

**R E S O U R C E - B A S E D
T O U R I S M P O L I C Y**

INTRODUCTION

This resource-based tourism policy applies to remote, semi-remote, and road access tourist operations using Crown land and resources in Northern and Central Ontario.

The Government of Ontario recognizes the importance of the tourism industry as a means to diversify and strengthen the economic base of Northern Ontario. Activities such as hunting, fishing, visiting parks, camping, canoeing, hiking, snowmobiling and viewing wildlife, are important to the economy of Northern Ontario. The resource-based tourism industry is important as a creator of jobs and as a source of export earnings. Being predominantly a service sector, most of tourism's impacts are retained locally, and most of the jobs are locally based. Important as this industry is now, it could be more significant given an improved business climate. A key priority of the Ontario government is to work with business to remove barriers, so as to increase investment and job creation.

Without the support of a resource-based tourism policy during resource allocation, tourist operators have pursued their concerns through the environmental assessment process. This has resulted in time delays and additional costs for all stakeholders in the resource field. Land disposition policies and procedures create financial uncertainties that affect investment in tourism. A resource-based tourism policy will increase certainty for all interests, improve the business climate, and increase investment for tourist operators in Northern Ontario. This will provide opportunities for development of the industry, and more jobs in this industry in the North.

The Government of Ontario also recognizes the importance of sustaining the ecological base and quality natural resources that provide for a wide range of uses. The wilderness used by this industry plays an important role in conserving the environment for future generations.

This policy was developed with consultation with various stakeholders concerned about Crown land use, including the forest products industry, mining and prospecting, tourism, environmentalists, First Nations representatives, anglers and hunters, and various levels of government. Diverse groups share an interest to live and work in, as well as enjoy, Ontario's North. Representatives of all groups accept the right of others to exist and interact in their use of the resources. This policy gives consideration to the interests of all stakeholders.

CONTEXT

Ontario has an abundance of natural resource riches for which there are many interests. The Ontario government is committed to ensuring that the province's natural resources are sustained for future generations. Decisions about resource allocation must be developed through a rational and open land use planning process that involves stakeholders in decision-making and considers environmental, social, economic and cultural effects at a variety of governance and geographic levels. Within this context of ensuring sustainable development, the Ontario government recognizes the need for a resource-based tourism policy that addresses issues related to crown lands and waters as they apply to remote, semi-remote and road-access tourist operations. Although this policy has been developed primarily for northern Ontario tourism, the principles apply wherever tourist operators depend on Crown resources. With respect to development north of the 51st parallel, this policy will apply only after a strategy has been developed by the government, Nishnawbe Aski, and other stakeholders.

GOAL

The purpose of the resource-based tourism policy is to promote and encourage the development of the Ontario resource-based tourism industry in both an ecologically and economically sustainable manner.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- 1 Recognize the resource-based tourism industry as an important component of Ontario's tourism sector and its importance to the well-being of Ontario.
- 2 Ensure that the natural resource base the resource-based tourism industry depends on is managed in a sustainable manner.
- 3 Implement a fair and open processes for the allocation of tourism-related natural resources and for the resolution of potential conflicts.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

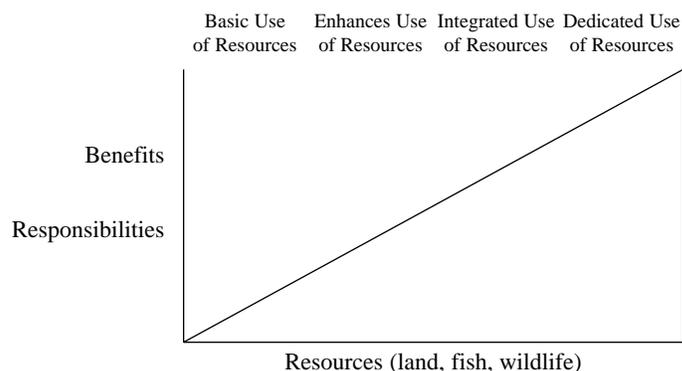
Policy options and decisions regarding resource-based tourism must be measured by the following principles, which act as fundamental evaluation criteria.

