

Soda Springs, Idaho

Historic Oregon Trail Oasis

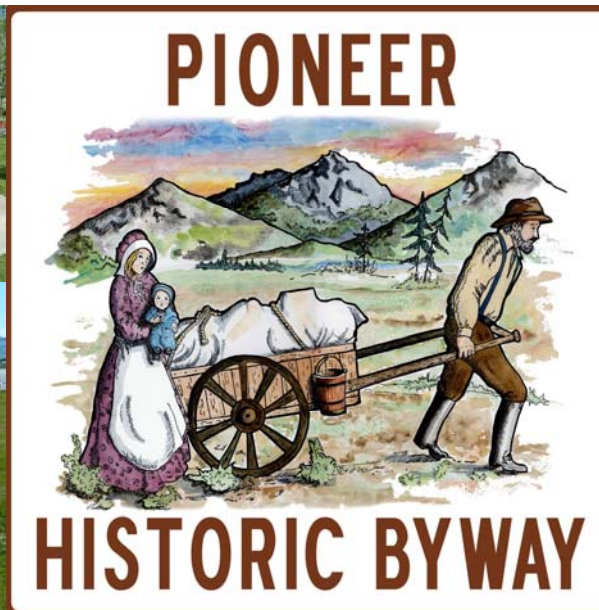
Soda Springs / Caribou County

Market Analysis

and

Action Plan

January 2009



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Executive Summary

Soda Springs and Caribou County was an oasis for weary travelers on the Oregon Trail, and today is a strategic location for highly productive industries with global markets, whose employees enjoy a high quality of life. Products from Caribou County are used in defense, agriculture, consumer products, and manufacturing around the world. The average wages in Caribou County are among the highest in Idaho, although county population and school enrollment has been declining. Many workers commute to work from adjacent counties due in part to lack of adequate housing and services in Caribou County.

Caribou County's competitive advantages include an excellent workforce; highway and rail transportation; natural gas; ample inexpensive power and water; quality education, sports, and health care facilities; developable land with available utilities; low cost of doing business; a favorable climate, and a plethora of outdoor recreation opportunities. Five key opportunities are new business development that complements existing industry; entrepreneurship and youth entrepreneurship development, particularly in services, technology, retail, and the arts; enhanced lodging capacity; housing development; and business assistance. Caribou County businesses need assistance in the areas of energy efficiency and alternative energy to lower costs; specialized training for employees; technology upgrades to be more competitive; financing for expansion, research, or new market development; and permitting or regulatory needs.

The fact that so many workers commute daily into Caribou County for high-paying jobs at local industrial plants, but spend their paychecks in the communities where they reside, attests to the need for quality housing, dining, shopping, and other services. Retail sales leakage in Caribou County is an estimated \$54 million per year in just eight retail categories (see Retail Leakage, page 9). Moreover, Caribou County is missing millions of dollars in potential tourism revenue annually.

A barrier to new business investment cited by local citizens is a lack of consensus among community leaders concerning the need and nature of economic change. Leadership must enthusiastically embrace open and honest community dialogue about the need for strategic growth. Local government can willingly research and effect best practices gleaned from other rural communities, such as zoning guidelines which will provide residents a quality neighborhood and community to call home. Citizens and business owners together can create events and attractions that travelers are excited to visit, spend their money, and share with their friends. Educators, retirees, volunteers, business owners, and youth can work together to diversify existing businesses, and develop skills to build/create new businesses.

The following target sectors for business recruitment are suggested: makers of products supplied to the mining and industrial plants; manufacturers of specialty equipment or parts for the alternative energy sector; byproducts from the industrial plants (i.e. silica, quartzite for artisan glass, etc.); manufacturers of specialty/custom recreational equipment; regional manufacturers seeking a lower-cost area for relocation/expansion; local art/craft co-op; "Lone Eagle" entrepreneurs; diversification and/or expansion of existing businesses focused to tourists; health care services for aging population; education and technology businesses; small brand motel, bed and breakfast; outfitting businesses; and new or upgraded RV park.

This Market Analysis and Action Plan identifies eight goals and 46 specific actions to encourage job creation and recapture lost retail sales for City of Soda Springs and Caribou County:

- Goal 1: Diversify the business base through strategic recruitment to provide more job opportunities.
- Goal 2: Support retention/expansion of existing businesses.
- Goal 3: Assist new entrepreneurs (start-ups).
- Goal 4: Reduce retail leakage (keep spending in town).
- Goal 5: Increase tourism through extended stays and targeted promotion.
- Goal 6: Plan, fund, and maintain infrastructure.
- Goal 7: Support development of affordable and executive housing.
- Goal 8: Expand workforce training opportunities.

Implementation of the goals and actions will be led by the Greater Soda Springs Community Development Committee (GSSCDC), with support from the City of Soda Springs, Caribou County, Chamber of Commerce, hospital, school district, local business and industry leaders, and the Four County Alliance of Southeastern Idaho (4-CASI).

Introduction

This Market Analysis and Action Plan Report outlines a strategy for economic development in Soda Springs and Caribou County. It is based on socio-economic trends and community input, and includes suggested economic targets and actions for business retention and recruitment, entrepreneurship, and tourism. Throughout the project, the consultants were assisted by Kathy Ray of the Four County Alliance of Southeastern Idaho, the Idaho Department of Commerce, Idaho State Tax Commission, Idaho Department of Labor, City of Soda Springs, Soda Springs Chamber of Commerce, and Caribou County.

Project Purpose

The purpose of this project was three-fold:

- 1) To “identify possible spin-off businesses from the nearby phosphate industrial plants that could be solicited to bolster the economic climate of the region”;
- 2) To develop promotional strategies for the area to service both domestic and international tourists; and
- 3) To identify possible business expansion and strategies to reduce retail leakage.

This report provides economic data to support specific economic targets, and actions to be taken by local business and elected leaders to encourage development of appropriate businesses and industries for the area.

Process and Timeline

The approach used by the consultants was a five-step process:

PROCESS STEPS	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
1. Identify Key Assets and Socio-Economic Trends	■	■	■			■	■
2. Online Stakeholder Survey		■	■				
3. Business Interviews and Public Workshop			■	■			
4. Research Market Opportunities and Trends			■	■	■	■	■
5. Action Plan for Soda Springs and Caribou County				■	■	■	■

As part of Step 1, the consultants reviewed relevant previous reports, assessments and planning efforts in Soda Springs and Caribou County, including the Community Review conducted by the Idaho Rural Partnership (IRP) in August 2007, the City of Soda Springs Comprehensive Plan adopted in May 2008, the Asset Mapping Project for Soda Springs 2005-06, Project Record Summary for the Greater Soda Springs Community Development Committee, 1980 Soda Springs Central Business District Revitalization Study, and 2004 Economic Development Administration Grant Final Report. Socio-economic data was obtained from the Idaho Departments of Commerce and Labor, Idaho State Tax Commission, U.S. Census Bureau, and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

There were several common themes and recommendations that emerged from the consultants’ review of the previous planning efforts for the City of Soda Springs and Caribou County. Many of those themes remain significant objectives for the community in its efforts to achieve a sustainable economy, and are woven into this Action Plan.

The Rural Economic Development Program of the Four County Alliance of Southeastern Idaho (4-CASI) for July 2008 to July 2009 identifies the following regional priorities:¹

- ◆ Work with new businesses.
- ◆ Continue to strengthen the relationships between the business leaders, government leaders, planning and zoning boards, chamber of commerce boards, and GSSCDC.
- ◆ Continue the presence of the communities on the web through the Land and Building Inventory.
- ◆ Provide information to counties, cities, planning and zoning organizations, GSSCDC, school districts, residents and businesses concerning the economic development incentives, opportunities and zoning changes necessary for economic development growth.

¹ Rural Economic Development Program One Year Work Plan (Kathy Ray, 4-CASI)

The consultants used all of this information as a foundation for development of the survey questions, the presentation and program for the public workshops, and the development of the Action Plan.

In Step 2 of the Market Analysis and Action Plan process, an online survey was developed and distributed to business and community leaders in six southeast Idaho counties in late August, including Caribou County. Twenty-two Caribou County business owners and community leaders responded (15% of all survey respondents), providing their insights into Caribou County's economic strengths, challenges, and opportunities. The survey results were used to formulate interview questions for community leaders and an agenda for a public workshop during a mid-September site visit.

The public workshop included a presentation of the findings of the socio-economic trends and survey results, draft goals and actions to address the findings, and small group discussions to identify additional actions, priorities, and responsibility for implementation.

Following the workshop, the consultants obtained additional information, and conducted additional analyses based on the workshop outcomes. In late fall 2008, economic upheaval in the banking, mortgage, and manufacturing sectors created significant changes in the national and international economy. In December 2008, the unemployment rate in Caribou County was more than double the rate in December 2007 (6.6% in 2008 vs. 2.8% in 2007). At the time of this report, the full implications of the economic upheaval for Idaho and Caribou County were still unclear, but a bankruptcy filing by Tronox Corporation in January 2009 shuttered the Soda Springs facility and eliminated 35 jobs. In January 2009, the consulting team updated socio-economic data as available, made revisions to this report based on economic changes in fall 2008 and early 2009, and used the information available to date to develop this final Market Analysis and Action Plan Report.

While the current economic situation is a moving target, many of the actions described in this Action Plan are more relevant than ever, and others will help position Soda Springs and Caribou County for stronger competitiveness when economic conditions improve.



Existing Conditions

This section of the report highlights key trends that affect business investment, job creation, and quality of life in Soda Springs and Caribou County, such as population trends, workforce skills, wage rates, business and industry sales, and tourism revenues.

Socio-Economic Trends

Social and economic data in Caribou County reveal economic opportunities. From 2000 to 2007, the number of jobs in the county increased, but the population and school enrollment declined. The job growth reversed in 2008, but the number and value of new residential building permits increased from 2003 to 2007, indicating some area population growth.²

Population

From 2000 to 2007, the population of the City of Soda Springs declined by 8%, and County population declined by 6%. Meanwhile, the State population grew 16% (Table 1). During this same time period, the population of neighboring Bannock County grew 5%, Bingham County 4%, and Franklin County 8%. Oneida County and Bear Lake County populations declined .5% and 8% respectively (many workers moved to Wyoming for higher paying jobs).

Caribou County residents are slightly older than the state average: in 2000, the median age in Caribou County was 35.0, while the state median age was 33.2. Caribou County had a higher percentage of residents in every age category from 40 years and up than the state average (Figure 1), but lagged the state in the percentage of residents age 30-39 and under 10. From 2000 to 2005, there were 78 births per 1,000 residents in Caribou County (also 78 statewide), and 45 deaths per 1,000 residents (vs. 37 statewide).³

Education Attainment

In 2000, the percentage of Caribou County residents with a high school diploma or some college was slightly higher than the statewide average (Table 2). However, the percentage of county residents with college degrees (associates, bachelors, or masters/professional) was lower than the state average. Higher educational attainment in a population group generally helps to attract higher-paying jobs and income levels.

Table 1. Population Comparison 2000 - 2007

	2000	2007	% Chg
City of Soda Springs	3,378	3,098	-8.3%
Caribou County	7,304	6,862	-6.1%
SE Idaho Counties*	146,469	152,425	4.0%
State of Idaho	1,293,956	1,499,402	15.9%

Source: US Census Bureau

* Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Caribou, Franklin, and Oneida

Figure 1. Caribou County vs. Idaho Age Distribution

Source: 2000 Census

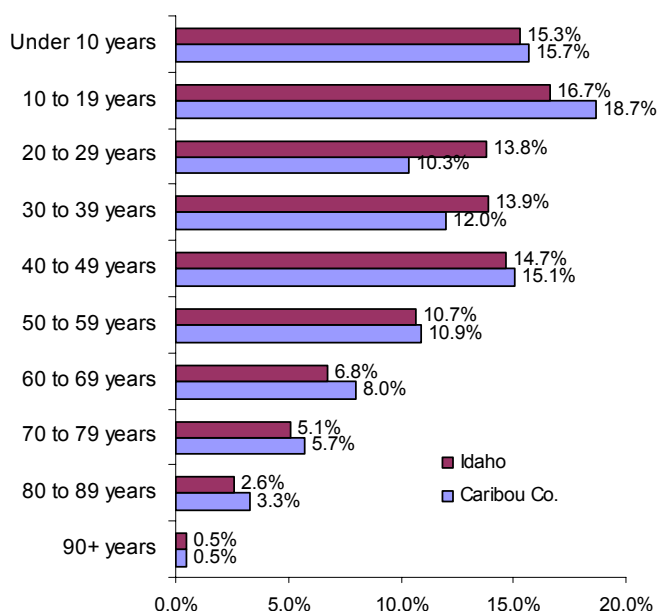


Table 2. Caribou County Education Attainment 2000

	Number	Caribou Co. %	State of Idaho %
Population 25 years and over	4,391		
Less than 9th grade	162	4%	5%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	427	10%	10%
High school diploma (incl. GED)	1,500	34%	29%
Some college, no degree	1,283	29%	27%
Associate degree	319	7%	7%
Bachelor's degree	545	12%	15%
Graduate or professional degree	37	4%	7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

