

LAKE DIEFENBAKER TOURISM DESTINATION AREA PLAN

Appendix IV – Summaries of Public Meetings & Consultations

Lake Diefenbaker Destination Area

Public Meeting #1

Monday, February 4th, 2008

Mainstay Inn – Riverhurst

Charts are included in the plan, points out the issues, and background material explaining it. This project, covering such a large area, we hope we can go forward with the plan to the entire government (federal, provincial and municipal) and show them the plan and voice the issues and concerns. There will be money put into this project to hire an individual to implement this plan.

- We have decent highways right now, however once you go into the marina here at Palliser, the roads are really bad. There is no dust control, etc. This is an RM road. Located on Provincial Crown Land. The calcium that they use on this road, is a waste of money, it only lasts for a day. This money could be put into dealing with this problem long-term. Highway 644 needs to be paved all the way down to the #1 Hwy.
- Could there be a budget that covers the entire lake so these projects can be handled.
- One of the mandates of the new government is to increase the funding to Tourism.
- A petition was signed last year and sent to the department of highways, however no response was generated from them. (We would like to get this petition)
- When will this plan be presented? Hoping to have it done by April of 2008. Will go forth to government in May at the earliest. Departments do their budgets in September, so this will be a good thing to have when they go to do their budgets this fall.
- Signage – when you drive along the highway in this area, there is no indication that there is even a lake around here. Need to get this out on the #1 & #11 highways. Palliser Regional Park sign is very old and needs to be replaced with something that is more obvious to tourists. There needs to be signage coming out of Calgary all the way along the major corridors.
- If the park is full, we can't attract new people here. Swimming pools need to be open longer periods of time. The park doesn't have enough money in their budget to keep the pool open all summer long. The pool continues to run at a deficit.

- Parks tend to be travel generators, but not money makers.
- Regional park infrastructure needs operational support. Money is often offered at 50 cent dollars.
- Is there a fundraising campaign? Not really.
- At the peak of the tourist season, the lake capacity always seems to be full and then the beaches disappear. Needs to be a negotiation with SaskPower and SWA. If SaskPower wants to keep the water up, maybe they should be offering some money to improve the infrastructure around the lake. The beach is washing up so much that permanent trailers may have to be moved in the future.
- Land stability along the banks is an issue, we are just seeing some sinkholes pop up in the last couple of years. You wouldn't want to put a development on unstable ground.
- How do we find the old plans that were created in the 50's and 60's, why are we reinventing the wheel? At Hitchcock, 3 or 4 councilors went to Regina to meet with the government, the government offered this up and they began to develop it. There was provision for 400 lots, about 140 are developed.
- Need to be able to develop on land that is titled. Developers won't develop on leased land.
- There are still people out there who don't even know that Diefenbaker exists. We need to promote ourselves in our own area as well.
- There are more people from Regina Beach, Moose Jaw, etc, who are coming here to fish.
- There is a water quality issue that needs to be dealt with.
- What does Tourism Saskatchewan do? Provincial tourism guides, training & certification (hospitality, outfitters, etc), operate border crossing centres around the province, produce publications such as internet marketing guide, business development guide, community tourism planning guide, destination area planning.
- Could have a route map at some of the key entrance points to the lake.
- Accessibility to the lake is a huge problem. Needs maps that identify access points.
- Signage budget comes out the department of highways. One of the things we have to do is change their rules so they are realistic, obviously if a budget wasn't spent, there are problems with their rules.
- There needs to be some speed signs in the marina, it is well signed in the park, but the marina needs to be enforced. This could also help control the dust problem.
- The government needs to make it easier for private developers to come in and put some infrastructure in place.
- The lake needs to be restocked with fish. This isn't happening. The eggs are being taken from the lake, but we aren't getting replenished.

