

**PROVINCE PROVIDES FINANCIAL SUPPORT
TO REGIONAL TOURISM ASSOCIATIONS**

The Manitoba government will provide more than \$24,000 to support projects initiated by six regional tourism associations, Culture, Heritage and Tourism Minister Flor Marcelino announced today.

“We are assisting regional associations to undertake several special projects focused on attracting tourism activity to their respective regions,” said Marcelino. “The projects are designed to address specific tourism opportunities and challenges within each region.”

The regional tourism organizations receiving provincial support include:

- The Eastern Manitoba Tourism Association for an online initiative that will see the development of an agri-tourism product database and the creation of a new agri-tourism website.
- Tourism Westman’s highway signage update initiative. This initiative will modernize the association’s existing highway signage by updating the appearance and simplifying the message of highway signs in the region.
- The Pembina Valley Tourism Association’s destination development package. This initiative brings together regional partners to develop market-ready tourism packages by creating professionally designed promotional materials for distribution at trade shows and by direct mail.
- The Parkland Tourism Association for the development of the Flavour Trail initiative, which promotes self-guided tours to discover the region’s local foods, food producers, eating establishments, events and places of interest.
- The Interlake Tourism Association for its winter destinations best practices development initiative to increase the region’s profile as a premier destination for winter-based tourism activities.
- Tourism North, in partnership with regional stakeholders, for the development of an inventory of the region’s road-accessible lakes and existing amenities, GPS co-ordinates, product offerings and fish stocks.

As well, the minister announced the department has provided funding of \$7,500 to the Manitoba Regional Tourism Network, a consortium of regional tourism associations. The funding is being used to assist regional tourism through a special Manitoba Adventure area at the Mid-Canada RV Show at the Winnipeg Convention Centre until March 13.

“Tourism creates employment and economic development right across our province,” said Marcelino. “The sector is a billion dollar industry that employs thousands of people and we are committed to supporting its growth.”

More information about tourism in Manitoba can be found at www.travelmanitoba.com.