² <http://censtats.census.gov/cgi-bin/bldgprmt/bldgdisp.pl>

³ www.city-data.com

School Enrollment

Through the 2007-08 school year, the Soda Springs Joint School District #150 included two elementary schools, a middle school, and two high schools. One elementary school closed in 2008. From the 2004-05 to the 2008-09 school years, overall enrollment declined 6% (Table 3). Enrollment in elementary grades did not change significantly, but middle school and high school enrollment declined 18% and 11% respectively. The declining school enrollment, in the context of overall population decline and age distribution discussed on the previous page, indicates that young families are leaving the area when kids reach middle school age. Soda Springs School District 2008 Idaho Standard Achievement (ISAT) proficiency score results were similar to the state results in all tested categories. Great Schools Ratings, based solely on test performance for one year, rated the Soda Springs School District as “average” (a score of 5 on a scale of 1 to 10).⁴

Table 3. Soda Springs Joint School District Enrollment 2004 - 2008		
	2004-05	2008-09
Thirkill Elementary & Grays Lake Elementary (closed in 2008)	449	453
Tigert Middle School	151	124
Soda Springs & Caribou High Schools	332	296
Total Overall Enrollment	932	873

Source: Soda Springs Joint School District

Labor Force and Unemployment

Caribou County's labor force decreased 2.5% (82) from July 2007 to July 2008, and the total employment decreased 3% (99) following a decade of growth (Table 4). The unemployment rate rose slightly from 3.1% to 3.7%, still outperforming the national rate (Figure 2).⁵

Table 4. Caribou County Labor Force	Dec 2007	Dec 2008F
Total Employment	3,162	3,082
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.8	6.6
State of Idaho % Unemployed	2.7	6.4
U.S. % Unemployed	4.7	6.4

Source: Idaho Department of Labor

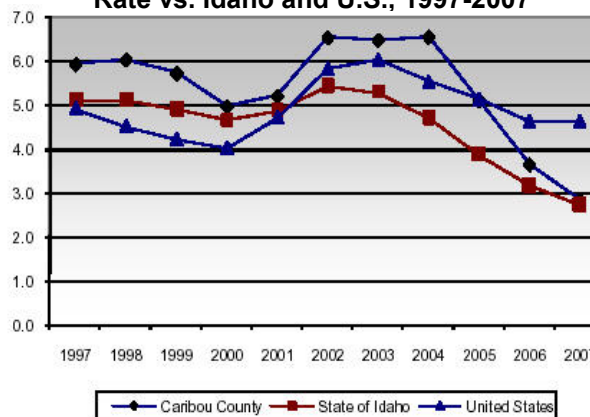
Jobs and Income

Estimated personal per capita income (PCI) in Caribou County was \$27,436 in 2006, compared to \$29,920 statewide, and \$36,714 for the nation. From 1997 to 2006, the statewide PCI rose 45%, while Caribou County per capita income rose 35%.

The 2007 average annual covered wage in Caribou County (\$40,038) was among the highest in the state due to the influence of phosphate mining and manufacturing.⁶ However, over the past decade, higher wage sectors lost jobs, and lower wage sectors gained jobs (Table 5, next page). Covered employment does not include county/federal employees, small farms, some nonprofits, and sole proprietorships. In 2006, the U.S. Census Bureau listed 374 sole proprietor establishments in Caribou County. Eighty-three percent represented retail trade, construction, real estate, professional services and health care services.⁷

In fiscal 2007, federal direct expenditures in Caribou County totaled \$42.8 million. Of that, \$20 million (47%) was paid for retirement and disability, including social security, and \$5.7 million was paid for social assistance (food stamps, housing, education, Medicare). Another \$6.2 million was ag-related direct payments (commodity loans, CRP, crop insurance), and \$7.9 million was paid in grants and cooperative agreements. About \$554,000 was federal contracts, and \$2.6 million was federal salaries and wages. In addition, \$2.7 million was expended in federal loans (farm, housing, mortgage insurance, veterans housing), and \$13.8 million in federal insurance (crop, flood, and veterans life insurance).⁸

Figure 2. Caribou County Unemployment Rate vs. Idaho and U.S., 1997-2007



⁴ http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/id/district_profile/99

⁵ Idaho Department of Labor, February 2009

⁶ Covered employment: jobs subject to the Employment Security Law and on which Unemployment Insurance taxes are paid.

⁷ US Census Bureau, American FactFinder

⁸ US Census Bureau Consolidated Federal Funds Report FY07

Table 5. Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job	1997 - Average		2006 - Average		2007 - Average	
	Employ- ment	Wages	Employ- ment	Wages	Employ- ment	Wages
Total Covered Wages	3,035	\$32,058	3,166	\$39,026	3,216	\$40,038
Manufacturing	760	\$55,876	694	\$76,789	692	\$78,809
Mining	418	\$43,462	347	\$50,955	358	\$46,584
Construction	298	\$30,645	238	\$39,198	251	\$46,471
Financial Activities	62	\$17,579	144	\$27,950	152	\$33,563
Professional and Business Services	48	\$16,265	164	\$27,457	150	\$28,436
Government	619	\$20,798	696	\$25,589	683	\$26,740
Trade, Utilities, & Transportation	470	\$19,096	482	\$24,472	518	\$23,714
Agriculture	63	\$14,951	79	\$17,393	104	\$19,150
Educational and Health Services	104	\$14,356	103	\$16,269	103	\$17,102
Information	14	\$8,597	21	\$16,834	22	\$16,733
Other Services	44	\$12,199	46	\$15,393	50	\$15,689
Leisure and Hospitality	135	\$5,322	152	\$6,745	132	\$7,518

Source: Idaho Department of Labor

Nearly half of all jobs in Caribou County are in the production of fertilizer, phosphorus and weed killer. In 2007, mining and construction provided 19% of jobs and 23% of wages. Manufacturing represented 22% of jobs, but 45% of all county wages.⁹ Manufacturing, mining and construction represented 40% of covered employment (1,301 jobs), and financial, professional and government represented 31% (985 jobs) (Table 5). However, from 1997-2007, 175 jobs in manufacturing, mining and construction were lost, while financial, professional and government sectors gained 256 jobs.

Overall, the number of jobs in Caribou County increased 7% (+207) from 2000 to 2007, with the largest increases in real estate (+93), professional services (+76), and retail trade (+65) (Table 6).

Table 6. Caribou County – Jobs by Industry			
	2000	2007	Diff.
Manufacturing	780	693	-87
Mining	395	366	-29
Retail Trade	291	356	+65
Educational Services	322	331	+9
Construction	248	251	+3
Health Care and Social Assistance	201	238	+37
Public Administration	184	196	+12
Accommodation and Food Services	157	121	-36
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	29	105	+76
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	69	104	+35
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	7	100	+93
Wholesale Trade	79	78	-1
Transportation and Warehousing	52	56	+4
Other Services (except Public Administration)	57	53	-4
Finance and Insurance	50	52	+2
Utilities	35	44	+9
Administrative/Support, Waste Mgmt/Remediation	25	43	+18
Information	33	25	-8
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2	11	+9
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1	2	+1
TOTALS	3,017	3,224	+207

Source: Idaho Dept. of Labor

The 2008 cost of living index in Soda Springs was 80.5 (the U.S. average is 100).¹⁰

Businesses listed as “Major Employers” by the Idaho Department of Labor include Agrium U.S. Inc., Monsanto Inc., Degerstrom-Dravo, Caribou Memorial Hospital and Living Center, J.R. Simplot Co., Heritage Safe Company, and Mark III.¹¹

⁹ Idaho Department of Labor

¹⁰ <http://www.city-data.com/city/Soda-Springs-Idaho.html>

¹¹ Idaho Department of Labor, Caribou County Work Force Trends, December 2008

Business and Industry

Of the 302 business license holders in the City of Soda Springs in September 2008, 75% (226) were located in Soda Springs. Personal service providers were the largest component (48), with entities related to construction and contracting making up the next largest segment (30). The Soda Springs Chamber of Commerce lists only 83 member businesses, indicating an opportunity to grow Chamber membership.

In the online survey of southeast Idaho business and community leaders, half of Caribou County survey respondents (50%) reported difficulty filling job openings. Positions cited were carpenters, nurses, office assistants, housekeepers, sales representatives, professional engineers, and part-time/low paying positions. Survey respondents gave below average ratings for the availability of vocational/technical education training programs in Caribou County.

According to local business and community leaders, many high wage-earners employed in Caribou County's mining and manufacturing plants prefer to live in more urban areas, so they reside in nearby Pocatello (population ~54,000), and commute 110 miles round-trip. Some would move to Caribou County if adequate executive housing were available. These high-wage earner commuters pay property taxes in Bannock County, and tend to shop near their homes, contributing to lost retail sales in Caribou County exceeding \$54 million per year.

Retail Leakage

Retail leakage is an estimate of the amount of money spent *outside* the county on retail goods and services by residents and visitors to the county. It is calculated by comparing the statewide average spending per capita in specific retail business categories against per capita spending in the county in those same categories. Thus it provides an estimate of the money "leaking" out of the community that possibly could be recaptured by local businesses.

In 2007, approximately half of all potential retail sales (50%) in eight major categories occurred outside of Caribou County (Table 7). The categories with the greatest leakage are retail clothing, general merchandise, and home furnishings. The category with the lowest amount of leakage, at nearly zero, is auto sales/service, due to the draw of local auto/truck dealers in Soda Springs. Table 7 lists only eight retail categories because data was unavailable for other categories. There are many other categories of retail merchandise, such as drug stores, sporting goods, florists, farm equipment, bakery goods, and jewelry, which could not be compared in this analysis.

Table 7. Caribou County Retail Leakage				
(Source: Idaho State Tax Commission)				
Retail Category	Estimated 2007 Leakage	Total % Leakage	Estimated Potential Sales	2007 Actual Sales
Food Stores	\$13,692,644	75%	\$18,375,727	\$4,683,083
General Merchandise	13,547,868	99%	13,700,672	152,804
Building Materials	7,490,320	73%	10,200,166	2,709,846
Furniture/Furnishings	7,149,006	90%	7,978,087	829,081
Restaurant/Bar	6,178,896	76%	8,098,623	1,919,727
Specialty Retail	2,559,931	28%	9,205,427	6,645,496
Retail Clothing	2,368,660	100%	2,380,081	11,421
Auto Sales/Service	937,444	3%	36,937,412	35,999,968
Total	\$53,924,770	50%	\$106,876,196	\$52,951,426

Note: Retail sales are listed by county, but sales by businesses with more than one location in the state, and those with headquarters outside the state, often are reported elsewhere. Sales figures for retail categories with fewer than three businesses in the county are not available. Consequently, sales figures for Caribou County may not represent a complete picture of total sales within its boundaries.

Tourism Trends

Hotel/motel/RV park lodging sales are a measurement of tourism business activity. In Caribou County, reported lodging sales exceeded \$600,000 in 2002. However, sales dipped dramatically in 2003 and 2004, and in 2008 surpassed 2002 levels (Figure 3). Statewide from 2002 to 2008, lodging sales increased 41%, and neighboring counties showed healthy lodging sales increases of 47% in Franklin County, 38% in Oneida County and 30% in Bear Lake County. Nearly two-thirds of Caribou County's annual lodging sales occur in the five peak months of June through October (64% in 2007 and 62% in 2008), indicating that a significant portion of tourism activity is related to summer leisure travel (Figure 4).

There are sixteen lodging properties in Caribou County, including motels, B&Bs, guest ranches, and RV Parks. Eleven of those properties are in Soda Springs, with 196 guest rooms and 80 RV spaces. County-wide, there are 214 guest rooms and 257 RV/camp sites. Nearby public campgrounds provide an estimated 167 spaces, though lodging tax is not collected on public campgrounds. Reported lodging sales in 2008 for Caribou County totaled \$755,908. However, due to contract workers and consultants employed by the nearby mining and manufacturing plants, Soda Springs lodging facilities have higher than normal non-transient lodging business (guests staying 30 days or more do not pay sales or lodging tax, and are not included in lodging sales reports).

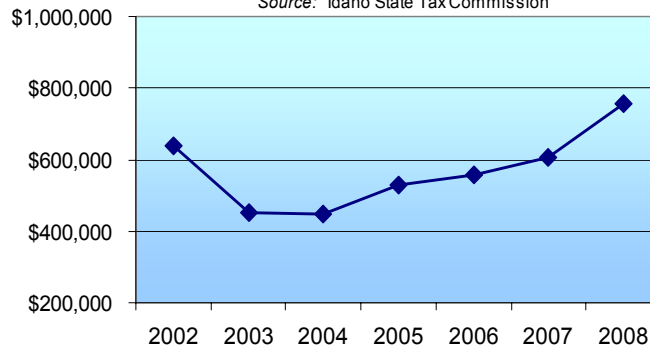
For every dollar spent on lodging in Caribou County, travelers spend another \$3.93 on dining, retail shopping, entertainment, and recreation.¹² Therefore, an increase of \$750,000 in lodging sales would generate nearly \$3 million annually to the community. The addition of a 40-50 unit brand hotel would capture more vacation traffic and local business travelers. In order to generate \$750,000 per year, a 40-unit hotel would need an average annual occupancy rate of 65% at an average room rate of \$79 per night. A key to hotel survival is business travel: statewide, business travelers represent 43% of all travel parties, and 18% of all visitor days.¹³ In the current economic downturn, business travel has been impacted significantly. Future additional commercial/industrial business investment in Caribou County would generate overnight business travel stays, helping to make development of a brand hotel economically viable. A brand hotel also would likely capture more leisure travelers en route to/from Yellowstone-Grand Teton National Parks via the Oregon Trail-Bear Lake Scenic Byway.

