

## Ecotourism Meets Agritourism



Governor's Conference on Tourism  
 March 8, 2005  
 Inn Serendipity & Renewing the Countryside  
 Lisa Kivirist & John Ivanko

## WHY ECO-TRAVEL?

"We're longing for gung-ho, do-something, learn-something, give-back-something vacations that will exhilarate us and leave us feeling good..."

We want vacations that will allow us to experience intimately the people and places we visit, while not inadvertently polluting the environment or contributing to an oppressive political regime, and perhaps make the world a better place."

- Daniel and Sally Wiener Grotta, *The Green Travel Sourcebook*

## DEFINITIONS Agritourism

Tourism based on visitation of a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operation for the purpose of enjoyment, education, or active involvement in the activities of the farm or operation.



SOURCE: Small Farm Center, University of California's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources

## DEFINITIONS Agritourism

Agritourism is closely related and often includes the direct marketing of agricultural products to customers:

- Roadside stands
- Farm stands & wineries
- U-pick operations
- Community supported agriculture
- Farmers' markets
- Farm visits & farm stays
- Petting stables
- Special events: corn mazes, sleigh rides & haunted barns.



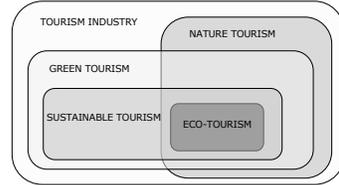
## DEFINITIONS Ecotourism

*Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.*



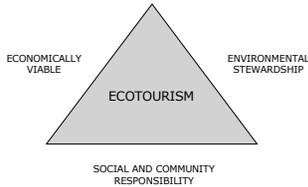
SOURCE: International Ecotourism Society, ecotourism.org

## WHAT IS ECOTOURISM?



SOURCE: Renewing the Countryside

## WHAT IS ECOTOURISM?



SOURCE: Renewing the Countryside

## DEFINITIONS Who Is the "Ecotourist"

Those who implement and participate in ecotourism activities strive to follow the following principles:

- Minimize impact
- Build environmental & cultural awareness
- Provide positive experiences for visitors & hosts
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation
- Provide financial benefits & empowerment for local people
- Raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental & social climate

SOURCE: International Ecotourism Society, ecotourism.org

## DEFINITIONS Who is the "Ecotourist"

- Cultural Creatives
- Social innovators (often working in non-profit world)
- Co-parenting parents
- Passionate about food & drink

- MOST OF ALL:**
- Travel to experience, learn, grow & contribute



**TRENDS**  
**Agritourism**

**Agritourism growth based on travelers:**

- Taking more and shorter trips
- Traveling more by car
- Looking for new experiences
- Adding diversity to experiences
- Traveling to help reconnect family
- Getting back to roots, food and land

**Reason for rural travel:**

- Enjoy rural scenery, pet farm animals, learn where food comes from, watch/participate in farm activities

SOURCE: Nature-based Tourism & Agritourism Trends, USDA/NRCS

**TRENDS**  
**Ecotourism/Nature-based**

- Ecotourism increasing at annual rate of 10-30%, versus overall tourism 4% annual rate
  - Source: World Resources Institute
  - Still only 1/10th of total industry (WTO)
- 40-50% inbound US travelers are nature tourists; 20-40% wildlife-related
  - Source: International Ecotourism Society
- Wildlife viewing, \$108 billion global industry (more than total cash receipts of US livestock industry)
  - Source: Center for Study of Rural America/US Fish & Wildlife

**CERTIFICATION**  
**Scotland's Approach**

Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) is the world's largest national tourism ecolabel

- Developed in Scotland in 2001
- Used throughout Europe, with over 420 members
- Assessed once every two years by registered environmental auditors
- Graded against over 120 measures of best practice
- Actual achieved projects & physical evidence needed

**CERTIFICATION CRITERIA**  
**Scotland's Green Tourism Business Scheme**

**MANAGEMENT**

- Environmental awareness training > 50% of staff
- Monitoring feedback from guests and visitors

**COMMUNICATION**

- Written environmental policy on display
- Up-to-date list of green tourism business scheme businesses



**CERTIFICATION CRITERIA**  
**Scotland's Green Tourism Business Scheme**

**ENERGY**

- At least 50% of bulbs used are low energy bulbs
- Use low energy appliances

**WATER**

- Use low flush toilets
- Use drip irrigation systems



**CERTIFICATION CRITERIA**  
**Scotland's Green Tourism Business Scheme**

**GREEN PURCHASING**

- Home-grown or organically grown vegetables
- Local fish and meat

**WASTE**

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle paper products
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle electronics



**CERTIFICATION CRITERIA**  
**Scotland's Green Tourism Business Scheme**

**TRANSPORT**

- Information on walking and bicycling routes
- Staff carools to work

**WILDLIFE & LANDSCAPE**

- Business helps support wildlife or landscape initiative
- Business plants native trees and shrubs



**CERTIFICATION IN USA**  
**Example: Eco-Friendly Lodging**

No accreditation or certification widely exists in USA

- Co-op America Business Network (coopamerica.org)
  - members based on social & environmental criteria (hotels as well as other business sectors)
- Green Hotels Association (greenhotels.com)
  - membership program for eco-hotels
- Green Seal (greenseal.org)
  - certifies domestic hotels (and products) for fee

**SUSTAINABLE BLEND**  
**Agricultural Sustainability = Ecotourism**



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

- Hobby Farm, or Farmette
- Two room B&B, plus other businesses managed from home office
- Outside Monroe, Wisconsin
- 5.5 acres on ridge
- Flock of free-range chickens, two llamas, and son, Liam



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

- Experience of farm life attractive to city or suburban dwellers
- Tours of garden & renewable energy systems key asset
- Some guests even help with chores!



