



DRAFT

CRAFT Recovery Mentor Summary Report Lake County

CRAFT Programs

The Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) developed the Colorado Rural Academy for Tourism (CRAFT) to support communities across the state integrate tourism into their economic development strategies and develop new visitor experiences aimed at attracting increased traveler spending.

The CRAFT Recovery Mentor program provides up to 50 hours of mentoring for Colorado tourism partners to advance one or more tourism strategies that bolsters their response to a recent crisis or natural disaster.

Overview

The Lake County Tourism Panel (LCTP), in the Rockies Playground travel region, was awarded a CRAFT Recovery Mentor program by the Colorado Tourism Office in fall 2020 to advance recovery efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The objective of this CRAFT Recovery Mentor program was to engage with Lake County tourism stakeholders to identify priority visitor impacts that can be mitigated through strategic messaging and create a plan to collaboratively distribute visitor behavior messages to reduce those impacts from future visitors.

The LCTP is a dedicated group of volunteers committed to promoting tourism in Lake County, Colorado. The LCTP is funded by Lake County lodging taxes and markets the county through print and digital advertising, public relations and its annual Visitor's Guide.



Results

The LCTP was paired with Hilary Lewkowicz, a CRAFT Mentor with experience in rural tourism development, stakeholder engagement, sustainable tourism and destination marketing, to achieve the following outcomes:

- Development, distribution, and analysis of an online survey for Lake County businesses, organizations and attractions to inform priority visitor impacts from the 2020 tourism season.
- Facilitation of a focus group for Lake County land managers, conservation organizations and tourism-related businesses to discuss priority visitor impacts from the 2020 tourism season.
- Facilitation of a follow-up focus group meeting for Lake County land managers, conservation organizations and tourism-related businesses to discuss collaborative messaging strategies and visitor communications resource mapping.
- Delivery of a Lake County Visitor Impacts Focus Group and Online Survey Summary Report.
- Delivery of Lake County visitor communications resource map that identifies each stakeholder's capabilities to distribute responsible recreation messaging.
- Delivery of a Responsible Recreation Messaging Framework and Inventory.

Recommended Next Steps

Immediate - Now through March 2021

1. Deploy CTO Winter Backcountry Safety messaging across digital platforms. Share messaging and [LCTP backcountry winter safety webpage](#) with tourism stakeholders in order to amplify the campaign.
2. Convene Lake County tourism stakeholders to share Lake County Visitor Impacts Focus Group and Online Survey Summary Report, and Responsible Recreation Messaging Framework and inventory. This could be a virtual meeting to share messaging strategies and how to target visitors throughout the visitor lifecycle. In an effort to streamline communication resources, stakeholders should be given the opportunity to share their current and projected capacity for messaging to visitors.
3. Expand the Responsible Recreation Messaging Inventory to include content from each of the existing responsible recreation messaging programs that were identified for each impact. Content should be based on existing principles, as outlined in the inventory, and tailored to fit the voice and priorities of Lake County.



Short Term - March to May 2021

1. Convene Visitor Impacts Focus Group prior to summer to discuss priorities for responsible recreation messaging and in-person visitor education opportunities at places like the Twin Lakes and Leadville visitor centers.
2. Development of responsible recreation digital and print materials to target summer 2021 visitors. These materials could be organized as a communications toolkit that is shared with local tourism stakeholders to support distribution.
3. Development of a LCTP website landing page for summer 2021 responsible recreation messaging. The landing page should be shared with tourism stakeholders and serve as a central digital location for them to drive their audiences to for deeper content about responsible recreation in Lake County.

Long Term - Fall 2021 and beyond

1. Continue to convene the visitor impacts focus group and other tourism stakeholders to share updates on visitor impacts and ensure alignment on messaging.
2. Identify ways to be more inclusive when distributing responsible recreation messaging (e.g., bilingual messaging) and identify organizations to partner with that will support the LCTP reach new audiences in Colorado
3. Create a trail ambassador program to target the most impacted recreation areas.
4. Establish mechanisms that enable visitors to donate their time, talent and treasure to projects that enhance public lands in Lake County.
5. Create an editorial calendar for Lake County tourism stakeholders to collaboratively distribute timely responsible recreation messages throughout each year.

Contact Information

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