More than 390 fishermen participated in the 19th annual fishing derby at Clear Springs Foods ponds in Soda Springs. In addition to \$5,283 being raised for local charity projects, the derby contributed to the local economy by attracting people from outside the area. Well over half the participants were from other communities, and many made purchases from Soda Springs merchants.¹⁴

Figure 3. Caribou County Lodging Sales

2002 - 2008 = 19% Increase

Source: Idaho State Tax Commission

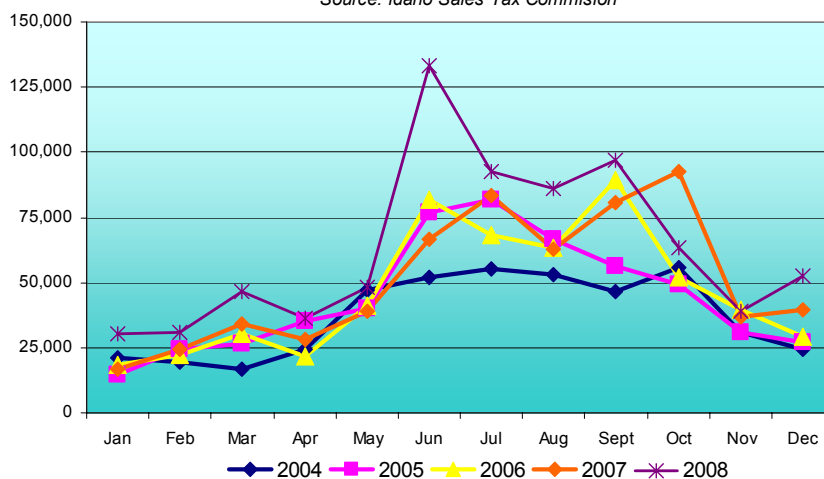


Figures do not include public campground receipts.

Figure 4. Caribou County Lodging SALES

2004 - 2005 - 2006 - 2007 - 2008

Source: Idaho Sales Tax Commission



¹² Global Insight, *Economic Impact of Tourism in Idaho Study*, 2004.

¹³ D.K. Shifflet & Associates, *Idaho 2005 Visitor Profile*, January 2007.

¹⁴ Idaho Employment Report, Idaho Dept. of Labor, Feb. 2009 (Dec. 2008 data).

Situation Assessment: Assets, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats

This section contains a summary of the Soda Springs and Caribou County situation from the perspective of a business investor or site locator, based on the trends analysis, online survey results, and consultant's experience in site location, business and economic development.

Business and Industry

<u>Assets</u>	<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
Four important resources needed for business recruitment and expansion are available in Soda Springs: natural gas, power, water and telecommunications.	Slow conversion to 'green' or sustainable industry cited from online survey respondents. Contamination at former Tronox site.	Tronox plant is completely set up for natural gas, though currently it is not used at the plant. A rail spur is located on the Tronox property.	Tronox, with headquarters in Oklahoma City, filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy in January 2009, idling the facility.
Several world-wide construction and mining engineers have offices in or nearby Soda Springs to service the mining and manufacturing plants. They bring permanent and temporary contract workers to the area. Good work ethic of local residents.	Nearby states with emerging oil-rich fields offer higher wages in almost all industrial work categories. Local work force is not specifically trained in industrial math and sciences, safety, and heavy equipment operation.	Create better methods to appropriately train the existing, work force to better fit needs of the industrial plants.	If vo-tech training is not provided through plant partnerships and targeted school curriculum, the mfg. plants and their sub-contractors will bring in workforce from outside Soda Springs.
The major plants operating in or near Soda Springs employ more than 900 people. Soda Springs is both environmentally and permit-friendly, according to some of the managers at the manufacturing plants.	Two of the plants are designated Superfund sites. Industrial pollution cited as an issue from survey respondents.	Brownfield funds could be available for the Tronox property (a registered Super Fund site). Tronox facility has available land to lease/sell.	Access to ore is crucial for industrial plants. Should one or more of these employers be denied operational permits, severe lay-offs and/or mine and business closures would ensue.
An Industrial Park and the MIE site are available for new business development.	Small parcels from one to five acres are the only available spaces. There is not room for a large expansion project in the land adjacent to the park.	The Tronox facility has 12 or more empty offices.	
	Local businesses have trouble filling low-wage, part-time jobs.		
	Lack of support for development of new and existing businesses from local government, as cited by online survey responses.		

Mining and Manufacturing Plant and Industrial Sites

Caribou County and Soda Springs have significant resources for mining, processing, and manufacturing. Infrastructure includes the Williams Pipeline natural gas mainline and Intermountain Gas distribution line. Rail service is available from the UPRR Mainline (east-west) and the Dry Valley Spur (north-south). Power Lines include 138 kV (PacifiCorp), 345 kV (Idaho Power), and 46 kV (PacifiCorp), with substations located at Conda, Caribou, Tronox, Monsanto, and Soda Springs. T1 and fiber optic service are available, along with water, sewer, and wastewater treatment.



Agrium U.S. Inc. (www.agrium.com) is the parent company of Nu-West Industries, which manufactures phosphatic fertilizers at a mining plant in Conda, six miles northeast of Soda Springs, and employs 273 people on a regular basis plus 24 'casual' employees, totaling 297 people. The plant is supplied with phosphate rock from the Rasmussen Ridge mine, and it produces the following products: Super Phosphoric Acid, Merchant Grade Acid, MAP (Monoammonium Phosphate), and Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate.

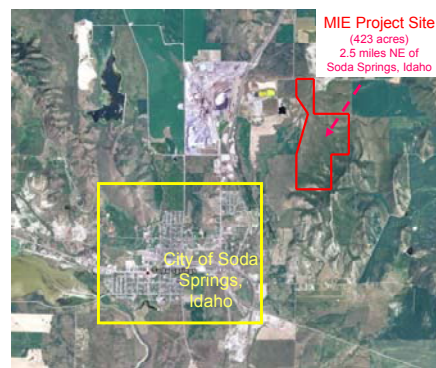
Monsanto Inc. (www.monsanto.com), headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, operates a phosphate mining plant two miles north of Soda Springs on 530 acres. The Soda Springs plant produces agricultural chemicals and employs 380 full-time workers, 360 contract employees, 60-80 temporary workers, and operates four shifts, 24/7, 365 days a year. Monsanto is the largest power user statewide at over 200 MW. A byproduct of their process is high value silica, 97.9% pure quartzite.



Tronox, Inc. (www.tronox.com) is headquartered in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, although the company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in January 2009. The smallest of their specialty chemical manufacturing plants, which manufactured lithium manganese oxide battery material and pigment colorant, was located two miles north of Soda Springs on 158 acres across the highway from Monsanto. The vanadium plant employed 100 at one time, but was reduced to 15 in fall 2008. The facility operated under Tronox's Henderson, Nevada facility. The Soda Springs facility, originally owned by Kerr-McGee Chemical, employed about 35 workers in fall 2008, but in January 2009 only a caretaker was on site. Infrastructure and amenities on the site include buildings with 15 office spaces, conference room, training facilities, city water/sewer services, natural gas capability, a rail spur and electric substation. The site is a Superfund site, and is eligible for Brownfields or other EPA funding for cleanup if there is a change of ownership.



The 423-acre **Mountain Island Energy (MIE) site** is located adjacent to the Tronox property northeast of Soda Springs. The site is zoned ag/industrial, with 300 acres of tillable land, and 123 acres of un-tillable/foothills property ranging from 6,050 to 6,535 feet in elevation. The seismic rating is Zone 3, with no geologic faults. The site has potential for wind power development.



Additional survey results and comments related to Business and Industry:

Types of assistance needed by businesses (listed in order of response frequency):

- Energy efficiency, alternative energy to lower costs
- Specialized training for employees, including industrial math and science, standards, fork lift operation, industrial safety, regulatory environment and compliance, industrial welding, etc.
- Technology upgrades to be more competitive
- Financing for expansion, research, or new market development
- Permitting or regulatory assistance

Implementation of this Action Plan should include addressing the priority issues listed above, including follow-up with businesses to provide assistance.

Idaho Growth Sectors

“Although Idaho’s economy is going through a significant slowdown, there are some industries and occupations that will rise to the top and guide the state into the next decade. Between 2006 and 2016, the health care industry will be the state’s fastest-growing, largest and highest-paying industry over the decade, with nursing as the hottest occupation.”

- Bob Uhlenkott, Idaho Department of Labor Chief Research Officer.

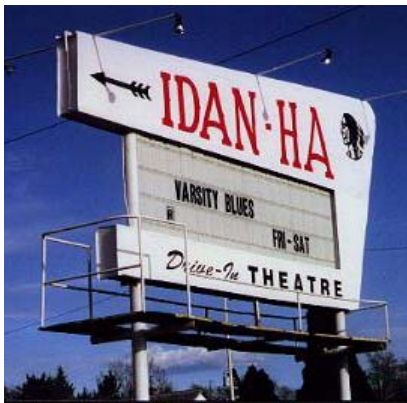
In its 2009 Statistical Abstract, the Census Bureau estimated that Idaho had the fewest doctors per capita of any state and the fourth fewest nurses per capita. In the online survey, one respondent commented that an enhanced partnership with ISU is needed to train health professionals. Bear Lake Hospital has successfully boosted its nursing staff. Three years ago the hospital paid a premium to bring nurses to the area and accommodate a significant amount of overtime. Then the hospital board initiated Grow Our Own, a program offering stipends, scholarships, and hospital-based distance-learning classrooms to entice local residents to make nursing a career. The program pays 75% of a nurse’s education costs in return for the nurse working at Bear Lake Memorial for at least the same number of years s/he received educational assistance. Bear Lake Memorial is fully staffed, while there are 400+ nursing vacancies statewide.¹⁵

Alternative and renewable energy is a growth sector in southeastern Idaho and Wyoming. Linkages between Caribou County industry and energy sector businesses could help grow the number of jobs.

¹⁵ Idaho Dept. of Labor Report February, 2007

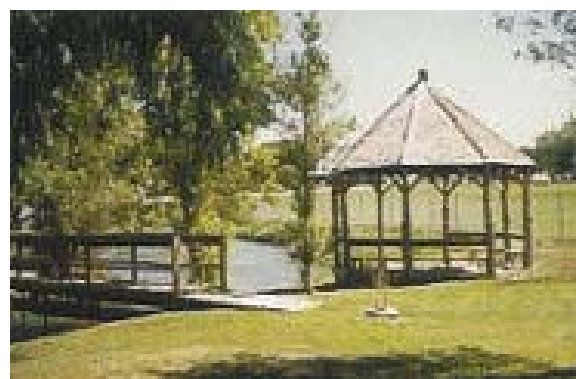
Transportation

<u>Assets</u>	<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
Two major roadways through the county: U.S. Route 30 and State Route 34. The U.S. 30 corridor from McCammon to Soda Springs is 33 miles long and provides a vital commercial link between Idaho and Wyoming.	Maintaining the roads.		Highway 30 improvements to Pocatello make commuting to/from Soda Springs easier for workers, and for local residents to shop elsewhere.
Soda Springs is located at the intersection of two designated scenic/historic byways: Oregon Trail-Bear Lake Scenic Byway and Pioneer Historic Byway.	West entrance to town is unappealing.	Community service program by local garden club to spruce up entrances to town with volunteer planting and maintenance of gardens.	Loss of federal/state scenic byway funding.
The Union Pacific railroad has a rail line traversing the southern portion of the County in a general east-west direction between Soda Springs and Bancroft.	Passenger rail service is not available within the county.		Abandonment of rail line if use does not justify cost to maintain.
The Allen H. Tigert Airport, a small public facility that has been in operation since 1947, is located approximately one mile southeast of Soda Springs, and has a runway length of 3,500 feet.	Effective, ongoing promotion of the local airport.	Benefit for businesses re-locating to the area.	Funding to maintain and upgrade the airport.
Rideshare available for commuters, info available at RideshareOnline.com (free service).	Local public transit service	Survey respondents cited a need for local public transportation. Many Soda Springs residents commute daily.	



UTILITIES

<u>Assets</u>	<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
Power is supplied by Rocky Mountain Power and Bonneville Power through major transmission lines running through the county.	Cost of services to residential vs. commercial.	Exploit fiber backbone. There is an electrical substation in the county which can draw electricity from new transmission lines if installed in the future.	According to one business leader, some business owners are relocating out of the area due to the increasing cost of utilities.
Williams Pipeline for natural gas is a main transmission line for the Pacific Northwest. Natural gas is supplied by Intermountain Gas, operating on the Williams Pipeline.	Cost of gas.	Recruit additional businesses who need natural gas.	Cost increases.
City of Soda Springs is attempting to raise additional funds to finish the upgrade to their water system.	Sewer infrastructure upgrade cost increase. Due to increasing costs, when the City recently bonded for water upgrade, the amount was less than the amount needed.	Plan now for future upgrades.	Additional subdivision developments could outpace revenue to support infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer).
Telecommunications is serviced by Silverstar Communications and Independent Cable Systems, as well as DSL with Qwest in residential and business areas.	Old cell phone infrastructure, VoIP unreliable.	Exploit fiber backbone.	



