

# 2024

## ANNUAL REPORT

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**ExploreWY**  
ROCK SPRINGS  
& GREEN RIVER

**EXPLOREWY.COM**





# OUR MISSION:

# BOARD MEMBERS & STAFF

TO ENHANCE THE ECONOMY OF SWEETWATER COUNTY BY ATTRACTING AND RETAINING VISITORS.

### FRONT ROW

- MEGAN WARNER**  
*Marketing Manager*
- TAMARA MUSGROVE**  
*Board Member*
- AINHOA FERRER**  
*Board Member*
- JENISSA MEREDITH**  
*CEO*
- JULIA RUBLE**  
*Board Member*
- MELISSA HUTCHINSON**  
*Board Member*

### BACK ROW

- ALLISON VOLCIC**  
*Industry Relations Manager*
- KIM STRID**  
*Board Member*
- DOMINIC WOLF**  
*Board Member*
- MARK LYON**  
*Board Chair*
- JESSICA FLORENCIO**  
*Board Member*
- DEVON BRUBAKER**  
*Board Treasurer*

### NOT PICTURED

- CORY GARDNER**  
*Board Vice-Chair*
- ANGELICA WOOD**  
*Board Secretary*
- LUCY DIGGINS-WOLD**  
*Flaming Gorge Tour Guide*

## THE LODGING TAX

The Sweetwater County Local Option Lodging Tax was originally approved by Sweetwater County voters in 1991. Since then, local voters have approved the renewal of the tax every 4 years. It was on the November 2022 general election ballot and passed with 81% support. The purpose of the tax is to promote and enhance local travel and tourism for the benefit of the local economy. *The lodging tax board is required to commission an audit of financial records by a CPA annually and has consistently received a clean and successful audit report every year since inception.*



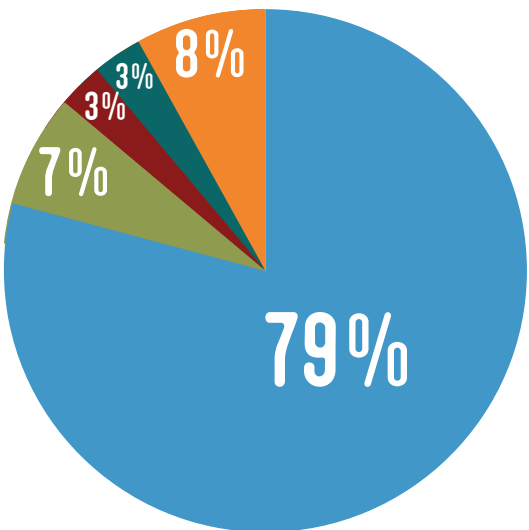
# LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION.

Sweetwater County Travel and Tourism operates the Explore Rock Springs & Green River Visitor Center at 1641 Elk Street in Rock Springs. Elk Street (Hwy 191) is the perfect location to offer information and encourage travelers to spend more time in Rock Springs and Green River as they travel to and from the Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks.





# BUDGET BREAKDOWN



-  **MARKETING PLAN**
-  **EVENT GRANTS**
-  **CHAMBER BLOCK GRANTS**
-  **SEC BLOCK GRANT**
-  **ADMINISTRATION**

# LODGING TAX COLLECTION

FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL	% CHANGE
2017-18	\$889,207	<b>4%</b>
2018-19**	\$1,009,161	<b>13%</b>
2019-20	\$1,062,309	<b>&lt;1%</b>
2020-21	\$980,538	<b>-8%</b>
2021-22	\$1,292,540	<b>32%</b>
2022-23	\$1,265,384	<b>-2%</b>
2023-24	\$1,458,079	<b>&gt;15%</b>

\*\* 9 months @ 3%, 3 months @ 4%

## BLOCK GRANTS



Operational Costs and Staffing



Out-Of-County Marketing and Event Recruitment



# EVENT GRANTS

Any organization holding an event resulting in overnight stays at a Sweetwater County lodging property is eligible for T&T advertising and marketing or sponsorship funding. Grant hearings are held in March, June, September, and December.