- Why is Palliser Regional Park clumped in with the Provincial Parks?
- Does Palliser have room for expansion? Not at the moment, other than the sites developed down at the marina. Working on more cottages across from the Mainstay. What about campsites along the ball diamonds? Infrastructure is not able to sustain new developments at the moment. The park is at capacity right now.

Lake Diefenbaker Destination Area

Public Meeting #2

Tuesday, February 5th, 2008

Harbour Inn - Elbow

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- Re-investment in core attractions – conditions at Elbow Harbour, in the Rec site, quality of the roads. Danielson & Douglas
- A list of concerns has been given to Sask Parks, highlighting what needs to be done in each of the three Provincial Parks
- Have not spoken to the Department of Highways as of yet. However they are aware that this plan is in the works.
- In the last 3 or 4 years, the water quality of the lake has drastically changed. There are now concentrations of blue-green algae along the shores of the lake. If this continues to be a problem, it will destroy some of the sandy beaches that are a huge attraction that bring people to the lake. More dedicated testing needs to be done. This lake was monitored in the 90's and was very healthy, now it has seemed to changed. Some of this problem may be linked to the fish farm east of Birsay, and they currently proposing an expansion. They are asking the province to do a study before there are additional phosphates added into the lake. Want to see a more organized and corseted effort to address this issue and take it where it needs to go.
- The fishing has also seemed to drop off since the fish farm was established. Is this affecting the fish population in the lake? Are the indigenous species being affected from the farmed fish?
- Highway counts seem to be down in the past couple of years on certain corridors.
- There is a group planting approximately 1000 trees this year.
- Can we get the government into reassessing the old plan of planting 50 million trees?
- We will be incorporating parts of the green plan into this Destination Plan
- Heritage Resources – town is looking into heritage grants for the elevator. There are a lot of beautiful churches in this area, as well as cemeteries. Need an awareness or an adoption program to ensure there is a pool of money available to maintain the site.
- Whitecap Trail Corridor – there is money in place to push this project through to Gardiner Dam, but nothing south of there. The Rural Municipalities are the ones to

have to undertake the project. The conversation is that it will be extended down along the lake. Logical route for this corridor is 15 down to Danielson, ideally along 44 or the grid, over to 19 and south.

- Hospitality training is an issue. Could we host an awards recognition night and coincide with Lake Diefenbaker Tourism. There is an entrepreneurial training session that is available to the school and the public that will be held in Elbow. This will be a test case. If this works, it may be something that other communities could do. “First Impressions” is a course that someone goes into another community and rates them on their service. These two suggestions could be incorporated into the plan.
- Signage – when Brad Wall was leader of the opposition there was a letter that indicated that with the doubling of the tourism budget, signage would be an important part of the allocations. The rules need to be changed so signs can be placed on the major corridors around the lake. The rules currently state that the attraction has to be adjacent to the highway, so we are not eligible to place them on highway #1 or #11.

Lake Diefenbaker Destination Area

Public Meeting #3

Thursday, February 7th, 2008

Town Hall - Davidson

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- Whatever happened to the Kule (sp?) Collection?
- Hunting - There seems to be a large concentration of moose in the area, especially around the golf course.
- Does Davidson have a tourism bylaw? Town council would pass a bylaw to form a tourism committee that would give them terms of reference. That committee would make a plan for the community. Bill Nosen, with Mid Sask CFDC/REDA did an extensive community plan for this area, this may contain some tourism initiatives that we could look into. This could encourage a certain group of people in charge to promote the service industry with hospitality training. Affirms that the town thinks tourism is important. Gives a committee responsibilities of things that they can work on and promote.
- There are probably still some fishing licenses available for outfitters along Lake Diefenbaker. There is a moratorium on the bird licenses in the area.
- This area is a gateway into the lake. What could this area do to enhance the tourism plan?
- Because it is half-way between Saskatoon and Regina, it could be very aggressive in attracting people to meet in between the cities.
- This area could be an information base to help tourists find their way into the lake.
- The area could become known as a hospitality centre, working with the service industry.
- At the rest stop on the edge of town, there is a place to put brochures, we could advertise our information there.
- Signage is a large issue in the entire area.
- May want to pursue is working with the golf courses that are along the lake and the river, working together. There are a group of courses that have bonded together at Lanigan, Craik, Outlook, Watrous, Davidson etc. that promote cheaper rates during the weekdays to encourage golfers to move around in the area. Davidson course is

attracting more tournaments and more city golfers. What about creating a stay & play package. Work together with the Bed & Breakfasts in the area.

