What is Geotourism?

• “Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place- its environment, heritage, aesthetics, culture, and well being of its residents”

• Encompassing version of tourism which provides an authentic travel experience.
Manage tourism so that it *pays* to protect the place, not destroy it.
Destination Stewardship IS Wise Tourism
2012 Visitor Expenditures

($3.2 BILLION IN NEW MONEY)

- Hotel, B&B, etc.: $323,880,000 (10%)
- Restaurant, Bar: $607,836,000 (19%)
- Retail Sales: $611,140,000 (10%)
- Gasoline, Oil: $1,163,160,000 (36%)
- Transportation: $1,046,000 (i%)
- Gambling: $4,480,000 (i%)
- Farmers Market: $266,000 (i%)
- Scub, Guide: $20,400,000 (1%)
- Campground, RV Park: $22,000,000 (1%)
- Auto Rental: $51,876,000 (2%)
- Licenses, Entrance Fees: $60,208,000 (2%)
- Groceries, Snacks: $258,320,000 (8%)
- Vehicle Repairs: $29,000,000 (1%)
- Misc Services: $11,450,000 (1%)
- Rental cabin, Condo: $35,200,000 (1%)

Total: $3,200,000,000
Economic Impact of Glacier National Park

• 1.85 million visitors (2011)
• Spent $98 million
  – In and around the park
• Supports 1,386 area jobs

*Daily Inter Lake, February 26, 2013
Why Geotourism in the Northern Rockies?

• Intact Ecosystem
• Rich culture and heritage
• Unique communities
• Experiences that cannot be had anywhere else in the world
Project History

• Stewardship Council formed in 2007
• MapGuide and website completed in 2008
• 53 partner groups
• Tourism bureaus, businesses, educators, conservation & recreation groups, First Nations, government agencies
Outreach & Collaboration

- Geotourism Business Development
  - Encourage sustainable businesses
- Communication & Education
  - Business
  - Community
  - Visitors
Collaborative Efforts

• Top 10 Scenic Drives of the Northern Rockies
  – Buses 4 Byways Transportation Study

• Yellowstone Business Partnership (YBP)
  – Geotourism Co-op Study
  – UnCommon Sense Business Leadership Program

• National Geotourism Council (NGC)

• Research Institutions
  – University of Montana
  – Duke University
Geotourism MapGuide Usage Assessment

How did the MapGuide influence your trip?

- Natural Landmark (59%)
- Choice of travel route (50%)
- Visitors Center (45%)
- Purchase or eat locally grown food (38%)
- Where to spend the night (37%)
- Extend their trip (30%)
- Donated to local causes (7%)

*Users spent 6.25 nights, non-users spent 5.41 nights*
The Final Test

Are we sustaining and enhancing the character and integrity of our place?