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High Plains Travel and Recreation Perception Survey Results

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Purpose

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the awareness of Montana's High Plains amongst residents of western Montana and the Bismarck area of North Dakota. Additionally, the survey assessed their perceptions of the High Plains as a place to visit. Western Montana and the Bismarck area were the target areas for the Montana Office of Tourism's recent marketing campaign highlighting the High Plains, including the attractions, activities and landscape found there. The study was funded through the Montana Office of Tourism's advertising firm, and survey items were developed in cooperation with both entities. The marketing campaign was initiated in June, 2009, and the survey was conducted in August, 2009.

Survey methods and sample size

1000 surveys were mailed to a random sample of residents of Burleigh and Morton counties in western North Dakota and Flathead, Gallatin, Lake, Missoula and Park counties in western Montana. The number of surveys sent to each county was proportionate to the population of each county, thereby ensuring that no county was over-represented in the data. Sixty-eight surveys were returned as non-deliverable. Three hundred nineteen completed surveys were returned for an overall response rate of 34 percent. See Appendix A for survey instrument.

Splitting the sample – Geotravelers and Potential Geotravelers

For this analysis, the sample was split into two groups based on respondents' level of agreement with a set of eight statements (1 = disagree to 5 = agree). These statements were provided by the Montana Department of Tourism's advertising firm as a way to evaluate whether respondents have geotraveler tendencies. Geotravelers are the focus of the marketing efforts by the state of Montana. The eight statements all relate to tendencies of geotravelers. Two of the eight statements reflect ideas that are not tendencies of geotravelers. The responses to these two items were reverse coded (1 = agree to 5 = disagree). The response values were then averaged to give each respondent a score ranging from 1 to 5. Respondents who had an average score of less than 3 (3 = neither agree nor disagree) were excluded from further analysis. Therefore, the number of useable surveys was 300. Respondents who had an average score of 3 to less than 4 were included in the sample labeled "potential geotraveler." The group label indicates that, overall, the people in this group do not strongly agree with the geotraveler statements, but their scores indicate that they may agree strongly with at least some of the statements, making them potential geotravelers. These respondents represented 33 percent of the total sample.

The remainder of the sample were respondents who scored 4 or above and are considered "geotravelers" for this analysis. These respondents represent 67 percent of the total sample. The results of analysis for the geotraveler and potential geotravelers will be presented side-by-side in the majority of this report for ease of comparison. However, caution is advised when comparing the two samples because the sample sizes are substantially different (geotravelers: n=202, potential geotravelers: n=98).

Results, Geotravelers and Potential Geotravelers

The respondents in the geotraveler group take more trips per year than to those in the potential geotraveler group. The two groups are very similar in terms of the percentage who take three or more trips per year and the percentage who take overnight trips in Montana.

Table 1 - Trip-taking behavior

	Geotravelers (n=202)	Potential Geotravelers (n=98)
Average # of trips in a 12 month period	6.6 trips	5.4 trips
% taking 3+ trips in a 12 month period	69%	64%
% who take overnight trips in MT	85%	81%

In this sample, the average age of geotravelers is actually 6.6 years younger than potential geotravelers.

Table 2 - Demographic information

	Geotravelers (n=202)		Potential Geotravelers (n=98)	
Mean age	51.5		58.1	
Sex	55% female	44% male	53% female	47% male
MT resident	82%		77%	
ND resident	18%		23%	

The following table displays the mean response to each item for both groups, geotravelers and potential geotravelers. The mean response is based on possible responses ranging from 1, disagree to 5, agree.

Table 3 – Mean scores, geotraveler tendency statements

	Mean response*	
	Geotravelers (n=202)	Potential Geotravelers (n=98)
I enjoy participating in outdoor activities when vacationing	4.88	4.16
I tend to vacation in places where I can enjoy the beauty of the outdoors	4.86	4.44
I enjoy visiting national parks or monuments when vacationing	4.82	4.32
I enjoy participating in cultural activities when vacationing	4.50	3.42
I tend to eat at unique and different restaurants when vacationing	3.96	2.57
I tend to stay at unique and different accommodations while on vacation	3.49	2.15
I tend to stay at luxury, 4 star accommodations while on vacation	1.75	1.99
My favorite activity when vacationing is shopping	1.71	2.30

*1= disagree through 5=agree

Slightly fewer respondents in the potential geotraveler group had heard the term, “Montana’s High Plains” as compared to the geotravelers. The frequency of where respondents had heard the term was quite similar between both groups.

Table 4 - Familiarity with “High Plains,” where the term was heard, and resulting change in image

	Geotravelers (n=202)	Potential Geotravelers (n=98)
Prior to this survey, have you heard the term, “Montana’s High Plains”?		
Yes	50%	43%
No	50%	57%
<i>The following two questions were answered only by those who responded “yes” to the previous question.</i>		
Sample size for the following 2 questions	n=100	n=41
If yes, where did you hear the term Montana’s High Plains? (check all that apply)		
Word of Mouth	38%	34%
Magazine	29%	24%
TV	27%	27%
Unsure	27%	29%
Radio	21%	22%
Newspaper	16%	20%
At MacKenzie River Pizza Co.	9%	2%
Website	4%	2%
How did your impression change once you learned about Montana’s High Plains?		
It didn’t change	74%	67%
It changed positively	22%	18%
Both positively and negatively	3%	13%
It changed negatively	1%	3%

Geotravelers seem to be somewhat more familiar with the High Plains region than potential geotravelers, in terms of how often they drive through or travel in the High Plains for business (Table 5). The geotravelers seem to be more likely to vacation in the High Plains within the next three years than the potential geotravelers (Table 6). Likewise, they seem to be slightly more likely to visit the attractions of the High Plains in the next three years, as highlighted in Table 7.

Table 5 – Familiarity with the High Plains region

Geotravelers (n=202)						Potential Geotravelers (n=98)				
Have you ever lived in MT's High Plains?	Yes		No			Yes		No		
	15%		85%			16%		84%		
	Never	Once every few years	Once a year	A few times a year	Many times each year	Never	Once every few years	Once a year	A few times a year	Many times each year
How often do you simply drive through part of MT's High Plains?	17%	39%	14%	26%	5%	27%	46%	5%	16%	6%
How often do you travel in MT's High Plains for business purposes?	68%	15%	5%	10%	1%	82%	8%	3%	7%	1%

Table 6 – Vacations in the High Plains

Geotravelers (n=202)						Potential Geotravelers (n=98)				
How often have you vacationed or recreated in Montana's High Plains?	Never	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times	Never	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times
	39%	13%	28%	7%	12%	39%	13%	25%	14%	9%
Did you vacation/recreate in MT's High Plains this summer?	No		Yes			No		Yes		
	88%		12%			89%		11%		
Do you plan to vacation/recreate in MT's High Plains in the next 12 months?	No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely		No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely	
	49%	32%	9%	11%		62%	21%	6%	10%	
Would you consider vacationing/recreating in MT's High Plains 2 to 3 years from now?	No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely		No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely	
	12%	47%	20%	22%		28%	50%	11%	11%	

Table 7 – Visits to High Plains attractions

Geotravelers (n=202)				Potential Geotravelers (n=98)		
Have you visited the following in Montana’s High Plains? (please X all that apply)						
	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument
	14%	26%	29%	14%	28%	32%
How likely are you to visit the following High Plains sites within the next 3 years?						
	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument
	Not at all likely	15%	14%	12%	34%	31%
Unlikely	20%	17%	14%	15%	14%	15%
Somewhat unlikely	22%	24%	21%	19%	20%	14%
Somewhat likely	31%	28%	31%	22%	22%	28%
Likely	8%	12%	14%	9%	11%	11%
Very likely	4%	6%	8%	1%	2%	4%

Tables 8 and 9 display the mean response as well as the frequencies for each possible response in regards to the level of agreement with respondent perceptions of what the High Plains has to offer. The items are organized in each table by the mean score for each item from the items with the highest level of agreement (score of 5) to items with the lowest level of agreement (score of 1).

