

Explore Minnesota Tourism Council Meeting

December 10, 2024



m EXPLORE
MINNESOTA

star of
the north*

Agenda

- 10:00 a.m. Welcome
- Approval of Minutes
- 10:05 a.m. Team Updates and Updates from Council Committees
- Destination Marketing
 - Marketing Committee Update
 - Livability Marketing
 - Livability Committee Update
 - Destination Development
 - Education / Industry Resources Committee Update
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Outdoor Recreation Committee Update
 - Tribal Relations
 - Film
 - Legislative/Administrative
 - Legislative Committee Update
- 11:30 a.m. Adjourn





Welcome

- Approval of Minutes from September 10 meeting



Explore MN Updates

- Marketing
 - Marketing Committee Update
- Livability Marketing
 - Livability Committee Update
- Destination Development
 - Education / Industry Resources Committee Update
- Outdoor Recreation
 - Outdoor Recreation Committee Update
- Legislative/Administrative
 - Legislative Committee Update
- Tribal Liaison
- Film



Marketing

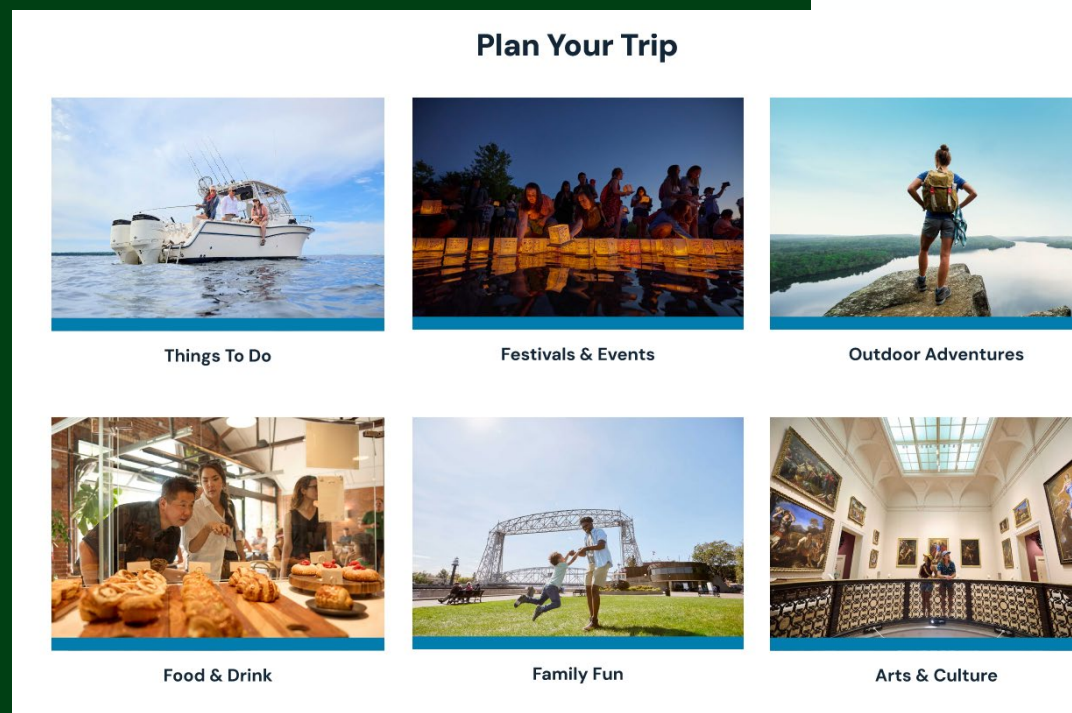
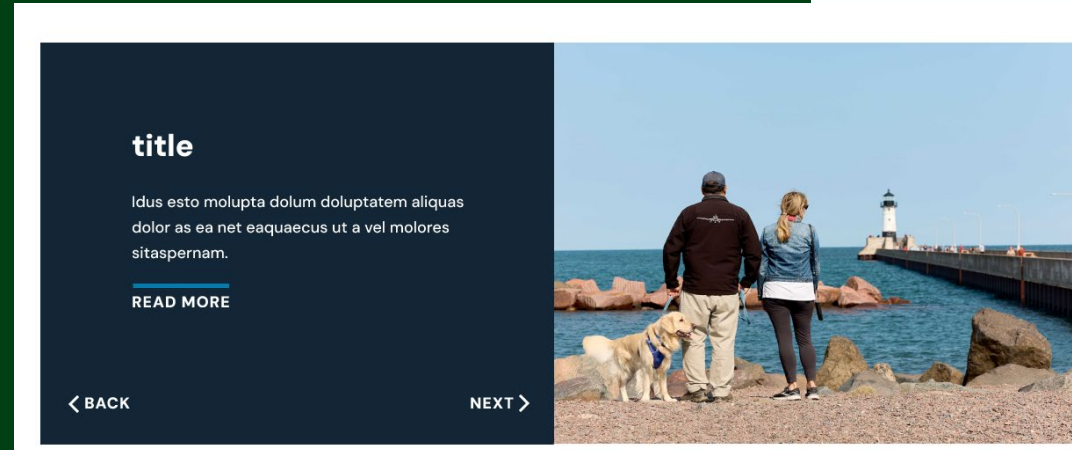
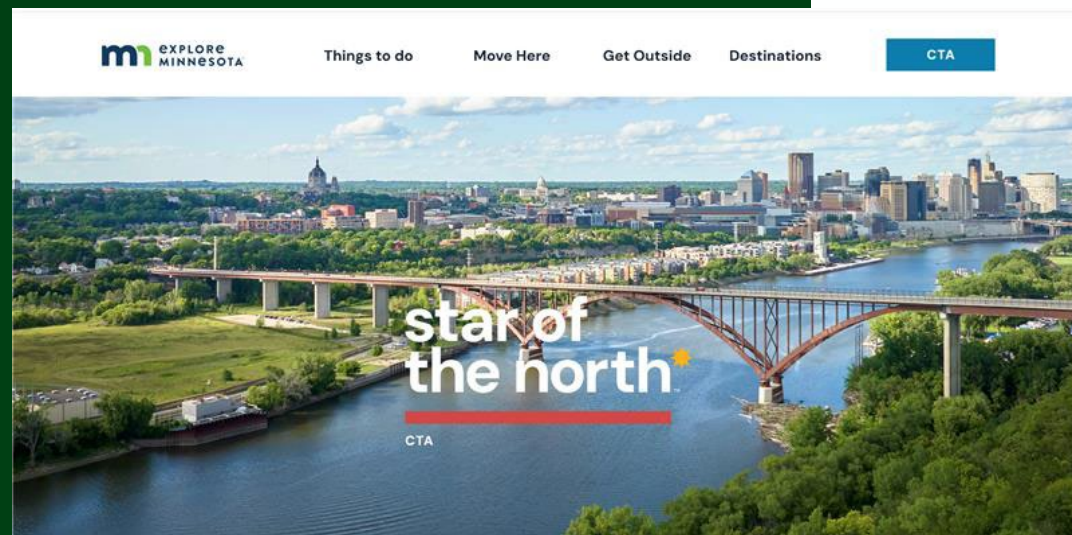
Kat Sutton

Deputy Director

Local Comms Strategy

- Boost media appearances (radio, TV, print) to highlight destinations statewide, promote local travel and amplify Star of the North campaign
- Build strong relationships with local media, writers, producers, and radio personalities





Website “Facelift”

- Aging codebase, end-of-life version of Drupal + out-of-date design elements, branding → Refresh (but not rebuild)
- Overall priority of creating an updated, sleek design alongside an improved user experience
- Will be complete by FY26 (Jun. 30, 2025) and ensure a well-working website until the next legislative biennium (FY28)



2025 Travel Guide

- New & streamlined look and content to align with web facelift, Star of the North, itineraries (incl. QR codes to watch video)
- 2024 stock to deplete by mid-Dec., larger marketing push begins Jan. 1
- New RFP for 2026 launched, currently in process with multiple bid reviews



