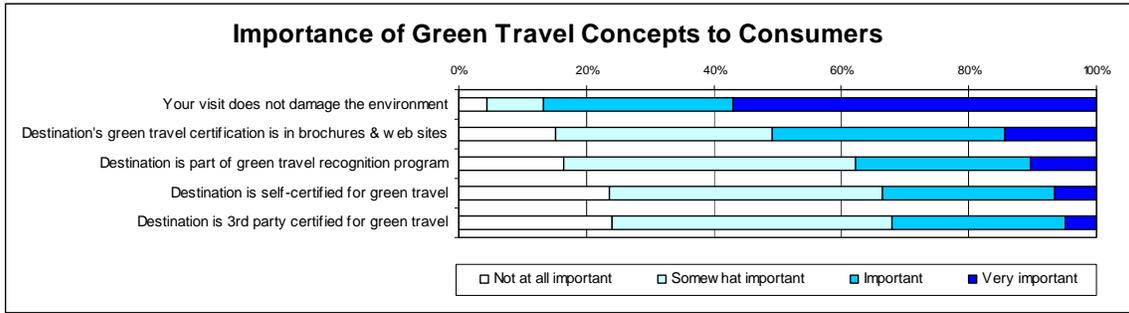
A total of 274 'Travel Green' surveys were completed online by customers of Explore Minnesota Tourism. These consumers placed higher importance on travel green concepts related to their travel and planning experience than they did on green travel certification. They were also more likely to have previously sought out 'green' travel experiences than to have sought out destinations that were recognized or certified green. The majority of respondents did not know whether they would be willing to pay more for travel that is part of a Travel Green program; a quarter would be willing to pay more.

Questions of interest:

What potential elements of a 'Travel Green' program are important to consumers of Minnesota travel?

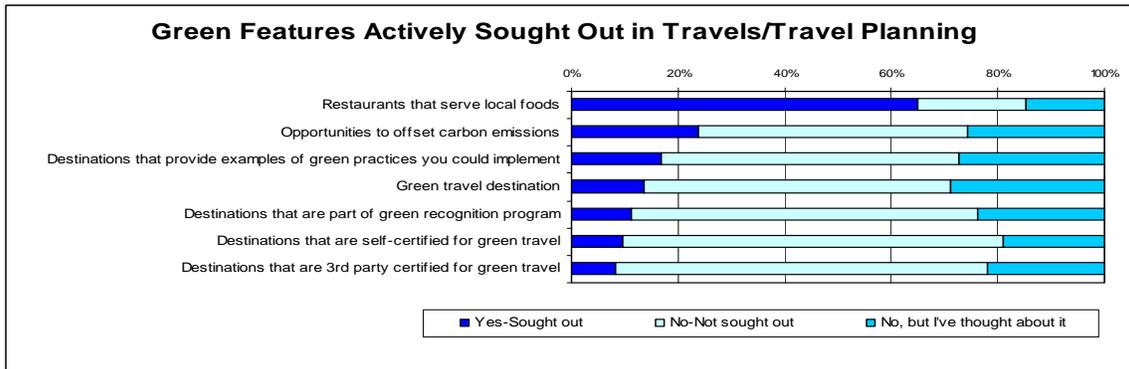
Two of five green travel concepts were rated important (i.e. important or very important) by 50% or more of respondents. "Your visit does not damage the environment" was rated important by 87% of respondents and "The destination/attraction informs you of its green travel certification in brochures, web sites, etc." was rated important by 51% of respondents. The remaining concepts, addressing whether and how a destination/attraction is part of a green travel program, were rated important by fewer than 40% of respondents.

Respondents with higher previous green travel participation levels (i.e., reported having sought out 2 or more travel green features) were more likely to consider 4 of the 5 green travel concepts as important. Only the concept addressing damage to the environment did not differ in importance between higher and lower participation levels.



What green travel features have been sought out by consumers who travel to Minnesota?

Only one green feature – “Restaurants that serve local foods” – had been actively sought out by a majority (65%) of consumers in their travels and travel planning. Nearly one quarter (24%) of respondents had sought out opportunities to offset carbon emissions. Each of the other 5 features had been sought out by 17% or fewer respondents. With the exception of the “local foods” feature, more respondents had *thought about* seeking out each feature (i.e., without actually seeking it out) than had actually sought out the feature.



Would consumers be willing to pay more for travel that is part of a Green Travel Program?

