2019
GOVERNOR’S CONFERENCE ON TOURISM
DESTINATION MAINE:
CHARTING THE COURSE
APRIL 9 & 10 // AUGUSTA, MAINE
Destination Development
Case Study: Moosehead Lake
Governor’s Conference on Tourism
April 9, 2019
The Moosehead Lake Region

1.25 million acres
- Bigger than some states
- Nearly half in conservation

Over 100 lakes and ponds
- Highlighted by 75,000 acre, 40 mile long Moosehead Lake
- Over another 60,000 acres of water

Population of 4,200 (2.5 persons per sq. mile)
- Greenville – 1,646 residents
- Rockwood – 320 residents
- Jackman – 718 residents
- Shirley – 183 residents
The Catalyst

❖ Loss of Anchor Businesses
  ❖ Lumber Mill & Steam Plant
  ❖ Ski Area
  ❖ Whitewater Rafting
  ❖ Condo Lodge (Realtor Investors)

❖ School & Hospital in jeopardy
  ❖ 25% loss of population
  ❖ School enrollment 1996 – 374; 2018 – 216;
  ❖ Grades 9 -12 = 88 in 2018;
    ❖ projected: 68 in 2020; 48 in 2024
The Catalyst

- Reformed defunct Economic Development group - 2014
- Hired Roger Brooks: Branding
  - Brand Leadership Team
  - Committees: Downtown, Wayfinding
- Maine Office of Tourism:
  “Moosehead Pilot Project”
The Catalyst

- Changing forest ownership, new conservation framework

Figure 6. The number of acres owned by industry (red) and by various newer forest owner types combined (blue) in Maine between 1994 and 2005.

Figure 7. Map of Maine timberland ownership by owner type in 1994 and 2005. See Table 1 for a description of owner types.

Source: Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, “Changing Timberland Ownership in the Northern Forest and Implications for Biodiversity” December 2005
The Catalyst

The Landscape in 1996
The Catalyst

The Moosehead Region today
The Maine Woods Initiative

The Appalachian Mountain Club’s Strategy for Land Conservation in the 100-Mile Wilderness:

- Landscape-scale conservation
- New outdoor recreation destination
  - Sustainable forestry
- Regional economic development, community partnerships and local environmental education
AMC Maine Wilderness Lodges

In 2018: Approximately 4,000 unique visitors, 10,000+ overnight stays
10-Month Operation. Peak Season Months: February-March & July-September
55% New England States, 35% Maine, 8% Other U.S., 2% International

AMC Visitor Spending In Moosehead Lake Region: 2003-2017 = $1.6 Million
20% spend an overnight at another lodging property in Greenville;
25% visit a local historic site or cultural institution;
67% eat at local restaurants;
77% make purchases at local retailers

2017 Direct Visitor Spending in Local Economy = $197,000
Our Goal:
To energize & revitalize downtown Greenville for both residents and visitors thereby fostering more people to move here, open a business, vacation and spend their money here.
The Actions

Memory Benches

21 Benches and flower pots

Investment: $21,000
The Actions

Attractive Trash Receptacles
Downtown Greenville Master Plan

- Town of Greenville hired the Musson Group
- Downtown Plan Resulted
The Action

Northern Forest Center Façade Grant Program

Before:

After:
The Actions

Updating Town Ordinances

- Lighting Ordinances
- Zoning Ordinances
- Allowable Business Ordinances
- First & second floor uses
Create an 'Artisan Village'
The Actions

Artisan Village Enhancements & Landscaping
# The Actions

## Moosehead Lake Artisan Village

Our Track Record So Far:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pilot 2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>Estimate 2019</th>
<th>Long-term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weeks Open</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottages</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupancy</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moosehead Lake Artisan Village

Key Program Components:

- Artisan Village Programming Committee
- Recruitment of artists
- Focus on building relationships with artists
- Complimentary and reduced-priced lodging
- Low fees and flexible requirements
- Marketing the program throughout the region
- Beautiful location and setting
Moosehead Lake Artisan Village

Challenges/Future Plans:

- Artists' sales revenue
- Long-term staffing
- Long-term location
The Actions

❖ Downtown Greenville Summer Music Programs

1) Expansion of Destination Moosehead Lake’s Gazebo Concert series

2) New Thoreauly Entertaining! series

Total cost: $8,275 for 2017 and 2018
$3,425 for Gazebo Concert expansion
$4,850 for new Thoreauly Entertaining! series

Revenue: 8 philanthropic donations
The Actions

❖ New Thoreauly Entertaining! Series

Key Program Components:
- Downtown buzz
- Performances
- Recruitment of Musicians
- Marketing the Program

Challenges/Future Plans:
- Long-term program ownership
- Expansion to Saturdays
- Funding
The Actions

WHY WAYFINDING???

➢ Key Priority in Moosehead Lake Branding Effort (by Roger Brooks International)

➢ Surveyed 1400+ people

➢ Economic Impact of Wayfinding:
  • More attractions lead to longer visitor stays
  • Increase in visitors numbers overall
  • Increased revenue for stores, lodging, restaurants, arts/cultural venues.

