

Nature Tourism

Issue: Nature tourism is the fastest growing element of the tourism industry, and many local communities lack the knowledge and skills to capitalize on this opportunity and associated economic development.

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Region: South **Circle which primary base program it addresses -** ANR CD (related/secondary)

Section 1. Relevance

Relevance is included to provide the reason the educational program should be developed to address the identified issue. Within the relevance section, there are several questions that must be addressed. This section will seek to address these.

Where did this issue surface?

Texas Community Futures Forum

County Committees

Commodity / Industry / Special Interest Groups

Specialist(s) Miles Phillips

Other: Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Corporation, Nature Groups & Eco-Tourism

What is the issue/problem?

Local Communities do not have the knowledge and/or resources to capitalize on the growth seen in the nature tourism industry, as well as, alternative enterprises and income diversification which can also lead to prevention of habitat degradation & habitat loss.

Problem size and scope? (How many people does it affect? How wide spread?)

Affecting every county in region to one degree or another.

Problem severity? (How serious is this issue?) *Medium*

Description: Every county (from landowners to chambers of commerce) in the South region is dealing with the issue of nature tourism to one degree or another.

Target Audience? (Who does the problem impact and how many?)

Local landowners needing income diversification, risk assessment, and a “how - to” cookbook for setting up and running a nature tourism business, local chambers of commerce, Economic Development Corporations, and nature tourism groups need additional resources and training for fostering and partnering with these types of businesses, as do local leaders and elected officials along with nature groups interested in the environmental aspects of these enterprises.

What are some general characteristics of the audience this program targets?

All of these groups are currently clients of Extension and utilize our resources to a great degree. This “additional” information would be one more resource these clients would call upon Extension to provide.

Section 2. Response

State the goal of the program.

State the outcome objectives.

Client Change	At the end of this program, will....
<i>Knowledge</i>	increase knowledge on.... -The financial & economic impact of nature/eco-tourism to local communities and the state as a whole. -Resources available to them.
<i>Skills</i>	develop skills.... -Developing business management skills (risk management, business plans) -Naturalist training -Skills to evaluate feasibility of nature tourism
<i>Attitude</i>	change their attitudes pertaining to... -The perception that they cannot reach their goals (ie. set up and run a successful nature tourism business) -Their negative perception of the real positive influence of nature/ eco-tourism.
<i>Behavior Change</i>	adopt.... -nature tourism enterprises
<i>New Technology</i>	adopt....
<i>Best Practice</i>	adopt

Program Design. In the space below, provide an explanation of the program design. Try to list the topics that could be addressed under this issue. For example, if this was an educational program for new ranch landowners, topics could include: pond management, introduction to beef cattle production, introduction to wildlife management, and general landscaping. Also, try and list resources that could be used to help develop or provide existing curriculum to address the issue.

Topic (Subject Matter)	Existing Resource(s)	Delivery Strategies	Contact Person(s)
Overview of the economic impact of nature tourism (eco-tourism) to local communities and the state	La Copita Ranch (& website)	-group meetings -self-taught -face to face -networking	-Miles Phillips
Keys to/examples of successful nature tourism businesses.	-Existing Eco-tourism businesses	-group meetings -self-taught -face to face -networking	-Miles Phillips -Business owners -Master Naturalists
Business development & business management training & marketing (ie. how to plan & finance a successful nature tourism business)	-Farm assist -SBDC -Business Incubators -EDC -CofC -Extension -Websites -TDA (Nature Tourism) -TPWD -Master Marketers (Nature Tourism)	-group meetings -self-taught -face to face -networking	-Greg Taylor -Miles Phillips -Local heads of aforementioned agencies and groups
-Grantors & Related groups and agencies who work or assist with nature tourism development	Examples -TPWD -GLO -CofC -EDC (Multitude of organizations)	-group meetings -self-taught -face to face -networking	-Too many to list

<p>Follow-up types of yearly review, updates, trainings, workshops, etc. to see where we are going and what we can do to help.</p>	<p>The people we have used in the process (resources we have previously used should be involved)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -group meetings -self-taught -face to face -networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Too many to list -Local heads of aforementioned agencies & groups
<p>(ie. follow-up series)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -group meetings -self-taught -face to face -networking 	

Section 3. Results

The last section deals with evaluation of this program. The evaluation content should mirror the objectives that are outlined in section two. Please try and list some specific questions that should be asked to the target audience to determine if the intended change took place. List as many potential questions as possible. The goal here is to create a question bank for each client change level so that the educator can review these questions to see if any of them are relevant to their program. If they are, then they can use them to measure change in their program.

Client Change Level	Sample Questions (Review the objectives section to help place questions or statements in the space below)
<i>Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Awareness of eco tourism opportunities
<i>Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Evaluate feasibility of the eco tourism business- Develop skills necessary to run business

Client Change Level	Sample Questions (Review the objectives section to help place questions or statements in the space below)
<i>Attitude</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- This is a legitimate business opportunity.- More positive view of interacting with people/potential customers
<i>Behavior Change</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- adoption of eco tourism

Client Change Level	Sample Questions (Review the objectives section to help place questions or statements in the space below)
<i>New Technology</i>	- Internet-based marketing
<i>Best Practice</i>	

Economic Indicators. Are there economic indicators that can be measured concerning this issue?

YES

Please list them below.

Improved profit ability and net worth
Possible increase in sales tax revenue (i.e. lodging overnight)

Interpretation. The last step in the process is interpreting the results to our stakeholders. List internal and external stakeholders that would be interested in the results of this educational program. Do not forget to think about other state agencies and groups that would be interested in these outcomes.

Internal to Extension Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Administration & especially department heads (Agriculture, Park & Recreation, Community Development)-County Extension Agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Government (Commissioners & stakeholders)-EDC-TDA-TPWD-Grantors, etc.-C of C*Numerous-Similar groups/associated groups be made aware of what the other groups are doing (ie. Bed & Breakfast groups need to know nature tourism site development is being planned)-Nature tourism groups