The majority of respondents (54.0%) didn’t know whether they would be willing to pay more for travel that is part of a Travel Green program. A slightly higher proportion would be willing to pay more for travel that is part of a Travel Green program (24.8%) than would not be willing to pay more (21.2%). Of the 25% of respondents who would be willing to pay more, 70% (i.e., 18% of all respondents) would be willing to add up to 10% to their trip cost; 18% did not know how much more they would be willing to pay.

What sentiments do consumers express about a potential Travel Green program?

Open-ended comments generally reflected respondents' curiosity and support for a green program. Positive comments (27) outnumbered negative ones (6), with the balance being "neutral". (Note: 29 of 130 responses were "No comment" or similar.)

What is the relationship between consumers' prior experience seeking out green travel features and their ratings of the importance of green travel program concepts?

As mentioned above, respondents in the high participation group (i.e., reported having sought out 2 or more travel green features) were more likely to consider 4 of the 5 green travel concepts as important. However, overall measures of participation (i.e., total number of 'green' features that had been sought out) and importance of travel green concepts (i.e., sum of importance ratings) were not positively correlated.

Methods:

A sample of 4,994 consumers – individuals who provided e-mail addresses when inquiring for travel information from Explore Minnesota Tourism from March through August 2007 – was invited to take the online Travel Green survey. The survey was administered using Zoomerang – a commercially available, web-based survey tool. E-mail invitations/reminders were sent on September 6, 10 and 12 2007, with a September 12 response deadline. Five \$50 cash prizes served as incentive. After adjusting for 181 undeliverable e-mail addresses, the 274 completed surveys accounted for a relatively low 5.7% response rate. This response rate points toward results being more directional rather than definitive.

Summary results can be found at:

www.zoomerang.com/web/SharedResults/SharedResultsPasswordPage.aspx?ID=L23592UU4UE2

Explore Minnesota Tourism Web site users could take an identical survey by clicking on a "Travel Green Survey" box on the Explore Minnesota Tourism Web site home page from August 31 through September 12. The 33 completed survey responses were too few to analyze separately; they were not added to the other consumer group due to significant differences between group results.

Who responded?

By state: 54% Minnesota residents, 26% residents of the 11 other North Central states, 19% from remaining 38 states

By travel: Travel, and especially travel *to* Minnesota was prevalent – 92% took at least one overnight pleasure trip (anywhere) in the past 12 months, with a mean of 4.7 trips; 83% had taken at least 1 pleasure trip in Minnesota in the past 5 years, including 45% who took five or more such trips; 30% had taken 1 or more business trips in Minnesota in the past five years

Actively sought out 1+ ‘green’ features in travels/travel planning-70%; 2+ features-31%

Summary: Respondents’ state of residence reflects the mix of travelers to Minnesota found in other studies; respondents were experienced Minnesota travelers, and many had at least some experience seeking out ‘green’ travel

APPENDIX D: STATE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN MINNESOTA SURVEY

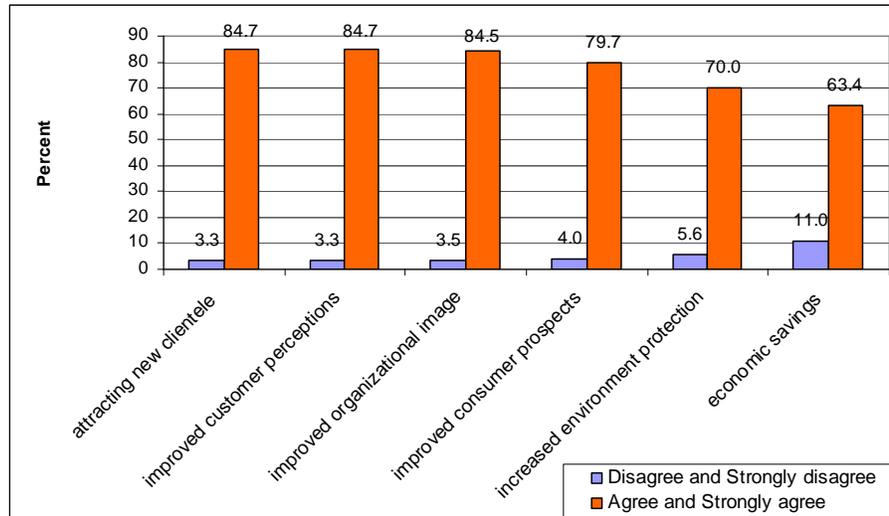
Baseline Survey Prepared by University of Minnesota Tourism Center