**THE TRAVEL & TOURISM BOARD COMMITTED FUNDING TO THE FOLLOWING 2023 & 2024 EVENTS:**



## 2023

- GREEN RIVER KNIGHTS INVITATIONAL BASEBALL TOURNAMENT
- SWEETWATER BLUES & BREWS
- MULE DEER DAYS
- ART ON THE GREEN
- RUDY GUNTER MEMORIAL WRESTLING TOURNAMENT
- TRIPLE GOLD QUALIFIER BMX RACE
- BATTLE IN THE SPRINGS SOCCER TOURNAMENT
- SWEETWATER HIGH SCHOOL & JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL RODEO CHAMPIONSHIPS
- NATIONAL TRAPPING ASSOCIATION WESTERN REGIONAL CONVENTION
- WYOMING CHIROPRACTIC ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE
- STATE LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL TOURNAMENT
- RIVER FESTIVAL
- BABE RUTH 13-15 ALL-STAR BASEBALL TOURNAMENT
- RED DESERT ROUNDUP RODEO
- CO-ED TOUGH TURKEY VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT
- SNOWMAN STROLL
- DECEMBER DUNK BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT
- FLAMING GORGE CLASSIC BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT
- THOMAN INVITATIONAL WRESTLING TOURNAMENT
- OVERLAND STAGE STAMPEDE RODEO
- QUILTING ON THE GREEN
- BUD CUP HOCKEY TOURNAMENT
- MUSIC FOR VETS
- SHIVER IN THE RIVER SWIM MEET
- WESTERN WYOMING DISTRICT SWIM CHAMPIONSHIPS

## 2024

- WYOMING STATE HOCKEY PEEWEE BC TOURNAMENT
- S'MORES SATURDAYS
- SWEETWATER BLUES & BREWS
- ALL OUT BALL OUT BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT
- SWEETWATER HIGH SCHOOL & JUNIOR HIGH RODEO
- RUDY GUNTER MEMORIAL WRESTLING TOURNAMENT
- STATE SOCCER TOURNAMENT
- HIGH SCHOOL REGIONAL TRACK MEET
- HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER JAMBOREE
- MULE DEER DAYS
- BMX TRIPLE GOLD CUP QUALIFIER RACE
- SWEETWATER MID MOUNTAIN REGIONAL MOUNTED SHOOTING EVENT
- WYOMING SENIOR BABE RUTH BASEBALL TOURNAMENT
- STATE BABE RUTH BASEBALL TOURNAMENT
- THE ROCK CHALLENGE SOCCER TOURNAMENT
- ART ON THE GREEN
- FLAMING GORGE DAYS
- MISS WYOMING VOLUNTEER PAGEANT
- RED DESERT ROUNDUP RODEO
- RIVER FESTIVAL
- VIVA LA IQUALDAD
- ARTEMBER
- WYOMING ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY OFFICERS CONFERENCE
- GREEN RIVER KNIGHTS INVITE BASEBALL TOURNAMENT
- THOMAN INVITATIONAL WRESTLING TOURNAMENT
- FLAMING GORGE CLASSIC BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT
- HIGH SCHOOL REGIONAL CROSS COUNTRY MEET

## EVENT & INTERNATIONAL TOUR RECRUITMENT



Since 2010, SWCTT has worked with several local partners to successfully recruit numerous events which have brought thousands of visitors to the area. These events include the 2013 & 2014 State Boys and Girls High School Soccer Tournaments, as well as the WY State High School Speech and Debate Tournament 2012-14, 2017 and 2020 as well as **2023 & 2024 State 3A & 4A Boys and Girls Soccer Tournaments, which generated a \$6 million economic impact for Sweetwater County.**



# COMMITTEES & BOARDS

**JENISSA MEREDITH**  
**CEO INVOLVEMENT**

**WYOMING HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM COALITION**  
**BOARD VICE-CHAIR**

**SWEETWATER COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION COLLABORATIVE**  
**STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER**