Table 8 – Geotravelers perceptions of what the High Plains have to offer

Geotravelers	In your opinion, Montana's High Plains has:					
	Mean Score	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	No perception	Somewhat agree	Agree
Vast open spaces	4.76	0%	0%	10%	4%	86%
Ranching/farming heritage	4.74	0%	0%	10%	7%	84%
Unique geologic features	4.57	0%	2%	9%	21%	69%
Native culture	4.56	0%	1%	11%	21%	68%
Intriguing natural history	4.54	0%	1%	10%	22%	67%
Friendly people	4.53	1%	2%	12%	14%	71%
Abundant wildlife	4.50	1%	2%	10%	21%	66%
Opportunities to learn about regional history/culture	4.46	0%	3%	10%	25%	62%
Unique dinosaur history sites	4.42	0%	2%	17%	18%	63%
A relaxing atmosphere	4.36	0%	7%	13%	17%	63%
Opportunity for adventure	4.32	2%	6%	11%	24%	59%
Quaint communities	4.31	2%	3%	12%	30%	54%
Great fishing opportunities	4.27	1%	1%	25%	17%	56%
Places I would like to explore	4.26	2%	8%	9%	25%	56%
Great hunting opportunities	4.24	1%	1%	29%	13%	57%
Awe inspiring scenery	4.17	2%	12%	8%	26%	53%
Interesting attractions	4.15	2%	10%	8%	33%	48%
Attractive scenery	4.12	2%	14%	9%	24%	52%
Great camping opportunities	4.10	2%	7%	17%	28%	47%
Accessibility to water recreation	4.08	0%	9%	16%	31%	43%
Great hiking opportunities	3.97	3%	11%	17%	25%	44%
A sense of excitement	3.87	4%	16%	11%	29%	41%
Excellent facilities for travelers	3.56	4%	15%	25%	33%	23%
Unpleasant terrain	2.93	21%	23%	15%	23%	18%
Nothing of interest	1.79	55%	25%	10%	7%	3%

Table 9 – Potential geotravelers perceptions of what the High Plains have to offer

Potential Geotravelers	In your opinion, Montana's High Plains has:					
	Mean Score	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	No perception	Somewhat agree	Agree
Vast open spaces	4.83	0%	0%	5%	8%	87%
Ranching/farming heritage	4.69	0%	0%	8%	14%	78%
Friendly people	4.58	0%	4%	9%	13%	74%
Abundant wildlife	4.55	0%	1%	8%	25%	66%
Unique geologic features	4.44	1%	2%	12%	21%	64%
Intriguing natural history	4.32	1%	1%	21%	17%	60%
Great hunting opportunities	4.31	1%	4%	21%	11%	63%
Quaint communities	4.29	0%	11%	13%	13%	63%
Native culture	4.28	1%	4%	17%	24%	55%
Unique dinosaur history sites	4.25	1%	1%	25%	17%	56%
A relaxing atmosphere	4.23	0%	7%	16%	23%	54%
Great fishing opportunities	4.21	1%	2%	25%	18%	54%
Opportunities to learn about Regional history/culture	4.20	1%	4%	24%	16%	55%
Opportunity for adventure	4.19	1%	5%	20%	23%	51%
Attractive scenery	4.16	1%	13%	9%	21%	55%
Interesting attractions	4.15	2%	8%	11%	29%	50%
Awe inspiring scenery	4.15	1%	11%	10%	28%	50%
Places I would like to explore	4.00	2%	7%	23%	23%	45%
Great camping opportunities	3.96	2%	8%	23%	23%	43%
A sense of excitement	3.91	4%	9%	19%	29%	39%
Great hiking opportunities	3.90	6%	6%	23%	21%	44%
Accessibility to water Recreation	3.88	2%	9%	24%	28%	37%
Excellent facilities for Travelers	3.72	4%	7%	30%	33%	27%
Unpleasant terrain	3.13	19%	15%	19%	26%	21%
Nothing of interest	2.02	49%	21%	16%	9%	6%

Open-ended responses, geotravelers and potential geotravelers perceptions of the High Plains

A set of open-ended questions which asked about respondents' perceptions of the High Plains was also included on the survey. Respondents were asked to provide up to three words or phrases describing their perception of the landscape, hospitality and recreation opportunities if they were to vacation or recreate in the High Plains. They were also asked to describe their perceptions of how they might feel if

on vacation or recreating in the High Plains. Appendices B and C include all of the responses to each of these questions separated into the same Geotourist and Potential Geotourist groups.

The responses for each question were organized based on themes which seemed to be prominent within the responses. Obviously, this involved some subjective analysis. Therefore, critical thinking about the open ended responses is certainly encouraged! In the appendices, each theme is listed along with the total number of comments within each theme. Below the theme, each specific comment is listed along with the number of times that comment appeared. Table 10 lists the three themes for each question which contain the most individual responses.

Table 10 – Summary of open-ended responses

Perception of...		Geotravelers (n=202)	
Landscape	Terrain Descriptors (i.e. flat, rugged, prairie)	Open Space (i.e. big, open, vast)	Climate/Weather (i.e. dry, windy, hot)
Hospitality	Friendly/Helpful (i.e. friendly, helpful, welcoming)	Facilities Descriptors (i.e. good, small-town, pleasant)	People Descriptors (i.e. honest, western, polite)
Recreation Opportunities	Hunting/fishing (i.e. great hunting, great fishing)	Not so positive remarks (i.e. limited, boring, sparse)	Other types of recreation (i.e. sightseeing, horses, golf)
Feelings if Vacationing	Relaxed/rested (i.e. relaxing, peaceful, quiet)	Happy (i.e. good, welcome, great)	Adventure/Excitement (excited, fun, surprised)
		Potential Geotravelers (n=98)	
Landscape	Terrain Descriptors (i.e. flat, rolling hills, rugged)	Climate/Weather (i.e. dry, windy, hot)	Open Space (i.e. open, vast, big sky)
Hospitality	Friendly/Helpful/Welcoming (i.e. friendly, helpful, downhome)	Facilities Descriptors (i.e. good, hospitable, small-town)	Unknown/Misc. (community, campgrounds)
Recreation Opportunities	Hunting/fishing (i.e. excellent hunting, pheasants, good fishing)	Positive remarks (i.e. good, fun, less crowded)	Not so positive remarks (i.e. limited, hot, lacking)
Feelings if Vacationing	Enjoy/Positive remarks (i.e. enjoyable, great, excited)	Relaxed/peaceful (i.e. relaxed, fulfilled, inspired)	Bored/Alone (i.e. alone, isolated, distanced)

Results – Montana residents and North Dakota residents

In addition to looking at the data in terms of geotravelers versus potential geotravelers, the sample was split according to whether the respondents had ever lived in the High Plains as well as whether they are residents of Montana or North Dakota. The following tables display the survey results comparing responses of those who are Montana residents to responses of those who are North Dakota residents. These tables are then followed by a section comparing responses of those who have lived in the High Plains to those who have not. Please note the difference in sample sizes when comparing results (246 Montana residents compared to 64 North Dakota residents).

