



**Executive Director's Annual Report
April 1, 2016 - March 31, 2017**

Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism Society is a not-for-profit self-sustaining Destination Marketing Organization. It is industry-funded, research-based and membership-driven, covering an area from Nelson (including Whitewater Ski Resort, Retallack and Baldface) Balfour, Proctor, Harrop, Ainsworth, Kaslo, Lardeau and Meadow Creek.

Vision

To be the acting tourism voice of the Nelson Kootenay Lake region creating innovative and strategic marketing plans to attract visitors to its communities.

Mission

Through year-round compelling marketing Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism Society promotes the region's unique cultural qualities (outdoors, sports, dining, shopping, arts, health and wellness, heritage) to potential visitors, ultimately increasing the number of visitations and length of stays.

Board of Directors

1. Eleanor Stacey (Cultural Development Commission)
2. Gary McCandlish (Balfour Historical Society and Business Association)
3. Peter Moynes (KMC Magazine)
4. John Dutton (Nelson Whitewater Rafting Company)
5. Debra Hamilton (Wing Creek Resort)
6. Daphne Hunter (Kaslo Chamber)
7. Jake Murfitt (Ainsworth Hot Springs Resort)
8. Rob Little (Adventure Hotel/Louie's/Empire)
9. Rebeckah Hornung (Whitewater Winter Resort)
10. Val Yowek (Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce, NAEDP)
11. John LeBleu (Prestige Lakeside Resort and Prestige Inn)
12. vacant

Organizational Summary

NKLT is composed of 12 board positions, an executive director (ED) and a variety of contractors. This group has worked together developing and implementing marketing initiatives, community awareness and partnerships.

The Executive Director's (ED) 40-hour work week consists of managing and implementing the marketing plan, hosting media tours, attending meetings in and out of the area. The ED supports collaboration between other tourism organizations, sitting on the Cultural Development Committee and International Selkirk Loop Board, representative at stakeholder-related community meetings, and partnering with businesses throughout the region to improve awareness of what we have to offer to potential visitors.



The social media, photography, design, website content, and some project specific promotions are managed by Janneke Guenther, a recent graduate of Selkirk College. John Bowden was hired as a writer from September to May through the School Works Program. He was a huge asset providing new insights into the area and tourism knowledge. The website is hosted and managed by Brad Higham of Collabo.co, located in the Slocan Valley. Additional contractors are hired at times to keep NKLT evolving in SEO, video, photography and the written word. Working as a team, sharing ideas, and discussing strategies and creative direction has allowed us to meet our goals and make high level decisions on opportunities and challenges.

Marketing Summary

We created a three year plan back in 2015, establishing four goals that are broken down throughout this report. We have covered a variety of media reaching our targeted audiences (Calgary south to the border, Pacific Northwest, Okanagan and Greater Vancouver) through magazine, newspaper, billboard, online advertising and digital (social media) promotions.

Our MRDT (hotel tax) has increased another 10% this year. Fantatstic! We are now collecting over \$300,000 and using this money to market the region in innovative and successful ways.

The following is a summary of our initiatives that promoted the NKL region as a four-season destination.

Advertising/Social Media

- **Publications:** Kaslo Guide, Pennywise, Nelson Star, Discover Nelson Guide, Spokane Living, Out There Monthly, NKL Travel Book, KMC, CMC, KRT Travel Guide, Pacific Northwest Golf, Outdoors NW, Kettle Valley, Kootenay Ferry TV Screen, CWSAA, BC Musician Mag, ISL brochure and map, Sandpoint Magazine
- **Radio:** Bluepoint Radio Spokane area, Kootenay Coop Radio
- **Online Ads:** Castanet, Out There Monthly, Facebook, Kootenay Mountain Culture Group, Back Country Skiing, BC Musician, Kootenay Biz, Inside Golf, ArtsBC, Bestbikingroads.com, GoCamping
- **Facebook:** 11,587 from 9104 - up 2483 - 21% up
- **Twitter:** 1949 from 1546 followers - up 403 - 21% up
- **Instagram:** 5097 from 2531 from 1670 followers - up 861 - 16% up
- **Newsletter:** email monthly to 3537 subscribers
- **Tradeshows:** Calgary, Vancouver and Spokane Outdoor Shows, Golf Shows - Calgary, Spokane, Vancouver
- **FAM** - 14 media visits came to the area over the year with a larger amount in the spring and summer than years previous



Website Overview

- Users 121K, Sessions 158K, and Duration 2m 23s - all up as planned. Bounce Rate has improved remarkably going down another 11% to 46%.
- Link building is still a challenge. Referrals from local businesses could all benefit by affiliating and linking to the NKLT website that holds rich content for visitors.

Photography and Video

- Videos: Kaslo, Biking, XC Ski
- New images is ongoing by internal and external photographers

Strategic Plan

What are we doing to reach our four goals?

1. Creative Direction

- Ad Templates, Travel book for tourists, Trade Show displays, web content

2. Research

- Tourists survey
- EQ Survey
- Vacation Guide for tourists - Travel Book

3. Shoulder Season

- Shopping Campaign May to June and September: Sandpoint Mag, radio and social media
- DBC Coop Marketing - Cultural Theme - \$53,000
 - [Digital maps](#)
 - [Community Events Calendar](#)
 - Consumer Shows
 - Website Content Development
 - Marketing - brochures, mags, online and billboard

4. Collaboration - NKLT as an advocate for tourism-related topics, will ensure our tourism partners are heard and we will support fair and responsible initiatives to maintain and improve the tourism industry.

- Partnerships - \$13,050 amounting to 153 partners
- Community Calendar
- Digital Maps - 11 categories, Self-Guided Tours
- Kootenay Golf Trail
- Kootenay Dirt with 8 other DMO communities
- Short Term Rental discussions
- Railtown Development discussions



- International Selkirk Loop
- Urban Design Discussions
- DBC/Nelson Visitor Centre - social media actions campaign
- Discussions with Creston and East Shore regarding new DMO

Feedback

We value your participation and opinions. For NKLT to meet the needs of the communities and its stakeholders, please fill out the following survey, or send us an email or give us a call anytime. Let us know what we are doing well, and other ideas we should consider to help support and promote the region.

info@nelsonkootenaylake.com | 250.352.7879

Dianna Ducs, Executive Director
Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism Society

This Annual Report is available on the Nelson Kootenay Lake website.
www.nelsonkootenaylake.com/info/about/board-reports