**SWEETWATER COUNTY LODGING ASSOCIATION**  
**CHAIR**

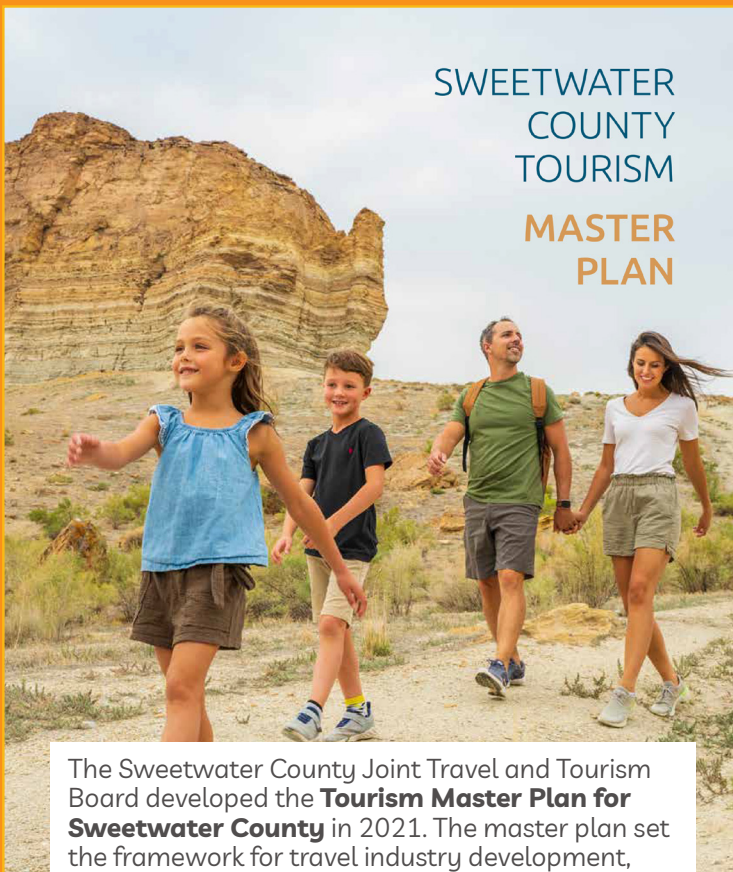
**SWEETWATER COUNTY EVENT RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE**  
**CHAIR**

**ROCK SPRINGS BEAUTIFICATION/TREE BOARD**  
**CHAIR**

**FLAMING GORGE-GREEN RIVER BASIN SCENIC BYWAY COMMITTEE**  
**VICE-CHAIR**

**ONE WEST TOURISM ALLIANCE FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBER**

**DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL SMALL DESTINATION TASKFORCE MEMBER/ PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBER**



**SWEETWATER COUNTY TOURISM MASTER PLAN**

The Sweetwater County Joint Travel and Tourism Board developed the **Tourism Master Plan for Sweetwater County** in 2021. The master plan set the framework for travel industry development, cooperation, and promotion for both the public and private sectors and positioned SWCTT to be prepared to apply for funding in the future.



## STATUS:

### **PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS:**

Partnering daily with local industry and organization leaders to gain mutual support and secure project funding.

**OUTDOOR RECREATION:** Serving on Sweetwater Outdoor Recreation Collaborative Steering Committee working to move projects forward. Implementing update to Rock Springs Way Finding Program with WOT Destination Development Funds. Working to secure funding and develop turnouts/amenities around the Flaming Gorge.

**ATTRACTIONS & AMENITIES:** Commissioned a feasibility study to assess the need for a local Indoor Sports Facility.

Commissioned a Gateway Enhancement Plan for Elk Street off of I-80.

**TRAVEL INDUSTRY INFRASTRUCTURE:** Hosting Lodging Association meetings monthly to keep a finger on pulse of industry needs.







# FLAMING GORGE TOURS

The Flaming Gorge Bus Tour is a full-day guided tour aboard an air-conditioned motorcoach that makes nine stops around the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area. Lunch, water, and snacks are all included. SWCTT has received incredible five-star reviews on Google and TripAdvisor. Tours will continue in Summer 2025.



# SAND BOARDING



## What is Sandboarding?

Sandboarding is a boardsport and extreme sport similar to snowboarding that involves riding across or down a sand dune while standing on a board, either with both feet strapped in or while standing loose without bindings. Sandboarding can also be practiced sitting down or lying on the belly or the back. It typically involves a sandboard, although it is also possible to use sleds, surfboards, a skateboard deck, or snowboards.

- Wikipedia

*SWCTT encourages visitors to explore and “surf” the Killpecker Sand Dunes and sells sandboards and sleds at the visitor center on Elk Street.*

## Residential Mailer

SWCTT mailed out a resident piece in 2024 encouraging residents to “Rediscover Rock Springs & Green River, Wyoming.” The piece included details on the importance of the local option lodging tax and featured several attractions and offerings in the county.

