DESTINATION LEVEL CRITERIA:
Early Adopter Program – Teton County

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Policy 6.1.b: Promote eco-tourism

Tourism will continue to be the basis of the economy and will continue to focus on outdoor recreation. Consistent with the community’s Ecosystem Stewardship Common Value, eco-tourism, which promotes energy efficient and low impact enjoyment of the ecosystem, should have an expanded role in the overall tourism sector. Eco-tourism businesses are able to profit from the community’s natural capital while promoting ecological conservation and passing along the community’s stewardship ethic to visitors.

Policy 6.2.a: Enhance tourism as the basis of the economy.

Tourism will continue to be the basis of our economy, and the community will enhance this sector by pursuing sustainable tourism that is not reliant on growth and consumption.
GSTC’s Early Adopters Program - Objectives

1. Conduct a destination good practices evaluation that will provide snapshot of the destination’s readiness for destination criteria

2. Validate the range, applicability, and clarity of the criteria and indicators
Process & Outputs

- Self-evaluation: carried out by 22 local leaders during opening workshop
- One-on-one meetings with 25 local leaders

- Validation Workshop: preliminary results presented to 38 local leaders; small working group reviewed matrix in detail post-workshop

- Report finalized
## Results:

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Recommendations: Destination Management

• Establish a Destination Stewardship Committee (DSC) based on the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee (GYCC) model and comprised of key leaders and leading organizations from private sector, local government, and civil society.

• Develop a destination-level sustainable tourism strategy consistent with the policies outlined in Teton County’s Comprehensive Plan and any economic plan, while clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the various leading organizations in regards to tourism management and monitoring.

• Integrate the message of sustainability more meaningfully into the brand of the destination, as well as its marketing strategy.
Recommendations: Economic and Social

- **Public participation in tourism planning and decision-making.** The proposed Destination Stewardship Committee (DSC) should be inclusive and representative of a cross-section of destination interests. The DSC can serve as a permanent mechanism for guiding sustainable destination planning, management and monitoring.

- **Community satisfaction monitoring.** The newly established Travel and Tourism Board should consider surveying the community’s satisfaction with tourism on an on-going basis.

- **Promoting local sustainable products and services** that are based on the destination’s nature, history and culture. For example, tourism leaders should also consider working with local artisans to produce and bring to market authentic handicrafts and souvenirs.
Recommendations: **Natural & Cultural Heritage Preservation**

- **Natural and Cultural Heritage Preservation** is Teton County’s highest-ranking theme.

- The destination’s **strong performance in this area is mainly attributed to the planning and programs of public land managers** in the Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park, Bridger-Teton and Caribou-Targhee National Forests and the National Elk Refuge.

- **There is a high level of coordination among federal land managers.** The Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee is a successful mechanism for cooperation and collaboration that can serve as a model for improved coordination of destination-level sustainable tourism management.
Recommendations: Environmental

- **Private sector sustainability.** It is recommended that the DSC, once established, coordinate closely with the GYCC and concessionaries to build on lessons learned and inspire widespread adoption of sustainable operating practices among tourism businesses throughout the destination.

- **Climate change adaptation.** Destination managers should consider elevating the tourism sector’s awareness of the interaction between climate change and tourism. It is recommended that tourism stakeholders broaden their dialogue to identify strategies for adapting to direct and indirect impacts of climate change.

- **Environmental Assessment.** Destination managers should consider establishing a destination sustainability monitoring system which tracks changes occurring in the destination over time.
Thank you!

Q&A