Montana residents who responded to this survey take 2.6 more trips than the North Dakota respondents. A significantly higher percentage of the Montana residents indicated taking overnight trips in Montana as well, not unexpectedly (82% compared to 44%).

Table 11 – Trip-taking behavior

	Montana Residents (n=246)	North Dakota Residents (n=64)
Average # of trips in a 12 month period	6.6 trips	4.0 trips
% taking 3+ trips in a 12 month period	63%	54%
% who take overnight trips in MT	82%	44%

Table 12 - Demographic information

	Montana Residents (n=246)		North Dakota Residents (n=64)	
Mean age	54.03		55.32	
Sex	58% female	42% male	41% female	59% male

The level of agreement with the geotraveler tendency statements was quite similar when comparing the mean responses of the Montana residents to those of the North Dakota residents. Montana residents tended to disagree more strongly with the last two statements listed in the table (luxury accommodations and shopping while vacationing).

Table 13 - Mean scores, geotraveler tendency statements

	Mean response	
	Montana Residents (n=246)	ND Residents (n=64)
I enjoy participating in outdoor activities when vacationing	4.59	4.37
I tend to vacation in places where I can enjoy the beauty of the outdoors	4.66	4.59
I enjoy visiting national parks or monuments when vacationing	4.56	4.56
I enjoy participating in cultural activities when vacationing	4.06	4.06
I tend to eat at unique and different restaurants when vacationing	3.49	3.44
I tend to stay at unique and different accommodations while on vacation	3.01	3.05
I tend to stay at luxury, 4 star accommodations while on vacation	1.78	2.19
My favorite activity when vacationing is shopping	1.88	2.11

Although the number of North Dakota residents who had heard the term, “High Plains” was relatively small (27 out of 64, or 42% of them), it is interesting to note that none of them heard the term at MacKenzie River Pizza Company (there are no MRPC locations in ND) or from the website. Fewer of them had heard the term via word of mouth than Montana residents, but more of them had heard the term on TV or in a magazine than Montana residents. The researcher is not sure if this is a reflection of different focuses in the marketing tactics for the two states, or whether it is due to something else.

Table 14 - Familiarity with “High Plains,” where the term was heard, and resulting change in image

	Montana Residents (n=246)	North Dakota Residents (n=64)
Prior to this survey, have you heard the term, “Montana’s High Plains”?		
Yes	47%	42%
No	53%	58%
<i>The following two questions were answered only by those who responded “yes” to the previous question.</i>		
Sample size for the following 2 questions	n=114	n=27
If yes, where did you hear the term Montana’s High Plains? (check all that apply)		
Word of Mouth	38%	26%
Magazine	26%	33%
TV	22%	44%
Unsure	31%	26%
Radio	22%	15%
Newspaper	18%	11%
At MacKenzie River Pizza Co.	9%	0%
Website	4%	0%
How did your impression change once you learned about Montana’s High Plains?		
It didn’t change	74%	64%
It changed positively	18%	25%
Both positively and negatively	6%	11%
It changed negatively	2%	0%

Table 15 - Familiarity with the High Plains region

	Montana Residents (n=246)					North Dakota Residents (n=64)				
Have you ever lived in MT’s High Plains?	Yes		No			Yes		No		
	18%		82%			6%		94%		
	Never	Once every few years	Once a year	A few times a year	Many times each year	Never	Once every few years	Once a year	A few times a year	Many times each year
How often do you simply drive through part of MT’s High Plains?	20%	39%	11%	24%	6%	29%	46%	13%	13%	0%
How often do you travel in MT’s High Plains for business purposes?	75%	10%	6%	9%	1%	68%	20%	2%	8%	2%

Table 16 - Vacations in the High Plains

	Montana Residents (n=246)					North Dakota Residents (n=64)				
	Never	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times	Never	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times
How often have you vacationed or recreated in Montana's High Plains?	41%	12%	27%	9%	12%	39%	20%	25%	9%	6%
Did you vacation/recreate in MT's High Plains this summer?	No		Yes			No		Yes		
	87%		13%			94%		6%		
Do you plan to vacation/recreate in MT's High Plains in the next 12 months?	No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely		No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely	
	55%	26%	8%	12%		53%	34%	6%	6%	
Would you consider vacationing/recreating in MT's High Plains 2 to 3 years from now?	No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely		No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely	
	20%	46%	14%	20%		22%	44%	23%	11%	

The percentage of North Dakota respondents who have visited the attractions, listed in the table below in the High Plains, is fairly comparable to the percentage of Montanans who have visited, with the exception of the CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge. The percentage of Montana residents who are unlikely to visit the attractions is somewhat lower than the percentage of North Dakota residents who indicate being unlikely to visit.

Table 17 - Visits to High Plains attractions

Montana Residents (n=246)				North Dakota Residents (n=64)		
Have you visited the following in Montana’s High Plains? (please X all that apply)						
	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument
	13%	30%	31%	16%	14%	22%
How likely are you to visit the following High Plains sites within the next 3 years?						
	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument
Not at all likely	23%	20%	18%	29%	31%	31%
Unlikely	17%	15%	13%	22%	19%	19%
Somewhat unlikely	22%	22%	19%	15%	22%	14%
Somewhat likely	27%	25%	29%	25%	22%	29%
Likely	8%	13%	14%	7%	3%	5%
Very likely	3%	5%	7%	2%	3%	3%

The mean scores of respondents in the following table are ranked highest to lowest based on the Montana residents' responses. Responses are fairly similar when comparing the two groups, although some slight differences can be seen.

Table 18 - Perceptions of what the High Plains have to offer

	In your opinion, Montana's High Plains has:	
	Montana Residents	ND Residents
	Mean Score	Mean Score
Vast open spaces	4.76	4.81
Ranching/farming heritage	4.69	4.75
Unique geologic features	4.49	4.48
Friendly people	4.49	4.63
Abundant wildlife	4.46	4.73
Native culture	4.45	4.50
Unique dinosaur history sites	4.43	4.40
Intriguing natural history	4.41	4.49
Opportunities to learn about regional history/culture	4.36	4.24
Quaint communities	4.25	4.42
Great fishing opportunities	4.22	4.30
Great hunting opportunities	4.22	4.43
A relaxing atmosphere	4.19	4.68
Opportunity for adventure	4.13	4.67
Places I would like to explore	4.06	4.35
Awe inspiring scenery	4.06	4.40
Interesting attractions	4.04	4.37
Accessibility to water recreation	4.02	3.93
Attractive scenery	3.99	4.57
Great camping opportunities	3.94	4.46
Great hiking opportunities	3.83	4.40
A sense of excitement	3.70	4.40
Excellent facilities for travelers	3.44	4.14
Unpleasant terrain	3.05	2.91
Nothing of interest	1.91	1.84

Results – Respondents who have previously lived in the High Plains and those who have not

The last section of the report compares responses of those people who have previously lived in Montana's High Plains to those who have not. In general, there does not seem to be much difference in the responses of these two groups.

Table 19 – Trip-taking behavior

	Previously lived in High Plains (n=46)	Have not lived in HPs (n=253)
Average # of trips in a 12 month period	5.43 trips	6.32 trips
% taking 3+ trips in a 12 month period	61.9%	63.2%
% who take overnight trips in MT	91%	76%

Table 20 - Demographic information

	Previously lived in High Plains (n=46)		Have not lived in HPs (n=253)	
Mean age	54.6		53.4	
Sex	59% female	41% male	54% female	46% male
MT resident	91%		82%	
ND resident	9%		18%	

The following table displays the mean response to each item for both groups. The mean response is based on possible responses ranging from 1, disagree to 5, agree.

