

THE VALUE OF NATURE BASED TOURISM TO THE NCLRMP ECONOMY (2004-02-18)

In July of 2003, Back Country Tourism submitted the Pacific Analytics economic impact analysis study on Multi Day Nature Based Tourism (13 operators), which is the only current and accurate assessment of the economic importance of Tourism to the North Coast area.

Economic value of North Coast multi day nature-based tourism to the provincial economy

- Direct Expenditures: **\$24.5 M** in British Columbia
- Direct Jobs: **201 full time equivalent jobs** (FTEs)
- Overall Economic Impact **\$33.2 M** supporting 316 full time equivalent positions
- Average Daily Expenditures by North Coast nature-based clients is **\$915 per day** compared to a provincial average for non-resident tourists of **\$100 per day**

Economic value of North Coast nature-based tourism to Prince Rupert area

- Nature-based Tourism, (tourism relying on the natural environment as the prime attribute), **is a significant** (if not the most significant contributor) **to the value of the overall North Coast Tourism industry.**
- According to the Pacific Analytics study, the direct economic contribution of multi day nature-based tourism to the Prince Rupert economy is **\$2.5M in wages and salaries**
- Economic Impact of nature-based tourism based out of Prince Rupert has not been studied but would make an appreciable addition to the above figures as it would include the fish boat charters single day sightseeing and other nature based tourism operators operating out of Prince Rupert.

Additionally the anticipated contribution of the Cruise Ship industry (starting in earnest with the 2004 cruise season) to the Prince Rupert and NCLRMP economy **is not included in the above figure, and will be very substantial and increasing over the next years.**

That traffic, and its ability to grow and generate return visits to Prince Rupert and the North Coast, **depends significantly on how we at the table move to protect our viewscapes, wildlife and our culture.** If tourism is to have a chance and grow and contribute to the economic stability of the Prince Rupert area, viewscapes and the ecological integrity of the area must be preserved. Tourism will achieve this by respecting First Nations' inherent interests in the land, and by working co-operatively with other land users.

Consequences of failing to protect the tourism resource base

A recent visual quality impact study by the Ministry of Forests (re: Nimmo Bay Resort on the Central Coast) suggests that even a partial retention VQO (meaning less than 5% visual quality disturbance) would **result in a loss of almost 30%(29.2%) of clients.** Because of the relatively high fixed costs of a typical wilderness lodge, such an outcome would be sufficient to result in the eventual closure of the facility (let alone limit investment in new lodges).

Back Country Tourism supports EBM principles and specifically the need for protected areas

Tourism recognizes the need to protect the range of natural variability and the coarse and fine filter biodiversity features in the non-protected areas. **Tourism respectfully requests the table to support the implementation of the viewscapes proposal worked out between tourism operators and forestry, as shown on the drawing of December 2003.** (See attached) Forestry concerns can be addressed through flexible forestry practices and a cooperative management approach across all sectors.

Key Benefits

- The Central Coast Tourism and Forest sectors have reached agreement on visuals using the same approach as proposed for the North Coast. Agreement reached on the North Coast would result in the **protection of the visual qualities of the entire Inside Passage**
- Reaching agreement on the North Coast would **establish certainty for each sector, help attract investment** and enable a **joint international marketing strategy** (as is being developed on the Central Coast)