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Elements of the "Good Life"

- Food Systems
- Energy Systems
- Living Systems
- "Right Livelihood"



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Food Systems

- Diversified farm operation featuring three growing fields
- Raise crops to meet 70% of food needs
- Grow organically
- Attend Eastside Farmers' Market on Tuesdays (Madison)



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Renewable Energy Systems:  
10 kW Bergey Wind Turbine

- 120-foot tower
- Produces over 7,000 kWhs/year
- Grid-interconnected system
- Net cost \$16,000, after Focus on Energy cash-back award



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Renewable Energy Systems:  
.5 kW Photovoltaic (PV) System

- 4 120-Watt Kyocera modules
- Cantilevered off equipment shed
- Meets about 2% annual electricity needs
- Net cost \$1,700, after Focus on Energy cash-back award



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Renewable Energy Systems:  
Solar Thermal System for Hot Water

- 3 collectors
- Capture heat from sunlight to heat water for domestic use
- Estimated payback of less than 5 years



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Renewable Energy Systems:  
Woodstove for Winter Heat

- Return to the hearth
- Locally available wood at little or no cost
- EPA certified, air-tight design (post 1990)



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Renewable Energy Systems:  
Energy Conservation & Energy Efficiency

- ENERGY STAR appliances
  - Maytag Neptune, Sun Frost refrigerator
- Compact fluorescent bulbs
- Low-E window inserts
- Line-dried laundry
- Faucet aerators, caulking, hot water wrap



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Living Systems: Natural Home

- No-VOC products (paints, sealers, caulks)
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified woods
- Recycled products (tiles made from recycled windshield glass)
- Eco-cleaners, organic/natural linens



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Living Systems: Green Design

Strawbale greenhouse

- Made from local straw bales
- Earthen & Lime-cement plaster
- Solar thermal heating system
- Steel roof (very durable)
- Meet additional year-round food needs



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

Living Systems:  
Reducing Ecological Impacts

- Trees for Travel certificates
- Water and soil restoration
- Tree planting program at cabin
- Recycled paper, reuse & free-cycle
- Exploring biodiesel; local fuel



**CASE STUDY**  
Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

"Right Livelihood"  
Work that is meaningful, essential, restorative, and sustainable  
"Be the change you seek"  
- Gandhi



**BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION**  
Harvesting Green

- Direct energy savings
- Natural home & gardens
- Celebrating local community
- Magnet for visitors
- Good PR opportunities
- Business as unusual
- Take your tax credits on renewable energy
- Operating cleaner & greener
- A natural for agritourism operations



**WISCONSIN'S FUTURE?**  
"Green Rural Routes"

**ECOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
Protecting, conserving and/or enhancing nature and the physical environmental health of the life-sustaining ecosystem.

**LOCAL ECONOMIC VITALITY**  
Supporting local economies, businesses and communities to ensure economic vitality and sustainability.

This is a pilot program by Renewing the Countryside in Minnesota.



**WISCONSIN'S FUTURE?**  
"Green Rural Routes"

**CULTURAL SENSITIVITY**  
Respecting and appreciating cultures and cultural diversity to ensure the continued well-being of local or host cultures.

**EXPERIENTIAL RICHNESS**  
Providing enriching and satisfying experiences through active, personal and meaningful participation in, and involvement with, nature, places and/or cultures.



**RENEWING THE COUNTRYSIDE**

Building awareness, support, and resources for farmers, artists, activists, entrepreneurs, educators, and others whose work is helping create healthy, diverse, and sustainable rural communities.

[www.renewingthecountryside.org](http://www.renewingthecountryside.org)




**AWARENESS**

- Sharing stories
- Illuminating issues
- Building interest
- Making connections

**SUPPORT**

- Exploring new models (i.e. "green business")
- Developing media campaigns
- Strategic marketing

**RESOURCES**

- Model examples
- Marketing tools
- PR assistance
- Online resources

[www.renewingthecountryside.org](http://www.renewingthecountryside.org)





- RESOURCES**  
Literature Available Today
- *Natural Home* (renamed *Natural Home & Garden*) magazine
  - National Tour of Solar Homes (first weekend in October)
  - Renewable Energy & Sustainable Living Fair (Midwest Renewable Energy Assoc.)
  - Wisconsin Focus on Energy
  - Renewing the Countryside
  - Co-op America

**www.ruralrenaissance.org**  
**www.innserendipity.com**

***Rural Renaissance: Renewing the Quest for the Good Life***  
By Lisa Kivirist & John Ivanko

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