Table 21 - Mean scores, geotraveler tendency statements

	Mean response	
	Previously lived in High Plains (n=46)	Have not lived in HPs (n=253)
I enjoy participating in outdoor activities when vacationing	4.46	4.68
I tend to vacation in places where I can enjoy the beauty of the outdoors	4.74	4.72
I enjoy visiting national parks or monuments when vacationing	4.57	4.67
I enjoy participating in cultural activities when vacationing	4.11	4.15
I tend to eat at unique and different restaurants when vacationing	3.50	3.50
I tend to stay at unique and different accommodations while on vacation	3.07	3.05
I tend to stay at luxury, 4 star accommodations while on vacation	2.11	1.78
My favorite activity when vacationing is shopping	1.89	1.90

One interesting observation in Table 22 is the difference in the frequency of respondents who indicated that their impression of the High Plains changed positively once they learned about the term (12% for those who had lived in the High Plains compared to 23% for those who had not lived in the High Plains).

Table 22 - Familiarity with “High Plains,” where the term was heard, and resulting change in image

	Previously lived in High Plains (n=46)	Have not lived in HPs (n=253)
Prior to this survey, have you heard the term, “Montana’s High Plains”?		
Yes	57%	46%
No	43%	54%
<i>The following two questions were answered only by those who responded “yes” to the previous question.</i>		
Sample size for the following 2 questions	n=25	n=115
If yes, where did you hear the term Montana’s High Plains? (check all that apply)		
Word of Mouth	36%	38%
Magazine	28%	29%
TV	25%	29%
Unsure	28%	27%
Radio	32%	19%
Newspaper	24%	16%
At MacKenzie River Pizza Co.	12%	6%
Website	4%	3%
How did your impression change once you learned about Montana’s High Plains?		
It didn’t change	68%	71%
It changed positively	12%	23%
Both positively and negatively	12%	4%
It changed negatively	0%	2%

Table 23 - Familiarity with the High Plains region

Previously lived in High Plains (n=46)						Have not lived in HPs (n=253)				
Have you ever lived in MT's High Plains?	Yes		No			Yes		No		
	100%		0%			0%		100%		
How often do you simply drive through part of MT's High Plains?	Never	Once every few years	Once a year	A few times a year	Many times each year	Never	Once every few years	Once a year	A few times a year	Many times each year
	7%	44%	4%	36%	9%	22%	41%	12%	20%	4%
How often do you travel in MT's High Plains for business purposes?	53%	20%	9%	16%	2%	77%	11%	3%	8%	1%

Table 24 - Vacations in the High Plains

Previously lived in High Plains (n=46)						Have not lived in HPs (n=253)				
How often have you vacationed or recreated in Montana's High Plains?	Never	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times	Never	Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times
	17%	9%	30%	11%	33%	43%	14%	26%	9%	7%
Did you vacation/recreate in MT's High Plains this summer?	No		Yes			No		Yes		
	80%		20%			90%		10%		
Do you plan to vacation/recreate in MT's High Plains in the next 12 months?	No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely		No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely	
	39%	28%	17%	15%		56%	29%	6%	10%	
Would you consider vacationing/recreating in MT's High Plains 2 to 3 years from now?	No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely		No	Possibly	Probably	Definitely	
	13%	35%	17%	35%		18%	50%	17%	15%	

Not surprisingly, the percentage of respondents who had visited the High Plains attractions was higher among the group of respondents who had lived in the High Plains versus those who have not.

Table 25 - Visits to High Plains attractions

Previously lived in High Plains (n=46)				Have not lived in HPs (n=253)		
Have you visited the following in Montana’s High Plains? (please X all that apply)						
	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument
	20%	44%	48%	13%	23%	27%
	How likely are you to visit the following High Plains sites within the next 3 years?					
	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument	Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area	CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	Missouri River Breaks National Monument
	Not at all likely	22%	13%	13%	21%	20%
Unlikely	24%	20%	22%	18%	15%	13%
Somewhat unlikely	20%	22%	20%	21%	23%	18%
Somewhat likely	13%	17%	17%	31%	28%	33%
Likely	11%	17%	13%	8%	11%	12%
Very likely	9%	11%	15%	2%	3%	5%

The results in Table 26 are ranked according to the mean responses of those who had lived in the High Plains before.

Table 26 - Perceptions of what the High Plains have to offer

	In your opinion, Montana's High Plains has:	
	Previously lived in High Plains (n=46)	Have not lived in HPs (n=253)
	Mean Score	Mean Score
Vast open spaces	4.89	4.76
Ranching/farming heritage	4.84	4.70
Unique geologic features	4.82	4.47
Intriguing natural history	4.82	4.41
Unique dinosaur history sites	4.77	4.29
Abundant wildlife	4.74	4.47
Opportunities to learn about regional history/culture	4.66	4.33
Quaint communities	4.64	4.24
Friendly people	4.62	4.53
Great fishing opportunities	4.61	4.19
Native culture	4.56	4.46
Opportunity for adventure	4.53	4.23
Great hunting opportunities	4.50	4.21
Awe inspiring scenery	4.49	4.10
A relaxing atmosphere	4.45	4.31
Great hiking opportunities	4.41	3.87
Attractive scenery	4.35	4.09
Places I would like to explore	4.32	4.15
Interesting attractions	4.31	4.13
Great camping opportunities	4.27	4.02
Accessibility to water recreation	4.12	4.01
A sense of excitement	4.11	3.84
Excellent facilities for travelers	4.00	3.54
Unpleasant terrain	2.91	3.00
Nothing of interest	1.61	1.90

Conclusion

Geotravelers in this study were identified through their level of agreement on eight survey questions. These identifying statements are in line with the stated marketing efforts of the Montana Office of Tourism. While these statements have not been through rigorous testing for validity and reliability, the assumption here is that they provide the needed segmentation for this study. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents in this study have been described as geotravelers based on these eight survey questions.

There was a relatively high level of agreement with six of the eight geotraveler tendency statements (Tables 3, 13 and 21) which relate to ideas typically held by geotravelers and are reflective of things that the High Plains has to offer. There was general disagreement with the two statements that are not geotraveler tendencies. This held true regardless of the respondent segment (geotraveler versus potential geotraveler, Montana resident versus North Dakota resident, and those who have previously lived in the High Plains versus those who have not).

Two sections of the survey addressed respondents' perceptions of the High Plains, the 20 items regarding perceptions of what the High Plains has and the four open-ended questions relating to respondents' perceptions of the landscape, hospitality, recreation opportunities, and their feelings if they were to vacation or recreate in the area. Generally, there was a high level of agreement among geotravelers with most of the 20 statements regarding things such as the scenery, landscape, and recreational opportunities. The relatively low mean scores of the perception statements that the High Plains has "unpleasant terrain," and "nothing of interest" indicate that the majority of geotravelers disagree, to some extent, with these statements. The levels of agreement amongst potential geotravelers tend to be a bit more towards the middle of the scale, meaning they tend to agree or disagree slightly less strongly than geotravelers do.

The mean scores of the 20 items relating to the perceptions of what the High Plains has to offer can help us to interpret the responses provided for the four open-ended questions. While many of the comments could be interpreted as negative if taken out of context, the levels of agreement with what the High Plains has to offer helps us to realize that comments such as "rugged," "windy" and "desolate" are not necessarily negative. In fact, in light of how people responded to the 20 perception items, it seems that these comments, and others like them, are not intended as negative remarks, but rather, as simple observations or even positive comments. While the landscape and recreational opportunities that the High Plains has to offer may not appeal to everyone, it does seem that many people, particularly those like the geotravelers, appreciate what can be found in Montana's High Plains.