In the spring of 2007, the University of Minnesota Tourism Center undertook a survey to assess the State of Sustainable Tourism for Minnesota. The goal of the study was to:

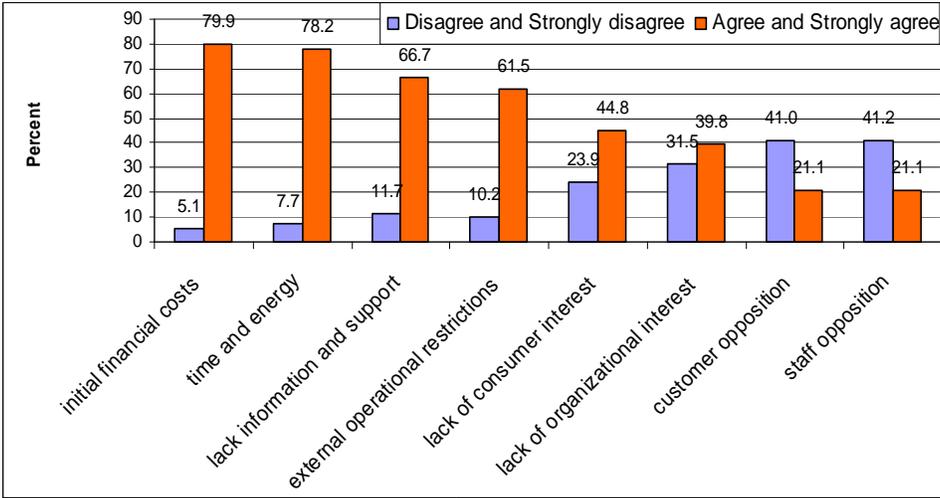
- Identify a baseline of practices
- Identify needs for education and information
- Identify attitudes about sustainable tourism
- Continue dialogue on sustainable tourism

Overall, the majority of those who responded perceive benefits. The challenges included resource challenges (money, time/energy, information) and external and internal complications, such as external operations restrictions and staff/consumer disinterest. Those who responded were fairly well along in waste minimization, environmental purchasing, air quality, and landscaping. Significant opportunities exist in energy, water consumption, and consumer education.

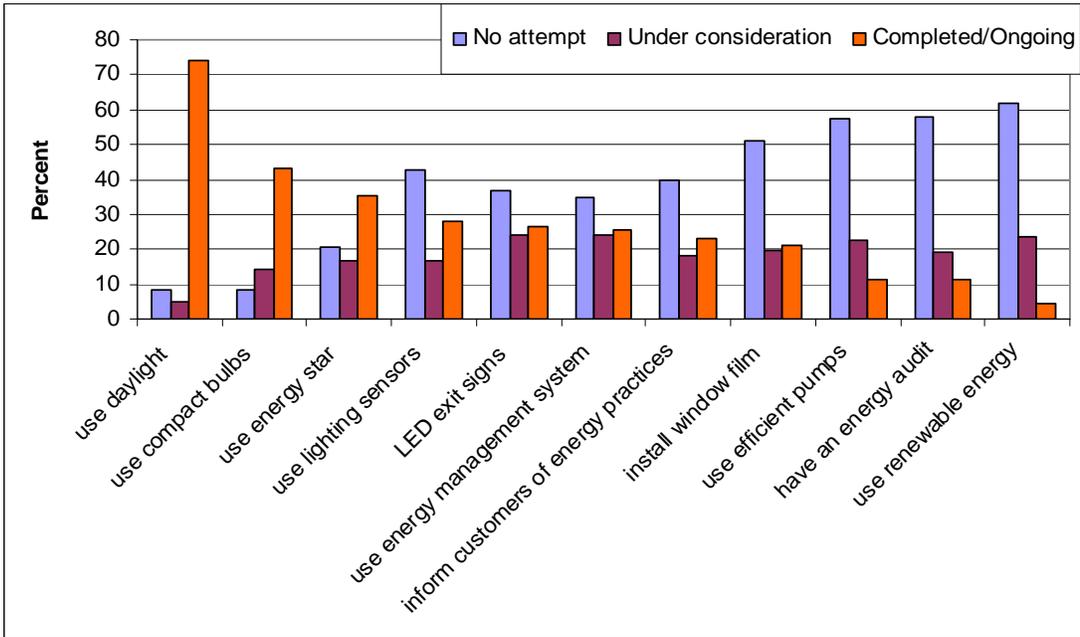
The benefits of adopting sustainable tourism practices:



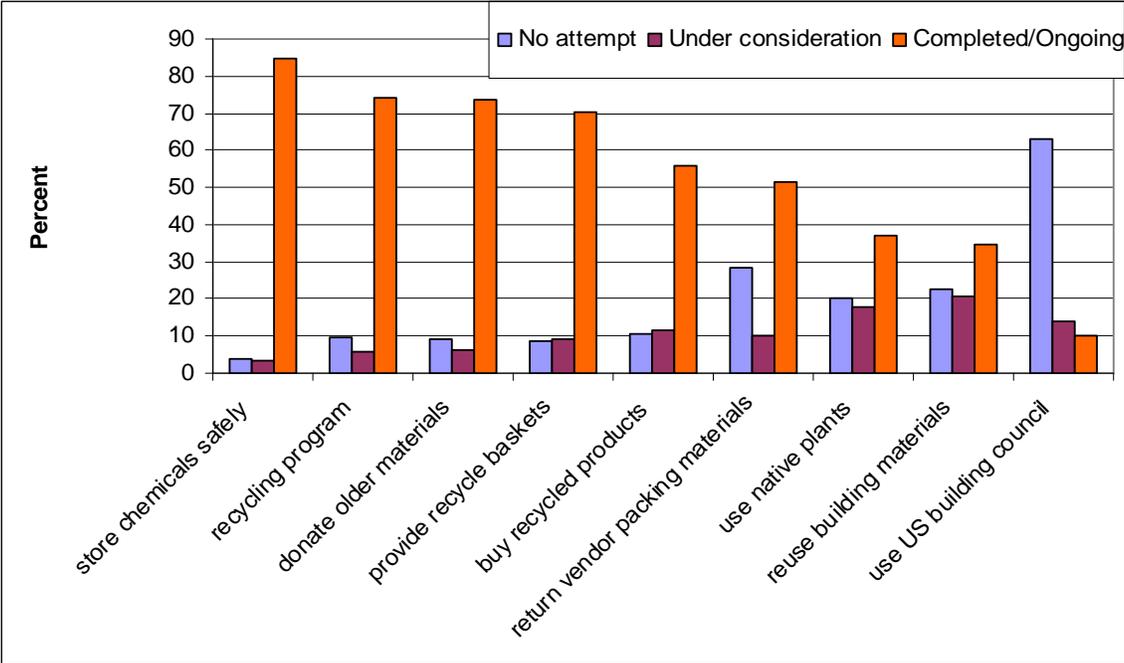
The challenges of adopting sustainable tourism practices:



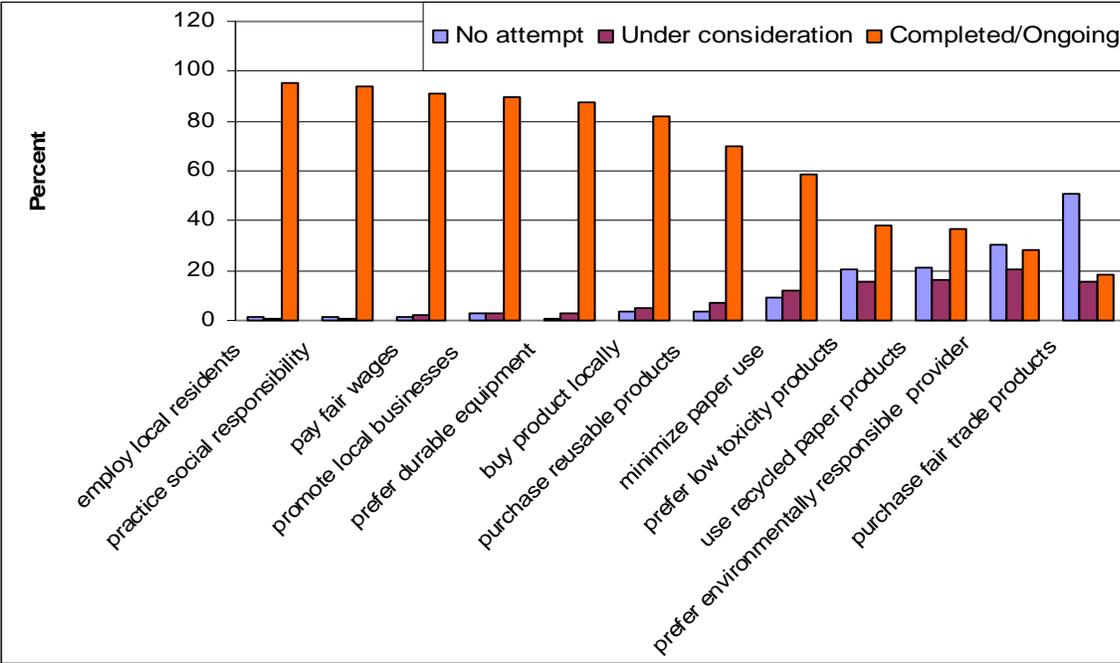
Energy efficiency practices:



Waste minimization practices:

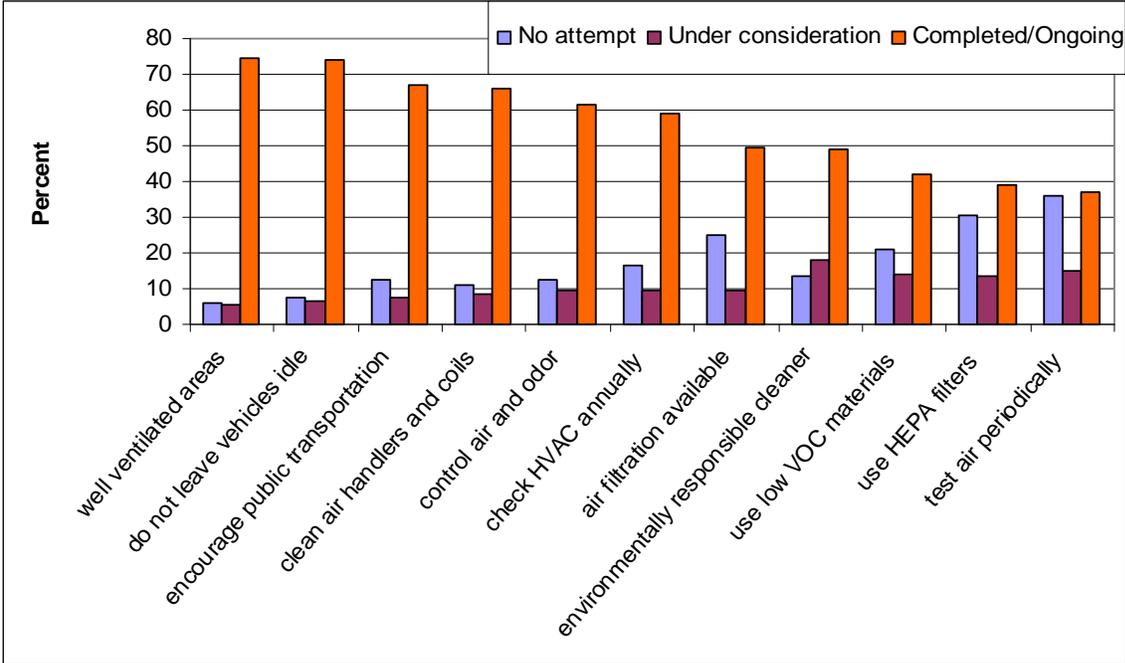


Environmental purchasing practices:

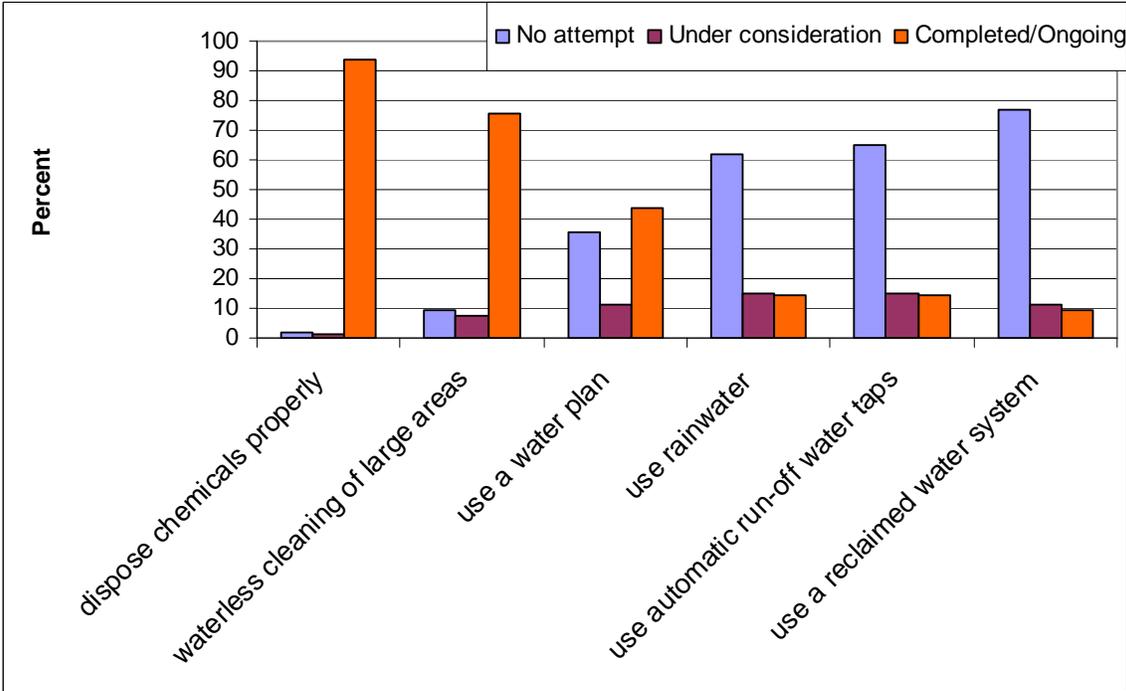


**Minnesota Travel Green Task Force
Report and Recommendations**

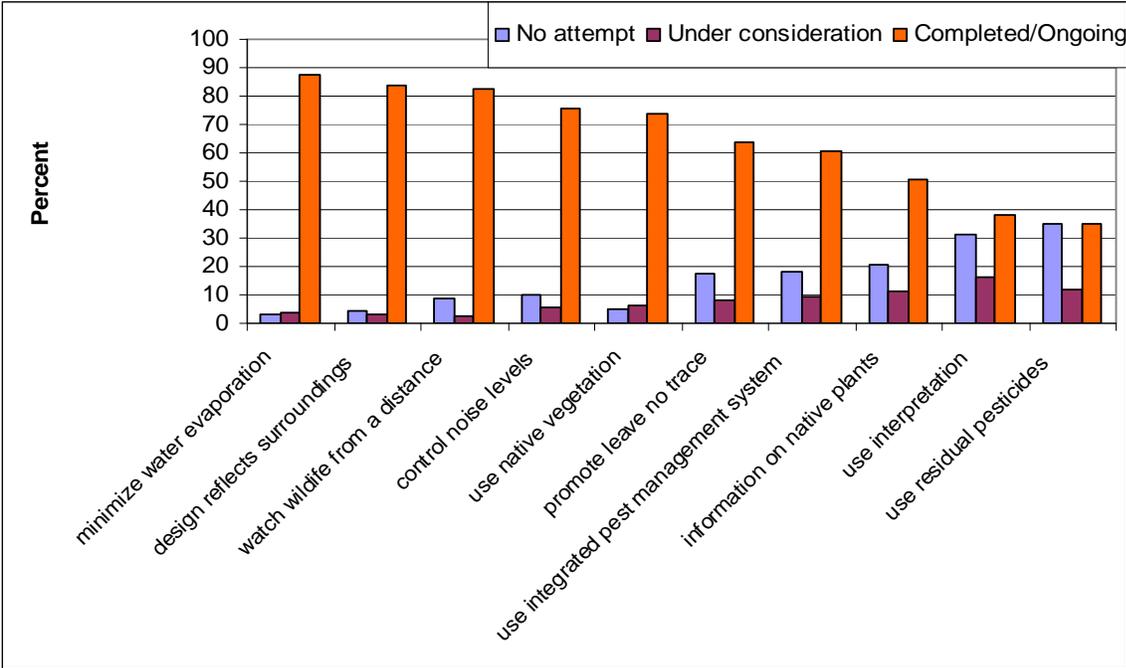
Air quality practices:



Water conservation practices:



Landscaping/Wildlife practices:



Source: State of Sustainable Tourism in Minnesota, 2007

APPENDIX E: A PARTIAL LIST OF GREEN BUSINESS RESOURCES

Prepared by Jan Joannides, Green Routes/Renewing the Countryside, October 1, 2007

GENERAL SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS RESOURCES

National Center for Appropriate Technology's Smart Communities Network

Web site: www.smartcommunities.ncat.org/business/buintro.shtml Excellent sustainable business introduction, well worth the time to explore thoroughly. Includes funding resource lists, assessment tools, policy information, great links and much more.

Next Step - Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Web site: www.nextstep.state.mn.us/section.cfm?topic=17. An extensive and handy list of resources.