- Poker derbies use to be very popular, maybe this is something we could look into revitalizing.
- Davidson needs to be promoting their rink more aggressively and try to encourage teams out of Saskatoon to utilize their facilities.
- Creating a web page/landing page that would be user friendly for various web site owners. This map would be incorporated into various sites around the lake and users would become more familiar as they see this map on several sites.
- GPS points of interest. Figure out the company/business that you upload your base map with and see what the cost/procedure for getting your point of interest on their layer.
- Davidson doesn't have any serviced lots available for sale.

Lake Diefenbaker Destination Area

Public Meeting #4

Monday, February 11th, 2008

Elks Hall - Kyle

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- Kyle falls into the West Central Tourism Region, however they do not feel that they belong in this region.
- The marina at Sask Landing is full and Dale has been fighting with the government for more moorage slips. If they are trying to draw people into the area, we are turning them down because we have no room for them.
- Could use another cottage development at Sask Landing.
- Need more campground in the Prov. Park, also need a privatized seasonal campground there as well. Up to 100 privatized sites that people could individually buy into.
- Fixed-roof accommodation is a problem at the landing. Lots of people don't camp, but they want to stay in the park. Banquet facilities and room for conferences/meetings. To draw different businesses who will come and utilize the park.
- Problem with pavement in the parking lots and campgrounds. Many other Prov. Parks are paved, Sask Landing isn't paved like others. No one seems to be prepared to do anything about it.
- Sewage capacity is inadequate at Sask Landing. However there doesn't seem to be a budget put in place to address this.
- Lacking power?
- Year-round water to the golf course is a problem. There is no water past the cabin development.
- Trying to get the government to irrigate and landscape around the marina and golf course. Looks barren.
- Highway signage is a problem. Signs on the #1 should say "Sask Landing Provincial Park home of Lake Diefenbaker" etc.
- Potable water at the Landing – there isn't enough volume. Needs to be addressed if there is any expansion at the Park.
- Map of the lake needs to be enhanced. Attractions along the lake need to be shown.

- Historic points of interest along the lake need to be marked in the water along the shoreline. People don't realize they are even near it when they are in a boat in the water.
- A windsurfing school use to be held, but is no longer. Should this be brought back since there is interest in it? We have lots of open water for it to happen.
- Very few conservation officers in the lake.
- The highways in the area seem to be in pretty good shape. Hwy 4 is in good condition as well as #342 that goes east to Beechy.
- Is there any other word about #4 hwy becoming Big Bear Trail? It would be good if a group gets back together and continue to campaign. A statue of Big Bear is going to be erected in Battleford. If the Corridor is named a celebration at the Landing would be a good idea.
- A big problem that the government is not friendly towards private development in the park.
- The only reason that there is development at Sask Landing is because there are private groups that work towards an end goal.
- In the summertime there is not enough power capacity to handle what is needed in the peak camping season. People's needs have changed as compared to 20 years ago. RV's have air conditioners etc.
- There isn't a problem with the lagoon, there seems to be room for expansion.
- There are plans underway for a rural water pipeline for the park. Water would originate from the aquifer east of Kyle. Federal government has given a grant for this area to develop rural water.
- A 2nd cottage development in the Park would be ideal near the golf course. That area has access to the highway, water, golf, etc.
- The perception that there isn't any "park" south of Saskatoon needs to be changed. Some people believe that you have to go north to go to a park.
- Heritage resources – there is a lot of heritage property in this area. Especially at the Landing. Concern is the Goodwin House, nothing has changed, so it is not attracting new visitors. Once you go the first time, you don't go back because there is nothing new.
- Battleford Trail should be promoted as an important Heritage Site. Maybe this should be highlighted in the Goodwin House. There needs to be better signage and information put up in the Park.
- Métis Red River Cart; there is suppose to be a plaque erected, but nothing has been done to date. Hope that in the future that the heritage designation will continue.