# REDISCOVER ROCK SPRINGS & GREEN RIVER, WYOMING

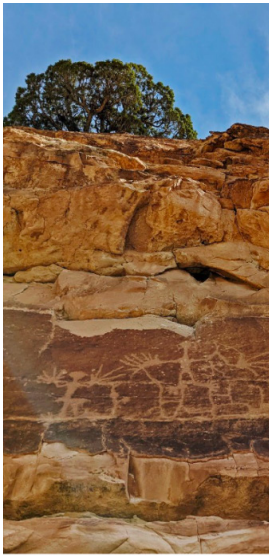




# 2024 BOARD PROJECTS



## THE FLAMING GORGE SCENIC BYWAY: THE NATION'S NEWEST ALL-AMERICAN ROAD



After decades of promoting the Flaming Gorge Scenic Byway, SWCTT worked with corridor partners in 2021 to update the Corridor Management Plan and submitted an application for the Byway to be designated an All-American Road as part of the National Scenic Byway Program - a destination unto itself. The application was successful, and the designation was granted later that year. It is now one of only 37 All-American Roads in the United States, and this status provides opportunities for funding to build out amenities along the Byway. In 2024 SWCTT received \$100,000 for the Henry's Fork Rock Art site from the Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation and is applying for the remaining funds from the National Scenic Byways office. Construction on the project will begin in 2025.

## DOWNTOWN ROCK SPRINGS



### Lighted Display

SWCTT provided funding for the lighted holiday display.



### S'mores Saturday

SWCTT provided funding for S'mores Saturday events in Downtown Rock Springs.

### Bronze Art

SWCTT provided funding to the new Bronze Statues in Downtown Rock Springs.

## ROCK SPRING CHAMBER INTERNATIONAL FLAGS

In 2024 SWCTT provided funding for new international flags at the Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce to represent "Home of 56 Nationalities."



## ROAD TRIPPIN'

SWCTT partners every year with KUTV Channel 2 News out of Salt Lake City. The 2024 segments encouraged viewers to "Rediscover Rock Springs and Green River, Wyoming."



# MEDIA, MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS SUMMARY

Sweetwater County Travel & Tourism continues to make significant strides in terms of media and marketing efforts, resulting in extensive media coverage from various renowned publications including Thrillist.com, Cowboy State Daily, Luxury Travel Guide, KUTV-TV (Utah), Cowboys & Indians, Fox 13 Now (Utah), Inside Hook, Trekaroo, AAA Via (online), VIA Magazine (Mountain West Group), Ontheroadwithsarah.com, MSN.com & Many More..

## TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING

- 2024 Wyoming Travel Journal
- Utah Life Magazine
- In-state Radio (TownSquare Network)
- Wyoming Press Association (40 newspapers throughout WY)
- Wyoming State Fair & Rodeo Guide/WY Livestock Roundup
- Rodeo Life Magazine
- Denver Post
- Salt Lake City Tribune
- Utah Life Magazine
- National High School Finals Rodeo Program
- Billboards: US 191 (1.1 miles north of MM 3 WS) and I-80 board: 90191-I80 NS @ Exit 104 FE
- Two billboards outside of the new Visitor Center on Elk Street
- Explore Magazine (Jackson Hole/Tetons & Yellowstone OVG)

## ONLINE ADVERTISING

- WyomingTourism.org
  - Banners, listings, deals, and calendar
  - Emails (featured partner) and custom emails
  - Online video page and custom content page
  - Paid social takeover
- MyYellowstonePark.com –custom emails, lead generation
- Brand USA/WOT CO-OP New Enhanced City Page on VisittheUSA in 7 languages
- Google PPC
- Facebook / Instagram / Facebook Boosts – ads, custom audiences, retargeting, videos

## TRAVEL GUIDE FULFILLMENT

- 1,331 Travel Guides fulfilled between July 2023-June 2024

## DATABASE MANAGEMENT & E-NEWSLETTER (JULY 2023 – JUNE 2024)

- 11,525 total leads July 2023-June 2024
- 33,829 average active email subscribers in database (monthly email distribution)
- Average monthly email open rate is 43.48%

## WEBSITE MANAGEMENT (JAN.–DEC. 2024)

JAN. 1 – Dec. 8, 2024

- 106,663 Website Users (up 10% from 2023)
- 129,819 Website Sessions (up 9.4% from 2023)
- 44.43% Engagement Rate

## SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

(JAN. 1ST – DEC. 9TH, 2024)

FY24 was our first full year pulling our conversion data from GA4 due to the switch to the platform back in the middle of FY23.