Some of the comments that were not very positive often point out areas for improvement and may offer ideas for improvement to tourism related businesses in the High Plains. For example, comments such as "not too abundant," "only basic needs to be met," and "on their own schedule" highlight areas on which tourism businesses could focus if they're hoping to improve the way they operate.

The responses to the questions regarding peoples' likelihood to visit the High Plains in the future show quite a bit of potential (Table 6). Fifty-two percent of geotravelers indicated that they would possibly

visit the High Plains within the next year, and 89 percent of them indicated that they would consider visiting two to three years from now. Similarly, between 43 and 53 percent of geotransporters said they are at least somewhat likely to visit Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge, or Missouri River Breaks National Monument within the next three years (Table 7). These figures show great potential in the ability of a High Plains marketing campaign to perhaps encourage people to make the trip.

Fifty percent of geotransporters and 43 percent of potential geotransporters had heard the term, “Montana’s High Plains” (Table 4). The researchers are not aware of what the goal was in terms of how widely known the term would become throughout the course of the marketing campaign. It seems likely that if the campaign were to continue, the percentage of people familiar with the term would certainly increase, particularly considering that word of mouth was the most common response among both geotransporters and potential geotransporters when asked where they had heard the term. People are obviously seeing or hearing the advertisements and talking about them with others. The picture does change a bit when looking at the responses of Montana residents versus North Dakota residents, although not drastically. Forty-two percent of North Dakota residents had heard the term, compared to 47 percent of Montanans (Table 14). TV was the most common source of hearing the term for North Dakota residents, followed by magazine, and then word of mouth. This may simply be a function of the differences in media outlets used for the marketing campaign in the two states.

Regardless of the way the data was segmented, the majority of respondents indicated that their impression of the area did not change once they had learned about the High Plains (Tables 4, 14 and 22). Based on the perceptions held by most respondents, their impression of the area was already a positive one. Between 12 and 25 percent of respondents did say that learning about the High Plains changed their impression in a positive way. Very few respondents indicated that it affected their impression negatively (between 0% and 3% for all respondent segments).

Overall, the perceptions of the High Plains are fairly positive, yet realistic. People do not perceive the region as a place that has things to offer that cannot actually be found there. People seem to appreciate the High Plains for what it is, a place that offers rugged beauty, abundant opportunities for certain types of recreation and an open landscape, to name just a few things. Continuing to market Montana’s High Plains to residents of western Montana and the Bismarck, North Dakota regions seems to be a good idea. Continued or increased marketing would, in all likelihood, increase awareness of the High Plains as a place to visit. As people become more aware of what the High Plains has to offer, it is even more likely they will consider visiting the area in the near future.

Appendix A – Survey Instrument

20. In your perception, Montana's High Plains has:

	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	No perception
Awe inspiring scenery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unique geologic features	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attractive scenery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quaint communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Native culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ranching/farming heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friendly people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interesting attractions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Great hunting opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Great fishing opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Great hiking opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Great camping opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unpleasant terrain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unique dinosaur history sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities to learn about regional history/culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intriguing natural history	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vast open spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nothing of interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessibility to water recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abundant wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Places I would like to explore	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A relaxing atmosphere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunity for adventure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excellent facilities for travelers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A sense of excitement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To thank you for your time, ENTER TO WIN a trip to Montana's High Plains at www.MontanaHighPlains.com. Must register by August 31, 2009.



Travel and Recreation Perception Survey

1. How many vacation/recreation overnight trips do you usually take in a 12 month period (not including to a personal 2nd home/cabin)?

2. Do you take overnight trips within the state of Montana for recreation/pleasure (not including to a personal 2nd home/cabin)? ☐ No ☐ Yes

3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. (Please "X" one box for each statement)

	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree
I enjoy participating in outdoor activities when vacationing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I enjoy participating in cultural activities when vacationing (e.g. museums, art galleries, local events)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I enjoy visiting national parks or monuments when vacationing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to vacation in places where I can enjoy the beauty of the outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My favorite activity when vacationing is shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to stay at luxury, 4 star accommodations while on vacation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to eat at unique and different restaurants when vacationing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to stay at unique and different accommodations while on vacation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Prior to this survey, have you heard the term, "Montana's High Plains"? ☐ Yes ☐ No (please turn the page and go to Question 5)

a. If yes, where did you hear the term Montana's High Plains? (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Radio	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper	<input type="checkbox"/> Magazine	<input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth
<input type="checkbox"/> TV	<input type="checkbox"/> At MacKenzie River Pizza Co.	<input type="checkbox"/> Website	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsure

b. How did your impression change once you learned about Montana's High Plains?

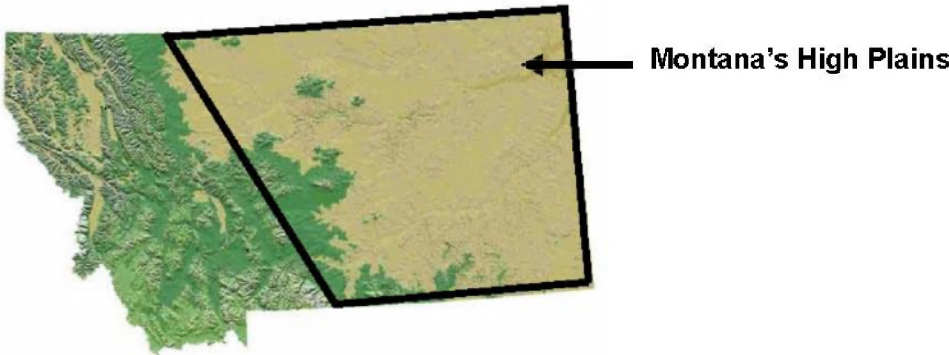
<input type="checkbox"/> It didn't change	<input type="checkbox"/> It changed positively	<input type="checkbox"/> It changed negatively	<input type="checkbox"/> Both positively and negatively
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5. What is your age?

6. What is your sex? ☐ Male ☐ Female

7. What is your zip code?

For your reference in answering the remainder of the survey, the following map highlights the approximate location of Montana's High Plains.



8. Have you ever lived in Montana's High Plains? ☐ No ☐ Yes

9. How often do you...

	Never	Once every few years	Once a year	A few times a year	Many times each year
simply drive through part of Montana's High Plains?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
travel in Montana's High Plains for business purposes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. How often have you vacationed or recreated in Montana's High Plains?

<input type="checkbox"/> Never	<input type="checkbox"/> Once	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 times	<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 times	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 10 times
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11. Did you vacation/recreate in Montana's High Plains this summer?

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
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12. Do you plan to vacation/recreate in Montana's High Plains in the next 12 months?

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly	<input type="checkbox"/> Probably	<input type="checkbox"/> Definitely
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13. Would you consider vacationing/recreating in Montana's High Plains 2 to 3 years from now?

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly	<input type="checkbox"/> Probably	<input type="checkbox"/> Definitely
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When filling in the boxes below, all answers are correct!
We need to know what you really think.

14. Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of the landscape if you were to vacation or recreate in Montana's High Plains:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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15. Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of the hospitality if you were to vacation or recreate in Montana's High Plains:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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16. Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of recreation opportunities in Montana's High Plains:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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17. Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of how you might feel if you were to vacation or recreate in Montana's High Plains:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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18. Have you ever visited the following in Montana's High Plains? (please "X" all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Bighorn Canyon Nat'l Recreation Area	<input type="checkbox"/> CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	<input type="checkbox"/> Missouri River Breaks National Monument
---	--	--

19. How likely are you to visit the following High Plains sites within the next three years?

	Not at all likely	Unlikely	Some-what unlikely	Some-what likely	Likely	Very likely
Bighorn Canyon Nat'l Rec Area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CM Russell National Wildlife Refuge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Missouri River Breaks Nat'l Monument	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please continue on back page...