- There is a lack of signage east of the Goodwin House. There are graves and an old house there, but it is poorly marked.
- Have a beautiful beach in the park. Lots of trees, irrigated lawn. Very little utilization of the park. Fixed roof or permanent sites on the west side of the highway would bring more people over to that side of the park. They should remove the entry gate on the west side of the road, so people won't be deterred to go in there if they have to have a park sticker. They will go to the east side anyways, to explore the golf course, marina etc. so leave the booth on the west side, but remove from the east side.
- Parks should look at attracting young families. The \$50 for the annual pass is a bit pricey to get a young family into the park. The seniors don't spend the money, the young people do. You even have to pay a day pass to get into golf or go for a meal.
- Offer a first couple hours for free in the park, let them explore and get to know the park, and then if they want to come back and utilize the park again, charge them for it.
- Lots of people have been turned away in the last couple of years because there is no room for them to camp.

Lake Diefenbaker Destination Area

Public Meeting #5

Tuesday, February 12th, 2008

Community Hall - Demaine

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- The roads to Prairie Lake are not great
- Lucky Lake, there is not proper signage coming in from the major cities. This is a problem for the entire area. It is difficult to get signs and have the ability to have signs created for the various destinations in the area. There is no signs for the Luck Lake Heritage Marsh. When you come off the ferry, there is nothing telling you that Lucky Lake is near. Signage is needed on the outskirts of the region as well as signage within the region.
- There are virtually no signs to get to the Sandcastles, and the roads leading to them go from highway to gravel to dirt trail into pasture. You have to open gates etc.
- A boat launch at the ferry is needed. There is no other area near Lucky Lake that you can launch your boat into the water. The boat launches should be along both sides of the lake, there are very few places along the lake that you can get gas at. Hitchcock Bay has a very small boat launch, but is not adequate enough for the demand.
- Different RMs have different planning statements and zoning bylaws, some of them don't have anything. These need to be standardized throughout, if one RM is looking at a development and the neighboring RM has different rules from them, it is hard to deal with.
- The Recreation site by the ferry has no washroom facilities or shower rooms etc. So people don't even come there to fish or spend the day any more.
- There needs to be rest areas around the lake. A place to pull over, look at a map, and decide where you go next. Who would maintain these kinds of areas? Highways or parks? There use to be facilities like these in the past, however they cease to exist now.
- We don't have good cell service when you get close to the water.
- When you have an attraction on private land, how is this dealt with? Ex. Sandcastles. The gates are closed at certain times of the year because of dry conditions, cattle on certain areas, etc.

- Vandalism on signs is an issue, also with washrooms. The washrooms at Danielson/Gardiner dam are locked in the off-season, why is this?
- There are a few groups in the area that are planning on planting some trees this summer. Maybe monetary assistance through something like the green plan could help assist some of the service groups in the area with planting of trees. Maybe one community in the area could contact communities in the surrounding area and see if they can gather up enough interest for groups to plant trees.
- Government regulations and limitations are hard for the landowner to deal with. There is lots of potential; however the regulations make it hard for progress to be made with any kind of project.

Lake Diefenbaker Destination Area

Public Meeting #6

Wednesday, March 5th, 2008

Court Room - Outlook

Charts are included in the plan, points out the issues, and background material explaining it. This project, covering such a large area, we hope we can go forward with the plan to the entire government (federal, provincial and municipal) and show them the plan and voice the issues and concerns. There will be money put into this project to hire an individual(s) to implement this plan once it has been completed.

