



STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE
COMMUNITY AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Office of Economic Development

Sarah Palin, Governor
Emil Notti, Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 30, 2008

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Developing Alaska Rural Tourism – 2008 Call for Projects

JUNEAU - Beginning this fall, the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development - Office of Economic Development (OED) and the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) are initiating an 18-month project to provide technical assistance and training for regional and community tourism development efforts, and provide business mentorship opportunities for new tourism businesses in rural Alaska. This exciting new project is a key component of the Developing Alaska Rural Tourism (DART) program.

Under the DART program, OED has helped local and regional efforts to

- Create regional tourism marketing strategies and regional websites
- Develop regional “brands” that distinguish the region and its unique tourism attractions, and
- Organize assessment tours, bringing in industry experts who can assess and give exposure to new or developing tourism attractions or “products”.

The DART program also offers visitor industry training, aimed at boosting rural businesses and employment, including OED’s own AlaskaHost customer service training program. DART training also draws upon business and other training available from the University of Alaska, or vocational or technical training programs.

During the month of August, OED is soliciting requests or proposals for assistance to new regional rural tourism development projects, particularly in those regions where there is a high level of interest in tourism. OED is also welcoming recommendations for training and business mentorship opportunities. Proposals or recommendations received by September 1 will have the best chance of getting into the 18-month DART work plan, which will begin approximately October 1, 2008.

For more information, or to submit your proposals or ideas, contact Odin Brudie, OED Tourism Planner (e-mail: odin.brudie@alaska.gov phone: 907-465-5466) or Dru Garson, OED Business Development Specialist (e-mail: dru.garson@alaska.gov phone: 907-465-2162) with the Alaska Office of Economic Development. More information will be posted on the OED website: <http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/oed/dart/home.htm>.



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The Alaska Office of Economic Development offers services through the Developing Alaska Rural Tourism program, the Tourism Mentorship Assistance program, AlaskaHost customer service training, the Alaska Public Lands Information Centers, the Alaska Visitor Statistics Program, and the Alaska Film Program. For more information about the office, visit the OED website:

<http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/oed/toubus/home.cfm>.

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