TOURISM

(See Appendix A for list of Assets)

<u>Assets</u>	<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
Recreation facilities and attractions in Caribou County include the Chesterfield Historic site, the Soda Springs Geyser, 2 golf courses, cross country ski areas, hot springs, and birding trail/areas.	Cold weather. Overcoming the "dirty" image of mining & industry.	Develop a 'destination' community culture, rather than continuing with the 'pass-through' mind-set. Create marketing partnerships & promotional materials for recently restored the nearby town of Chesterfield. Create new annual festivals, such as 'Huckleberry Days', or 'Geyser Days', which could draw tourists.	Failure to upgrade facilities can further erode tourism growth and profitability for related businesses.
Eight sites in Caribou County recognized on the National Register of Historic Places. Due to its geologic makeup, Soda Springs enjoys unusual natural resources and beauty.	Below average <i>quality</i> rating for 12 of 17 visitor facilities and services listed in the online survey, such as lodging, recreation facilities, public campgrounds, and accessibility/availability of visitor information. Lack of fine dining restaurant.	Online survey respondents rated January and February as high priority months to increase tourism activities. Better use of the internet for public awareness about Soda Springs. Continue partnership with the Pioneer Country Travel Council, in addition to the Bear Lake CVB.	Decreasing numbers of volunteers and start-up funds. Lack of online tourism marketing for Soda Springs – travelers will overlook the area when planning and booking vacations.
In Caribou County, there are a total of 471 guest rooms, lodges, RV spaces, and camping units.	Lack of mid-range national brand hotel property. Existing lodging properties are 'worker-oriented,' not tourist-oriented. Quality of existing RV parks rated low by survey respondents.	A national brand hotel (40+ rooms) with a small meeting facility, possibly adjacent full-service restaurant. Improve and/or provide services (restrooms, showers, etc.) at local RV parks.	Failure to upgrade existing facilities and services (i.e., air conditioning) will prevent lodging sales growth.
Caribou County survey respondents rated these facilities or services with an average or better rating: • Trails: ATV, snowmobile, bike and pedestrian • Directional signs to key attractions, services • Business signs/billboards • Hot springs facilities		Agri-tourism is an alternative revenue source for small to medium-sized farms: welcome vacationers onto their farms to share in the experience, work and knowledge. Heritage tourism, history tours, geocaching.	Lack of maintenance of snowmobile trails could slow tourism in winter months.

Additional survey results and comments about Tourism:

- The lack of a modern 40+ room lodging property in the county means that potential overnight tourists stay elsewhere, and the county loses this potential income at restaurants and retail businesses. People come to Soda Springs to do business, but stay in nearby Montpelier at a brand hotel.

- A Market Study of a proposed national chain motel to be located in Soda Springs conducted in 2003 states that commercial travel in Soda Springs generates 50% of the demand for room nights, 'En-Route' Travel (leisure and commercial travelers passing through the area on their way to other destinations) could generate 30% of the hotel demand, and Family Travel (individuals and families staying in the area for weddings, funerals, family reunions and other personal reasons) could generate the remaining 20% of the demand.¹⁶
- The Oregon Trail-Bear Lake Scenic Byway begins at the Utah state line and follows U.S. 89 north to U.S. 30, then north and west to Soda Springs. There are 13 Oregon-California Trail sites identified in the Soda Springs area. These sites are documented in diaries of the emigrants, in military records, by early mountain men, and settlers.
- The Pioneer Historic Byway begins at the Utah state line and follows U.S. 91, then Idaho 34 north to U.S. 30, and then east to Soda Springs where it meets the Oregon Trail-Bear Lake Scenic Byway. This route offers the shortest distance and time between Salt Lake City and Yellowstone National Park. Special attractions along the byway include the Bear River Massacre Site, Red Rock Pass, Niter Ice Cave, Black Canyon, Last Chance Canal, the world's only captive geyser in Soda Springs, and the Chesterfield town site.



In order of survey response frequency, the following were listed by Caribou County respondents as activities to increase off-season tourism:

- Community festivals, events
- Snowmobiling
- Skiing
- Historic, cultural, artisan tours
- Bicycling
- Photography tours
- Meetings and conferences
- Hunting
- Gaming
- Wildlife viewing/bird watching
- Scenic driving
- Fishing
- Camping and RVing
- ATV, 4-wheel trips
- Horseback riding, pack trips
- Golf
- Boating and water activities
- Hiking & backpacking



¹⁶ Market Study of a Proposed National Chain Motel, 2003, Barker Real Estate Services

EDUCATION

<u>Assets</u>	<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
Idaho Standard Achievement Test (ISAT) student proficiency scores in the Soda Springs Joint School District are on par with state levels.	School District has limited resources for employment training.	Entrepreneurship curriculum in high school. Help youth to stay in the area with their own businesses. Idaho Digital Learning Academy for entrepreneurs.	The supply of certificated teachers in the State of Idaho does not meet the demand.
Hooper Elementary School for use as a community training facility.	Promoting the facility.	Use Hooper Elementary School for Community entrepreneurship training.	Lack of entrepreneurial training will reduce likelihood of retaining youth in the community.
2005 high school graduation rate in Soda Springs (95% vs 88% statewide). On-site college classes and a distance education studio for broadcasting and receiving classes at Soda Springs High School.	Finding instructors to augment industrial training curriculum (they make more money working at plants than teaching). Youth prefer 'easier' work (office) to industrial jobs. Educated parents don't promote industrial work at the plants.	Improved partnerships with industrial plants to offer vo-tech training. Distance learning for math and sciences. Business Professional Association at Soda Springs High School. Recruit outside company skilled in industrial training to offer courses twice a year.	Teacher workforce is shrinking due to retirement or the declining number of students entering the teaching profession. College graduates w/ teaching credentials are choosing to teach in other states offering higher wages.
Emphasis on family values, hard work.	Brain drain: keeping high school graduates in area, or returning after college.	Survey high school seniors regarding their desire to stay in Soda, or leave for other opportunities.	Declining enrollment translates to lower state funding, reducing program offerings.

Additional survey results and comments about Education:

Rural school districts are especially challenged to find enough teachers to meet their needs, and often the qualified applicant pool for open positions is very small or non-existent. The situation is rapidly becoming more critical due to the increased math and science graduation standards recently adopted by the State of Idaho, which elevates the need for teachers.

To assist districts in retaining teachers and to maximize the use of the current teacher population, the Idaho Rural Education Task Force Committee recommends incentives for teachers who earn qualifications to teach in multiple subject areas and teachers who take on extra leadership duties. Idaho State Superintendent Luna included these recommendations as part of the Idaho State Teacher Advancement and Recognition System (ISTARS) to the Idaho State Legislature in 2008.

As insurance premiums increase, cash-strapped school districts are forced to divert limited discretionary dollars to cover the rising costs of health insurance for employees, which should be used to enhance educational opportunities for students. In response, the Idaho Rural Education Task force recommends the establishment of a separate line item in the Public Schools budget, beginning in Fiscal Year 2010, dedicated to listing insurance costs and benefits.¹⁷

¹⁷ Idaho Rural Education Task Force, 2008 Legislative Report - Nick Smith, Deputy Superintendent, School Support Services.

QUALITY OF LIFE

<u>Assets</u>	<u>Challenges</u>	<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
Strong school sports program ensures more varsity eligibility than in higher-populated cities.	Even though there are many manufacturing jobs in Soda Springs, too many workers live elsewhere and do not support the city's tax base.	More festivals and events, especially for youth.	Young families live elsewhere, reducing sport program funding and opportunities.
Caribou Memorial Hospital.	Perception that Soda Springs doesn't have adequate medial facilities.	Pool resources to better promote medical facilities through online and traditional marketing efforts.	Upgrades/improvements necessary to retain aging population in community to use health care services.
Good, safe, rural community to live and raise a family. Affordable and abundant land and relatively low cost housing. A Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the City of Soda Springs in May, 2008.	Attractive and well-located building sites for new homes are difficult to find. Lack of available executive and mid-priced housing.	Soda Springs is overlooked in favor of those places where homes sell for higher prices. Develop/promote incentives to residential builders/developers.	Disparate opinions among residents could stall effective land use management and improved economic development.
IDAN-HA Drive-in outdoor theater.	Retail and other services not open 7 days a week or lack variety of products	Generate business investment and entrepreneurial interest in developing additional retail shopping venues.	Residents' current habits of shopping elsewhere may be slow to change when new businesses open in Soda Springs.
A wide range of excellent outdoor activities with plenty of open space and close proximity to public lands.	Lack of available lifestyle amenities such as retail shopping and fine dining restaurants.	Develop bicycle trails. Restaurant.	
Intact historic downtown district.	Lack of goods and services (i.e, dry cleaner, etc.).	Outreach to Soda Springs alumni for business recruitment.	Loss of buildings from deterioration.
Many great community volunteers.	Residents unaware of complexities and potential benefits that can result from economic development.	Arts Guild, or Artisan Co-op could serve as a magnet to other artists to re-locate to an emerging art-friendly community.	Volunteer burnout.

Additional survey comments related to the community and quality of life:

- Build a local fire station.
- Encourage more police interaction with citizens.
- Limited resources.
- No available land for new families to build new homes.
- Not enough high paying jobs.
- Low level of services and amenities results in lack of economic loyalty
- Increased use of online shopping, in conjunction with low or poor levels of customer service, could result in the few retail shops closing, and/or increased retail leakage.
- Financing is available, but investment is not encouraged.



Target Markets

Successful business recruitment and expansion begins with strategic targeting, based on an objective assessment of community strengths and weaknesses, and matching the community's assets and values with the needs of specific business and industry sectors. Below is a list of suggested targets to consider for the City of Soda Springs and Caribou County. Note that this list is intended for discussion and further investigation purposes only. It should not be construed as a conclusion of business viability. Any plans for new or expanded business operations should include a thorough market analysis and business plan.

Industrial Business Targets

- User of high value silica (i.e., artisan glass, container glass, flat plate glass, specialty glass, fiberglass, abrasive tools, deburring media, grinding stones, hones, oilstones, stone files, tube-mill liners, whetstones, etc.).
- Laboratory to serve existing industries in Caribou County (lab work for Monsanto, Agrium, etc.).
- User of vanadium, which is used in metal alloys, production of aerospace titanium alloys, as a catalyst for production of maleic anhydride and sulfuric acid, in dyes and mordants, as target material for X-rays, and in some cases, in glass and ceramics.
- Manufacturers of specialty/custom recreational equipment.
- Provider of environmental research/remediation services to existing mining/processing facilities.
- Other businesses seeking large industrial sites with utilities and amenities offered in Caribou County.
- Smaller businesses seeking space in existing industrial park.

Retail and Commercial Business Targets

- Businesses to fill retail and service gaps. Table 8 on the next page lists the average population required to support various types of retail businesses. It should be noted that the table lists national averages, and there are always exceptional businesses that thrive in communities with much lower population, particularly if they use the Internet to supplement in-store sales. Caribou County's population is just under 7,000, plus the influx of commuters and travelers who spend money in local businesses. Based on the table, at least fifteen different types of retail businesses are supportable (highlighted in Table 8), and more are likely due to Caribou County's location and lifestyle. For example, sporting goods stores generally do well in areas with significant year-round recreation opportunities. Wild game processors and taxidermists are prevalent in rural Idaho communities. Flower and gift shops are complementary to hospitals, and so on.
- Local artisan/craftsmen's co-op.
- Retail businesses with extended/adjusted hours to meet the needs of mining/manufacturing company workers who need to shop after work or on days off.
- Specialty restaurant with limited menu/hours (i.e., open Thursday-Saturday for dinner).
- Small market retailer such as Bealls that brings moderately priced, nationally recognized brand.
- "Lone Eagle" professional services entrepreneurs.
- Health care services for aging population.
- Education and technology businesses.

Tourism Business Targets

- Small franchise brand hotel, such as a Wyndham Group brand (www.wyndhamworldwide.com) or Best Western (www.bestwesterndevelopers.com).
- Farm stays, bed & breakfast, or guest ranch.
- Step-on guides for tour buses and other groups (family reunions, etc.).
- Outfitting businesses which provide guided fishing, snowmobile tours, trail rides, wagon/sleigh rides, chuck wagon dinners, hiking, mountain biking, photography trips, bird/wildlife viewing, historic interpretive tours, etc.
- New or upgraded RV parks.

