

## Kudos

Our congratulations go out to travel partners who've been featured and recognized this past month. If we've missed you, please drop us a line at [ksschmidt@nd.gov](mailto:ksschmidt@nd.gov).

- Group Travel Leader recognized Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site, Rugby and Valley City <http://www.grouptourleader.com/Article.aspx?id=681>
- Nelson's Pumpkin Patch and agritourism was featured in the Grand Forks Herald
- Pheasant hunting in North Dakota got great blogs and tweets from Versatile Hunter
- The Houston Chronicle featured waterfowl hunting in North Dakota

## This issue



**Tech Tip:** Make sure you are getting the most of your email efforts. (Page 2)

**USTA news:** Hoteliers can find the latest statistical data about North Dakota through Smith Travel Research. (Page 2)

## Community Snapshot

**Community Snapshot:** Garrison is more than Wally Walleye and Lake Sakakawea. (Page 3)

**By the Numbers:** See the latest quarterly report from North Dakota Tourism Division. (Page 6)

**In the News:** North Dakota was in the news in October. (Page 4)



# N.D. bucking the trend

North Dakota's tourism industry leads the nation in the four major reporting categories for the second straight year, according to the United States Travel Association (USTA)'s 2011 research. The USTA's annual report, *Impact of Travel on State Economies 2011*, covers the impact of travel on state economies in 2009 and the U.S. national economy for 2010.

For travel-generated payroll, North Dakota was up 3.3 percent. Washington, D.C., was next at 3.1 percent, followed by South Dakota at 1.5 percent, Montana at .9 percent and Oklahoma at .3 percent.

North Dakota led the nation for travel-generated employment at 1.7 percent. South Dakota followed at -0.37 percent.

For travel-generated taxes, North Dakota led with a 5.2 percent increase, followed by South Dakota at 3.7 percent. (According to the state tax department, 2009 numbers reflect the eliminated 1-percent statewide lodging tax and new occupancy taxes added by Beulah and Wahpeton. The bulk of the increase in visitor generated taxes is due to volume.)

While travel expenditures were down nationwide in all states, North Dakota had the smallest percentage of decrease at -0.8 percent. Eleven states showed double-digit decreases in travel expenditures.

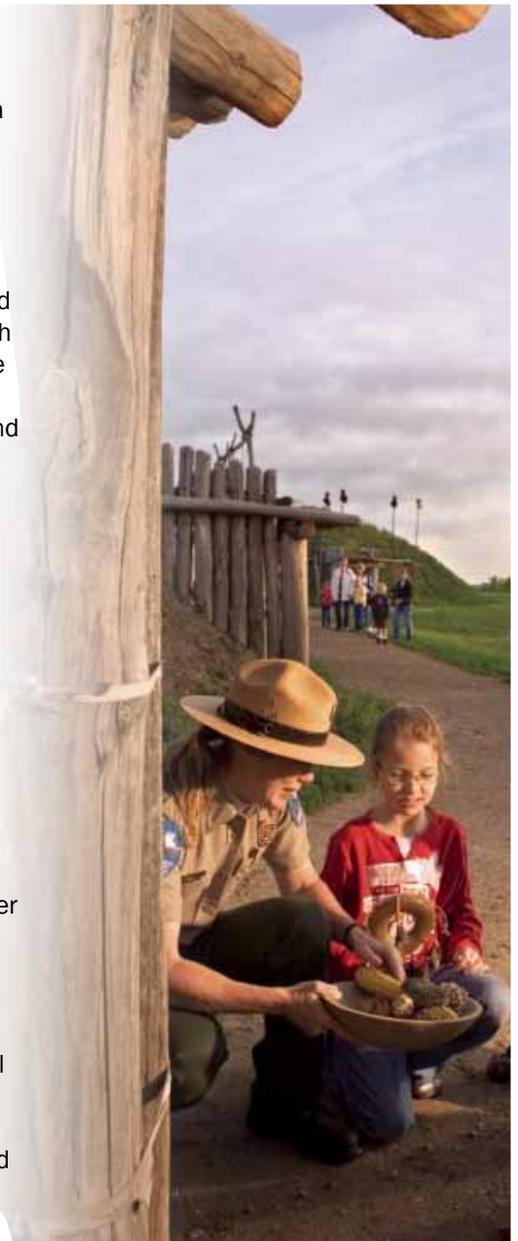
"At a time when the national economy and tourism industry were soft, North Dakota did well," North Dakota Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman said. "Tourism continues to be a strong player for the state's economy. This is demonstrated not only in the USTA report, but on a daily basis by hotel occupancy, border crossings and airline boardings, which are increasing across the state."

