

Destination Stewardship Council (DSC) Meeting #14

Thursday, March 21, 2024

11:00 am - 12:30 pm

Teton County Library Ordway Auditorium

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome of new/substitute/guest members

- a. Jerry Blann, JH AIR
- b. Jeremy Barnum, GTNP
- c. Justin Walters, JHCC

2. DSC communications and outreach

a. *External:*

- i. Public [SDMP Detailed Progress Tracker](#)
- ii. March “[Responsible Tourism Rundown](#)” newsletter
- iii. DSC/SDMP year 1 recap [press release](#)
 1. A press release has been issued and will be released by local media. Business listserv and nonprofit listserv will be next. Releases like this are part of a detailed JHTTB external communications plan.
- iv. The “[Responsible Tourism Rundown](#)” newsletter continues to receive high engagement.
- v. The JHTTB is looking at hosting a hospitality partners update (HPU) in May (pushed back from April due to off-season availability in the hospitality industry). A survey will go out to former HPU participants to determine their preferred topics.

b. *Internal:*

- i. March DMC Report
- ii. A clarification was made that the DSC can provide recommendations for members (including the JHTTB, Chamber of Commerce, JHMR, etc.) to perform SDMP actions or lead initiatives, but all work will need to be approved, coordinated, and directed by members’ individual boards/management.
- i. Results of the internal survey on the status of the DSC: Members were mostly satisfied with current progress and systems. Each member prioritized different SDMP goals/items for future work. This demonstrates the variety of stakeholders involved and also the difficulties in moving forward efficiently. Members (or designees of their organizations) are invited to join additional working groups to help expedite action items in preferred topic areas.

3. SDMP updates/feedback

a. Workforce

- i. The March 2024 working group meeting brought together 20 stakeholders from the business, nonprofit, frontline worker, governmental, and Wind River Reservation communities. It appeared to be the first time all those sectors have convened to create forward progress on regional workforce challenges.
- ii. The group is planning to break out into three smaller segments: workforce pipeline (high school, CWC, UW, senior center), workforce appreciation/retention/development, and identification and communication with workforce on existing programs.

b. Governance

i. DMMO

1. Kristin Dahl shared a very early draft of a potential DMMO structure recommendation. It is currently being reviewed by the County's legal council to ensure feasibility.
2. The recommendation will be shared with the DSC before the April meeting so members can provide feedback at the meeting.
 - a. **ACTION ITEM:** DSC members to review consultant's recommendation and prepare to discuss in April.

ii. Formal SDMP adoption

1. The DSC continues to recommend pushing for SDMP adoption by the Town and County. The goal of governmental adoption is to reduce organizational silos and create alignment on work plans, decisions, and community goals. Some SDMP action items hinge on Town/County decisions. The community has shown support for the SDMP through their engagement with outreach, working groups, and info sessions.
2. The JHTTB executive director has held meetings with some of the elected officials to discuss SDMP adoption. DSC members noted that others (DSC members, JHTTB board members) could help by having conversations with elected officials. This could be a multi-faceted type of campaign that shows the electeds broad existing community support.
3. Some members felt that elected officials and community members in general need more information about the work that the DSC is accomplishing, particularly through the working groups. Members suggested that the JHTTB provide regular updates via public comment at Town Council meetings about the DSC and SDMP to help increase awareness.

4. Cheyenne and Sheridan have already gone through the process of having local governments adopt and support their DMO's tourism plans, so they may be able to provide guidance.
5. Timeline - Budget discussions are dominating electeds' schedules through July. The DSC recommended pushing for SDMP adoption in early fall - after budget discussions and before election season fully ramps up. A staff report would need to be completed two weeks prior to any meetings with the SDMP on the agenda.
 - a. **ACTION ITEM:** The JHTTB is to provide regular public comment at Town/County meetings (*subject to JHTTB board direction*).
 - b. **ACTION ITEM:** The JHTTB and other members are to discuss the SDMP with electeds in more depth after summer (budget season) with the goal of putting SDMP adoption on a fall meeting agenda (*subject to leadership's direction at individual member organizations*).