Table 8. Average Trade Area Population Required to Support Retail Stores

<u>Retail Category</u>	<u>Pop'n Required</u>		
Food		Automotive	
Bakery products stores	10,126	Aircraft, boat, motorcycle dealers	30,497
Candy, nut, confectionery stores	12,594	Household trailer dealers	46,456
Dairy products stores	29,728	Passenger car dealers	5,657
Fish markets	51,971	Tire, battery, accessory dealers	7,284
Fruit stores, vegetable markets	21,259	Lumber, Hardware, Bldg Mat'ls, Farm Equip't	
Grocery stores/delicatessens	770	Farm equipment	11,530
Meat markets	11,463	Hardware stores	6,374
Eating and Drinking		Heating, plumbing equip. dealers	40,859
Drinking places (bars)	1,705	Lumber, building materials	6,510
Eating places (restaurants)	842	Paint, glass, wallpaper stores	16,239
General Merchandise		Miscellaneous Retail	
Department stores	44,379	Antique/second-hand stores	7,313
Dry goods stores	34,152	Bicycle shops	100,083
General merchandise stores	6,899	Book stores	59,815
Variety stores	8,430	Camera, photographic supply stores	57,030
Apparel and Accessories		Cigar, tobacco stands	38,509
Children's/infant's apparel	33,057	Farm and garden supply stores	16,774
Men's and boys' apparel	8,403	Florists	9,527
Shoe stores	7,679	Fuel, ice dealers	7,559
Women's apparel	4,247	Gift, novelty, souvenir stores	14,965
Furniture, Furnishings, Appliances		Hobby and toy stores	44,099
Furniture, home furnishings stores	3,437	Jewelry stores	9,011
Household appliances, radio, TV	6,148	Luggage, leather goods stores	140,684
Music stores, records, instruments	23,363	Newsstands	29,533
Drug Stores	3,749	Optical stores	14,792
		Pet shops	82,455
		Sporting goods stores	17,270
		Stationary stores	33,290

Source: Bureau of the Census, U.S. Dept .of Commerce

Economic Development Goals and Actions

Goals

Priority economic issues that need to be addressed for the City of Soda Springs and Caribou County were identified by online survey respondents, community leaders in interview discussions, and public workshop participants. Those issues were translated into the following eight goals, and then actions to accomplish each goal (next section).

- Goal 1: Diversify the business base through strategic recruitment to provide more job opportunities.
- Goal 2: Support retention/expansion of existing businesses.
- Goal 3: Assist new entrepreneurs (start-ups).
- Goal 4: Reduce retail leakage (keep spending in town).
- Goal 5: Increase tourism through extended stays and targeted promotion.
- Goal 6: Plan, fund, and maintain infrastructure.
- Goal 7: Support development of affordable and executive housing.
- Goal 8: Expand workforce training opportunities.

Actions to Achieve the Goals

The eight goals are listed again below, with actions to achieve each goal, explanations of each action, and responsibilities and potential resources for implementation. The actions were suggested by community residents and the consulting team as part of the public workshop and interview discussions.

Goal 1: Diversify the business base through strategic recruitment to provide more job opportunities.

Caribou County is fortunate to have industrial plants that are key regional employers, but there are few job opportunities in Soda Springs not related to these entities. Employment diversification is needed to provide other types of employment and reduce dependency on manufacturing employers and their sub-contractors.

Priority: High

Partners: City of Soda Springs, Caribou County, 4-CASI, IDOC, Soda Springs Chamber of Commerce, GSSCDC, Monsanto, Agrium, Tronox, landowners, realtors, County Planning and Zoning Commission, School District.

Resources: Idaho Dept. of Commerce Business Prospector, www.gemstateprospector.com
Four County Alliance of SE Idaho (4-CASI)
Idaho Economic Development Association (IEDA), www.ieda.biz
Idaho Dept. of Commerce, economic development lead distribution program, Gary Moore, gary.moore@commerce.id.gov (208) 334-2470, ext. 2140
Idaho Department of Labor, SE Idaho Regional Office, Scott Hobdey, Scott.Hobdey@labor.idaho.gov
Sage Community Resources, www.sageidaho.com, (800) 859-0321
Federal Reserve Fiscal Impact Tool (FIT), <http://www.federalreserve.gov/forms/fiscalimpactrequest.cfm>. The FIT workbook tool estimates the financial impacts of proposed economic development projects on local sales and property tax revenues, and on costs to local government. The estimates are based on user-provided information about the project (location, number of jobs) and the locality (tax rates, one-time government costs); default values embedded in the application that can be modified by the user for greater specificity; and simple assumptions made by the tool's developers. FIT enhances the analysis by providing supplemental information and is used primarily in small and mid-size communities.

- Action 1.1: Explore opportunities to create value-added products from industrial byproducts of local mining and manufacturing plants, as well as to identify industrial imports and opportunities for those products which could be produced locally. Work with 4-CASI, Idaho Dept. of Commerce, and the local GSSCDC, to research the byproducts and industrial imports, such as those listed in the Targets section on page 20. Pursue local/national companies that could supply products, or use byproducts in their outputs.
- Action 1.2: Work with the Idaho Department of Labor to quantify the occupational skills of workers who live in Caribou County. Maintain the results in order to have the information readily available to potential employers.
- Action 1.3: List available industrial/commercial land and buildings on the Idaho Business Prospector, City, and Chamber web sites. Maintain site information (locations, zoning, amenities, terms, etc.), in an updated and ongoing list.
- Action 1.4: Target firms that need industrial sites with available power, water, natural gas, telecom, and/or rail infrastructure. Soda Springs is fortunate to have these crucial resources already in place in an affordable, family-friendly, and low crime community. Work with regional economic development organizations and the Idaho Dept. of Commerce to aggressively market available assets in Caribou County. Use the Federal Reserve Fiscal Impact Tool to calculate the net economic impact of new business development.
- Action 1.5: Contact Soda Springs alumni to identify businesses seeking affordable locations and a high quality outdoor lifestyle (including “Lone Eagles” or self-contained corporate operations/divisions), and which can be located in a remote area. Use personal connections with families and Soda Springs alumni, and develop a working contact list of individuals to market business opportunities about Soda Springs.
- Action 1.6: Meet with Sage Community Resources to explore potential Brownfields funding opportunities applicable to the Tronox site, which would be available to new owners (and possibility to existing owners) for environmental assessment and remediation.

Goal 2: Support retention/expansion of existing businesses.

Many new jobs and business revenues in a community are created by existing businesses that grow from within. Expanding Soda Springs businesses, especially in the downtown area, is an identified objective outlined in the 2008 Market Analysis request by the Soda Springs City Council. See Targets on page 20.

Priority: High

Partners: Soda Springs Chamber of Commerce, BEAR Team, 4-CASI, Businesses

Resources: Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) program:

http://businessresources.mt.gov/BRD_bear.asp

and http://www.mbac.biz/index.php?pr=BEAR_Program

Idaho Small Business Development Center: <http://www.idahosbdc.org>

Eastern Idaho Entrepreneurial Center (E Center) (contact Adam Wickern 208.356.5009 ext. 403; email: adam.wickern@gmail.com)

Counselors to America's Small Businesses (SCORE): <http://www.score.org>

Action 2.1: Create a Business Assistance Team similar to the Montana Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) program, which provides existing businesses with advice, information, and access to resources through a group of volunteer experts. These skilled volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds: economic development, business assistance, workforce development, education, and others. The services offered by the BEAR program are free to local businesses regardless of size or structure.

Steps:

- a. Review the BEAR program details.
- b. Recruit and train BEAR team members.

- c. Promote the program through local media and the Soda Springs Chamber.
- d. Schedule appointments with businesses, and in confidential interviews, identify the needs/challenges of businesses.
- e. Develop steps to assist as appropriate, and work to address needs (with banks, investors, city, county, schools, etc).
- f. Review findings and report to BEAR group the outcomes and next steps.
- g. Develop a user-friendly approach to offering feedback to businesses, and ensure all BEAR volunteers understand the methodology.

Action 2.2: Provide assistance to businesses as needed, particularly in the areas identified in the online survey: energy efficiency and alternative energy to lower costs; specialized training for employees; technology upgrades to be more competitive; financing for expansion, research, or new market development; and permitting or regulatory assistance.

Action 2.3: Work with the Eastern Idaho Entrepreneurial Center (E Center) to assist businesses as appropriate (include BYU intern, venture capital/angel investors). Link businesses to SICO and SBA for low-interest loans and gap financing.

Action 2.4: Monitor progress and measure success of business expansion efforts. Track results and provide ongoing assistance/feedback to local businesses. Measure results not just by the number of jobs created, but also by the quality of the jobs (wages, benefits), the increases in business sales, dollar value of new private sector investment in the community, and increases in tax revenues from new development.

Goal 3: Encourage and assist new entrepreneurs (start-up businesses).

Caribou County has tremendous assets for entrepreneurial development, including a skilled and creative workforce, strong community support for youth, artists, and opportunities to provide services/products to existing companies.

Priority: High

Partners: Soda Springs Chamber of Commerce, 4-CASI, ISU, SBDC, SICO, Eastern Idaho Entrepreneurial Center, BYU

Resources: Small Business Development Center at ISU (contact Mike Ditto, Portfolio Manager; 208.232.4921; email: dittmike@isu.edu)
 Small Business Boot Camp: <http://www.idahosbdc.org>
 Idaho Digital Learning Academy: <http://www.idahodigitallearning.org>
 ISU NxLevel Training (contact Joseph Fleishman, Workforce Training Director; 208.282.3372; email: workforc@isu.edu, <http://workforcetraining.isu.edu>)
 NxLevel Training: <http://www.nxlevel.org>
 Get the Buzz on Biz (youth): http://www.nxlevel.org/Youth_Entrepreneur.htm
 Southeast Idaho Council of Governments (SICO)
<http://www.bannockplanning.org/SICO.html>
 Eastern Idaho Entrepreneurial Center (E Center) (contact Adam Wickern 208.356.5009 ext. 403; email: adam.wickern@gmail.com)
 National Business Incubation Association: www.nbia.org
 Economic Development Administration (EDA): <http://www.eda.gov>
 USDA - RURAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY GRANTS (RBOG)
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/buspr/bog.htm> (business incubator feasibility study and implementation funding)
 Idaho Commission on the Arts: www.arts.idaho.gov
 Two Degrees Northwest artisans in north Idaho: www.2dnw.org
 HandMade in America: www.handmadeinamerica.org
 Stone Soup: www.shopthefrontier.com
 National Governor's Association Report *Arts & the Economy: Using Arts and Culture to Stimulate State Economic Development*: <http://www.nasaa-arts.org/nasaa/news/nga.shtml>.

- Action 3.1: Sponsor a Small Business Boot Camp. 'Boot Camps' are one-day sessions designed for people interested in starting their own business, but unsure of their fitness for business ownership and their business concept. Boot camp topics include business feasibility, self-employment assessment, market research methods, start-up expenses, financial feasibility, business structure options, financing sources, permits and regulations, pricing strategies, marketing, and the elements of a business plan.
- Action 3.2: Explore entrepreneurial education and training. Graduates of the Small Business Boot Camp and existing business owners are candidates for the NxLevel Entrepreneurial Training Program. This course is a 6-12 week in-depth, hands-on business course designed to help entrepreneurs advance their skills in starting, growing, and managing their businesses. NxLevel training is available through the Small Business Development Center at Idaho State University and online through many state and national campuses.
- Action 3.3: Work with the Eastern Idaho Entrepreneurial Center (E Center) to assist businesses and identify venture capital/angel investors. The E Center helps small businesses reach the next level of success, thus creating jobs and building the eastern Idaho economies. BYU-Idaho seniors majoring in business or engineering are hired as E Center Ventures interns who work as consultants to businesses and municipalities. Additionally, the E Center manages a team of senior business students to perform due diligence such as business plans, market analysis, survey writing, community revitalization, etc.
- Action 3.4: Consider entrepreneurship curriculum in high school. Idaho Digital Learning Academy, a state-sponsored, accredited online virtual school available to all Idaho students, offers an Entrepreneurial Economics course, which focuses on the principles of business ownership for young people. A youth version of the NxLevel program called "Get the Buzz on Biz" is a one-semester curriculum designed for use in high school economics classrooms. Students develop a business concept, do research, interview local business owners, and create a business plan. Often these business plans result in the creation of successful businesses.
- Action 3.5: Continue evaluating the feasibility of a business incubator and define target sector(s), potentially in the Hooper School building. Business incubators nurture the development of entrepreneurial companies, helping them survive and grow during the start-up period, when they are most vulnerable. These programs provide their client companies with business support services and resources tailored to young firms. The most common goals of incubation programs are creating jobs in a community, enhancing a community's entrepreneurial climate, retaining businesses in a community, building or accelerating growth in a local industry, and diversifying local economies.
- Steps:
- Conduct a market and demand analysis to define the target sector(s) for a viable incubator, such as Internet-based businesses, commercial kitchen, artisans, etc., and identify possible tenants.
 - Based on the target sectors, conduct a feasibility study and create a business plan for the incubator. Contact the National Business Incubation Assn. for assistance.
 - Identify necessary facility requirements, and determine an appropriate location.
 - Obtain funding for incubator facility and start-up operations (EDA, USDA).
- Action 3.6: Assist local artists to connect with markets by forming a Community Arts Council. Arts councils strive to develop, promote, and coordinate the arts at a community level and usually are structured as nonprofit corporations (IRS subchapter 501c3).
- Steps:
- Hold a well-publicized and well-planned public meeting to determine community interest in forming the council. Share information about similar efforts in Idaho and nationally, such as Two Degrees Northwest in north central Idaho, Stone Soup in Washington, Hands of Harvest in Montana, and HandMade in America. Include economic impact data from the National Governor's Association Report on *Arts & the Economy: Using Arts and Culture to Stimulate State Economic Development*.
<http://www.nasaa-arts.org/nasaanews/nga.shtml>.

