

Community Focus Statement D: Become a destination renowned for culture, environment, health, and well-being for people of all ages and abilities.

Action Statement D.3: Promote family- and eco-friendly tourism that educates people about our natural surroundings, dark skies, and quiet nature.

D3

Benchmarks: Existing and new eco-friendly tourism businesses thrive in Bear Valley.

Champion: Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

Estimated Cost: \$8,000–\$50,000



The Stanfield Marsh Wildlife and Waterfowl Preserve is an opportunity for ecotourism in the Bear Valley Communities. Photo source: Michael Baker International

Millions of people visit Bear Valley each year. The impact of millions is significant in both positive and negative ways. For example, tourist dollars positively impact the economy. In contrast, waste (such as broken sleds) left behind in the forest negatively impacts the environment. Bear Valley stakeholders recognize that tourism is the backbone of the local economy and would like to minimize the negative impacts of tourism while boosting the positive. To that end, leaders in the Bear Valley Community can work to increase the number of annual visitors and motivate those tourists to recreate responsibly in our natural environment.

Currently, the Big Bear Visitors Bureau, as the Big Bear Lake Tourism Business Improvement District, promotes Bear Valley through advertising, promotions, public and media relations, and special events. Upon examination of their efforts, the Chamber of Commerce can identify untapped markets and develop a marketing strategy for the most favorable.

In addition, the Big Bear Visitors Bureau produces and distributes brochures, visitor guides, and literature about the Bear Valley communities. Such collateral can be modified to incorporate a campaign to educate and promote sustainable use of Bear Valley natural resources. As a result, visitors can be encouraged to recycle, leave no trace, be energy efficient, and conserve water. The Visitors Bureau can also work with the Big Bear Ecotourism Coalition to offer volunteer vacations combined with outdoor adventures that enable visitors to protect the natural surroundings while enjoying the serenity and beauty they offer.



Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Establish an action team	Champion	Months 1	Big Bear Visitors Bureau http://www.bigbear.com/ Big Bear Ecotourism Coalition http://bigbearecotourism.org/members/
2. Establish partnerships to promote responsible tourism and form working group.	Team	Months 1 – 2	
3. Analyze existing tourism base and identify desirable untapped markets.	Team	Months 3 – 4	
4. Develop new and/or niche marketing campaign focused on desirable untapped markets.	Team with support of Big Bear Visitors Bureau, Big Bear Ecotourism Coalition	Months 5 – 8	
5. Refine visitor information materials to promote conscientious use of recreational and hospitality resources.	Team with support of Big Bear Visitors Bureau, Big Bear Ecotourism Coalition	Months 6 - 12	
6. Monitor the effectiveness of programs, report to community members, and revise as appropriate.	Team with support of Big Bear Visitors Bureau, Big Bear Ecotourism Coalition	Month 13, on-going	