4. Visitor management

- a. DSC Internal Prep Doc correlated with [SDMP Initiative 2.1](#)
- b. Long-term:
 - i. The SDMP recommends commissioning a study to determine a holistic visitor management strategy in the long-term (Years 4-5).
- c. Mid-term:
 - i. The SDMP recommends the creation of a visitor management action team in the mid-term.
 - ii. The DSC came to the consensus that it would be challenging to enact any potential policy actions without a DMMO in place and/or the SDMP being formally adopted by the Town/County. Since the visitor management SDMP section incorporates all other segments of the plan, liaisons from the existing working groups will be important when creating an action team.
- d. Short-term (interim goals and outcomes):
 - i. In the near-term, the DSC is learning from member organizations (YNP, GTNP, BTNF) about their visitor management planning processes.
 1. Member organizations stressed the importance of taking the time to clearly identify problems within an overarching framework of establishing desired conditions and outcomes. It may be tempting to focus on tactics and strategies to enact

“quick wins,” but this can create unintended consequences unless the entire system is viewed holistically.

- a. The JHCC Visitor Services team is a good resource for collecting and conveying feedback from visitors to help identify what “problems” exist according to different user groups.

2. Federal partners have spent time identifying problems and thresholds while working to understand the visitor flow systems. They’re collecting data on regional transportation and visitor use patterns (how people move through the system) rather than focusing on one specific impact area. Studying the spatial flow of visitors across the region has improved their understanding of visitor use.

3. **ACTION ITEMS:**

- a. Focus on influencing visitor behavior and the visitor experience through effective communications. For example, Visitor Services has been recommending that people head up to the parks early to reduce traffic jams. GTNP has noticed a change in behavior with more early entries.
- b. Continue to develop the data/indicators project with UW (including visitor sentiment data) to establish baselines.
- c. Continue to push for SDMP adoption by the Town/County and for the establishment of a DMMO.
- d. Keep in mind that tactics and strategies (especially within working groups) need to be considered within a holistic context of desired outcomes.
 - i. Note that the process of identifying desired destination-wide conditions has not officially begun.

e. Snake River Bridge traffic

- i. Based on surveys and direct visitor feedback, the traffic situation on Highway 22 and the Snake River Bridge is significantly impacting visitor experience and resident sentiment. The transit and marketing/education working groups will be discussing this topic at their April meetings to determine further recommended action items.

5. Updates from DSC members

- a. Public engagement opportunities:

- i. Airport pilot [shuttle survey](#): ends April 14, 2024
- b. GTNP visitor management stakeholder meeting: April 30, 2024

6. Logistics

- a. Supermeeting with DMMO + DSC: April 25, 2024

Attended:

- Jeremy Barnum, GTNP Chief of Staff (substitute)
- Christina White, YNP Chief of External Affairs and Partnerships (virtual)
- Mary Cernicek, BTNF Public Affairs Officer
- Arne Jorgensen, Jackson Town Councilman
- Justin Walters, JH Chamber of Commerce Director of Visitor Services (substitute)
- Jerry Blann, JH AIR (substitute)
- Elizabeth Birnie, Community Foundation of JH Philanthropy Officer
- Ned Wonson, JHMR Marketing Director
- Julien Hass, community at large
- Ryan Stolp, community at large
- Jim Wollenburg, Wyoming Office of Tourism Global Partnerships Senior Manager (Ex-officio, virtual)
- Mary Bess, JHTTB Sustainability Committee
- Crista Valentino, JHTTB Executive Director
- Lindsey Ehinger, JHTTB Destination Management Coordinator
- Mike Garaci, JHTTB Board (observer)

Absent:

- Wes Gardner, Teton County Commissioner