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***Northwest Passage Theme & Tourism
Marketing Strategy - Volume Vi - Gjoa Haven
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**“NORTHWEST PASSAGE THEME
AND
TOURISM MARKETING
STRATEGY”**

VOLUME VI: GJOA HAVEN

MARCH 1995

Canada's

NORTHWEST PASSAGE



Gjøa Haven

VOLUME VI: GJOA HAVEN

INTRODUCTION

This community document is one of a series produced as part of the “Northwest Passage Theme and Tourism Strategy Marketing Project”. Volumes have been completed for **Holman**, Coppermine, Cambridge Bay, **Taloyoak** and **Gjoa Haven**. “Volume I-Kitikmeot Region” includes study recommendations and background information on a regional basis.

You are encouraged to read Volume I as it provides an overview of the study process. It also includes a **detailed analysis** of markets, theme suggestions and many regional projects that communities may wish to develop on their own. We have included here the Executive Summary for your review.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY- NORTHWEST PASSAGE THEME AND TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGY

Purpose:

In December of 1994 the Department of Economic Development and Tourism with the Government of the Northwest Territories contracted Mike Freeland and Associates of **Yellowknife**, together with a study team, to develop a **N.W.** Passage Theme and Tourism Marketing Strategy. The study was conducted between December 1994 and March 1995. This report contains the findings.

Background

Although a number of tourism planning studies have been conducted in the **Kitikmeot** Region over the past 10 years, development has been **slow**. There are a limited number of operators and the Arctic Coast Tourism Association has had little positive effect on the industry. Attractions, facilities and services for visitors are few.

The development of Sport Hunting activities has made the most impact in generating “new” dollars. Other markets such as Adventure Travel, Bird Watchers/Naturalists, Sport Fishing and Cruise Ships bring in a limited number of visitors. Business travel continues to supply over 90% of travel to and within the region.

Existing business travel, the cruise ships and naturalist markets have potential for providing more benefits to communities if packages were to be developed.

Most natural attractions in the **Kitikmeot** can also be found in other Arctic areas. The unique features of the region include the fact that this is Canada’s 3rd coast and that

the Northwest Passage exists here.

Getting the Answers:

Working with community liaison people, workshops were held in the communities of Holman, Coppermine, Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven and Taloyoak as well as Yellowknife.

Research was conducted both in the communities and outside, including southern Canada, Europe and Greenland as well as review of past studies.

What We Found:

Community consultations and research indicates a strong interest at the community level for interpretation of history and culture.

Market analysis indicates interest in activities surrounding the **N.W. Passage, history of the region, Inuit** people and culture.

There is a growing pool of residents trained in various aspects of tourism including that of guiding and cooking. Few of these residents however, have had the opportunity of demonstrating these skills while hosting visitors.

Festivals, events and anniversaries have, to a large extent, been organized for a local or a regional market. There is potential for these activities to draw outsiders if planned well in advance, and promoted to potential visitor groups.

Recommendations:

1. **We suggest tourism development should happen in a two phased approach.**

There are few licensed tourism operators in the region, and in turn, limited facilities and services for visitors. Although there is a rich history to the region, little of this is documented, or promoted.

Phase One- years 1-3- Before any substantive marketing efforts are made it is proposed that Phase I involve completion of many of the projects, infrastructure and basic business opportunity start-ups as noted in this report both on a **Regional and by Community basis. Projects** such as interpretive signage, interpretive centre/museum in Gjoa Haven, historical brochures, walking tour/ guide/brochures for each community, phrase booklets, and a regional poster/map will provide a more solid basis for further tourism development.

Once a number of projects as suggested for Phase I (see Chapter H) are

completed, they will support and enhance existing operators as well as encourage the development of new operations.

