

Experts Team Up To Guide Tourism Industry

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held in Iron Mountain to gather information from the western end of the Upper Peninsula, he said, and more sessions are planned in Traverse City, Alpena, Battle Creek, Dearborn, and the Saginaw area in early summer. When the listening sessions are concluded, results will be compiled and the researchers will form teams in Lansing to tackle industry concerns like funding, promotion, and hospitality training, Dr. Holocek explained.

Once a final plan is drafted, it will be presented at a state-wide Tourism Industry Summit.

Noting that such a plan has been proposed by experts in the state since 1945, research cited by the MSU team shows that tourism has not been an economic development priority in Michigan. Travel promotion budgets have been dwindling over the years at the state level. When ranked with other states in order of overall budget of the state tourism office, Michigan came in 31st last year. In 1990, it ranked 7th among all states, and 12th in 1995, 20th in 2000, and 27th in 2004, according to the Travel Industry Association of America.

Now industry experts want to use the upcoming listening sessions and other research to identify the industry's shortcomings and, for the first time, coordinate a strategy for working together to capture more of this fiercely competitive market. And researchers say the time is right for the idea to find support in state government. In his online report about the project, Dr. Holocek points to the passage of

post-Labor Day school opening legislation as evidence that state political leaders recognize the importance of tourism in the economy, and are ready to "favorably consider" a plan by the industry to define its goals.

The full cost of developing the

"We have some challenges. This plan should help us to mitigate them."

— Dr. Don Holocek,
director of Michigan State
University
Tourism Center

Strategic Plan project is estimated at \$400,000. About half of that amount will be contributed by MSU and the state's Travel Michigan agency in the form of reassigned faculty and staff. Supporters in the tourism field have raised about \$35,000 to get the project started, and the industry should plan to spend about \$165,000 more for research to craft the comprehensive plan, according to Dr. Holocek.

Several steps have already been taken, including the creation of the 80-person plan development team. Raising operating funds, assigning roles to various participating agencies, and launching a Web site will be among the next steps in the proposed project.

Experts believe Michigan

tourism shows strong potential to become a thriving force in the economy. They point to the amount of money Michigan travelers spend elsewhere and the recovery of a parallel field, the nation's travel industry, as indicators of that potential.

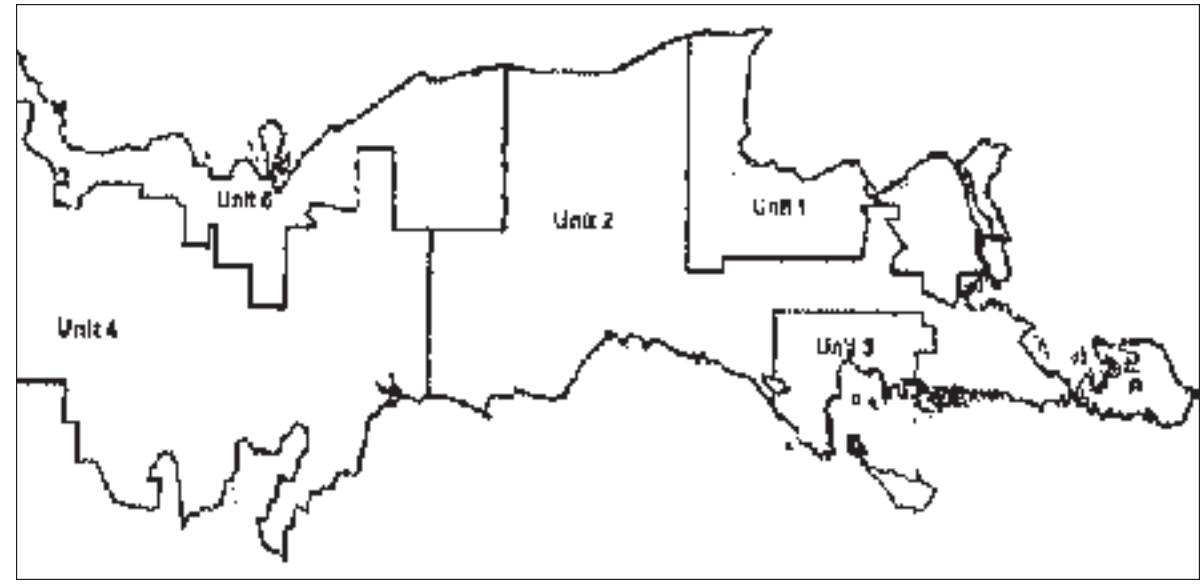
Researchers report that Michigan has a large travel trade deficit, meaning state residents spend almost \$3 billion more per year on out-of-state trips than non-residents spend on Michigan trips.

The U.S. travel industry has fully recovered from the terrorism attacks of 9/11 and the last recession, while the industry in Michigan has not recovered, according to Dr. Holocek's online report. Contrary to what tourism workers may be seeing in Michigan, the tourism industry on the whole is actually one of the world's largest industries and is growing rapidly — not dying.

