

**THE HONOURABLE WALLY SCHUMANN  
MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, TOURISM  
AND INVESTMENT**

**NO.: 171-18(2)**

**DATE: March 10, 2017**

**NWT Tourism 'Secrets' Campaign**

Mr. Speaker, the secret is out; or, to be more precise 150 secrets are coming out. They are the foundation of a Canada-wide promotion highlighting the many reasons our territory is a spectacular place to live and visit.

From coast to coast, Canadians are learning about things like the Rabbit Kettle Tufa Mounds in Nahanni National Park, the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway, the Canol Trail, Ice Road Truckers and Fort Smith's annual Paddlefest.

The campaign, which is also taking advantage of Canada's 150th birthday, was conceived and is being led by our government's Destination Marketing Organization, Northwest Territories Tourism.

It is being promoted to Canadians at major trade shows in Vancouver, Calgary and Toronto; in restaurant promotions, on decaled public transit, and in advertising on TV, social media, newspapers, radio and the web.

The goal of the campaign is to generate national awareness and conversation about the NWT as a must-see travel destination. Mr. Speaker, it is safe to say that our goal has been achieved. The response to this campaign is already astounding and it is not over yet.

In the first three weeks of the campaign, it exceeded its marketing targets with 60,000 contest entries, 157,000 visitors to the SpectacularNWT website, 385,000 webpage views in search of our spectacular secrets and 3,000 new subscribers to the NWT Tourism's Quarterly Newsletter. The campaign will end on April 10.

Mr. Speaker, the Secrets campaign features five grand prize packages that will take five couples on all-inclusive adventures, one each, into our territory's five regions. Subsidiary prizes will see 140 individuals fly to Yellowknife where they will be encouraged to travel further into our territory.

The entire campaign is just one part of the NWT Tourism's broader \$2.76 million dollar plan to attract domestic and international visitors to our territory that I will table in this House later this afternoon.

The tourism sector offers the best opportunities that we have to advance economic diversification in the NWT; and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is working diligently to build the foundation on which our tourism sector will flourish.

Our Tourism 2020 strategy is the blueprint for this work and aims to increase tourism spending in the NWT to \$207 million by 2020-2021.

Our strategy outlines the steps we are taking to attract visitors to the Northwest Territories. It outlines the programs and initiatives with which we are strengthening the products and capacity of NWT operators.

Under the banner of our Tourism 2020 strategy, the new Aboriginal Tourism Champions Program was launched in October. More recently, we have introduced the new Community Tourism Coordinator Program to advance regional product development and packaging.

We continue to deliver the Community Tourism Infrastructure Contribution Program to encourage the development of community tourism infrastructure and we continue to facilitate and invest in our territory's greatest tourism resources with our business and youth mentorship programs.

Mr. Speaker, in 2015-2016 we increased our visitors to the NWT by 11 percent over the previous year. As importantly, the increase was reflected in a 14 percent increase in visitor spending and the direct spend in our territory related to tourism in 2015 rose to \$167.1 million dollars. That means new money for our economy, increased business for tourism operators and our hospitality industry; and business development. The growth of our tourism industry also means growth in employment opportunities and improved quality of life for northern residents in terms of dining and activity options.

With creative marketing campaigns, strategic planning and timely, targeted programs, we will continue to build our tourism sector and the growth and diversity that it will bring to our economy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.