Phase Two: Years 4 and beyond -This should include packaging of products followed by more aggressive marketing to wholesale and package tour companies through trade shows, familiarization trips, and target marketing. We suggest product packaging and marketing may not prove effective until **Phase I is well underway.**

2. **The theme/logo, "Canada's Northwest Passage" be promoted as a regional identifier while** each community could add a unique icon signifying their connection to the overall theme.
3. **The current operators (ie. community based outfitters, hotels, and fly-in lodges, etc.) may wish to re-evaluate the existing business travel market.** All visitors including government and construction workers could be encouraged to extend their stay by developing a variety of quality, economical short packages based on a variety of attractions close to the communities.
4. **We recommend that package tours, cruise ships and bird watchers/naturalists be a priority for further development:**
5. **Market directly to qualified and targeted travel agents and tour operators,** promoting land, air and sea packages.
6. **Marketing efforts to be focussed on established operators from targeted countries of Great Britain, Norway and Germany.**
7. **Cooperative partnerships between communities, operators and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism** will encourage efficient use of resources.
8. **Priority should be given to community initiated,** community driven projects, maximizing benefits to residents and complementary to each other and to the Northwest Passage theme approach.
9. **To document historical and archeological artifacts taken from the Arctic Coast/Northwest Passage Area** at various museums, public and private collections. As a facility to display additional artifacts becomes available, return of these artifacts for permanent display must be encouraged.
10. As the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (I.T.C.) formally **recognizes the high percentage of youth** (60% are under twenty-five years old) and has committed to a youth seat (or seats) on all its affiliated organizations, **we recommend that any tourism committees, including a Nunavut wide Tourism Group Board**

of Directors. do the same.

11. Each community to have at least one major initiative with minimum duplication between communities.
12. Successful tourism operators that now **bring** visitors to the **region** must be **supported** by encouraging their efforts to increase visitor numbers and length of stay.
13. A mix of community based and regional projects will benefit all communities and visitor groups.
14. Ongoing planning and research/data collection must be **initiated**(i.e. expansion of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism's "Diary Program,"), producing a database for future **planning**.(Refer to Chapter H)
15. Training tools must be developed to meet the needs of emerging markets. That may include a handbook "How to prepare for Cruise Ship Visitors to your community" or a workshop for operators and hosts on how to maximize benefits from the cruise ship market.
16. Maximize benefits of cruise ships to communities through employment and money spent on arts/crafts, food, stores, outfitters, guides, hosts, lecturers and story tellers.
17. Development in, or close to a community should be a priority as opposed to remote locations (i.e. Fort Ross), thus maximizing community benefit.
18. Workina closely with the Keewatin and Baffin reaions in establishing a strona Nunavut presence in the marketplace is essential.
19. Coordination between communities and projects is recommended as well as on going evaluation and monitoring of projects.
20. Cooperation and Coordination is the key to success in the overall marketing of the Arctic Coast areas including those communities not directly on the Northwest Passage.

A) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: GJOA HAVEN

We suggest Gjoa Haven has good long-term potential for increased tourism considering the number of favorable factors - most importantly the rich history of the Netsilik people, the Franklin trips and subsequent searches and Amundsen.

We suggest that efforts be directed towards:

- Proceed with plans for a historical museum/interpretive centre with additional displays to be based in the community.
- Complete documentation and make all efforts for recognition of the Back River/Chantrey Inlet area as "National Historic Site".
- Purchase the useable assets of Chantrey Inlet Lodge for long-term regional development opportunity, possibly in conjunction with the community of Taloyoak.
- Promote the new hotel facility as a regional conference/meeting/training centre.
- Encourage package tour and cruise ship operators to stop in Gjoa Haven and utilize local outfitters, guides and facilities. The fact that there are a number of family descendants of Amundsen and crew living in Gjoa Haven provides a "living connection to history". We recommend contacting qualified package tour companies based in Norway and Great Britain - especially those who package international destinations with historical significance to the home country.
- To develop a craft/ carving centre and encourage limited Production of traditional Inuit clothing.