Conducted and published by the USTA for more than three decades, the annual *Impact of Travel on State Economies* estimates travel expenditures, travel-generated employment, payroll income and tax revenues for the nation, as well as the 50 individual states and Washington, D.C.

**More USTA news on Page 2**

### North Dakota USTA 2011 Research Report, estimates at a glance

Category	% change 2008-09
Travel-generated Payroll	+3.3%
Travel-generated Employment	+1.7%
Travel Expenditures	-0.8%
Travel-generated Taxes	+5.2%



## Tech Talk



Each month, the Tourism Division newsletter will feature technology tips or best practices for utilizing new tools and Web 2.0. Please share your success stories, or your questions and suggestions, via email to [hlemoine@nd.gov](mailto:hlemoine@nd.gov).

### Improving email results

InternetAndMarketingReport.com offers tips to improving email results:

#### Create Urgency

InternetAndMarketingReport.com found that making an email offer expire in 48 or 72 hours significantly increases conversions, especially when combined with a genuinely good deal and/or coupon code.

#### Segment

The open rate is 45 percent for email blasts, thanks to personalization. We broke our email lists down into categories like age and what customers buy from us. Then we took the time to create individual emails for each specific group. That sent open rates through the roof.

#### Scrutinize How It's Delivered

Testing how our email is delivered in different programs – Outlook, Gmail, etc. – before we send is vital to our success. First, you need to make sure it'll get

delivered. Second, if your email looks “off” in one program, you know the response from those recipients will be next to nil.

#### Keep It Brief

The best thing we did with our email was make it shorter. Sounds simple, but response increased once we made them short and sweet. Another thing that helped was offering people an easy way to unsubscribe. When they requested to unsubscribe, we asked them why. That gave us a chance to open up a dialogue with them.

#### Stop Blasting

We found that sending large email blasts wasn't nearly as effective as sending fewer, more personalized messages. It goes to show: While it's easier to hunt with a shotgun, you'll get more impact with a rifle.

#### Add More Links

The more links we build in, the more people tend to find their way back to our site. We almost always have a call to action button – and we recently started working links into text with success. Our mailers are short, so we typically won't include more than three links.



U.S. TRAVEL  
ASSOCIATION

### The Power of Travel

The U.S. Travel Association has created a tool that shows the economic impact of travel on the nation, all 50 states, and all congressional districts. The tool, <http://poweroftravel.org>, shows the many benefits travel has on businesses and individuals. The 2009 report from the U.S. Travel Association, with industry growth shared on page 1, goes into greater detail.

### Scenic Byways Program retains funding

A recently defeated amendment to cut funding for the Scenic Byways Program was a victory for the U.S. travel industry. The amendment introduced by Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) would have prevented federal transportation funds from being spent on scenic or historic highway programs, including tourist and welcome centers, landscaping or scenic beautification, historic preservation, rehabilitation of historic transportation buildings and other projects important to travel and tourism. The U.S. Travel Association assisted Senator Mark Begich (D-AK) and other members of the Senate in a successful effort to defeat the McCain amendment.

### Defend your budget toolkit

The U.S. Travel Association has created a Power of Travel Promotion Toolkit with talking points, sample op/ed pieces, ideas for engaging the local community and more. The toolkit is available online at <http://www.ustravel.org/news/defend-your-budget/toolkit>

### Smith Travel Research report

The Tourism Division encourages hoteliers to learn more about Smith Travel Research, its STR report and numerous tools for the lodging industry at [https://www.strglobal.com/Products/STAR\\_Program.aspx?productId=51](https://www.strglobal.com/Products/STAR_Program.aspx?productId=51)

Smith Travel Research, working with properties participating in North Dakota shows:

- Hotel room supply since 2000 is up 20 percent
- Year-to-date through September, RevPAR in North Dakota reached a new historical peak of \$66.07
- Many hotels are renting by the month instead of by the night
- In the past decade, North Dakota's hotel market demand has increased by a staggering 45.7 percent

**USTA Marketing Outlook Forum highlights**

Fargo-Moorhead Convention and Visitor Bureau CEO Cole Carley and North Dakota Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman attended the USTA Marketing Outlook Forum last month to hear economists, researchers and market analysts present the latest insight into the travel industry outlook for 2012.