- b. Identify local artists and the collective art interests of Soda Springs.
- c. Determine possible activities the Soda Springs Arts Council could sponsor.
- d. Identify funding sources, including Idaho Commission on the Arts, USDA, etc.
- e. Sponsor a Soda Springs Arts Council event, such as a photo contest.
- f. Form an Artists Co-op, which is a business organization for local artisans to sell their products. Co-ops are owned by the members and the purpose is not to generate profits, but to serve the interests of the members.

Action 3.7: Evaluate creation of an artists' village. If an Artists' Co-op is formed, a physical location to showcase the art, as well as a place to work and produce their craft, could be an economic asset to the artists, and to the City of Soda Springs. Identify locations that might be appropriate for this endeavor, including the Trail Motel on Highway 30. Artists' products also should be sold online through web sites such as www.shopthefrontier.com, a site sponsored by Stone Soup, a nonprofit in Washington that operates the online rural marketplace specializing in high value arts and crafts from around the Pacific Northwest.

Goal 4: Reduce retail leakage (keep spending in town).

Caribou County is losing nearly \$54 million annually in just eight retail categories, and much more in all retail categories. To be sustainable, a community needs profitable businesses to provide added value to the quality of life, create jobs, and contribute to the tax base. In most communities, residential services are subsidized by business taxes. To improve profitability, Soda Spring businesses would benefit from more residents, commuters, and temporary workers shopping locally.

Priority: High

Partners: Soda Springs Chamber of Commerce, area major employers, business/property owners, local media, school district, 4-CASI

Resources: National Main Street Center, www.mainstreet.org
 Rick Segel Retail Marketing and Retail Sales Training, www.ricksegel.com
 Idaho Department of Commerce (IDOC), www.commerce.idaho.gov
 ISU, www.isu.edu and BYUI, www.byui.edu
 Soda Springs Joint School District #150, www.sodaschools.org
 Bealls Stores: <http://www.stagestores.com/AboutUs.html>
 Shop Red Lodge, Montana, www.ShopRedLodge.com
 U.S. Press Direct, www.uspressdirect.com

Action 4.1: Support a Soda Springs Chamber "Shop Soda" program. Join the National Main Street Center network to access tremendous resources for downtown revitalization (www.mainstreet.org). Develop and maintain a directory and map on the Soda Chamber web site (www.sodachamber.com), which promotes local businesses and services, incorporating promotions, contests, window stickers, etc. Help residents understand importance of shopping locally through messages on the chamber web site, from locally distributed press releases, newsletters and online bulletins. Target areas where retail leakage is occurring and highlight those products which are available locally, and which can be marketed via the internet. Promote the program in local and regional media, feature articles, and direct mail promotions.

Action 4.2: Partner with the area employers in a program to motivate employees to shop/dine/play in Soda Springs. Develop incentive shopping contests for employees of local industrial plants. The objective is to encourage employees to shop in Soda Springs, motivated by prizes, loyalty shopping cards, coupons, etc. Shopping incentives could be distributed via the industrial plants' company newsletters, paycheck envelopes, emails and other direct marketing efforts. Coordinate between the Soda Spring Springs Chamber of Commerce and the employers' human resource departments.

Action 4.3: Adjust and extend retail business hours to customer needs. Nationally, 50% of all retail sales occur after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends. Adjust business hours to accommodate

workers and commuters who cannot shop between 8am and 5pm, and extend weekend hours accompanied by targeted downtown events and promotions to draw customers.

Action 4.4: Create and implement a volunteer Downtown Facelift Brigade and 'Adopt-A-Window' program. Deteriorating buildings and empty storefront windows imply blight and detract from neighboring businesses that are working hard to draw customers. Work with downtown business and property owners, the Soda Springs School District, and civic groups to develop a volunteer brigade to help spruce up building facades and implement an 'Adopt-A-Window' program to decorate vacant windows. Window decoration activities could be competitive, with the Soda Springs Chamber offering judging and prizes.

Action 4.5: Obtain market intelligence about Soda Springs' shoppers and their needs. Partner with ISU, BYU, and/or Soda Springs High School and 4-CASI to collect and analyze customers and foot traffic counts, including a consumer survey. Gather and analyze information about when, why, and who is shopping in downtown Soda Springs, and what purchases are being made (and not made), to assist in business expansion and recruitment efforts. Work with high school/college students for class credits, to reduce the cost of information gathering, while adding to the arsenal of knowledge for the businesses and students. Share the results and implications with business owners.

Action 4.6: Develop special targeted events and promotions for high value customer segments (women, seniors, youth, commuters). Add fun, excitement and vibrancy to downtown Soda Springs. Encourage sidewalk dining, (artistic) sandwich boards, sidewalk chalk art, etc. Ask talent from Soda Springs High School and the retired community to provide ideas and assistance to business owners for innovative, low-cost marketing efforts and events that are designed for their target customers.

However, all downtown events are not created equal. Events should be strategically targeted to desired customer segments at specific times or days/evenings of the week, and designed to drive sales. Events targeting kids draw parents and grandparents, but must include shopping/dining elements to generate sales. Track sales before/during/after events to measure the net return on investment (ROI) after event expenses.

Action 4.7: Sponsor workshops on retail marketing, employee training and retention, merchandising, etc. Provide educational workshops that offer helpful, updated methods and successful practices to existing downtown businesses, and individuals considering starting a business. Sign up for Rick Segel's free retail marketing newsletter at www.ricksegel.com, and participate in periodic webinars.

Action 4.8: Consider widening the sidewalks and adding landscaping on Main Street in Soda Springs to facilitate outdoor shopping, dining, events, and vibrancy to the downtown district. Retain diagonal parking, but consider back-in diagonal parking (similar to Boise's 8th Street Marketplace). Back-in diagonal parking improves safety because shoppers place purchased items in the trunk of their car from the sidewalk and can see oncoming traffic when pulling into the drive lane. It is easier than parallel parking, and safer for seniors and parents.

Cost of an Empty Storefront

One small building sitting empty for one year in a small-town commercial district will have the following average impact on the community:

- \$250,000 in lost sales
- \$12,500 in lost sales tax revenue to state and local government
- \$15,000 in lost rents to the property owner
- \$24,750 in lost business profits and owner compensation
- \$1,500 in lost property tax revenue to local government
- \$51,000 in lost loan demand to local banks for the building
- \$15,000 in lost loan demand to local banks for the business
- \$750 in lost property mgmt fees
- \$16,250 in lost employee payroll
- \$5,500 in lost payments to local utility companies
- \$3,500 in lost advertising revenues to local media
- \$5,100 in lost local bank deposits
- \$1,250 in lost fees to local attorneys and other professionals
- \$18,900 in lost household income generated elsewhere in the community

- Don Rypkema, *Place Economics*, Washington, DC, Main Street News 2002

University of Pennsylvania research confirmed that investment in greening (trees, flowers) translates not only into increased quality of life benefits, but also into increased sales and higher property values.

Action 4.9: Recruit existing/new retail investment to fill gaps in local services (i.e., Radio Shack, Verizon, books, Bealls, etc.). Many national or regional retail corporations have business plans suited to smaller population communities. For example, Stage Stores, an apparel chain that operates in small towns and communities, operates two Bealls locations in Burley and Blackfoot, Idaho.

Goal 5: Increase tourism through extended stays and targeted promotion.

Soda Springs can capture more pass-through traffic between Salt Lake City and Yellowstone-Grand Teton National Parks, since the area has a wide variety of year-round recreation and tourism attractions, including 4-wheeling, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, pioneer culture, scenic drives, and industrial history. Recreation and heritage-based tourism represent great opportunities to capture more revenue for Soda Springs businesses and attractions.

Priority: High

Partners: Soda Springs Chamber of Commerce, business/property owners, local media, school district, Pioneer Country Travel Council

Resources: Pioneer Country Travel Council, www.seidaho.org
Idaho Dept. of Commerce Tourism, www.commerce.idaho.gov/travel, www.visitidaho.org
Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association (IOGA), www.ioga.org
U.S. Travel Association (formerly Travel Industry Association – TIA), www.tia.org
Yellowstone Business Partnership, www.yellowstonebusiness.org
Agritourism farms/ranches, <http://www.agritourismworld.com>
Idaho Dept. of Agriculture, Farmers Markets and Direct Marketing,
<http://www.agri.idaho.gov/Categories/Marketing/FMmarketing.php>
Idaho Department of Transportation, District 5 Sign Coordinator; Scenic Byway
Coordinator, Garry Young, Garry.Young@itd.idaho.gov
The National Tour Association (NTA), www.ntaonline.com
Tourism Cares, www.tourismcares.org
United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA), www.ustoa.com
U.S. Press Direct, www.uspressdirect.com
Idaho State Historical Society: www.idahohistory.net

Action 5.1: Identify target markets and marketing strategies. Continue to partner with Pioneer Country Travel Council and the Idaho State Tourism Office to share in target market research and marketing strategy implementation, particularly focused on enhanced online marketing and social media. Caribou County has outstanding natural attractions, and a strong family-values community, with plenty of outdoor recreation and public facilities, including school sports and event facilities. Identify, strategically develop, and promote outdoor recreation and group gatherings that will draw extended families and the traveling public to Caribou County and Soda Springs, particularly in off-peak season.

Action 5.2: Continue enhancement and promotion of scenic byways. Soda Springs is fortunate to be at the junction of two designated byways: the Pioneer Historic Byway (National Scenic Byway) and the Oregon Trail Bear Lake Scenic Byway. Continued efforts to partner with the byway promotional organizations will benefit Caribou County businesses. Encourage visitors to extend their stays for sightseeing/driving tours by coordinating promotional efforts with other communities and states. Promote scenic byway links through the Pioneer Country Travel Council and the state/national scenic byway web sites. Link to the new *Top 10 Scenic Drives in the Northern Rockies* effort.

Action 5.3: Develop strategic targeted events and activities to extend visitor stays in Caribou County, particularly for travelers en route to/from Yellowstone-Grand Teton National Parks. Work to change the mindset of Soda Springs as a 'pass-through' community to one of a destination. Focus on niche market travelers interested in specific activities and themes that can be marketed collectively through the Pioneer Country Travel Council and Soda Springs Chamber and City web sites.

Possible Steps:

- a) Identify off-peak season outdoor recreation activities, such as snowmobiling, skiing, guided hiking, birding, photography, wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, and interpretive trips, etc.
- b) Work with local companies to promote industry educational tours (Monsanto, etc.).
- c) Develop itineraries and packages, such as weekend getaways.
- d) Promote targeted events such as Oregon Trail descendants' gatherings, geyser/geologic themed events and seminars, etc.
- e) Promote youth tournaments and activities such as disc golf and wrestling tournaments that will bring families to the area and increase visitor spending.
- f) Coordinate marketing with the Pioneer Country Travel Council, such as purchase of addresses for direct emailings to yellowstonepark.com web site users.

- Action 5.4: Provide information on tourism trends and effective online marketing techniques to Caribou County businesses. Help businesses understand trends, regional marketing efforts and results, and how to link and enhance their own marketing efforts.
- Action 5.5: Continue farmers market and other local business promotions. Farmers markets help people enjoy locally produced foods and crafts, while supporting their community. Local business promotions also could include 'history' stories in a storytelling hour by local historians, such as "Cariboo Jack" (aka Tony Varilone).
- Action 5.6: Create historic walking tours and combine with business promotions (i.e., an example is Idaho History Tours in Lewiston: www.idahohistorytours.com). Soda Springs enjoys a rich heritage that tourists would enjoy learning about through guided tours and user-friendly self-guided walking tours. Create an inexpensive walking tour brochure that identifies the walking routes and tells the stories of the featured places (for examples, contact the Idaho State Historical Society, www.idahohistory.net). Invite business owners to offer walking tour promotions to include on the brochure. Encourage local historians to establish a "Storytelling Hour". Promote the tours on the Soda Springs and Pioneer Country Travel Council web sites.
- Action 5.7: Provide visitor information 24/7 at a self-guided kiosk, and at convenience stores, hotels and restaurants, including information about nearby communities. Help travelers understand the recreation and tourist attractions in the area with rack maps and brochures identifying areas and places of interest. The Soda Springs Chamber of Commerce could create a Visitor Brochure Steering Committee whose members keep the self-guided kiosk stocked with brochures on a rotational basis. Brochures also should be placed at area hotels, private campgrounds, and restaurants. The Steering Committee could help business owners pool resources to produce and buy affordable brochures.
- Action 5.8: Explore opportunities for group tours and guided services. Guided guests spend approximately five times more money than non-guided travelers. A fully-loaded motorcoach (46 passengers) spends \$5,000 per day in local communities. A designated 'Step-on Guide' for tour buses traveling on Highway 30 could inform riders about the area, and distribute brochures which include coupons for return vacations. Learn about group bus tours and what Soda Springs could offer tour operators. Work with Idaho Tourism to understand this niche and to develop tour operator leads. Guided outdoor recreation services, such as photography tours, wildlife viewing/bird watching, and including fishing, hunting and hiking, are excellent opportunities for entrepreneurial enterprises by individuals with a keen knowledge of the area.
- Action 5.9: Implement targeted sales effort to encourage facility and service upgrades. Caribou County respondents to the online survey cited a new brand motel and new/upgraded RV park as two business development needs. Hospitality services cannot be economically viable without strategic and ongoing efforts to promote off-peak season activities. Effective Chamber sales and marketing efforts to attract targeted groups is critical, with results measured in terms of room/RV nights and economic impact generated. The Chamber needs to work with businesses to identify and solicit specific groups (sports

tournaments/events, car clubs, birding clubs, RV groups, motorcycle touring groups, Oregon Trail descendents, etc.).