B) FAVORABLE AND CONSTRAINING FACTORS EFFECTING COMMUNITY AND AREA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Favorable

- Recently completed hotel with overflow available in the old hotel.
- Now serviced by two airlines with a number of flights weekly from **Iqaluit** and **Yellowknife**.
- Rich historical background - **Amundsen** and various Northwest Passage explorers.
- Some residents are direct descendants of **Amundsen**.
- Mini interpretive display and historical photo collection at school.
- Some historical signage in place.
- Two recently established outfitting companies.
- Some guiding/outfitting experience with musk-ox and polar bear sport hunts.
- Some guides have work experience with a big game outfitter north of Yellowknife.
- Recent cooking and hospitality training in the community through Arctic College.
- **Netsilik** people of Back River - Chantrey Inlet area lived totally on the land as late as the early 1970's.
- Quality of carvings improving.

Constraining

- **One** of the most expensive communities to operate in.
- Fastest growing community in the **N.W.T.**
- Highest unemployment rate in the Kitikmeot.
- Little business experience in community.
- Less than 15 actual tourists visited in '94.
- Community itself is only recently established so there is less history of "The Bay", "R. C. M. P." or churches than some other communities.
- 8-12 hours boat travel required to reach Chantrey Inlet area in good weather.
- No air charter plane based in Gjoa Haven; the closest being Cambridge Bay or Inuvik.
- Ice conditions can restrict cruise ship stops.
- The west side of King William Island was travelled by Franklin but distance from the community and lack of actual attractions preclude any immediate development.

Favorable

- Co-op hotel is installing an arts and crafts display and sales area in new hotel.
- A newly established Bed and Breakfast offers alternative accommodation.
- Hamlet is supportive of "Tourism".
- Positive attitude about community based tourism development.
- Community **was well** prepared for '94 cruise ship visit which did not happen due to ice conditions.
- Two recent ½ hour videos completed by the " **Great Outdoorsman**" for TSN.: one on the community itself and one on outfitting activities offered by "Gjoa Haven Tours Ltd.".
- H.T.A. recently purchased a large fishing boat which may be considered for tourism.
- Experienced drum dancers and **throat** singers.
- As detailed in P.R.P. Parks 1987 study "Northwest Passage Historic Park Interpretive Plan" a number of interactive displays that were recommended are now completed and in the Hamlet office.
- Anthropologist Jean Briggs completed a book the "Back River People" detailing the life of the Chantrey Inlet area Netsilingmiut in the early 1970's.

- . Local attractions include fish weirs at Koka Lake, “Rock Igloo”, “Old Footprints” in the rock, fossils.
- . Close to Queen Maud Gulf Bird Sanctuary.
- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, Museum of Man in Ottawa, and the Museum of Oslo have conducted research in the area.

c) **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Simon Takkirua was our community liaison while Tommy Angultitaurug provided translations during our community meeting. Mike Freeland facilitated the workshop assisted by RTO Cheri Kemp-Kinnear.

Thirty five people attended the public meeting in Gjoa Haven of which there were four hamlet counselors and key members both of the H. T. A., and the Women's Group. Participants were enthusiastic to add to the development idea list with a final total of 60 ideas for Gjoa Haven and 38 for the region.

A brief presentation was made to both Hamlet Council and Arctic College's 9 week 'Tourism **Entry** Level Program" **class** at the hotel. Most key people in the community were met either through the community meeting or on a one-to-one basis.

The following were the top 10 projects as identified by the community:

1. Extend **airport** for jets
2. Interpretive tour guide training with historians
3. Brochure on historic trail, packaging of trail
4. Northwest Passage tours on King William Island
5. Museum about Amundsen
6. Lower airfares
7. Make and display traditional clothing **Netsilik** style
8. Road to **N.W.** side of island
9. Gradual acquisition of the Chantrey Inlet Lodge
10. **Gjoa-Pelly-Taloyoak** circle tour

D) INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Our study team conducted further research on the top 10 projects as identified by the community. We attempted to match “ **What** the tourist wants” to “ What the community wants to offer tourists.” The cost and potential benefit of each project was also considered in developing the final list of recommended projects detailed here.

