

North Shore Scenic Drive (NSSD) Team Project – Duluth to Thunder Bay

OVERVIEW:

During the Heart of the Continent Partnership (HOCP) Congress (held October 24-27, 2011) in Thunder Bay, Ontario and Grand Portage, MN a team of partners making up the “North Shore Scenic Drive Team” worked together to investigate ways to collaboratively work together to promote tourism along the greater North Shore of Lake Superior. Each of the regional teams from northeast MN and western Ontario participating in the HOCP Congress were charged with developing a project and work plan.

NORTH SHORE TEAM MEMBERS:

Bonnie Hundrieser, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) (Team Leader), Judy Ness (Superior National Forest); Cheryl Erickson (planning consultant/ NSSD Vice Chair); Frank Vecchio (Grand Portage Tribe); Gordy Anderson (Two Harbors Chamber of Commerce Director); Bryan Anderson (MnDOT District 1 Planning Director); and Paul Pepe, Thunder Bay Tourism Manager. Additional North Shore regional partners are also participating in project efforts, including the larger North Shore Scenic Drive Council (NSSD). The NSSD Council works to develop and implement projects along the designated byway on Hwy. 61 from Duluth to Grand Portage which improve the byway and enhance the visitor’s experience.

PROJECT: Strengthening the Regional Tourism Corridor between Duluth and Thunder Bay via the North Shore Scenic Drive (In short, promoting the idea of “Two Nations, One Route”).

Project goals:

- Goal 1: The North Shore Scenic Drive corridor between Duluth and Thunder Bay will be known as a unique, international destination connected by incredible experiences.
- Goal 2: Tourist-based visitation will increase through collaborative, cross-border promotion of the experiences along the North Shore Scenic Drive.
- Goal 3: Connectivity will be increased within the Heart of the Continent

Project Objectives:

- Objective 1: Explore the extension of the North Shore Scenic Drive scenic byway designation into Thunder Bay.
- Objective 2: Build relationships and awareness with stakeholders.
- Objective 3: Establish framework by which to collaborate on tourism/marketing initiatives.
- Objective 4: Strengthen the Sister Cities connection between Duluth and Thunder Bay to increase tourism.
- Objective 5: Support development of a signature traveler experience that spans the byway corridor from Duluth to Thunder Bay.