Goal 6: Plan, fund, and maintain infrastructure.

Infrastructure services such as water, sewer, power, roads/streets, rail lines, and telecommunications services are critical to the success of businesses. Soda Springs needs to plan for sustainable growth and develop a Capital Improvement Program for future maintenance and upgrades to the city's infrastructure.

Priority: High

Partners: 4-CASI, Caribou County, City of Soda Springs, Idaho Dept. of Commerce, Urban Renewal District

Resources: American Planning Association, Western Chapter, <http://www.wccapa.org/Idaho.php>
Association of Idaho Cities, <http://www.idahocities.org>
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Financing Alternatives Comparison Tool (FACT), <http://www.epa.gov/owow/funding/tools.html>
Boise State University, Environmental Finance Center (EFC), <http://efc.boisestate.edu/efc>
Urban Land Institute, *10 Principles for Smart Growth on the Suburban Fringe*, www.uli.org
American Farmland Trust, *Cost of Community Services Studies*, www.farmlandinfo.org

Action 6.1: Conduct a long-range needs assessment. Work with property owners and developers to identify growth areas and projected infrastructure needs. The Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University offers a Financing Alternatives Comparison Tool (FACT), which is a financial analysis tool that compares the costs associated with various financing options for water infrastructure projects. The City of Soda Springs could use this tool to produce a comprehensive analysis of financing, regulatory, and other important costs, and to carefully weigh financing options.

Action 6.2: Develop a Capital Improvement Program (CAP). Based on the needs assessment and cost/financing analysis, create a prioritized list of projects, costs, and funding sources. Seek funding to implement the CAP beginning with top priorities.

Action 6.3: Evaluate formation of an Urban Renewal, or Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. Many rural communities have used urban renewal/TIF as a tool to capture tax revenues from new development to finance infrastructure improvements that incent the development. Successful projects typically involve one or more committed investors.

Action 6.4: Explore possible development of a fiber backbone off-ramp. Determine the logistics and cost required to exploit the fiber backbone available in Caribou County. Increased broadband capacity would bolster business recruitment efforts, and may provide redundant service needed by certain types of businesses (i.e., service centers).

Goal 7: Support development of affordable and executive housing.

Respondents to the recent online survey identified a need for mid-priced and executive housing in Caribou County. Local industrial companies cited a lack of executive level housing as one reason for management personnel commuting from outside the county to work locally. Public workshop participants expressed concerns about a lack of strategic planning for residential growth in areas that may be annexed into the city in the future.

Priority: High

Partners: City of Soda Springs, Caribou County, Property owners, 4-CASI

Resources: Community Planning and Development, Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, Program 14.250 Rural Housing and Economic Development

Boise/Ada County Housing Authority, www.bcacha.org
 HUD in Idaho, <http://www.hud.gov/local/index.cfm?state=id>
 Idaho Housing and Finance Association, <http://www.ihfa.org>
 Mercy Housing, www.mercyhousing.org
 USDA Rural Housing Service (RHS), <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/nofas/index.html>
 Urban Land Institute, *10 Principles for Developing Affordable Housing*, www.uli.org
 Orton Family Foundation, <http://www.orton.org>
 Urban Land Institute, *10 Principles for Smart Growth on the Suburban Fringe*,
www.uli.org

- Action 7.1: Identify land suited to build mid-priced and executive housing. Conduct a housing survey and inventory of vacant or underused lots that could be developed for residential housing. Work with city and county planning and zoning to facilitate the process of appropriate development.
- Action 7.2: Evaluate examples of LEED-certified housing. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a Green Building Rating System, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, and is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. This type of sustainable, energy-efficient housing has typically been significantly more expensive than traditional construction, but the cost differential is narrowing with more demand and products on the market.
- Action 7.3: Identify funding assistance programs for affordable housing development. Contact USDA and HUD to assist local developers with affordable housing construction projects.

Goal 8: Expand workforce training opportunities.

Education and workforce training are critical to economic development and higher paying jobs in a community.

Priority: High/Medium

Partners: Soda Springs Chamber of Commerce, Soda Springs Joint School District, BEAR Team, 4-CASI, Businesses, ISU, EITC, ISBDC

Resources: Idaho State University (ISU), Workforce Training, <http://workforcetraining.isu.edu>
 Eastern Idaho Technical College (EITC), <http://www.eitc.edu/aca/wftgrants.cfm>
 Idaho Small Business Development Center (ISBDC): <http://www.idahosbdc.org>
 BEAR program: http://businessresources.mt.gov/BRD_bear.asp and
http://www.mbac.biz/index.php?pr=BEAR_Program
 Counselors to America's Small Businesses (SCORE): <http://www.score.org>
 Idaho Department of Labor, SE Idaho Regional Office, Scott Hobdey,
Scott.Hobdey@labor.idaho.gov

- Action 8.1: Through the Business Expansion and Retention program (BEAR, see Action 2.1), work with local businesses to identify training needs (health care, industrial, etc.).
- Action 8.2: Contact ISU, EITC, ISBDC, etc. for assistance with training.
- Action 8.3: Coordinate with local businesses to facilitate training programs/classes.
- Action 8.4: Offer training to local residents seeking to upgrade skills in order to access better job opportunities. Assist trainees with job placement following completion of training.

Next Steps

The Greater Soda Springs Community Development Committee (GSSCDC) is the lead economic development committee for Soda Springs and Caribou County. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the GSSCDC to take the lead and follow through on the next steps outlined below.

1. Adopt the Market Analysis and Action Plan (GSSCDC, Chamber, City, County).
2. Determine the lead partner for each priority action, obtain letters of commitment for actions assigned to each responsible entity.
3. Pursue funding and support/assistance from partners for implementation as appropriate.
4. Begin implementation.
5. Report progress quarterly to City, County, Chamber, and citizens via the media.
6. Track results in terms of new investment, business sales, jobs, ROI.
7. Evaluate and adjust as necessary.
8. Celebrate successes!



Appendices

Appendix A: Caribou County Tourism Attraction Inventory

Appendix B: Southeast Idaho Business and Community Leader Survey Questionnaire

Appendix C: Southeast Idaho Business and Community Leader Survey Results Report

Appendix A: Caribou County Tourism Attraction Inventory

National Register of Historic Places:

- Caribou County Courthouse, Soda Springs
- Chesterfield Historic District, Chesterfield
- Enders Hotel, Soda Springs
- Grace Pegram Truss Railroad Bridge, Grace
- Hopkins William House, Soda Springs
- Lander Cutoff to the Oregon Trail, Soda Springs
- Largilliere House, Soda Springs
- Soda Springs City Hall



Accommodations

- Bailey Creek Clubhouse
- Bar H Bar Ranch
- Blackfoot River Campground Area - BLM
- Brigham Young Lodge & Trailer Court
- Caribou Lodge & Motel
- Cedar Bay Marina & RV Park
- Central Links Golf Course & RV Park
- Dike Lake Campground - BLM
- Historic Enders Hotel & Cafe
- J-R Inn
- Kelly Toponce Guest Ranch
- Lakeview Motel
- Montpelier Ranger District Campgrounds, Caribou-Targhee National Forest
- Pardners' Working Cattle Ranch & Lodging
- School House Inn
- Sheep Creek Guest Ranch
- Soda Springs Ranger District Campgrounds, Caribou-Targhee National Forest
- The Old Rock House, LLC
- Trail Creek Lodge B&B
- Trail Motel & RV Park

Caribou County Areas of Significant Value and Tourist Attractions:

- Alexander Reservoir
- Bear River Overlook
- Black Canyon Gorge
- Blackfoot River Park
- Burchett Lake
- Caribou-Targhee National Forest
- Central Links Golf Course
- Chesterfield Reservoir
- Chesterfield Town Restoration Museum
- Chesterfield Historic Site
- China Hat Birding Trail
- Corrigan Park
- Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum
- Diamond Creek Trail
- Dinkey Engine
- Formation Springs Preserve
- Grace Fish Hatchery
- Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge
- Henry Stampede Park
- Highline Recreation Trail
- Hilda Thompson Wetlands Project
- Hooper Springs
- Hooper Springs Park
- Kelly Park Nordic Ski Area
- Last Chance Canal
- Loa Lake
- Maple Grove Springs (Grace)
- Nelson Game Enclosure
- Niter Ice Cave
- Oregon Trail Country Club
- Oregon-California Trail Portal at Big Hill
- Pinebar Campground, Caribou National Forest
- Pyramid Springs
- Sheep Rock – Oregon Trail
- Soda Springs Geyser (erupts hourly)
- Soda Springs Area Nordic Ski Trails
- Soda Springs Area Snowmobile Trails
- Summit Campground, Soda Springs R.D.
- Swan Lakes
- Tincup Campground, Caribou National Forest
- Wagon Box Grave

Soda Springs Restaurants

- Enders Cafe
- Artic Circle
- Caribou Mountain Pizza and Grill
- Geyser Inn
- El Toro Mexican Restaurant
- Subway

Events:

- Bancroft Pioneer Days Celebration
- Chesterfield Memorial Day Celebration
- Miniature Bull Riding
- Soda Springs 4th of July Celebration
- Soda Springs Winter Carnival & Fishing Derby

Appendix B: Business and Community Leader Survey Questionnaire

Online Survey about Business, Economic, and Tourism Development in Southeast Idaho

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking time to share your insights about southeast Idaho development efforts.

Most of the questions are “check-the-box” or Yes/No, and the survey is designed so you can skip sections that don’t apply to your organization. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential.

INSTRUCTIONS

For each question, please mark the response that best reflects your situation or opinion, or type a brief answer.

If you have questions, contact Anna Holden at The Hingston Roach Group (the firm contracted to conduct the survey),
aholden@thrgroup.com or 208-983-2175.

SECTION 1: RESPONDENT ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Q1a. Which of the following BEST describes you or your organization? *(The option you choose describes your role for the purposes of answering the questions on this survey.)*

- A. **BUSINESS:** Private for-profit business or corporation. (SKIPS TO Q1b1)
- B. **NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION:** Private non-profit/charitable organization, including tourism organization, chamber of commerce, trade association, economic development, cultural/historical/arts attraction, council, or society, recreation-related organization/club, festival/event, civic club, conservation/wildlife organization, youth/family, religious, health or education-related, etc. (SKIPS TO Q1b2)
- C. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT OR PUBLIC ENTITY:** City or county government operations or administrative management/staff or elected official, or recreation district, road district, school district, hospital, etc. (SKIPS TO Q1b3)
- D. **TRIBAL GOVERNMENT, AGENCY, OR ENTERPRISE:** Tribal agency, policy, administration, or program/facilities management (including elected/appointed official, operations, enterprise, social services, or agency staff). (SKIPS TO Q1b4)
- E. **STATE GOVERNMENT OR AGENCY:** State agency, policy, administration, or program/facilities management (including state elected/appointed official, operations or agency staff). (SKIPS TO Q1b5)
- F. **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OR AGENCY:** federal agency, policy, administration, or program/facilities management (including federal elected/appointed official, operations or agency staff). (SKIPS TO Q1b6)
- G. **OTHER** (interested citizen, retiree, other not listed): _____ (SKIPS TO Q2)

Q1b1. Which of the following describes you or your organization? (Choose all that apply.)

BUSINESS (FOR-PROFIT):

- a. **Finance or Insurance:** bank, credit union, insurance, investment services
- b. **Real Estate:** property management/sales, land development, mortgage, title/escrow
- c. **Construction/Contracting:** contractor, building materials, construction trades
- d. **Lodging:** hotel, resort, guest ranch, RV Park, campground, B&B, vacation rental
- e. **Food & Beverage:** restaurant, bar, espresso stand, catering, etc.
- f. **Outfitter/Guide, Guided Tour or Activity**
- g. **Amusement, Entertainment, Sports:** gaming, recreation equipment rental, ski or golf resort, spa/hot spring, theme park, theater, arcade, sports facility, etc.
- h. **Retail Store/Shopping:** gifts, apparel, art, sport/tackle, shopping center, home furnishings, gas station/C-store, auto sales/parts-related, groceries, hardware, etc.
- i. **Transportation or Travel Service:** car rental, bus/van/shuttle service, airline, rail service, travel agent, tour operator, etc.
- j. **Telecommunications, Media, Utilities:** telephone, cell phone service, Internet service provider, print/broadcast media, electric/gas utility
- k. **Business & Professional Services:** consulting, accounting, legal, scientific, education/training, printing, graphic design, ad agency
- l. **Personal Services:** photography, dry cleaning, hair care, funeral, etc.
- m. **Health and Medical Services:** for-profit medical practice, clinic, gym/spa, massage, veterinary clinic
- n. **Manufacturing or Food/Beverage Processing**
- o. **Wholesale, Warehousing, or Distribution**
- p. **Agriculture or Ranching**
- q. **Mining or Minerals**
- r. **Forestry or Wood Products**
- s. **Technology, Research, or Data Processing**
- t. **Other** (Specify): _____

(SKIPS TO Q2)

Q1b2. Which of the following describes you or your organization? (Choose all that apply.)