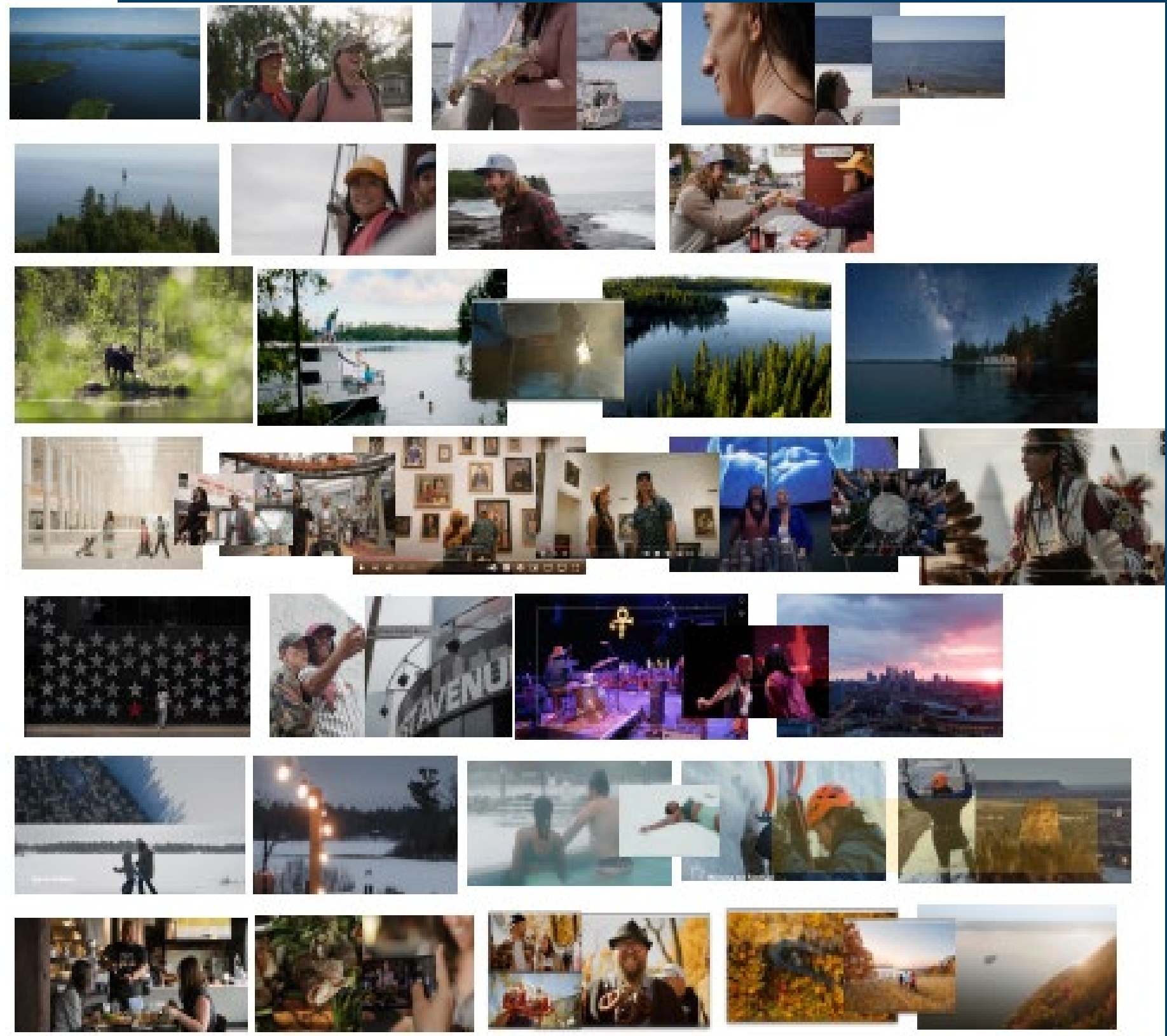
2025 Summer Campaign

- Debuts Mar. 10, runs through Jun. 30
- Niches:
 - Live Events/Food & Drink
 - Lake Life
 - National & State Parks
- Special highlights: Voyageurs 50th anniversary, Prince's Purple Rain (key 2025 events)
- Creative: New longform video w. travelers from Chicago; new lake life photo and video
- Channels/Tactics: Final plan forthcoming but likely to include well-performing tactics from previous Star of the North seasonal campaigns plus content partnerships with *National Geographic*, *Rolling Stone*, *Food & Wine* and *Smithsonian*