Renewing the Countryside

Web site: www.renewingthecountryside.org Renewing the Countryside Web site includes a searchable database of stories and resources related to sustainable development, practices and technologies.

GreenBiz Toolbox

Web site: www.greenbiz.com/toolbox/ phenomenal grouping of practical resources, comprising four segments: Green Biz Essentials – two-minute briefings on key business issues (e.g. travel, recycling computers, etc); How-To – guide to implementing sustainability on wide range of topics; Reports – research galore; and Tools – resources to help you assess your company, calculate your impact, etc.

Sustainable Development Planner

Web site: www.gemi.org/sd/ Free detailed and comprehensive self-assessment tool is designed to help companies evaluate, plan for and integrate sustainable development into business processes.

University of Minnesota Tourism Center

Web site:
www.tourism.umn.edu/research/sustainabletourism/index.html#business.
Links to resources on different aspects of sustainability by tourism industry segment, I.e. resources for lodging, festivals ...

Green Routes Resource Guide

An annotated list of resources to help businesses become more sustainable.
Will be available soon on www.greenroutes.org

Green Guide

Web site: www.greenguide.org A Web site and printed directory with information and resources for greening as an individual or business and with links to green businesses.

Dovetail Partners

Web site: www.dovetailinc.org

SOURCING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Guide

Web site: greenguardian.com/EPPG/ While developed for local governments and school systems, this document is packed full of information about choices in everything from flooring to copy machines. It also provides links to vendors.

Co-op America Green Business

Web site: www.coopamerica.org/greenbusiness Co-op America is a membership organization, with much of use online for nonmembers. Its Green Business Program provides the networks, resources, and technical assistance. See the National Green Pages with its directory search of green businesses and products all over the U.S.

Eco-products

Web site: www.ecoproducts.com/ Sustainable products for Business, Building, Office and Home.

The Green Mercantile

Web site: www.greenmercantile.com/ A non-grocery retail store specializing in environmentally and socially responsible products. Based in Duluth, with very good online marketing.

Green Earth Office Supply

Web site: greenearthofficesupply.stores.yahoo.net/ From art supplies to bags to computer accessories and desk supplies and everything between and beyond, including home and school supplies.

Green Home Environmental Store

Web site: www.greenhome.com/about/policy/approvpolicy.shtml Quite comprehensive, includes furnishing, cleaning, office and outdoor products, provides ample basic information about the green industrial revolution (e.g. what is a footprint), and even has compiled a browse able "toxipedia" with definitions of environmental terms, especially helpful in understanding green products.

WASTE and RECYCLING

Reduce.org

Web site: www.reduce.org. A program of the MPCA. Excellent and comprehensive guide to waste and pollution reduction and composting, with fact-sheets, slide shows, a topical index, and guides to reducing waste and avoiding toxics.

Minnesota-TAP Waste Reduction Techniques

Web site: mntap.umn.edu/resources/Checklist.htm. A handy list of waste reduction techniques for all aspects of businesses in many sectors.

<http://mntap.umn.edu/wastes.htm>. A browseable list of waste reduction techniques for particular wastes.

Minnesota Exchange

Web site: mnexchange.org/ Minnesota Exchange, coordinated by MnTAP, is a free business reuse network that links organizations that have reusable goods they no longer need to those who can use them, helping prevent usable materials from becoming waste.

Water Conservation

Web site: www.greenbiz.com/toolbox/essentials_third.cfm?LinkAdvID=4089&CFID=96365&CFTOKEN=78547820. True to Green Biz exhaustive standards, yet easy-to-digest.

Minnesota Waste Wise

Web site: www.mnchamber.com/about/wise_waste.cfm Helps member businesses and organizations to reduce solid waste, save money and protect the environment through technical and informational services.

GREEN ENERGY

Fresh Energy

Web site: www.fresh-energy.org. Based in A Minnesota nonprofit leading the transition to a clean, efficient and fair energy system. The Resources page includes lists of Minnesota sustainable energy businesses categorized by type (e.g. biomass, clean fuel, wind, etc.), and basic information on sustainable energy.

Next Step

Web site: www.nextstep.state.mn.us/section.cfm?topic=18. Resource list put together by the director of Fresh Energy.

Energy Star

Web site: www.energystar.gov EPA and DOE backed site, and very well-organized. Offers businesses and consumers energy-efficient solutions. Find products and services as locally as is possible. Search the “Partner Resources” page to seek financial incentives.