- 1 The provincial government will promote and contribute to the economic viability of the resource-based tourism industry.
- 2 The provincial government will facilitate economic opportunities for the resource-based tourism industry through its allocation of land and natural resources; the tourism industry will develop these opportunities.
- 3 The provincial government will ensure that Ontario's natural resources are managed sustainably for future generations; the tourism industry must share in responsibility and accountability, through resource stewardship, for the sustainability of the resources it uses and/or manages.
- 4 The utilization of natural resources by the resource-based tourism industry can be balanced and integrated with other users, be sequential, or be dedicated to tourism use.
- 5 The allocation of natural resources will be done in a fair and open manner that recognizes the resource-based tourism industry.
- 6 Resource users who get immediate and direct benefits must accept some responsibility, including costs. Responsibilities and costs will reflect the level or degree of allocation of natural resources.
- 7 Disputes over allocations, management of areas and other matters should be resolved through appropriate dispute resolution processes such as negotiation, mediation, or where necessary, through a fair, open and impartial appeal process.
- 8 This policy does not prejudice or affect in any way treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal People in Ontario.
- 9 The public is entitled to use Crown lands and waters and Crown resources for uses as described in provincial statutes and policies; exceptions must be justified.

ALLOCATION MODEL

This policy presents a framework from which specific instruments can be developed to achieve the goal of promoting and encouraging the growth of resource-based tourism. Figure 1 graphically explains the concept that the benefits from the use of the resource, responsibilities for its stewardship and sustainable development, increase as access to and allocation of resources increase. This framework offers individual tourist operators the potential to improve their business opportunities in terms of tenure, allocation of resources, and the responsibilities they undertake for the use and stewardship of the resources.

FIGURE 1
TOURISM ALLOCATION MODEL



This section describes the ranges depicted in the model moving to the right on the x axis, and also describes how each part of the range is different from the others. The benefits and responsibilities for each are outlined.

The fundamental changes that will apply generally to tourist businesses may include:

- longer tenure
- recognition of industry
- valuing remoteness
- costing for resources allocated to tourism
- land use planning system
- open and fair processes
- dispute resolution and appeal processes

Basic Resource-Use Level

- no allocation of fish and/or wildlife resources
- allocation of land base for main lodge and cabins/outpost sites only
- opportunity for more secure tenure for site of buildings
- possible new stewardship responsibility

Enhanced Use of Resources

- minimal allocation of fish and/or wildlife resources
- allocation of land base for main lodge and cabins/outpost sites only
- opportunity for more secure tenure for site of buildings
- possible new stewardship responsibility
- possible increased restriction of access to resources for some users

Integrated Use of Resources

- allocation of fish and/or wildlife resources
- allocation of land base for main lodge and cabins/outpost sites only
- opportunity for more secure tenure for site of buildings
- new resource stewardship responsibilities by operator
- possible increased restriction of access to resources for some users
- shared allocation of Crown land for multiple resource use

Dedicated Use of Resources

- exclusive allocation of fish and/or wildlife resources
- allocation of land base for main lodge and cabins/outpost sites only
- opportunity for more secure tenure for site of buildings
- new resource stewardship responsibilities by operator
- increased restriction of access to resources for some users
- dedicated allocation and utilization of Crown land resources

IMPLEMENTATION

The Government of Ontario is committed to the development and application of implementation instruments in as timely a manner as possible. The following statements indicate how the government will implement this policy, what the government role will be, and how the tourism industry will participate.

- 1 The government will negotiate matters that affect the resource-based tourism industry, such as phasing in, mitigating factors, timing and costs, through the Northern Ontario Tourism Outfitters Association. The Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters Association will be responsible for ensuring the tourist industry is consulted and for reflecting the views of the industry in its negotiations with government. The government will continue to negotiate directly with aboriginal tourist operators regarding their interests.
- 2 During the development of any new processes, instruments, or administrative requirements to implement the resource-based tourism policy, the government commitment to minimize red tape will be recognized.
- 3 Allocation of resources to the tourism industry will occur through land use planning, to be carried out by the Ministry of Natural Resources beginning in 1997 and continuing through 1998.
- 4 The government will establish and test a process to resolve disputes about allocations, management of areas, and other natural resource matters early in 1997.
- 5 The Ministry of Natural Resources will develop mechanisms to provide increased security of tenure for the resource-based tourism industry.
- 6 A method of valuing the resources allocated to the tourism industry will be developed.
- 7 The government will establish a system of agreements between tourist outfitters and the Crown, where tourist outfitters will receive an allocation of resources in exchange for responsibilities such as resource stewardship and costs.
- 8 Resource allocation and management decisions must be based on ecological, social and economic information; the government will work with partners to ensure acceptable standards for data collection and dissemination are established.
- 9 The government will ensure that ongoing forest management planning has regard for the resource-based tourism policy. As a priority, additional implementation direction will be established for ongoing forest management planning, particularly the 1997 and 1998 forest management plans, to ensure they reflect the principles of this policy. The alternate dispute resolution process will be available for unresolved concerns.