Evergreen Campaign

- Year-round video to generate higher awareness, for all-season campaign need
- More general Minnesota “big hits”: identification markers to garner better recognition / Minnesota muscle memory
- Two versions: yes, winter! and no winter

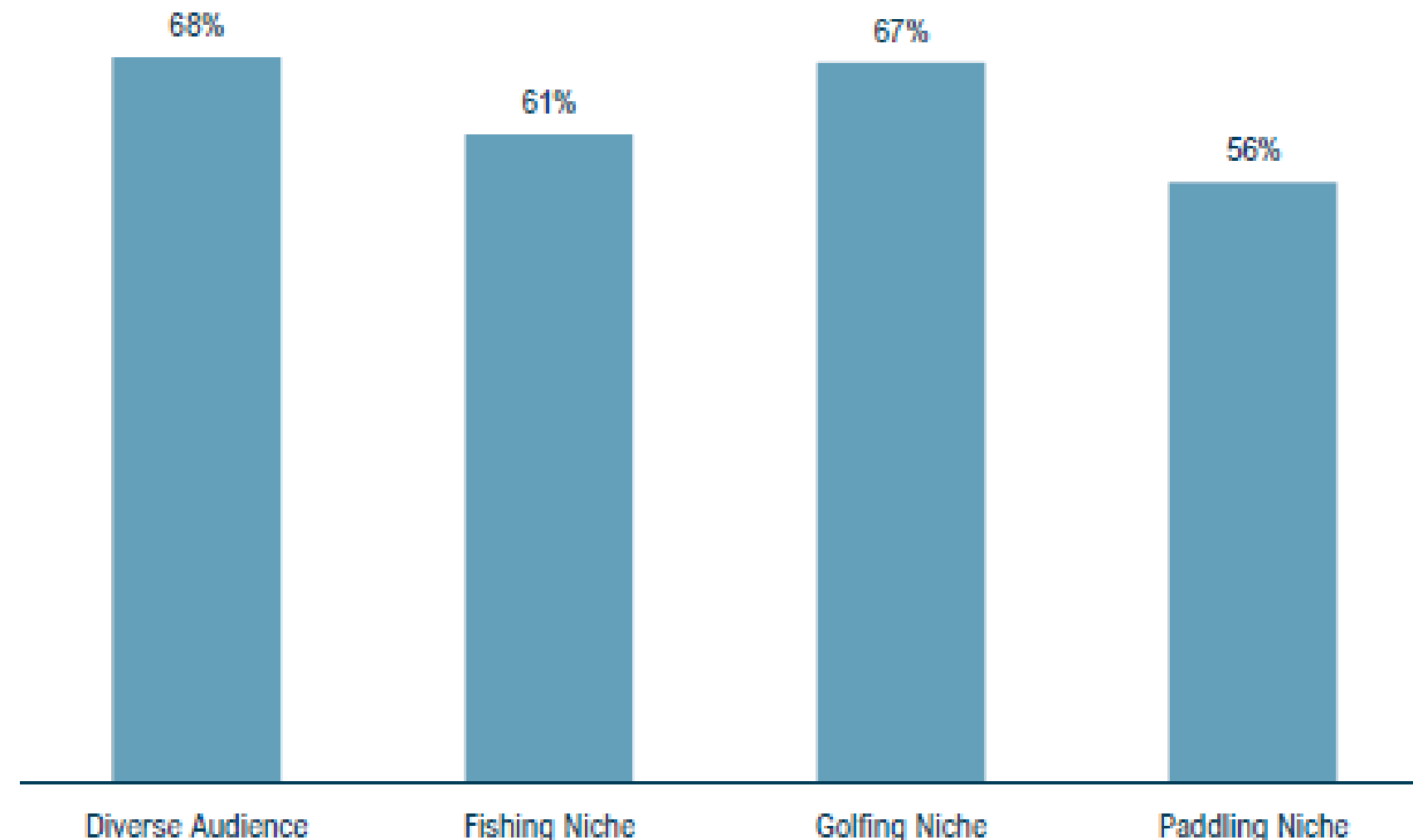


Relocation Considerations

Over half of satisfied visitors would consider moving to Minnesota.