**MARKETING  
OUTLOOK  
FORUM**

**FORT WORTH**

Presentations from Adam Sacks, Tourism Economics; J. Walker Smith, the Futures Company; Mary Multry, US Census Bureau; Steve Hood, Smith Travel Research; Greg Dunn, Y Partnership; and Helen Marano, US Department of Commerce; along with

key travel industry leaders and marketers, covered a gamut of subjects from the general economy to case studies on marketing integration:

**US General Economy**

- Companies and emerging markets will lead the US into recovery
- Construction and manufacturing should be bottoming out soon
- Personal consumption is at record highs resulting in huge consumer debt
- Consumer confidence is very low (mirrors unemployment)
- Travel industry is fueling recovery – 200,000 new jobs
- Travel exports are larger than motor vehicle, machinery, electronics – You can't outsource most travel jobs
- Recession ended two years ago, but not psychologically
- Travel intentions are the lowest on record
- Digital marketing and social media continue to attract more dollars – "Word of mouth on steroids"

**Marketing Insight**

- Cautious – Take the risk out of the offer
- Contentment, not accumulation, is driving spending
- 10,000 boomers turn 65 every day and they still lead spending in most sectors
- Changing households – Multi-cultural, multi-generational, single heads, lower incomes,
- Universal Parks rules – Take the guest to extraordinary places, immerse them in a story, deliver it in a compelling way and provide world-class service
- Top concern for Americans: lack of energy – Travel can re-charge

**Sectors**

- Lodging – Consumers are trading up, value is expected, growth fueled by international and corporate travel
- Airline capacity decreases are about equal to losing Northwest Airlines (pre-merger). Fares are expected to stay higher
- Dining – Casual dining has not rebounded
- Automobile – Even small changes in gas prices will affect travel

**Outlook**

- Moderate growth: Leisure 2-3%, Business 1-2%, Overseas/International 3-4%
- National parks should be up 1-1.7%



# Community Snapshot

Does your community have a "Hidden Gem," a special "Did you know fact" that you would like other North Dakota tourism partners to know about? Have your community showcased through the tourism newsletter. Each month, a community snapshot will be featured. This month's Community Snapshot is **Garrison**.

Garrison was incorporated in 1905 and was named for the military "garrisoned" at the original Fort Stevenson site. The original site, called Old Garrison, is now inundated by Lake Sakakawea. The early ancestors in the area are German and Scandinavian and the top five industries/employers are Garrison Memorial Hospital, Garrison Public Schools, BHG Inc., Garrison State Bank and Farmers Union Oil/Cenex.

**Hidden Gem:** The North Dakota Firefighter's Museum is the only museum to firefighting in the state. These firefighters not only put out fires, they also roll up their sleeves and delight the community with an annual event, the Firefighter's Buffalo Feed and Dance in February. A visitor can enjoy a great cup of coffee at Fezziwig's Espresso Coffee Bar and do a little shopping. You may think you are in England when you see the red, Queen Elizabeth Double Decker Bus cruising the streets.

**Did You Know?** Wally the Walleye in Garrison City Park at the end of Main Street is 26 feet long and Big Gene the Golfer can be seen from the highway. Big Gene is a 15-foot-tall metal sculpture that greets guests at the golf course. Look up in Garrison at the two water towers labeled hot and cold.

**Personalities:** Wes Cummings, a local resident, is in both the North Dakota Golf Hall of Fame and Baseball Hall of Fame.

**Special Events:** Dicken's Village Festival is held for three weekends - this year November 25-27, December 2-3 and 9-10. It was selected as an American Bus Association's Top 100 Event. Expect street vendors, performances, parades and holiday fun for all. Sky Dance Sakakawea is for a kite flying festival for all ages on May 26-28, 2012. Fort Stevenson's Frontier Military Days is June 23-24 with living history demonstrations with military encampments and maneuvers. The North Dakota Governor's Cup Fishing Derby on July 20-21 is where you will find more than 250 teams competing for the 37th annual championships. CANDISC returns to Garrison, August 4-11. This 400-mile ride down the Enchanted Highway is celebrating 20 years.

For more information on Garrison and its community, please contact Jude Iverson, Garrison Chamber of Commerce, 701-463-2631.