- Blackstrap Provincial Park has been missed in this plan. There is a lack of government funding and lack of initiative. The former government was approached to ask if it can be taken over a Regional Park; the current government hasn't been approach yet about this idea. There has been an extreme neglect with this park.
- Danielson Provincial Park has been neglected. Would like to see something done there, specifically with cottage developments, marina, and other things to compliment the Park.
- A proposal was put forward to new lots being developed in Danielson, however that proposal wasn't approved, but a private investor is now looking at the old Garth Subdivision that is located between Danielson (6 miles) and Elbow. Looking at 240-250 lots.
- There is no communal space available in the Outlook & District Regional Park. There is no store, sometimes a small booth. There is no place people can congregate, sit down, have a cup of coffee & visit. There needs to be a place for kids to meet and get together. This is a problem throughout the entire town, not just in the Regional Park. Some businesses are not open on weekends late enough or at all to satisfy the tourists (ie. Coffee shops on Sundays, etc)
- The roads around the entire lake area are horrendous. People come once and then they don't come again. This hinders access to the facilities around the lake. This applies to roads within Provincial and Regional Parks as well. The south of Birsay to the Riverhurst Ferry has gone back to gravel and is getting beat up pretty bad.
- Is there any land around the lake that is zoned for development? Very few areas. A restriction was placed back in the 70's that makes it very had for developers to come in and create a development along the lake. Restrictions were put into place to ensure that there was organized development happening. There was a shift where tourism was priority in the 60's to where we are now.
- Where does eco-tourism fit into this?

- The government owns all of the land along the lake.
- The Reservoir Development area was created upon elevation points.
- Why has the area along the lake not been opened up to private people? There may have been the attitude back when the lake was created, that they didn't want people to make any money off of development. Now, the attitude has changed, that as long as someone develops in an environmentally sensitive way, then why not let them make a dollar?
- Armoring the marina at Elbow – could you haul the rocks in the winter? Could you armor the road? Rip-rap the road?
- East end of the SkyTrail slumping? There was a report in the early 80's created for the Regional Park – concluded that the Town of Outlook & the Regional Park needs to reduce watering. The paving stones have been redone, but it is a problem.
- The pool within the Regional Park is also on a slant – before it was built, they had a survey done, but even after 5 or 6 years after it being built, it is still moving.
- Working with a municipal budget, it is hard to gather the money for long-term fixes on these huge problems. The bridge is not a revenue generator so most of the money for fixes comes from donations. The economic spin-off from the bridge is hard to judge, but it is there.
- Some urban parks get funding from the government (P.A., North Battleford, Weyburn), why can't the Outlook & District Regional Park be designated for the same kind of funding? This would be best approached through the Land Use Planning project.
- Many people use Danielson seasonal camping lots, there are rumors that not as many sites will be available for seasonal camping this year, so these people will be looking for lots, why don't we develop places for people to park their trailers permanently. Lots for people to own, not just lease, because people don't want to invest their money into leased lots.
- Are there ways to stimulate volunteer development? Some urban places have hosted banquets or get-togethers for newcomers in town.
- As people are moving back to Saskatchewan and looking for property to develop on, the time is right for the government to open up some area along the lake. There are over 5000 cottages along Last Mountain Lake. This shows huge potential for Lake Diefenbaker.
- Would like to see develop at the north end of the lake in the Danielson Park Area. Allow for private investment with the province's help and guidance.
- When the group was asked how many of them were in attendance at the meeting simply because they want to see development at Danielson Provincial Park, a show of hands indicated that approximately 90% of the crowd was there because of that reason.