- 68% of Diverse visitors indicated they would be interested in relocating to Minnesota after having a Good or Excellent trip to the state. This is the highest proportion followed by golfers (67%), fishers (61%), and paddlers (56%).
- Again, this is a subset of a subset of the population of favorable travelers, asked whether they would consider Minnesota as place to move to given a positive experience on their trip.

Would you consider moving to Minnesota in the future? Among satisfied visitors



 *Sample too small to calculate additional net values.



Livability Marketing

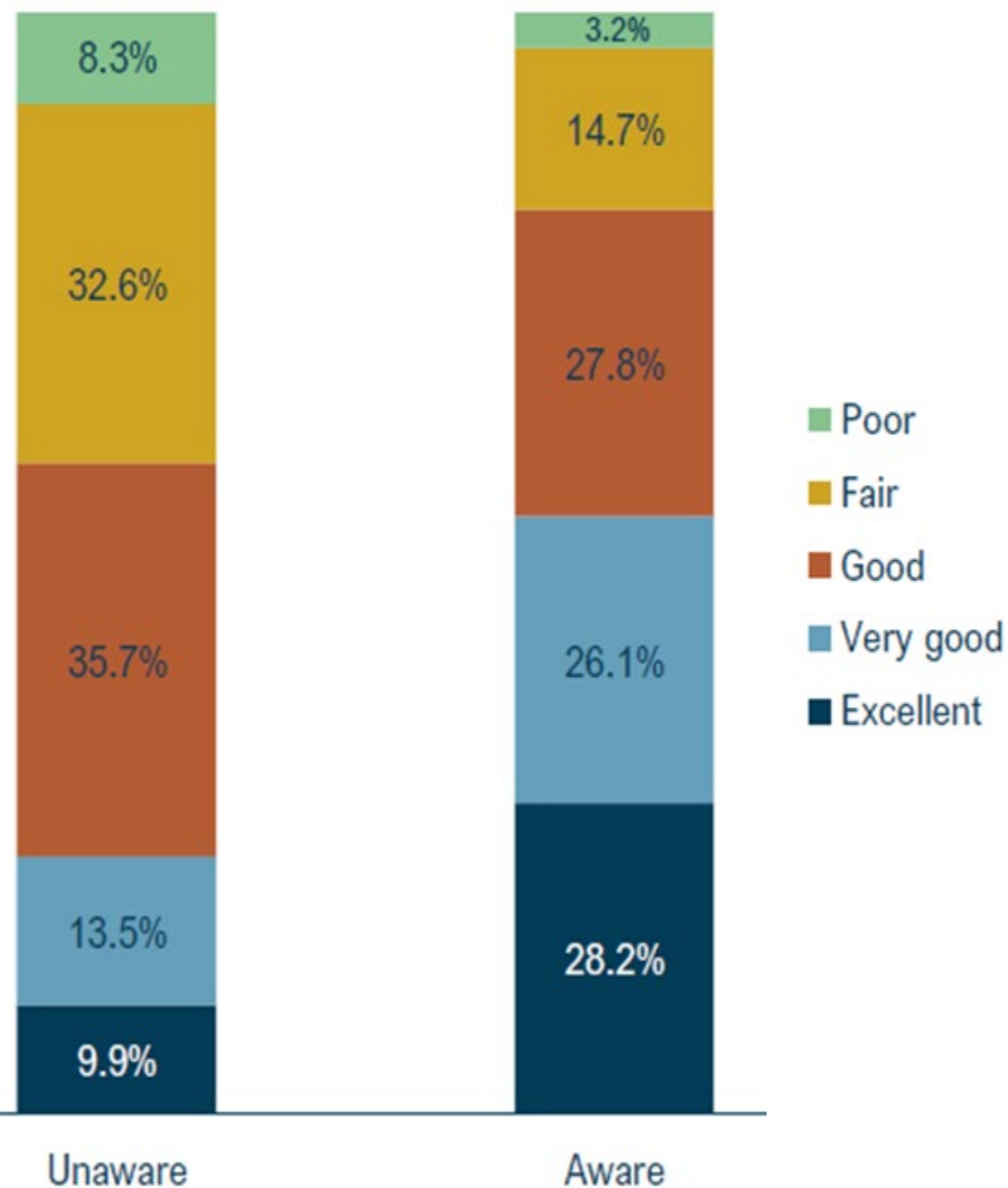
Kat Sutton



Workforce Attraction

- Campaign continues until Jun. 30, 2025
- Evaluation of any “missing” creative or assets to continue telling this story post-Jun. 30
- Optimizations continue, including:
 - Re-debut of “winter friendly” creative
 - Identifying pro-MN statistics that most resonate
 - Evaluation of:
 - Geographic targeting, including how to best target potential “boomerangs”
 - Content partnerships
 - LinkedIn channel use (for organic posting)

Lift in Overall Rating



Workforce Attraction

(SMARI Research Findings, September 2024)

- **Campaign viewed positively by 84.2% of those surveyed, above 70% benchmark.**
- **More than 82% of ad aware rated Minnesota as good, very good or excellent.**
 - This is a **23% lift in positive ratings** compared to those unaware of ad campaign
- **78% of those who visited website reported it was very useful; 97% of site visitors said it improved their perception of Minnesota.**
 - Furthermore, those who recalled website said they **visited an average of 3.6 times** since the campaign debuted

Business Attraction

- Debuted Sept. 9, runs through Jun. 30, 2025
- Launched exploreminnesota.com/business
- Featured businesses: Polar Semiconductor, Rosenbauer USA, Mayo Clinic, Microbiologics
- Looking ahead:
 - Business Facilities, Forbes placements
 - Trade show collateral
 - More web/social content





Resident Retention & Young Workforce Growth

(planned launch FY26)

- **Primary Objective:** educate and influence younger Minnesota residents ages 18-25* to remain in Minnesota and participate in the workforce
 - **Although 18-22 are the largest movers, extending to account for those who take alternative paths.*
- **Target Audiences:**
 - **Young diplomas/Recent HS grads** – Convince them to stay and pursue career paths in-state
 - **Young college-bound** – Convince them to stay and pursue education in-state AND career paths in-state after graduation



Destination Development

Beth Helle
Deputy Director



Industry Relations

2025 Explore Minnesota Tourism Conference

- Feb 18-19, 2025; Minneapolis Convention Center
- Weekly Conference Communications, Thursdays at 3 p.m.
- \$250 to attend; Tourism Council complimentary
- Keynotes and breakout sessions will be recorded

Meetings and Presentations next quarter

- 12/11 NWC Regional Monthly Meeting
- 12/12 GPHO Kick-off Meeting in Ortonville
- 12/19 Southern Minnesota Tourism Association (SMTA)
- 1/8 NWC Regional Monthly Meeting
- 1/9 MN River Valley Scenic Byway Meeting
- 2/12 MNDOT Corridor Planning PAC Meeting



Market Development

January

- American Beats Twin Cities Episode Launch with Brand USA
- Group Tour Ad in Destinations Magazine's January/February 2025
- Brand USA India Sales Mission

February

- American Bus Association Annual Convention, Philadelphia
- Filming "Amazing Train Journey" broadcast (France) in the metro

In-Market Campaigns (Jan-Mar)

- Italy – New contracted campaigns begin
- Germany – Radio Broadcast and Podcast Feature.
- United Kingdom – JRNY Magazine, Article Published; National Geographic Traveler Magazine Feature, Print and Digital
- Nordics – FDM Tour Operator Co-Op Campaign