Dr. Holocek pointed out that the state has been challenged by the long-term decline of the auto industry, slow growth in segments of the population that have been traditional markets for Michigan travel, and a sluggish overall economy. Some of the changes that have triggered the major structural change in Michigan's economy also threaten wallets across Michigan's primary tourism markets in Ontario, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.

"We have some challenges," Dr. Holocek said. "This plan should help us to mitigate them."

More information about the Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan Project is available online at www.tourismcenter.msu.edu.



This map shows geographic units of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

Lambert, Massaway To Advance in Tribal Election

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3, Fred Paquin and Mr. Lambert.

LaPoint, Hank Top Unit 2 Candidates

In Unit 2, incumbent Robert LaPoint (355 votes) and Frances Marie Hank (185 votes) were the top candidates, and will compete for one available seat in the June 22 election.

Other Unit 2 candidates were Lisa Burnside (137 votes), Cliff Bellant (134 votes), and Basel Willis (74 votes).

Current representatives of Unit 2 are Lana Causley and Mr. LaPoint.

Unit 1: McKelvie, Hoffman, McCoy, Wright Advance

In Unit 1, the Sault Ste. Marie area, four candidates were winners in the primary and will advance to compete for two seats in the election. They are incumbent Dennis McKelvie (933 votes), D.J.

Hoffman (842 votes), Darwin "Joe" McCoy (571 votes), and Nathan Wright (512 votes).

Other candidates in Unit 1 were Ken Eagle (418 votes), Steven Morello (361 votes), Henry Bouley Jr. (322 votes), Jackie Halfaday-Minton (305 votes), Lynne Weaver (299 votes), Charles Forgrave (249 votes), Donna Marble (247 votes), Sharon Fegan (204 votes), Jason Oberle (131 votes), Tom Rapson (118 votes), Sheila Berger (99 votes), and Toni Osterhout (90 votes).

Current representatives from Unit 1 are Cathy Abramson, Paul Shagen, Joe Eitrem, Todd Gravelle, and Mr. McKelvie.

Chase To Face Powers in Unit 4

In Unit 4, incumbent Denise Chase will face Ron Powers in the June 22 election. No primary election was required; they will vie for one available board seat.

Petosky, Weber To Race in Unit 5

In Unit 5, Shirley Petosky (143 votes) and Karl Weber (132 votes) will vie for one board seat.

Other primary candidates in that unit were Charles Matson (85 votes), Joe Gray (77 votes), and Kevin Kolbus (73 votes).

The board of directors is the governing body of the tribe. It consists of 12 board members and one chairperson.

The tribe's seven-county Eastern Upper Peninsula service area is divided into five units. Tribal members who are registered as voters in each unit elect representatives to the board. The number of representatives chosen from each unit reflects the unit's population. All officers serve for four years, and staggered terms put half of the board up for election every two years.

The tribe, headquartered in Sault Ste. Marie, administers 50 membership services and operates 17 businesses, including a chain of casinos. It has more than 33,000 enrolled members.

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Engadine Consolidated Schools

by James P. Wilcoxon
Superintendent
HOME OF THE EAGLES

Engadine Schools' Baccalaureate and High School Graduation are coming up. Baccalaureate will be Wednesday, May 24, at the Garfield Township Hall at 7 p.m. Father Tim Hruska and the Engadine/ Naubinway Catholic Church are hosting the program. High School graduation will be Friday, May 26, in high school gymnasium starting at 8 p.m.

Engadine Elementary School will have Academic Awards Day Friday, June 2, at 9 a.m. All parents and guests are welcome to attend.

As the school year comes to an end, so does our time at Engadine Consolidated Schools. My wife and I would like to thank the community for your support and friendship during the past 31.5 years. "Go Eagles!"

Calendar

May 24, Baccalaureate, Garfield Township Hall, 7 p.m.

May 25, Boys' and Girls' Varsity Track, Pickford, 2 p.m., Conference Meet

May 26, Graduation, High School Gymnasium, 8 p.m.

May 31, Kindergarten Graduation, Elementary Gymnasium, 7 p.m., First Grade Program, 12:30 p.m.

June 2, Last Day of School, Noon Dismissal, Elementary Awards Day, 9 a.m.

June 3, U.P. Finals at Kingsford, 10 a.m.

June 12, School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Rudyard Church To Offer Concert

A family concert by the Christian music group New Dawn will be offered Tuesday, May 30, at 7:30 p.m. at St. James Lutheran Church in Rudyard, reported Pastor Kathryn King.

The group of young adult ministers has recently returned from a tour of Malaysia and Singapore and tours the United States and southeast Asia with a faith-encouraging program of music, testimonies, drama, and puppetry.