

Appendix C: Montana Tourism & Recreation Charter and Principles

In 2007, the Tourism Advisory Council adopted the following Principles and the Charter upon which they are based. The Charter remains relevant to the current Strategic Plan.

Charter Principles:

1. Maintain integrity of place and destination appeal
2. Promote and highlight the businesses, services and opportunities that are unique to Montana
3. Promote sustainable resource conservation, including conservation of energy, water and wildlife
4. Participate in and help lead community stewardship partnerships to maintain Montana assets
5. Identify and appeal to markets that value and seek to help sustain Montana's distinct character
6. Foster a diversity of products and services that meet the demand of a demographic cross-section of the "geotourism" market
7. Ensure visitor satisfaction and an enduring market demand through education of Montana residents about the benefits of sustainable tourism
8. Work with Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, Montana Office of Tourism and other tourism organizations throughout the state to evaluate effective implementation of the Tourism Charter

Montana Tourism and Recreation Charter:

WHERE AS the travel and recreation industry of Montana recognizes our greatest asset in today's marketplace is Montana's great outdoors and pristine environment, including the headwaters of the continent, scenic vistas, wide open spaces, and abundant and charismatic wildlife;

AND WHERE AS our exceptional outdoor places are enhanced by equally distinctive communities, with a rich history of friendliness, authenticity, artistic traditions, and a people who derive their solid intellectual and creative capital from Montana's strong sense of place;

AND WHERE AS the people of the twelve tribal nations of Montana sustain an enduring cultural heritage and land ethic and provide opportunities for distinctive, enriching and educational experiences for visitors, particularly through culturally appropriate tourism businesses owned by American Indians;

AND WHERE AS we understand that Montana's collective authentic character represents values that are increasingly in demand by the economically and socially desirable "geotourist" market¹ including many business travelers and most leisure travelers. These travelers share many common values with most Montanans, including a desire to maintain the unique and authentic character of places;

AND WHERE AS the greatest long-term economic advantage for Montana's travel and recreation industry, lies with the geotourism market and other visitors who share the respect that Montana residents and communities have for our natural and cultural assets;

AND WHERE AS we have observed that despite increasing market demand, there are ever fewer places in North America that have retained their authentic feel and sense of place as they are "discovered" and changed;

AND WHERE AS the Montana character won't be maintained through benign neglect but rather requires shared commitment and continuous attention.

THEREFORE, the State of Montana, the Montana State Tribal Economic Development Commission and Montana's travel and recreation industry adopt this charter of stewardship and commitment to individual community-based economic development, promotion and conservation of the unique and treasured Montana character. From this point forward, we resolve to advocate, forge partnerships and take individual and collective actions to guarantee that the authentic and highly valued Montana experience is available for future generations of residents and visitors.