Visitor Services

- Move St Croix Welcome Center operations into the brand-new MNDOT facility
- New Welcome Center Partnership with Visit St. Cloud for brochure maintenance at St. Cloud Welcome Center
- MNDH Safe Harbor training for all Welcome Center employees



Outdoor Recreation

Randolph Briley
Deputy Director



Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership

- **General Economic Insights:** According to the recent BEA data release from November, Minnesota's outdoor recreation economy currently stands at \$13.5B. That is a 10.5% increase over last year's numbers. Minnesota is currently outpacing the national average which is 9% growth.
- Development of the state's first comprehensive **outdoor recreation economic impact report**.
 - Contracted vendor.
 - Six distinct phases of work
 - Remains on track for a June launch
- Ongoing coordination and facilitation of the **State Outdoor Business Alliance**.
 - In the process of hiring a temporary Executive Director.
 - Raising funds from founding members. Goal is \$50,000. Currently at \$25,000.
 - RFP circulated by the steering committee. Deadline for ED proposals was December 6.
 - Currently reviewing proposals; goal to select vendor by first quarter 2025.



Outdoor Recreation Industry Partnership

- **Facilitation of the First Annual Outdoor Industry Education Day on the Hill.**
 - Rotunda reserved from 1 pm to 5 pm on April 2.
 - Purpose is to educate policymakers on the importance of the outdoor industry to Minnesota's economic portfolio.
- **Development of the first annual Outdoor Recreation Industry Summit for June 2025.**
 - Date and venue are secured. June 26, 2025, at the Hyland Hills Chalet from 11 am to 6 p.m.
 - Currently developing an agenda.
 - 120 spots available for attendees.
- **Ongoing creation and promotion of the Explore Minnesota More podcast.**
 - Hired a freelance producer to consult on the substance and process of the show and to perform weekly post-production tasks (editing and mixing).