Appendix B – Open-ended responses of geotravelers

Geotravelers (n=202) - Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perceptions of the landscape if you were to vacation or recreate in

Montana's High Plains:

Terrain Descriptors	110
Flat	46
Mostly flat	1
No mountains	1
Reminds me of Nebraska	1
Rolling	9
Rolling hills	6
Rolling/rugged	1
Hills	1
Hilly	2
Hilly and wooded	1
Barren	8
Rugged	6
Rugged land	1
Desert	1
High desert	1
Mountains	2
Surprising mountain ranges	1
Foothills	1
Prairie	4
Buttes	3
Canyons	1
Interesting canyons	1
Badlands	1
Breaks	1
Ravines	1
Brown	1
Country	1
High	1
Prefer the coast	1
Land	1
Landscape	1
Tundress	1
Mud	1

Open Space	102
Big	6
Big sky	11
Broad	1
Empty	4
Epic	1
Expanse	1
Expansive	3
Grand	1
Open	28
Open country	1
Open skies	1
Open space	1
Open spaces	1
Openness	1
Roomy	1
Sky	1
Space	3
Spacious	4
Unpeopled	1
Vast	11
Very open	1
View	1
Views	1
Vistas	1
Wide	2
Wide open	9
Wide open spaces	4
Large	1

Climate/weather	73
Dry	26
Arid	6
Dry, desert, arid	1
Semi-arid	1
Somewhat dry	1
Windy	14
Windy and cold	1
Very windy	1
Windswept	1
Hot	11
Hot in summer	1
Hot/cold	1
Cold	3
Warm	1
Blue skies	1
Sunny	1
Great weather	1
Harsh	1

Beauty	47
Beautiful	24
Beauty	1
A thing of beauty	1
Awesome	6
Amazing	1
Awe inspiring	1
Breathtaking	1
Fabulous	1
Handsome	1
Incredible	1
Lovely spots	1
Majestic	1
Picturesque	1
Spectacular	1
Striking	1
Stunning	1
Scenic	3

Vegetation	28
Grasslands	8
Grassy	1
Lots of grass	1
Sage	2
Sagebrush	2
Wheat	2
Fields of wheat	1
Too many wheat fields!	1
Treeless	2
Few trees	1
Little trees	1
No trees	1
Trees	1
Green	1
Green and beautiful	1
Beautiful wildflowers	1
Bounteous	1

Unique/Different	26
Unique vistas	1
Unusual	1
Unusual and exciting	1
Unique	5
Unlike any other place	1
Weird/alien (but in a good way)	1
Different	4
Dramatic	1
Ever changing	1
Varied	1
Inspiring	1
Interesting	3
Intrigue	1
Free	1
Fresh	1
Fun	1
Natural wonders	1

Isolated	19
Desolate	11
Mostly desolate but interesting	1
Isolated	2
Remote	2
Lonely	1
Long	1
Low population	1

Other Descriptives	18
Bentonite	1
Dinosaurs (I realize this isn't a descriptor, but it's how I imagine the state)	1
Easy to get around	1
Great	2
Gumbo	1
Have no idea	1
Home	1
Indians	1
It would be OK	1
Like	1
MSU =)	1
New	1
No large cities	1
Not to vacation	1
The High Plains would relate to hunting only	1
Unyupified	1
What I expected	1

Boring	16
Boring	6
Plain (boring)	1
Stark	3
Sparse	2
Not too diverse	1
Monotonous	1
More interesting p	1
Bleak	1

Farming/Ranching	10
Rural	5
Ranching	3
Farming	1
Farmland	1

Peaceful	10
Low key	1
Peaceful	3
Quiet	2
Relaxing	1
Rustic	2
Serene	1

Surroundings	9
Broken	1
Colorful	2
Natural (uninhabited)	1
Unspoiled	1
Wild	4

Water	7
Rivers	2
Lakes and rivers	1
Missouri River	1
Yellowstone River	1
Lovely reservoirs	1
Little water	1

History	6
Historical	2
Historic	1
Forts	1
Havre's underground setion	1
Unchanged	1

Wildlife	5
Antelope	1
Fish	1
Great hunting	1
Wildlife	2

Geotravellers (n=202) - Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of the hospitality if Plains: you were to vacation or recreate in Montana's High

Friendly/Helpful	208
Friendly	88
Very friendly	2
Friendly folks	2
Montanans are friendly	1
Helpful	19
Genuinely helpful	1
Very helpful	1
Very friendly people	1
Welcoming	16
Always welcome	1
Welcome	1
Welcome friendly faces	1
Nice	9
Warm	9
Accommodating	8
Kind	8
Genuine	5
Hospitable	5
Open	4
Generous	4
Outgoing	3
Cordial	3
Courteous	3
Courtesy	1
Cautiously friendly	1
Good folk there	1
Gracious	1
Inviting	1
I've heard people are nice there	1
Kindness	1
Lovely people	1
Neighborly	1
Nice people	1
Non-threatened	1
Open hearted	1
People make you feel at home	1

Facilities Descriptors	71
A country feel	1
Accessible	1
Air conditioned	1
Decent	1
Different	2
Good	8
Good eating	1
Great	5
Hidden jewels	1
Homey	3
Montana style	1
I'd say ok	1
Low key	2
Interesting	2
High quality	1
Hometown	2
Not like Western MT	1
OK	2
Pleasant	5
Poor	1
Practical	1
Quaint	1
Quirky	1
Ranch-style	1
Small town	7
Small town atmosphere	1
Small towns	1
Solid	1
Spacious	1
Unique	4
What I expected	1
Fine	2
Family	2
Family style	1
Educational	1
Enjoyable	1
Excellent	2

People descriptors	47
Honest	7
Western	5
Conservative	4
Polite	4
Proud	2
Acceptant	1
Awesome	1
Chatty	1
Civil	1
Eager	1
Empty spaces, not empty people	1
Farmers	1
Frank	1
Fun	1
Good conversation	1
Great people	1
Great workers	1
Happy	1
Independent	1
Knowledgable	1
Laidback	1
Love those cowboys	1
Midwestern	1
Private	1
Quiet	1
Sincere	1
Smiles	1
Unassuming	1
Understanding	1
Unpretentious	1

Not so good remarks	42
Local	3
Closed	2
Insular	2
Redneck	2
Sparse	2
Adequate	1
Aloof	1
Average	1
Backwoods	1
Bad - better food needed	1
Basic	1
Cliquesh	1
Difficult	1
Distant	1
Good ol boy	1
Hidden	1
If destination resorts: less friendly, more expensive and profit-motivated	1
Limited	1
Not abundant	1
Not to vacation	1
Old	1
Old fashion	1
Old time	1
On their own schedule	1
Only basic needs to be met	1
Scarce	1
Spooky	1
Standoffish	1
Stoic	1
Strange	1
Suspicious	1
Uneasy	1
Uninformed	1
Unsophisticated	1
White	1
Who R U?	1

Unknown/Miscellaneous	18
?	3
Unknown	2
Don't know	1
No perceptions	1
Not sure	1
Have no idea	1
Anyone	1
Celebrities like it	1
Cultural	1
Shopping	1
Guides to familiarize with the area	1
High Plains, high times	1
High Plains, higher hopes	1
Great national parks	1
Fit	1

Down home	10
Down home	7
Down to earth	3

Geotravellers (n=202) - Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of recreation opportunities in Montana's High Plains:

Hunting/fishing	90
Hunting	26
Great hunting	2
Antelope hunting	1
Deer heaven	1
Hunters' paradise	1
Hunting - I don't hunt	1
Good hunting	1
Game	1
Wonderful hunting	1
Outdoor fish, hunt	1
Hunting lots and fishing	1
Hunting, fishing	1
Fishing	38
Great fishing	4
Good fishing	2
Fish	1
Fishermen's paradise	1
Fishing - Ft. Peck	1
Fishing - I don't fish	1
Fishing and camping are great	1
Fly fishing	1
Lake (reservoir) fishing	1
Pike	1

Not so positive remarks	51
Limited	16
Few	4
Boring	3
None	3
Not much	2
Sparse	2
Growing too populated	1
Hard to find	1
Have no idea	1
Inaccessible	1
Limited mountains	1
Long drive	1
Meet basic demands	1
Minimal	1
Need to know a rancher to have access	1
Needing	1
No scenery	1
Not diverse	1
Not many	1
Not much there	1
Not so plenty	1
Not to vacation	1
Nothing	1
Nothing to do	1
Regulated	1
Scarce	1
Select	1

Other Rec	34
Ancient (dinosaurs)	1
Dinosaur days	1
Find dinosaurs	1
Geology	1
Paleontology, archaeology	1
Rock hunting	1
Sightseeing	3
Driving	1
Wildlife	1
Wildlife, badlands	1
Horses	2
Nature trail ride	1
Riding the plains	1
Good biking	1
Mtn biking	1
Possible bicycling opportunities	1
Golf	3
Golf courses?	1
Skiing	1
Snowmobiling	2
ATVing	1
Motorcycles	1
Racing	1
Photography	1
Pictures	1
Auction sales and old junk	1
Eating and drinking	1
Flying	1

Outdoor Adventure	32
Exciting	3
Awesome	3
Action-packed	1
Adventure	1
Adventure races	1
Adventuresome	1
Adventurous	1
Exploring	3
Explore	1
Challenging	1
Outdoors	2
Outdoorsy	1
Many, if you enjoy the outdoors	1
Rugged	2
Rugged terrain	1
Remote	1
Primitive	1
Back country	1
Nature	1
Rough	1
Wild	2
Rustic	1
Rural	1

Fun/Unique	31
Unexpected	1
Unique	5
Rich	1
Outstanding	2
Good	2
Great	6
Fun	5
Enjoyable	1
Enough	1
Excellent	1
Really good	1
Beautiful	4
Beauty	1

Availability	30
Abundant	2
Accessible	1
Accessible to great areas	1
Numerous	1
Abundant hunting	1
Diverse	1
Unlimited	1
Unlimited options	1
Unrestricted	1
Varied	4
Vast	2
Vast opportunity	1
Widespread	1
Year round	1
Plentiful	2
Plenty	1
Limitless	1
Many	6
Extensive	1

Recreation setting	27
Windy	3
Wind blown	1
Windy (get used to it)	1
Flat	3
Not crowded	2
Less people	1
Few people	1
Undisturbed	1
Untouched	1
Views	1
Watching	1
Wide open	1
Spacious	1
Can see for miles	1
Picturesque	1
Far out	1
State parks are nice	1
Close to mountains	1
Close to Yellowstone	1
Great weather	1
Hot	1
Cold	1

Unknown/Miscellaneous	27
?	6
Unknown	2
Don't know	2
Really don't know	1
Family	1
Far reaching	1
Farming	1
Free	1
Friends	1
Must research first	1
New	1
Rattlesnake	1
Simple	1
Small	1
Average	1
Some better than others	1
OK	1
Depends on you	1
Hospitality tops	1
Great people	1

Camping	17
Camping	14
Camp	1
Car camping?	1
Comfortable campsites	1

Boating	16
Boating	7
Canoeing	2
Floating	2
Boats maybe	1
Float Missouri	1
Floating rivers	1
Floating/ rafting	1
Kayaking	1

History/culture	16
Historic	1
Historic locations to view	1
Historic sites	2
Historical	2
Historical activities	1
History	3
I enjoy history	1
Interesting forts	1
Lewis and Clark Trail	1
Cultural	1
Learn more about Montana	1
Local events	1

Personal feelings	16
Relaxing	4
Peaceful	4
Quiet	2
Good for the soul after being in the forest	1
Satisfaction never ending	1
Soulful	1
Solitude	1
Personal	1
Invigorating	1

Hiking	15
Hiking	11
Canyon landscapes/hiking	1
Wish there was more biking, hiking	1
Not very scenic for hiking	1
Some hiking and sightseeing	1

Birds	8
Bird hunting	3
Birding	2
Bird habitat	1
Great bird watching	1
Good upland bird hunting	1

Water	8
Rivers	2
Bighorn River	1
Missouri River	1
River	1
Water	1
Water activities	1
Water, rivers and lakes	1

Geotravellers (n=202) - Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of how you might feel if you were to vacation or recreate in Montana's High Plains:

Relaxed/rested	100
Relaxed	38
Relaxing	8
Rested	6
Relaxation	1
Renewed	1
Replenished	1
Restful	1
Peaceful	10
Quiet	5
Peace	2
Serene	2
At peace	1
Peaceful, serene	1
Tranquil	1
Refreshed	5
Recharged	1
Rejuvenating	1
Solitude	4
Calm	3
Away from it all	2
Fresh	2
Stressless	1
Unhurried	1
Very rewarding and relaxing	1
Away	1

Happy	42
Happy	16
Good	3
Welcome	3
Enjoyable	2
Enjoy	1
I would enjoy	1
Great	2
Lucky	2
Appreciative of the opportunity and ability (health wise)	1
Casual	1
Family	1
Family fun	1
Fine	1
Love it	1
OK	1
Privileged	1
Small town hospitality	1
Spoiled	1
Very good	1
We'd love it, we've done it before	1

Adventure/Excitement	31
Excited	8
Fun	4
Surprised	3
Adventurous	2
Adventure	1
Exhilarated	1
Exhilarating	1
Expectant	1
Expecting	1
Explorative	1
Exploring	1
Like to explore	1
New opportunities	1
Something different	1
Surprise	1
Surprising	1
Challenge	1
Unique	1

Physical Discomfort	24
Hot	9
Dry	4
Cold	3
Wind blown	2
Humid	1
Dirty	1
Dusty	1
Wet	1
Warm	1
Sweaty	1

Isolated/Alone	21
Isolated	3
Alone	2
Lonely	2
Remote	2
Deserted	1
Lost in vast plains	1
Anxious	1
Cautious	1
Restless	1
Yearning	1
Be prepared for weather	1
Be self equipped	1
Make friends with a local	1
Need friends	1
Need to know somebody	1
Unsure of where to go if I didn't have friends	1

Comfort/Satisfaction	19
Comfortable	5
Satisfied	5
Fulfilled	2
Nostalgic	2
Content	1
Grateful	1
Pleased	1
Satisfy	1
Old friends	1

Curious/Learning	19
Curious	5
Intrigued	2
Eager	1
Educated	1
I have a lot to learn about this place	1
Interested	1
Interested in history	1
Interesting	1
Learning	1
Looking for history	1
Pioneer	1
Trying to recreate the trials of early homesteader	1
Very interesting	1
Wanting to see more	1

Escape/Freedom	19
Free	12
Freedom	1
At nature's doorway	1
Escape from cities (rural)	1
Glad to have a great place to go	1
Happy to be away from work	1
Independence	1
No hustle bustle	1