**In the News**

(Go to the links below each item for a complete news release)



**North Dakota Tourism in the news in October**

**October 18:** Sixteen North Dakota tourism entities are able to enhance their event or marketing efforts thanks to two grant programs from the North Dakota Department of Commerce, Tourism Division. The Events Grant Program and Marketing Grant Program provide a maximum of \$5,000 in matching funds for promotion of regional events and for specific tourism marketing plans. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=459>

**October 31:** Discover arts of all forms in November, and satisfy your senses with the performing arts, visual arts, and handmade crafts and foods. Begin your holiday gift shopping, as artisans begin displaying their works at shows all across North Dakota. <http://www.ndtourism.com/news/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=460>

**Kudos to Ramada Grand Dakota Lodge**

The Tourism Division would like to recognize the Ramada Grand Dakota Lodge of Dickinson. According to manager Elaine Myran, it is working with the community to be aware of events, college athletic events and programs, and the popular travel times in the summer and hunting season to keep inventory available for tourists and travelers. It will keep limited rooms available for late walk-ins and day-to-day visitors. THANK YOU!

**Please put us on your “safe list”**

A few industry partners have reported that some of the Tourism Division staff’s @nd.gov emails are being filtered into junk-mail folders. To prevent this from happening, please be sure to add us to your “safe list.”

**Merchandise sales**

North Dakota Tourism frequently has sales on merchandise, which are shared via Facebook and Twitter. Feel free to share these sales with your friends and followers. This month, all sweatshirts and jackets will be 20 percent off the regular price, plus free shipping (online only). <https://www.shop.commerce.nd.gov/store/>

**We need your milestones**

Is your event, attraction or community celebrating a special milestone in 2012? Do you have something new, expanded or opening in 2012? The Tourism Division is seeking this information to include in media pitches, press releases and social media. Please send information to Public and Media Relations Manager Kim Schmidt at [ksschmidt@nd.gov](mailto:ksschmidt@nd.gov).



**Rest Area Literature Rack Program information**

Letters, guidelines and agreement forms for the Rest Area Literature Rack Program will be going out this month. If you are currently in the program or have contacted Tammy Backhaus in the past year expressing interest, you will receive this information. If you are interested in the program, please contact Tammy at [tbackhaus@nd.gov](mailto:tbackhaus@nd.gov) or 701-328-2526.

**Regional meetings get high praise**

The Tourism Division staff hit the road in October and November to help tourism operators, marketers and entrepreneurs with ideas to attract more visitors. Regional workshops were held in Linton, Carrington, Bottineau, Drayton and Regent. Thanks to local hosts who provided meeting space and invited travel partners from around the region. The Tourism Division staff facilitated roundtable discussions on the following topics: social media (intro or intermediate), tourism development, on-line marketing (basic, advanced), grant programs, hosting familiarization trips, packaging, cooperative opportunities and brochure distribution. More than 60 individuals attended these events, which offered an opportunity to tap into the resources provided by North Dakota Tourism and network with other tourism-related entities.



## Marketing and event grants announced

The Tourism Division has announced the recipients of this year's Events Grant Program and Marketing Grant Program.

### Events Grant

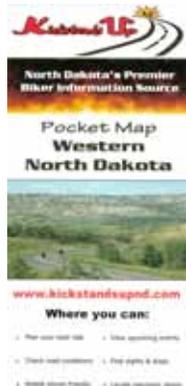
Recipients of the Events Grant Program, which provides a maximum of \$5,000 to communities and event promoters wanting to regionally promote their 2012 tourism-related event:

- Icelandic Communities Association, Mountain, for the Deuce of August Icelandic Celebration
- Legendary Adventures New Discoveries, Watford City, for the Maah Daah Hey 100 Race
- North Valley Arts Council, Grand Forks, for the Grand Cities Arts Festival
- Fort Abraham Lincoln Foundation, Mandan, for the Fort Lincoln Haunted Fort
- Devils Lake Area Convention & Visitors Bureau for the Devils Run Car Show
- Red River Zoo, Fargo, for the Northern Wildlife Film Festival
- Cavalier Retail and Services Association for the Cavalier Motorcycle Ride-In

### Marketing Grant

Recipients of the Marketing Grant Program, which provides a maximum of \$5,000 to develop marketing materials to promote an experience, activity or place unique to North Dakota:

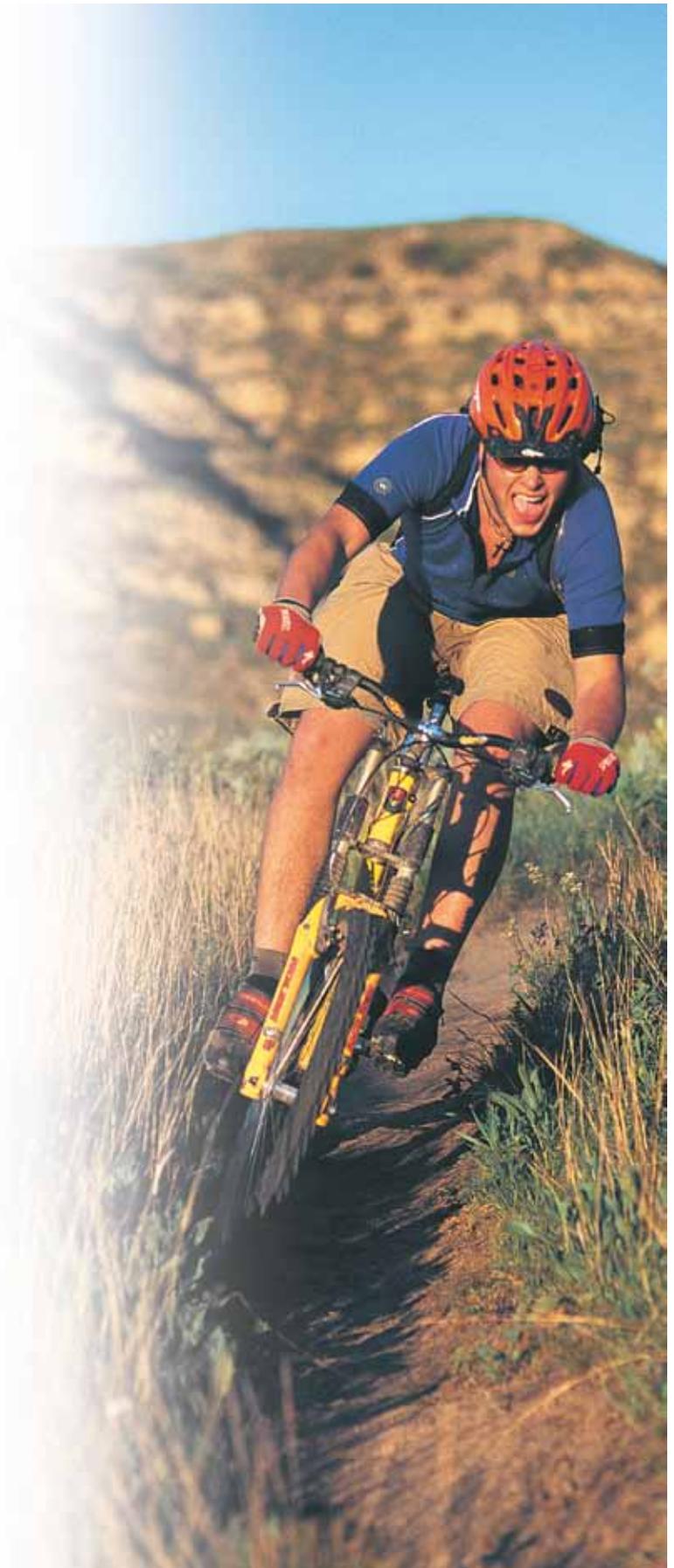
- Coteau des Prairies Lodge, Rutland, for marketing of a new guest lodge currently under construction
- Turtle Mountain Tourism Association for the International Adventure Trail birding program.
- Red River Zoo, Fargo, for the "Legend of the Wolf" package
- Hatton-Eielson Museum, Hatton, for website and marketing development
- North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame, Medora, for website development
- Greater Grand Forks Community Theater for marketing its programming to the Canadian market
- Prairie Village Museum, Rugby, for targeted marketing
- Kickstands Up, Wilton, for a statewide motorcycle map
- Lewis and Clark Riverboat for targeted group tour marketing



A total of \$69,100 was awarded between the two programs. Grant recipients will receive 25 percent of the grant money within 90 days. The remaining 75 percent will be paid following the event or completed marketing project.

Recipients of the 2012 Infrastructure and Expansion Grants will be announced in November.