Many of the projects receiving the most interest in Gjoa Have emphasized “teaching” the tourists, either directly or through displays. This has great potential for NW Passage cultural tourism.

1.0 Franklin Expedition Interpretation

King William Island, lying near the geographic **centre** of the **NWT**, is the backdrop against which the final days of the third **Franklin** expedition to the Canadian Arctic were played. The expedition had left England in 1845 and overwintered on Beechey Island. Its ships, **H.M.S.** Erebus and Terror, were beset in **ice** off the northwest coast of King William Island in April 1846 and remained so until April 1848 when they were abandoned. From a note left in a cairn at Victory Point on King William Island, searchers inferred that the intention of the survivors had been to make their way along the west coast of King William Island to the mainland and then by the Back River to fur trade posts in the southwestern part of the present **NWT**. All men perished in attempting this journey.

In the summer of 1992, a previously unrecorded site was found in Erubus Bay. A quick inspection revealed that it was probably related to the Franklin expedition. Fragments of historic artifacts and human bone were scattered across the surface of a small island connected to King William Island by extensive mud flats.

In the summer of 1993, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC) and Anne **Keenleyside** (**McMaster** University) directed a brief project to record the distribution of the artifacts and human remains across the site and collect them. A small test excavation was also done. The site is probably another “boat place”, where a crew of men perished after having dragged a boat across miles **of snow** and rock. The human remains are being analyzed at **McMaster** University. They will be replaced on the site in a rock cairn.

The finding from this site, and from another close by, containing at least three disturbed graves, **will** support efforts to develop thematic interpretation for the Northwest Passage and the Franklin Expedition.

Interest was shown in the community in taking people on NW Passage tours to specific point of interest on King William Island. obviously, this relates very well to the theme: not only dealing with the history of the passage, but also traveling in the passage.

Funding: continued research funding through PWNHC, ED&T. Encourage thesis students in this area.

Funding for tourism business through various loan and contribution programs. Technical assistance through ED&T

2.0 Interpretive Centre/Historical Museum and Displays

The University of Oslo has indicated that many of the 900 Amundsen/Gjoa Haven area artifacts now in Oslo could be returned to the community if a secure museum/interpretive centre was in **place in** the community

Ideas for displays and themes included **Amundsen**, traditional clothing, old cultural display, old lighting methods and fire starting, Tunik (**Thule**) dwellings, seal skin water pails, sewing display, and a skinning display.

A museum and displays maybe part of a larger cultural project, namely a **Netsilik Cultural Museum** (see Regional Report Section***).

If a museum were centred in **Gjoa Haven**, there must be a major section devoted to **Amundsen**.

Funding: ED&T and Cultural Enhancement Programs

3.0 Chantrey Inlet Lodge assets purchase

Chantrey Inlet Lodge, owned by non-N. W.T. residents, has not been licensed or actively used as a fishing lodge for many years. Its federal land lease is not in good standing and the operation has now been for sale for some time. Reports from local people indicate that many aluminum boats and the main lodge are in reasonable shape, while the cabins and various other equipment such as outboard motors, generators, kitchen equipment, etc., are in questionable condition.

We suggest consideration be given to purchasing **Chantrey Inlet Lodge** as a long term project maybe in conjunction with **Taloyoak**. The historical connection of the **Back River Netsilingmiut** to the lodge, and area of the land lease would be a good match. No current licence or land lease, lack of continuity of operation, and pressure in the market place suggest a very modest purchase price would be reasonable. Distance from sport fishing markets, float plane flying distances, variable weather conditions, and length and uncertainly of boat travel from **Gjoa Haven** to **Chantrey** are other factors to be considered. Long-term potential could include a combination of naturalist, historical/ cultural, sport fishing and on the land/cultural programs for residents and visitors

Funding: Development Corporations and ED&T

4.0 Back River Natural Historic Site

The federal “ Historic Sites and Monuments Board has recognized five historically significant events/sites in the area:

- a) **The Franklin Expedition**
- b) **Erebus and Terror**
- c) Rasmussen
- d) Netsilingmiut People (from Gjoa Haven to Back River Area)
- e) Northwest Passage

Department of Canadian Heritage Parks Canada **Department** will be establishing a new position in Yellowknife titled “Special- Inuit Cultural Affairs Initiatives This new position will be the key to discussion of Park/ Site designation (ie: Back River).