Energy Federation Incorporated

Web site: www.energyfederation.org/consumer/default.php Catalog of energy efficiency products of many types found in the home or business.

Clean Energy Resource Teams

Web site: www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/publications.html CERTS are a multi-agency collaboration, networking and coordinating regional community energy sustainability efforts. Includes a downloadable resource manual for communities!

Minnesota Incentives for Renewable Energy

Web site: www.dsireusa.org/library/includes/map2.cfm?state=MN¤tpageid=3 List of production incentive, grants, loans, tax exemptions and rebates for renewable energy in Minnesota. Includes state rules, regulations and policies section.

GREEN BUILDING

NCAT's Smart Communities Network: Sustainable Buildings Resources
Web site: www.smartcommunities.ncat.org/buildings/gbintro.shtml A thorough primer on green building, with great linked information including green building success stories.

MOEA Green Building

Web site: www.moea.state.mn.us/greenbuilding/index.cfm Essential resource from MPCA. Follow directly down the left margin for thorough tutelage in green building, including (enhanced) affordability; financing and incentives; specifications and ratings; materials sourcing; construction and demolition waste and water issues; case studies; a consultants directory and much more.

Minnesota Green Communities

Web site: www.greencommunitiesonline.org/minnesota An initiative designed to foster the creation of affordable, healthier, and energy-efficient housing throughout Minnesota.

Minnesota Sustainable Design Guide

Web site: www.msdg.umn.edu/ A tool to learn about sustainability, manage design decisions, and integrate sustainable design into the building design and operation processes for new and renovated facilities.

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING

EPA Great Lakes Green Landscaping Information

Web site: www.epa.gov/greenacres/ Regional green landscaping information, including slide shows, videos and fact sheets. Basics for anyone undertaking natural landscaping:

www.epa.gov/greenacres/toolkit/chap4.html. Minnesota resource listings:
www.epa.gov/greenacres/nativeplants/mn-resor.PDF

Sustainable Urban Landscapes Information Series

Web site: www.sustland.umn.edu/index.html Includes step-by-step landscaping design self-education series, with an emphasis on sustainability and energy conservation. Includes Minnesota sustainable plants database:
www.sustland.umn.edu/plant

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: Landscaping with Native Plant

Web site: www.dnr.state.mn.us/gardens/nativeplants/index.html Covers every aspect of landscaping with native plants. Includes regional plant lists, links to state suppliers and five garden designs using distinct kinds of plants. economic storm water management technique.

Rain Gardens Information

Web site: www.nextstep.state.mn.us/res_detail.cfm?id=1449. An entry on the Minnesota Sustainable Communities Network Next Step resources pages, with valuable links. Rain gardens are small, shallow low spots, planted with

native perennials and shrubs, which catch and hold flowing rainwater and snowmelt - making them an aesthetic and economic storm water management technique.

Green Roofs Information

Web site: www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/mnenvironment/summer2006/greenroofs.html Summer 2006 article on green roof basics, with a focus on Minnesota.

Minnesota Shoreland Management Resource Guide

Web site: www.d.umn.edu/~seawww/quick/ns.html. A useful Web site that describes why and how to manage shoreland appropriately. Includes links to more in depth information with a focus on Minnesota

LOCAL FOODS

The USDA Appropriate Technology Transfer in Areas (ATTRA) Minnesota Food Directories List

Web site: http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/localfood_results.php?Class=MN. List includes links to the following organizations: Minnesota Grown: directory listing over 700 Minnesota farm businesses and a dozen other organizations or networks that have local foods.

Homegrown Heartland Marketplace

Web site: www.homegrownheartlandmarketplace.com. This is a new site where local farmers and distributors list products they have available. Buyers must become members to use this site.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Green Routes

Web site: www.greenroutes.org. The Green Routes Web site is an easy-to-use tool to help you find one-of-a-kind places to eat, play, shop, sleep, and learn. Green Routes is a program of Renewing the Countryside (www.renewingthecountryside.org), an organization that promotes sustainable rural development.

University of Minnesota Tourism Center

Web site: www.tourism.umn.edu The Tourism Center conducts tourism research and provides education and outreach programs for the tourism industry, community groups and students. Features include Economic Impact calculators, Agritourism Resources from the University of Minnesota Tourism Center, and updated information on the annual Minnesota Sustainable Tourism Conference held each spring. particular interest is the segment on Minnesota's Agritourism efforts in the Success Stories section.

GREEN EVENTS

Web site: www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings/ Provides info to plan meetings while minimizing negative impacts on the environment.