➢ “Comfort Level” in remote areas
COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION!!

- Focused on the goals
- Met with all parties impacted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town Managers</th>
<th>Landowners/Managers:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select Boards</td>
<td>Natural Resources Education Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Boards</td>
<td>Weyerhaeuser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code Enforcement Officers</td>
<td>Brookfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Commissioners</td>
<td>LIBRA Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine Office of Tourism</td>
<td>AMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine DOT</td>
<td>Individual Property Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Members</td>
<td>Local Newspapers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Businesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Maine Regional Park Services</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maine Bureau of Parks &amp; Lands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland Fisheries &amp; Wildlife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moosehead Lake Economic Development Corp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Actions

STEPS:
➢ Hired Axia Creative as wayfinding consultant (objective expert)

➢ Identified key attractions based on objective criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Towns</th>
<th>Snowmobile/ATV Trailheads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sections of Moosehead Lake</td>
<td>Non-motorized trailheads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Boat Launches</td>
<td>Public Parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake &amp; Pond Fishing Access</td>
<td>Public Restrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Fishing Access</td>
<td>Airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Boating Access</td>
<td>Museums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking Trails</td>
<td>Historical Sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming beaches</td>
<td>Camping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Actions
The Actions

STEPS (cont.):

➢ Met with Maine DOT to present goals and map of destination points
  ➢ Brought key decision makers and support people from Moosehead Lake
  ➢ Identified roads that fall under DOT jurisdiction
  ➢ Gained rudimentary understanding of DOT regulations
  ➢ Got buy-in to begin moving forward
  ➢ Established DOT contact point for communication at every step
  ➢ Worked with Axia consultant to finalize sign designs

➢ Met with DOT to get approval of sign designs and locations
The Actions

**STEPS (cont.):**

- Issued RFP (MOT and DOT helped with a vendor list, plus locals)
- Checked references, visited manufacturing sites, reviewed previous jobs
- Met with landowners/municipalities to get approval on sign designs and locations
  - Obtained signed “permission slips” for DOT files
  - Negotiated contracts specifying ownership, liability, maintenance
- Tested prototype of sign panel (size of letters and font type)
The Actions

[Two images showing a person standing near road signs with directions to Lily Bay, Little Wilson Fls, Borestone Mtn, and Goodell Brk Fls on the left, and a sign pointing to Little Kineo Mtn on the right.]
The Actions

STEPS (cont.):

➢ Burr Signs provided fabricated prototype sign for approval

➢ Allow 8-12 weeks for fabrication

➢ Identify all sign locations by GPS coordinates and photo

➢ Have Dig Safe verify locations prior to installation
The Actions

ROUGH TIMELINE

- October 2015  Started working with Axia, wayfinding consultant
- June 2016    Issued RFP to vendors
- August 2016  Selected Burr Signs as vendor
- Sept 2016    Gave go ahead to Burr to begin fabrication
- Nov/Dec 2016 Started installation
- WINTER       (stopped installation)
- Sept 2017    Completed Phase 1 of installation
- Nov 2017     Completed Phase 2 of installation
- May 2019     Plan to install Information Kiosks
- FUTURE       More signs on top half of the lake and toward Jackman
The Actions

BUDGET SO FAR:

- $75K Wayfinding Consultant
- $225K Fabrication and installation of 78 signs in 2 phases
- $50K Information Kiosks and Business Map Stands
- 350K

FUNDRAISING:

- Counties (Somerset & Piscataquis)
- Corporate Donations
- Landowners
- Foundation Grants
The Actions

BEFORE

AFTER
The Actions

BEFORE

AFTER
The Actions

BEFORE

AFTER
WOUDDA COUDDA:

➢ Communicate with affected parties early and often (GOALS!!)

➢ DO NOT install signs in winter

➢ Know what signs look like with different numbers of message lines on them.

➢ DON’T RUSH THE DESIGN. It’s easier to change things on paper than in the field.

➢ Design Consultant should use standard software like Excel (message schedule) and Google Maps (location plan) so you can make changes and own the process.
Community Destination Academy
The Difference

❖ Local Engagement and Awareness
❖ Tourism Master Plan
❖ Downtown Plan
❖ New Business Owners & Investors
❖ Increased Business over the last 1-3 years
The Essentials

❖ Anchor Businesses – AMC, Weyerhaeuser
❖ Anchor Funding – Plum Creek now Weyerhaeuser
❖ Professional Expertise – Brooks, Future IQ, Musson
The Toughest Challenge

❖ Local Politics
❖ Organizational Capacity
❖ Getting things done efficiently

“Politics is more difficult than physics”
Albert Einstein
The Best Advice

- Build Grassroots up
- Stabilize/build key organizations first
- Get internal house in order – before you start marketing
- Deliver tangible products
- Be BOLD

“Top-down”

“Bottom-up”
Thank You!
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