Tribal Relations

Dawn Blanchard
Tribal Liaison



Tribal Relations Update

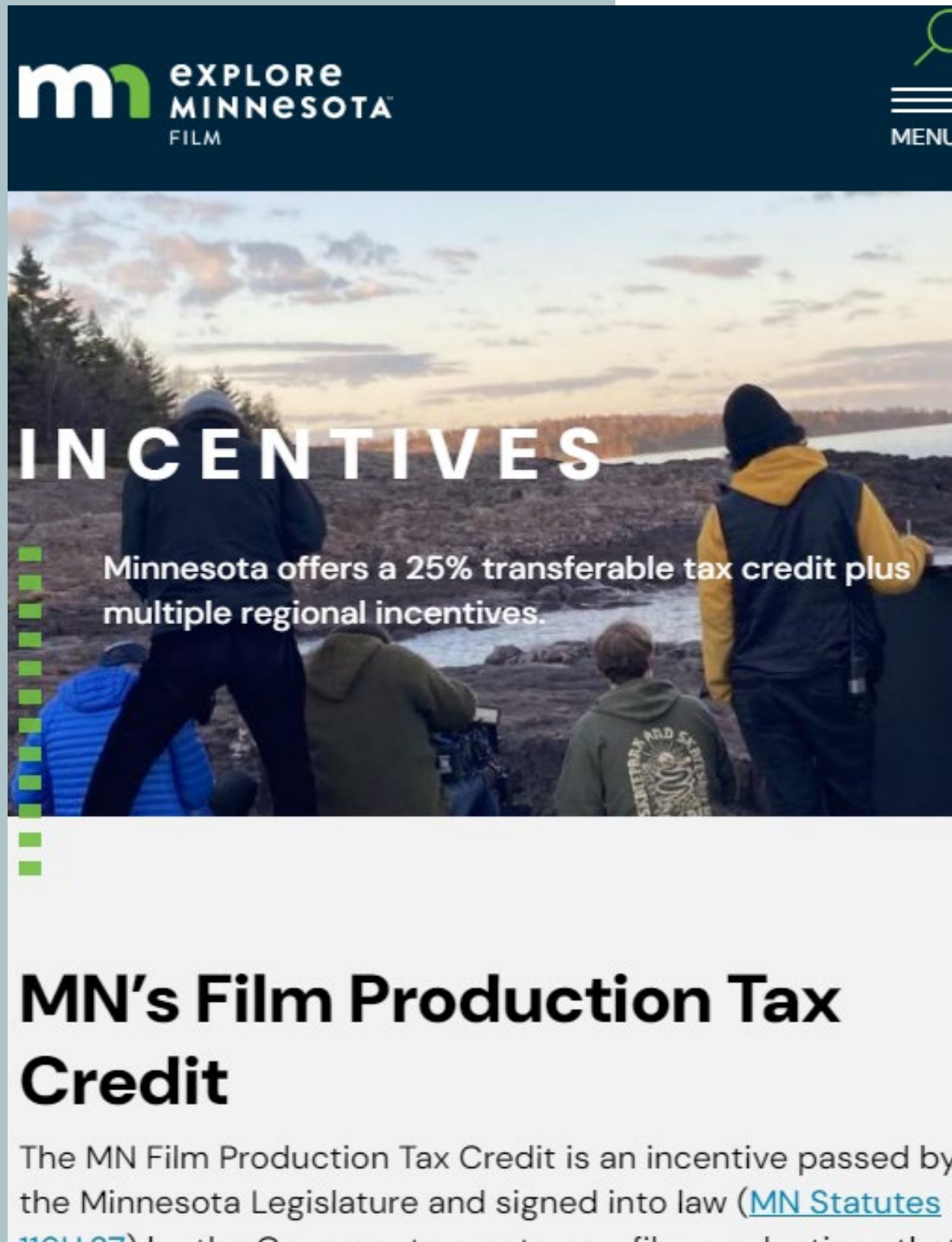
- Created Tribal Contact list for EMN Staff
- Created Tribal Relations SharePoint site for EMN staff with numerous resources
- Our first Tribal Consultation with Prairie Island Indian Community/Tinta Wita went extremely well
- Our first Minnesota Indian Affairs Council executive council meeting for introductions and a primer before Tribal consultations begin in 2025, also went well. Tribal Leaders are happy to be included in EMN activities and eager to know how we can partner.
- Drafting our first Tribal Consultation Policy
- Developing a guideline document for film/filmmakers
- Garnering relationships with Native photographers for more culturally appropriate media for our publications and external website.



Explore MN Film

Melodie Bahan

Deputy Director



New Staff

- Jill Johansen – Incentives Specialist
- Sarah Gebeke – Film Production Liaison

Website Launched

www.exploreminnesota.com/film

Tax Credit Program

Administration moves from DEED to Explore Minnesota Film January 1, 2025

Introductory Campaign

- Ads appearing in print and/or digital versions of industry trade and location outlets Variety, Locations International, Filmmaker, Moviemaker, Compass, The Gotham, and KFTV.
- Placement is scheduled now through March 2025 to coincide with industry awards season, Sundance, SXSW, and several location trade shows.
- Melodie and Sarah attending trade shows, industry events, and in-person meetings to reinforce the message.

Welcome to the Star of the North

Minnesota offers stunning urban and natural locations, experienced crew, reliable production services and four distinct seasons, all in a state that is consistently ranked among the best for quality of life.

**NOW OFFERING A 25%
TRANSFERABLE TAX CREDIT**



Explore Minnesota Film is here to help you navigate everything our state has to offer.



Legislative / Administrative Updates

Lauren Bennett McGinty

Executive Director



Legislative Session

- Begins January 14, 2025.
- 3 budget & 3 policy proposals are under review with MMB and the Governor's Office.
- Outreach to House and Senate members has begun.
- Tourism Matters updates will resume.



Administrative Updates

- Fiscal 2024 Annual Report released yesterday
- 2023 Tourism Numbers released via press release today



2025 Council Meeting Schedule

- Tuesday, Mar. 4 (virtual – 10 a.m.)
- Tuesday, Jun. 3 (hybrid – 10:30 a.m.)
- Tuesday, Sep. 16 (virtual – 10 a.m.)
- Tuesday, Dec. 9 (virtual – 10 a.m.)

Thank you!



star of
the north[★]