NON-PROFIT (NON-GOVERNMENT):

- a. **Festival or Event:** arts event, festival, historical reenactment, sports event or competition
- b. **Cultural or Historical Attraction/Organization:** museum, gallery, historical society, interpretive/cultural/nature center, arts commission, music group, etc.
- c. **Recreation-Related Organization or Club:** sportsmens', motorized recreation, non-motorized recreation, aviation, backcountry horsemen, search & rescue, golf/country club, team sports club, etc.
- d. **Tourism Organization:** regional tourism organization, convention & visitor bureau, visitor center, etc.
- e. **Conservation Organization or Foundation:** wildlife, nature/parks, land/growth management
- f. **Business or Economic Development organization:** chamber of commerce, economic development council/corporation, trade association, etc.
- g. **Civic or Social Services Organization or Club:** community services, children/families, religion, health care, education, private foundation, etc.
- h. **Other (Specify):**_____

(SKIPS TO Q2)

Q1b3. Which of the following describes you or your organization? (Choose all that apply.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OR PUBLIC ENTITY:

- a. Local government with tourism/recreation-oriented services or facilities: city, county, parks & recreation, public works, recreation district, road/highway district
- b. Local government – other: hospital district, school district, housing authority, urban renewal agency, economic development/planning office, etc.
- c. Other (specify)_____

(SKIPS TO Q2)

Q1b4. Which of the following describes you or your organization? (Choose all that apply.)

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT, AGENCY OR ENTERPRISE:

- a. Tribal government agency with natural resources, recreation facilities, transportation, or wildlife/game management responsibilities
- b. Tribal agency: economic development, employment/TERO, tourism, arts, culture
- c. Tribal agency – other: education, health care, housing, social services, etc.
- d. Tribal enterprise: casino/gaming, tours, retail, other
- e. Other (Specify)_____

(SKIPS TO Q2)

Q1b5. Which of the following describes you or your organization? (Choose all that apply.)

STATE GOVERNMENT OR AGENCY:

- a. State government agency with public lands, recreation facilities, transportation, or wildlife/game management responsibilities
- b. State agency: commerce, labor, tourism, arts, history
- c. State agency – other: education, health care, housing, social services, etc.
- d. Other (Specify)_____

(SKIPS TO Q2)

Q1b6. Which of the following describes you or your organization? (Choose all that apply.)

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OR AGENCY:

- a. Federal government agency with public lands, recreation facilities, transportation, or wildlife/game management responsibilities
- b. Federal agency – other: agriculture, housing, education, health care, social services, rural development, etc.
- c. Other (specify)_____

Q2. In which of the following southeast Idaho or adjacent counties is your business, facility or organization located? (Choose ONE answer.)

- ___ Multiple counties (2 or more of counties listed below)
- ___ Bannock County, Idaho *ONLY*
- ___ Bear Lake County, Idaho *ONLY*
- ___ Bingham County, Idaho *ONLY*
- ___ Caribou County, Idaho *ONLY*
- ___ Franklin County, Idaho *ONLY*

- ___ Oneida County, Idaho *ONLY*
- ___ Box Elder County, Utah *ONLY*
- ___ Cache County, Utah *ONLY*
- ___ Rich County, Utah *ONLY*
- ___ Lincoln County, Wyoming *ONLY*
- ___ Other counties not listed (specify)_____

Q3. What is your zip code? _____

Q4. Approximately how many people does your business or organization currently employ in southeast Idaho or adjacent counties?

Full-time year-round _____ Full-time seasonal _____
Part-time year-round _____ Part-time seasonal _____

Q5a. In the past 12 months, has your business or organization experienced difficulties filling job openings?

☐ Yes (continue with b) ☐ No (skip to Q6 below) ☐ N/A (skip to Q6)

b. Which positions have been difficult to fill? (Please list specific type of position, i.e., engineer, waitress, math teacher, biologist, welder, director of sales, truck driver, financial vice president, etc.)

c. Why have the positions been difficult to fill? _____

Q6. Where are the majority of your customers located?

☐ Almost totally within the immediate area (100-mile radius)
☐ Primarily in the Pacific Northwest/Northern Rockies
☐ Throughout the U.S.
☐ Worldwide (10% or more of our sales/customers are from outside the U.S.)

Q7. How much does your business or organization spend annually on marketing and advertising to increase sales/visitation? (answers will be kept strictly confidential)

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. \$0 - \$999 | 8. \$75,000 - \$99,999 |
| 2. \$1,000 - \$4,999 | 9. \$100,000 - \$249,999 |
| 3. \$5,000 - \$7,499 | 10. \$250,000 - \$499,999 |
| 4. \$7,500 - \$9,999 | 11. \$500,000 or more |
| 5. \$10,000 - \$24,999 | 12. Don't Know |
| 6. \$25,000 - \$49,999 | |
| 7. \$50,000 - \$74,999 | |

Q8. Does your business or organization need assistance in any of the following areas? (Choose all that apply.)

- ☐ Expansion to a larger site or building
☐ Technology upgrades to be more competitive
☐ Specialized training for employees
☐ Energy efficiency/alternative energy to lower costs
☐ Financing for expansion, research, or new market development
☐ Marketing expertise to reach new or global customers
☐ Information about dealing effectively with international customers
☐ Permitting or regulatory assistance
☐ Information or research to develop new products or services
☐ Government contracting opportunities for my products/services
☐ Representation of my business/organization at trade shows

Do you have other needs not mentioned above, or specific comments about the needs you indicated?

**END OF SECTION 1.
PLEASE CLICK "NEXT PAGE" TO CONTINUE
TO THE NEXT SECTION OF THE SURVEY.**

SECTION 2: BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Q9. What goods and services does your business or organization regularly purchase from suppliers OUTSIDE of southeastern Idaho?

Q10. What types of business investment (expansion or new business development) would be desirable to enhance the economy, recreation, tourism, and/or quality of life in your area?

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Q11. My local government is cooperative for business.

Strongly
Agree

5

4

3

2

Strongly
Disagree

1

Q12. Local business/economic development organizations meet my needs.

Strongly
Agree

5

4

3

2

Strongly
Disagree

1

Q13. What are the area's greatest strengths and weaknesses for business and economic development?

Strengths: _____

Weaknesses: _____

Q14. What other comments do you have about business and economic development opportunities in your area?

**END OF SECTION 2.
PLEASE CLICK "NEXT PAGE" TO CONTINUE
TO THE NEXT SECTION OF THE SURVEY.**

SECTION 3: TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, INVESTMENT, AND MARKETING

This section of the survey (Q15-29) pertains to recreation and tourism development, investment, and marketing.

Q15. Does your business or organization serve travelers, or do you have an interest in policy and strategy regarding recreation and tourism development and promotion?

☐ Yes, I wish to continue with the recreation and tourism section questions

☐ No, skip this section and continue with survey Section 4 (SKIPS to Q30)

Q16. In which month(s) of the year would you like to see more recreation and tourism activity in your area? (mark all that apply)

☐ January

☐ May

☐ September

☐ February

☐ June

☐ October

☐ March

☐ July

☐ November

☐ April

☐ August

☐ December

☐ None

Q17. Of the months you marked above, which month(s) is/are the highest priority for increased activity? (list up to three months)

Priority 1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

Q18. Which of the following activities should be developed or promoted to increase off-peak season tourism in your area? (Choose up to 5)

- Scenic driving and loop tours
 - Golf
 - Fishing
 - Hunting
 - Snowmobiling
 - Skiing – downhill/cross-country
 - Bicycling: road/mountain biking
 - Boating/water activities
 - Historic, cultural, artisan tours
 - Community festivals/events
- Hiking/backpacking
 - Horseback riding/pack trips
 - Photography tours
 - Wildlife viewing, bird watching
 - ATV/Four-wheel trips
 - Camping/RVing
 - Gaming
 - Meetings and conferences
 - Educational tourism (eco-tours, seminars, Elderhostel, etc.)

Q19. What other recreation activities not mentioned above should be developed and/or promoted?

Q20. What are the greatest opportunities and challenges to generate more recreation and tourism in off-peak seasons?

Opportunity_____

Challenge_____

Q21. What specific places or services could be enhanced or developed to expand recreation and tourism activity, and/or extend visitor stays, in your area?

[Q22. eliminated]

Q23. Imagine that you are a traveler from out of state, arriving in your area for the first time. Please rate the quality of the following facilities and services from the perspective of a first-time visitor.

<i>[Categories randomized.]</i>	<u>Poor</u>		<u>Average</u>		<u>Excellent</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
a. Attractiveness of community entrances	1	2	3	4	5	0
b. Downtown business district						
c. Directional signs to key attractions/services						
d. Business signs and billboards						
e. Availability/accessibility of visitor information						
f. Lodging facilities (hotels, B&Bs, etc.)						
g. Private RV parks/campgrounds						
h. Public campgrounds						
i. Meeting/conference facilities						
j. Restaurants						
k. Retail shopping						
l. Knowledge/service skills of front-line employees						
m. Lake/reservoir/river recreation facilities						
n. Hot springs facilities						
o. Trails - bike/pedestrian						
p. Trails – ATV/snowmobile						
q. Museums, cultural/interpretive facilities						
r. What comments do you have about the traveler's experience in your area?	_____					

Q24. Is your organization or business one that directly serves travelers (i.e., do travelers buy products or services directly from you, or do they visit your facility, site, land, park, or event)?
☐ Yes (continues with Q25) ☐ No (SKIPS to Section 4)

Q25a. Does your business or attraction stay open year-round?

Yes (please skip to Q26 below)

No (continue with Q25b)

b. If no, would your business or attraction stay open in off-peak seasons if enough traveler visitation were generated?

Yes, we would open in other seasons if enough visitation were generated (SKIP to Q26)

No, even with increased visitation we would/could not consider opening in other seasons

c. Under what conditions, if any, could you be open longer or year-round?

Q26. What are the top five geographic areas from which your customers/visitors originate? (Please list cities if known, or states/provinces.)

Area 1: _____

Area 2: _____

Area 3: _____

Area 4: _____

Area 5: _____

Q27. How important or unimportant to your business/attraction are travelers on their way to/from Yellowstone and/or Grand Teton National Parks?

Not At All Important

1

2

3

4

5

Extremely Important

Q28. How important or unimportant are the tourism marketing efforts of the following organizations to your business or organization in terms of generating sales or visitation?

Not At All Important

1

2

3

4

5

Extremely Important

a. Pioneer Country Travel Council

b. Idaho State Tourism Office

c. Local Chamber of Commerce or CVB

d. Commercial travel web site or online travel agent (Yellowstonepark.com, Goldaho.com, Travelocity, etc.)

e. What other tourism marketing efforts are important to your business or organization?

Q29. Is your business or organization able to accommodate tour groups (van, motorcoach, motorcycle/classic car clubs, etc.)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

**END OF SECTION 3.
PLEASE CLICK "NEXT PAGE" TO CONTINUE
TO THE LAST SECTION OF THE SURVEY.**

SECTION 4: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE BUSINESS & ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTHEAST IDAHO

Questions 30-37 ask for your opinions about the business and economic environment in southeast Idaho.

In questions 30 and 31, please mark the number that best reflects your opinion. Is each item listed in this section a Strength of the area, an Average or Normal situation, or is it a Weakness of the area? Please answer every item. Even if you are not very familiar with it, respond based on your opinion or perception of it.

Q30. GENERAL QUALITY OF LIFE

[Categories randomized.]

	<u>Weakness</u>		<u>Normal</u>	<u>Strength</u>		<u>No Opinion</u>
	1	2	3	4	5	0
a. Availability of quality housing for workers						
b. Cost of housing						
c. Quality of K-12 education system						
d. Availability of higher/continuing education						
e. Health care services						
f. Availability of social services (day care, etc.)						
g. Availability of arts/cultural activities						
h. Retail shopping opportunities						
i. Proximity to public lands						
j. Quality of relationship among races, religions, and ethnic groups						
k. Sense of community pride						

l. What comments do you have about the general quality of life in your area: _____

Q31. WORKFORCE & TRAINING SITUATION

[Categories will be randomized.]

	<u>Weakness</u>		<u>Normal</u>	<u>Strength</u>		<u>No Opinion</u>
	1	2	3	4	5	0
a. Availability of skilled year-round workers						
b. Availability of seasonal workers						
c. Availability of quality jobs for local workforce						
d. Overall quality/productivity of the local workforce						
e. Availability of vocational/technical programs at the secondary/post-secondary levels						
f. Quality of college/university education and training programs						

g. What comments do you have about workforce and training: _____

Q32. What, if any, specific comments or concerns do you have about local municipal services in your area? (i.e., police/fire, waste removal, water/sewer cost or availability, etc.)

Q33. What, if any, specific comments or concerns do you have about transportation infrastructure and services in your area? (i.e., road maintenance/traffic, public transportation, public parking, bicycle/pedestrian trails, air service, freight service, etc.)

Appendix C: Southeast Idaho Business and Community Leader Survey Report

(Separate attachment)