- Where the town of Cutbank used to be, the entire infrastructure is there in place (water treatment plant & a 2-cell lagoon), there is a plan in place for additional power as well, why aren't we developing there? The people, who live in the areas of Elbow and Riverhurst, pushed the government and they got their development.
- The majority of the people in this room came to this meeting to push development at the north side of Lake Diefenbaker.
- Pressure needs to be put on the local politicians to influence what is being done in this area.
- Need to consider when wanting to build so close to the lake that there is a lot of erosion happening on an annual basis. The lake seems to be kept at a very high level, which creates erosion close to houses that are built close to the lake. The dam was built to provide irrigation, power and recreation to the area. Power generation is the #1 priority, so we need to be careful when choosing development sites along the lake.
- The technology exists to produce hydrothermal energy out of this lake.
- There needs to be accurate and up-to-date management plans for the parks.

Lake Diefenbaker Destination Area

Public Meeting #7

Monday April 7th, 2008

Whitecap Dakota First Nations

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- Government regulatory process as it relates to waterways, there are issues with the provincial system that have been outstanding for years. We need capacity to lobby the government to see these regulatory changes take place. Need to be able to promote investment.
- How will this process enable us to lobby the government?
- This Destination Area Plan ties into the WaterWolf Land Use Planning project. One of the aspects looks at the issues and looks for resolutions to the issues. The lobbying will be done through the Planning Commission that will be established in this area.
- Consensus around the entire River Valley will be found through the Land Use Plan project. Demonstrating that we have Regional Capacity to move in that direction.
- Blackstrap Provincial Park is a strength of the RM of Dundurn and the Resort Village of Thode & Shields.
- Need to ensure the coordination of the WaterWolf Land Use Planning Project, Lake Diefenbaker Tourism group, Whitecap Trail Corridor, etc.
- The chapter on implementation hasn't been written yet. The role of senior government is included. The manner of how groups like Lake Diefenbaker Tourism will be included with this will need to be added to the plan.
- When will this go forward to the government departments? Will be presented to the government either in May or June. So they can put some of this stuff in their budgets in the fall.
- Whitecap is working with putting in a business plan for the Chief Whitecap Trail. When we go to government there has to be one voice that supports the plan. Does it make sense to use LDT as the forward organization?
- There hasn't been a Chief Whitecap trail meeting since December of 2006. But since there has been work on the highway, they are starting to promote it a little heavier. The organizing committee is interested in extending Whitecap Trail Corridor south to the #1 highway.

- Chief Whitecap originally settled in the Assiniboia area. There was also travel in this area towards Moose Jaw/Regina. So down both sides of the lake for the Whitecap Trail Corridor would make sense because there was trading areas down both sides.
- With the new compensation program for RM's to take heavy haul off of the highways and onto RM roads will allow us to start selecting areas for heavy haul traffic.
- There is opportunity on both sides of the lake with the casinos in Moose Jaw/Regina and the new one in Swift Current.
- The cut-across road from Highway #11 west to Highway #219; this connects Blackstrap with Lake Diefenbaker and it needs to fit in here somewhere.
- We could add a chart similar to the Parks charts that are included in the plan. Ex. Rationalizing water use regulations and arrangements – could be added. It would be useful to have Whitecap included in the plan. What they are doing here, affects everyone. There is going to be a regional strategy at Whitecap about how they attract tourists to their area. Whitecap has already addressed issues such as telecommunications, infrastructure, etc. Ian can draft something and send it to the representatives at Whitecap for them to review (*yes, they would like this*).
- There is another plan that is going to be prepared for the Cypress Hills area. Another in the NW part of the province, largely because of the new road connection that is underway. Probably other ones for Nipawin, Moose Mountain, etc. will be underway in the near future.
- A labor-force strategy could be built into a smaller side note in the plan. Looking at part of the policies on how places hire new people for jobs needs to be added into the plan.
- Need to add these events: Dakota Dunes Powwow, Whitecap Sports Day, Saskatchewan Open (guaranteed for at least 3 years).