- Total conversions from paid search efforts (travel guide orders, e-newsletter signups, contact us) increased 134.43% YoY (2,131 vs 909), while the overall conversion rate increased 109.37% (6.39% vs 3.05%). Cost per conversion was down 68.82% YoY (\$6.92 vs \$22.18).
- Top campaigns for conversions in 2024 were P-Max, Things to Do, and Brand.
- Spend was down 26.9% YoY. (\$14.7k vs \$20.2k).
- Clicks were **up 57.88% YoY.** (28.5k vs 18.1k)
- CPC was **down 53.7% YoY.** (\$0.52 vs \$1.12)
- Overall CTR (3.95%) was down 1.67% YoY. Search CTR (8.76%) was down 2.84%.

*Note: Overall CTR is low due to the Performance Max and Display campaigns, which typically see much lower CTRs than traditional Search campaigns due to their presence within Google's Display Network.*

## SWG PAID SOCIAL (JAN.–SEPT. 30, 2024)

Ads paused at the end of September

- Total Impressions: 1.19M (vs. 1.6M in 2023)
- Clicks: 26,946 (vs. 18,671 in 2023)
- Click-Through-Rate: 2.25% (vs. 1.16% in 2023)
- CPC: \$0.36 (vs \$0.57 in 2023)
- Landing page views: 19,001 (vs. 12,284 in 2023)
- C/LPV: \$0.51 (vs \$0.87 in 2023)
- 306 Bus Ticket Purchases (vs 23 in 2023)
- Spend was down 10.26% YoY

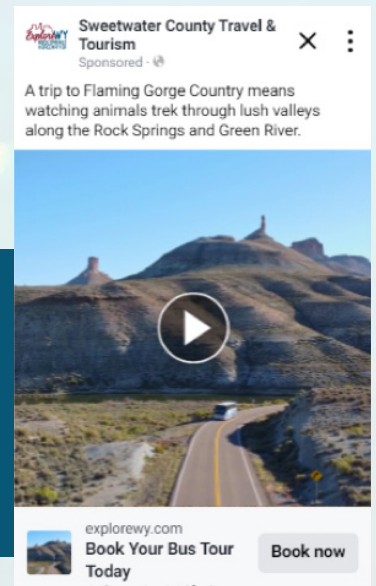
The account performed great this year with large increases in clicks (+44%), LPVs (+ 55%) and CTRs (+95%) YoY, even with a small drop in the spend. We also saw large decreases in our cost per landing page view (-42%) and cost per click (-38%) making for a very efficient social campaign. Our overall account performance far outperformed our social travel industry benchmarks of \$11 CPC and 1% CTR.



Our top performing prospecting creative was the scenic byways video, which brought in the most traffic. The Flaming Gorge 15s video was the top performer for our conversion campaign, generating 283 of the purchases at the lowest cost.



SWCCTB was the proud recipient of the 2024 HSMIA Bronze Adrian Award winner for the Digital-Video-Single Entry for the See Flaming Gorge Country Video. This is the 68th year of the Adrian Awards, recognizing excellence in travel marketing.





**ExploreWY** ROCK SPRINGS & GREEN RIVER

You are receiving this message because you requested updates from [ExploreWY.com](http://ExploreWY.com). No images? See the [privacy version](#).

**WELCOME TO SOUTHWEST WYOMING**

**Do It All This Fall**

Fall is one of the best-kept secrets of Green River and Rock Springs. Discover all there is to see and do, from scenic golfing to wildlife photo opportunities.

[LEARN MORE](#)

**Cast a Line in Green River and Rock Springs**

From the Suedskadee National Wildlife Refuge to Big Sandy Reservoir, discover the best sports in southwest Wyoming for your chance to reel in the big one.

[Explore](#)

**Things to Do When Your Hunter is Away**

For a relaxing spa day or an adventure escape, spend a fun day in Green River and Rock Springs while your hunter is tracking game.

[More Info](#)

**MONTHLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER**

**Family Thrills Await at the Dunes**

Enjoy a can't-miss experience with your family at Killpecker Sand Dunes. Snap photos for unforgettable, long-lasting memories.

[LEARN MORE](#)

**SURF THE DUNES**

Get your Sandboard at the Visitor Center

[ExploreWY.com](http://ExploreWY.com)

**ExploreWY** ROCK SPRINGS & GREEN RIVER

**TOUR THE FLAMING GORGE**

Full Day Bus Tour

**\$68**

[EXPLOREWY.COM](http://EXPLOREWY.COM)

**ExploreWY** ROCK SPRINGS & GREEN RIVER

**ExploreWY** ROCK SPRINGS & GREEN RIVER

**TOUR THE FLAMING GORGE**

YOUR BUCKET LIST EXPERIENCE IN SOUTHWEST WYOMING

TICKETS \$68

Full Day Guided Bus Tour. Lunch included.