Gjoa Havens first focus for site designation was on Franklin but this has now changed to a focus of historical **Inuit** involvement in the area--in particular the Back River/ **Chantry** inlet area.

Efforts are underway to recognize the Back **River/Chantry** inlet area under “Historic Park Status”. Chantry Inlet Lodge is central in the proposed area and is the traditional area of the **Netsilingmiut** people.

Funding: Canadian Heritage/ Parks Canada

5.0 **Make and Display Traditional Clothing**

Various programs over the years have funded the making of traditional clothing. There may be a limited market for caribou clothing with regional sport hunt operations and as part of interpretive displays.

Funding: Cultural Enhancement Programs

6.0 **Amundsen Memorial / Brochure**

Tom Stevenson from the University of Oslo in Norway had conducted research in Gjoa Haven due to the interest in Amundsen. He forwarded over 50 black and white print enlargements of photos taken by Amundsen in 1902-1903 to the school in Gjoa Haven. These fascinating photos are now fibre board backed and, we suggest, with labelling would provide an attractive display in the schools.

A memorial to Amundsen and his stay in Gjoa Haven and a small brochure describing this is suggested.

Funding: Hamlet and Economic Development and Tourism

7.0 Sewing and craft/carving centre.

Sewers, craftspeople and artists are seeking a **work** area, ideally adjacent to a display/sales area. The new hotel is planning a sales area; an artist working within a sales area would compliment items on sale. **This may also be a component of the interpretive centre**

Funding: Development Corporation and Hotel

E) IMPLEMENTATION AND TIME FRAME

Tourism Development	Short Term Year One	Medium Term Years 2-3	Long Term Years 4-10
Franklin expedition - interpretation	x		
Interpretive centre / historical museum and displays		x	
Chantrey Inlet Lodge assets purchase		x	x
Back River National Historic Site		x	
Make and display traditional clothing	x		
Amundsen memorial/ brochure	x		
Sewing / craft/ carving centre		x	

F) APPENDIX

GJOA HAVEN: Existing Facilities and Services

Component	Name	Facilities/Services
Accommodation	Amundsen Hotel Mary's B&B	12 rooms; 24 guests up to 8 guests
Food/Beverage	Amundsen Hotel	dining room, coffee shop
Attractions	Back River - Chantrey Inlet Lodge	sport fishing (unlicensed)
	Gallery in hamlet office	Dog Teams replica of Gjoa etc. 9-hole golf course
	Nadlok-Back River	170 km away; abandoned community from 1400s
	Barge arrival Fossils	mid-September about 16 km from town
	Quqshuun Ilihakvik School	small interpretive display and large B/W prints from Amundsen photo collection
Public (GNWT) Facilities and Attractions	NW Passage Historical Park	signs and trails NW Passage trail brochure NW Passage poster
	Hamlet office	NW Passage interpretive display
Services	Northern Kekertak COOP	retail/groceries includes taxi service, arts and crafts, A. T.V., fishing gear, retail and groceries.
	Gjoa Haven HTA	Muskox and polar bear hunts;
	Takkirug Tundra Tours	general outfitting and fishing, naturalist tours
	Gjoa Haven Tours Ltd.	Boats/motors, snowmobiles, ATVS for rent. General outfitting, fishing tours. Guides cooperative; dog team trips

Air Service

First Air

Via **Yellowknife**, Cambridge Bay

Ptarmigan

Yellowknife

Festivals

Gjoa Haven Hamlet Days
Summer Golf Classic
Uqshuqutuuq Music
Festival

May
mid-August
mid-Sept

Gjoa Haven: Results of Community Meetings

A community meeting resulted in two "wish lists" of development opportunities- one for the community and one for the region. Using a voting process these were prioritized and are listed here.