For more information on tourism grants, contact Dean Ihla with North Dakota Tourism at 701-328-3505 or dihla@nd.gov.



## Tourism Quarterly Report

Area of Travel	2011 Third Quarter	2010 Third Quarter	Percent Change 11-10	2011 Year to Date	Percent Change YTD 11-10
State Park Visitors	584,569	591,794	-1%	925,282	-7%
National Park Visitors	319,588	305,552	5%	494,244	-8%
Website New Visits	120,547	123,081	-2%	346,009	-2%
Major Attractions	1,192,064	1,208,773	-1%	2,686,392	-6%
Local Visitor Centers	52,391	50,799	3%	84,661	7%
Cumulative Lodging Tax	\$1,715,445.97	\$1,384,267.64	24%	\$4,134,876.82	22%
N.D. Airport Passengers	223,819	210,992	6%	639,072	7%
Canadian Border Crossings	180,774	184,757	-2%	509,723	0%
Statewide Hotel Occupancy Rate	July: 85.9% Aug: 89.6% Sept: 85.2%	July: 78.8% Aug: 79.0% Sept: 74.7%	July: 9.0% Aug: 13.4% Sept: 14.1%	74.9%	9.2%
Statewide Average Room Rate	July: \$91.11 Aug: \$93.44 Sept: \$92.39	July: \$81.56 Aug: \$80.71 Sept: \$80.84	July: 11.7% Aug: 15.8% Sept: 14.3%	\$88.24	15.4%
RevPAR			\$66.07	\$52.45	26.0%
Taxable Sales and Purchases	Arts, Entertainment Recreation \$20,845,196 2nd Quarter 2011  Food Services, Accommodations \$354,470,902 2nd Quarter 2011	Arts, Entertainment Recreation \$21,779,660 2nd Quarter 2010  Food Services, Accommodations \$319,474,938 2nd Quarter 2010	-4%  11%		

Through August →

**State Park:** Cross Ranch, Ft. Ransom, Ft. Stevenson, Grahams Island, Icelandic, Indian Hills, Lake Metigoshe, Lake Sakakawea, Lewis & Clark, Turtle River, Ft. Lincoln, Beaver Lake, Little Missouri and Sully Creek.  
**National Park:** Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Knife River Indian Villages, Fort Union.  
**Major Attractions:** Alerus Center, Badlands Trail Run, Bismarck Civic Center, Bismarck Marathon, Bison Sports Arena, Bully Pulpit Golf Course, Camp Hancock, CANDISC, Chahinkapa Zoo, Chateau de Mores, Missouri Yellowstone Confluence Center/Fort Buford, Custer House/Indian Villages, Dakota Dinosaur Museum, Dakota Gasification, Antelope Valley, Coteau, Dakota Territory Air Museum, Edgewood Municipal Golf Course, Rose Creek Golf Course, El Zagal Golf Course, Osgood Golf Course, Prairiewood Municipal Golf Course, Des Lacs NWR, Fargo Air Museum, Fargo Civic Center, Fargodome, Former's Governor's Mansion, Fort Abercrombie SHS, Fort Clark SHS, Fort Totten SHS, Gateway to Science, Gingras Trading Post, Heritage Center, Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County, International Peace Garden, L&C Interpretive Center/Fort Mandan, Lawrence Welk Home, Medora Musical, National Buffalo Museum, North Dakota Museum of Art, ND State Capitol, Painted Canyon Overlook, Pembina State Museum, Pioneer Trails Regional Museum, Plains Art Museum, Prairie Fire Pottery, Ralph Engelstad Arena, Red River Valley Fairgrounds, Red River Zoo, Ronald Reagan (Oscar Zero) SHS, Three Affiliated Tribes Museum, Toy Farmer Museum, Whitestone Hill Battlefield SHS.  
**Local Visitor Center:** Beach Information Center, Bismarck, Bowman Information Center, Buffalo City Tourism, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo/Moorhead, Grand Forks, McKenzie County, Minot, Jamestown, Wahpeton, and Williston.  
 The statewide hotel occupancy rate is measured by Smith Travel Research.  
 North Dakota Tourism uses Google Analytics to gather visitor data from [www.ndtourism.com](http://www.ndtourism.com).  
 Please contact Tricia Miller, Data Specialist, North Dakota Tourism, 1-800-435-5663 with questions or to be included in the survey.