[EXPLORE](#)

**ExploreWY** ROCK SPRINGS & GREEN RIVER

SWEETWATER COUNTY OFFICIAL TRAVEL GUIDE

**PRINT**

FIND YOUR TRAIL

Explore 100s of miles of wide open space

ADVENTURE IN

Rock Springs & Green River

**REDISCOVER**

ROCK SPRINGS & GREEN RIVER, WYOMING

**Sweetwater County Travel & Tourism** Sponsored

Experience the best of Flaming Gorge Country on an all-inclusive, locally-guided tour. Enjoy the spectacular views and leave the ... See more

**Flaming Gorge BUS TOUR**

BUY TICKETS

[tourwyoming.com](http://tourwyoming.com)

Tickets Only \$68

Plan your summer adventure

[Book now](#)

**SOCIAL & DIGITAL**

**Tourism** Sponsored

Spend the season in our wide open space. 🌞 Summer adventures are on!

[tourwyoming.com](http://tourwyoming.com)

Wyoming Bucket List

Gorge Country, Dunes & ...

[Learn more](#)

**Sweetwater County Travel & Tourism** Sponsored

Experience the ultimate adventure in Southwest Wyoming. Discover stunning waterways and canyons along the Flaming Gorge Scenic Byway.

[explorewy.com](http://explorewy.com)

Rock Springs & Green River

[Learn more](#)

**SWEETWATER COUNTY WAS FEATURED IN OVER 113 ARTICLES WHICH REACHED 198,949,420 PEOPLE AND A TOTAL EARNED MEDIA VALUE OF \$2,739,744**



# R.E.A.C.H. AWARDS

RARE AND EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE IN HOSPITALITY



The Sweetwater County Travel & Tourism Board recognizes outstanding customer service in the local lodging industry through the R.E.A.C.H. Awards Program. The importance of these efforts warrant consistent recognition. The R.E.A.C.H. awards luncheon is conducted each quarter of the year to celebrate the employees who truly are the backbone of the Sweetwater County Tourism industry.



The Sweetwater County Certified Tourism Ambassador program is a multifaceted program that serves to increase tourism by inspiring front-line employees and volunteers to turn every visitor encounter into a positive experience. When visitors have a positive experience, they are more likely to return in the future and also share their experience with others. Everyone benefits - the visitors, the industry, the local economy, and most importantly, the front-line workers. There are currently over 150 Sweetwater County Certified Tourism Ambassadors.

### COST/RENEWAL

There is a one-time, non-refundable, non-transferable application fee of \$39 and an annual renewal fee of \$19 per person. In addition to the renewal fee, CTAs must log 50 CTA points throughout the year, earned through a variety of activities.

### CLASS SCHEDULE/ENROLLMENT

For a class schedule and online enrollment, go to [www.ctanetwork.com](http://www.ctanetwork.com). If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact [allison@tourwyoming.com](mailto:allison@tourwyoming.com) or call (307) 382-2538.



# TRAVEL IMPACT STUDIES

Sweetwater County Travel & Tourism commissions an annual travel impact study to determine the effectiveness of the marketing campaigns administered with lodging tax dollars.

**ADVERTISING  
INFLUENCED  
ALMOST**  
**\$86**  
**MILLION**  
IN VISITOR  
SPENDING

**AVERAGE # OF  
PEOPLE IN  
TRAVEL PARTY:**  
**2.5**  
**PEOPLE**

**AVERAGE # OF  
ACTIVITIES  
IN SWC:**  
**4.8**

**AVERAGE # OF  
DAYS  
SPENT  
IN SWC:**  
**3.3**  
**DAYS**  
**AVERAGE  
TRIP SPENDING  
PER PARTY:**  
**\$1,510**

**ROI FOR EVERY  
ADVERTISING  
DOLLAR SPENT:**  
**\$745**  
**ADVERTISING  
INFLUENCED  
OVER**  
**59,000**  
**VISITS**

NEW  
DATA IS  
AVAILABLE TO  
TRACK VISITOR  
ATTENDANCE  
AT EVENTS AND  
THROUGHOUT THE  
COUNTY THAT WILL  
HELP TO GUIDE  
FUTURE SWCTT  
MARKETING  
EFFORTS



## SWEETWATER VISITOR ACTIVITIES





Explore WY  
ROCK SPRINGS  
& GREEN RIVER