<u>Gjoa Haven</u>	<u>Development Opportunities for the Community</u>	<u># Votes</u>
	Extend airport for jets	14
	Interpretive tour guide training with historians	10
	Brochure on historic trail, packaging of trail	9
	Northwest Passage tours on King William Island	8
	Museum about Amundsen at hotel	8
	Lower airfares	7
	Make and display traditional clothing	
	Netsilik Chantrey style	6
	Road to N.W. side of island	5
	Gradual acquisition of the Chantrey Inlet Lodge	5
	Gjoa-Pelly-Taloyoak circle tour	5
	Carver display	5
	Old cultural display	5
	Regular air service	5
	Better link to Norway	5
	Phrase book - English and Inuktitut	5
	Community tours and entertainment	4
	Local sport fishing trophy; fish fry	4
	Fishing weir	4
	Building igloos	4
	Display of old time lighting methods and fire starting	4
	Visit spring/winter family camps	3
	Teach tourists traditional games and language	3
	Teach tourists traditional hunting ways	3
	Boat tours	3
	Drum dances	3
	Display of Tunik (Thule) Dwellings	3
	Examples of seal skin water pails	2
	Hotel information desk	2
	Better community advertising of products	2
	Boating to back river	2
	Sewing display	2
	Sealing and fishing in spring	2
	Teach tourists how to make camp	2
	Teach tourists about weather conditions	2
	Display of skinning	2
	Medicine man - Shaman display	2

Sewing centre	2
Amundsen Memorial	1
Brochure about Amundsen	1
Take visitors to old ship wrecks	1
Caribou, musk-ox, polar bear watching	1
Interpretive centre	1
Guide training	1
Wintertime display of life on the land	1
Cultural activities (women scraping hides, snow house making, etc.)	1
Promote midnight sun	1
A.T.V. tours	1
Community host/office	
Local boat tours	
Oral history project (federal)	
Movies/slide display for interpretive centre	
Bird watching	
Tell stories about Franklin	
Storytelling of legends	
Building igloos	
Interpretive centre	
Look for seals and seal holes	
Making fish spears	
Northern lights watching	
Winter fishing at Chantrey	

Gioa Haven

Development Opportunities for the Region

Sewing and craft centre	14
An interpretive display comparing early English/ Scandinavian methods of Arctic travel/exploration (i.e. Franklin, Peary, Frobisher) and traditional Inuit methods	10
To catalogue archaeological and historic sites in each community	9
Regional Skidoo expedition	9
Country food in hotels	9
Large carving centre	8
Airport displays	7
Regional tourist board	6
On going Training	4
Bilingual Inuit staff at A. C.T.A.	4
Hotel displays	4
To encourage development of alternative accommodation facilities	3
Walking tour and interpretive trail guide of each community	3
Poster/map - history/information of the Kitikmeot	3
Start up Training	2
Plan evaluation	2
Written and photographic history of both Inuit and non-Inuit who made substantial contributions to the area	2
Meet regularly with regional tourism committee	2
Regional market research	1
Interpretive tour guide/host training	1
I-bound tour operator/organizer	1
To develop a workshop/seminar on the cruise ship market	1
To produce four regional guides on:	1
- birds	
- plants and flowers	
- animals/mammals	
- minerals/fossils	
To develop an on-going listing of "Tourism" resource people	
Land use and other resource research	
Document the history of each community and make available in printed form	
Brochure for each community	

Gjoa Haven

Other Suggestions from workshop participants

Netsilik Museum

Teach traditional ways

Information on fur trade effect

Old ways - new generation has not experienced them

Useful to visitors

Jobs

Share experiences

More recognition

Support each other more

Improve communication in community

Ideas/projects run where possible by community people