Bored	15
Bored	9
Boring	2
Bored of long drives	1
Unexcited	1
Monotonous	1
Slow	1

Miscellaneous	11
Elk	1
Frugal	1
Go in fall or spring	1
Hopeful to bag an antelope	1
Like I was back in Illinois	1
Near North Dakota - This could be good or bad	1
Pike	1
This is a great spring destination for warmer weather	1
Walleye	1
Wildlife	1
Year round	1

Rather be elsewhere	9
Let's head west....(sorry)	1
Prefer Flathead	1
That I would view MT as flat and desolate	1
Too far away	1
Too many miles to travel	1
Wife needs convincing	1
Would rather be by the ocean	1
Would rather be in Italy or Greece	1
Wouldn't like it	1

Inspired	14
Amazed	1
Awed	2
Beautiful	1
Blown away	1
Impressed	1
Scenery	1
Inspired	2
Invigorated	3
Optimistic	1
Hopeful	1

Open/Uncrowded	11
Panorama	1
Open spaces	1
Out west	1
Not surrounded by people	1
Not crowded	1
Where did the mountains go?	1
Wide open	1
Wide open spaces	1
Uncluttered	1
Uncrowded	1
Wilderness	1

Negative feelings	7
Hate the wildlife fence I-94	1
Ignored	1
Not much to do there	1
Not to vacation	1
Outsider	1
Skeptical	1
Unwelcome	1

Unknown	13
?	4
Not sure	2
Unknown	2
Don't know	2
Have no idea	1
Really don't know	1
TBD	1

Appendix C – Open-ended responses of potential geotravelers

Potential Geotravelers (n=98) - Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perceptions of the landscape if you were to vacation or recreate in Montana's High Plains:

Terrain Descriptors	44
Bare east	1
Barren	2
Breaks	1
Desert	3
Deserty	1
Flat	14
Flat lands	1
Hilly	1
Mountainless	1
Mountains	1
Long rolling hills	1
No mountains	1
Plains	1
Prairie	1
Rolling hills	6
Rugged	4
Rural	1
Rural areas	1
Tundra	1
Tan/open	1

Climate/weather	31
Arid	2
Dry	17
Hot	3
Sunny	1
Too hot	1
Too windy	1
Windy	5
Snow	1

Open Space	28
Big	2
Big sky	2
Never ending	1
Lots of blue sky	1
Open	8
Open space	3
Sparse	1
Sparsely populated	1
See a long ways	1
Vacant	1
Vast	5
Wide	1
Wide open spaces	1

Surroundings/Appearance	24
Awesome	3
Compelling	1
Crowded	1
Interesting	2
Intriguing	1
Invigorating	1
Picture perfect	1
Picturesque	1
Primeval	1
Pristeen	1
Pristine	1
Scenic	1
Natural	1
Nice	2
No pollution	1
Like where I live	1
Satisfying	1
Good	1
OK	2

Other Descriptives	15
Boring	4
Unique	2
Peaceful	2
God's earthly creation	1
If you look you can find beauty anywhere!	1
Treasure State not Big Sky Country	1
Home	1
Different	1
Relaxing	1
Uninteresting	1

Beauty	12
Attractive	2
Awed by the beauty	1
Beautiful	6
Breathtaking	1
Evocative	1
Wow	1

Farming/Ranching	9
Farm land	1
Farming	1
Farms	1
Farms/ranches	1
Livestock	1
Ranching	1
Ranching and farming land	1
Cattle	1
Wheat farms	1

Unknown/Misc.	8
?	1
Don't know	1
None	1
Except for the breaks	1
Fun	1
Lack recreation	1
Missoula	1
North Dakota	1

Vegetation	8
Grasslands	1
No trees	1
Sagebrush	2
Treeless	1
Trees	1
Very few trees	1
Wheat/grain	1

History	5
Historical	1
Take you back in time	1
Untouched	1
Western	1
Wild	1

Isolated	5
Desolate	2
Lonesome	1
Long drive	1
Long roads	1

Water	4
Bad water	1
Few streams	1
Many rivers and streams	1
River systems	1

Wildlife	3
Good hunting	1
Excellent hunting areas	1
Wildlife	1

Potential Geotravellers (n=98) - Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of the hospitality if you were to vacation or recreate in Montana's High Plains:

Friendly/Helpful/Welcoming	90
Friendly	34
Friendly people	2
Mostly friendly	1
Helpful	9
Down home	5
Welcoming	4
Laid back	3
Gracious	2
Kind	2
Nice	2
Warm	2
Welcome	2
Caring	1
Cordial	1
Courteous	1
Cowboys	1
Down home friendly people	1
Home grown	1
Informative	1
Interesting friendly people	1
Inviting	1
Kindness	1
Neighborly	1
Nice folks	1
Nice people	1
People wave when meeting them	1
Polite	1
Private	1
Ranchers	1
Ranching people	1
Real Montanans	1
Receptive	1
Sincere	1
Sweet	1

Facilities Descriptors	41
Good	9
Great	4
Hospitable	4
Small town	3
Enjoyable	2
Pleasant	2
Relaxed	2
Average	1
Comfortable	1
Fine	1
Good food	1
Happy	1
Honest	1
Hospitality in MT is usually very good	1
Old fashion	1
Plenty	1
Rural	1
Simple	1
Unique	1
Very nice place	1
Very traveler friendly	1
Montana-like	1

Unknown/Misc.	13
Ancestry folks	1
Campgrounds	1
Community	1
Don't know	1
Easy to agree	1
Fire	1
Have only been around Lewistown	1
High	1
Highway patrol	1
No idea	1
None	1
People few and far between	1
OK	1

Negative remarks	4
Rude	1
Shy	1
Stuck up	1
Somewhat helpful	1

Potential Geotravelers (n=98) - Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of recreation opportunities in Montana's High Plains:

Hunting/Fishing	44
Hunting	15
Excellent hunting	1
Hunt	1
Hunting good	1
Hunting only	1
Some good hunting	1
Game availability hunting	1
Pheasants	3
Incredible bird hunting	1
Fishing	15
Fish	1
Fish or raft	1
Good fishing	1
Excellent fishing	1

Positive remarks	24
Good	5
Fun	2
Great	2
Less crowded	2
Beauty	1
Cheap	1
Enjoyable	1
Free	1
Informative	1
Introspective	1
Is understated	1
Must see	1
Outstanding	1
Reflective	1
Relaxing	1
Tremendous	1
Undeveloped	1

Not so positive remarks	18
None	2
Limited	2
Hot	2
Cold	1
Few	1
Isolated	1
Lacking	1
More opportunities to the west	1
need	1
Not sure	1
Poor	1
Secluded	1
Sparse	1
Uninteresting	1
Windy	1

Other activities	16
ATV	1
Dirt bikes	1
Snowmobiling	1
Skiing	2
Sightseeing	2
Culture	1
Ranching culture	1
Rodeo	1
Historic	1
Trains	1
Golf	1
Photos	1
Wildlife	1
Wildlife viewing	1

Camping/Hiking	15
Hiking	5
Hiking opportunities	1
Hiking/fishing/hunting	1
No hiking trails	1
Camping	5
Camp	1
Few camping spots	1

Availability	8
Many	2
Abundant	1
Access availability hunting	1
Easy access	1
Easy to move	1
Limitless	1
Lots to do and see	1

Unsure/Misc.	7
Don't know	2
Unknown	2
Horse ridge	1
OK	1
Unsure	1

Explore	6
Explore	2
Exploring	2
Adventure	1
Adventurous	1

Boating	4
Boating	1
Boating Fort Peck	1
No boating	1
Rafting	1

Potential Geotravelers (n=98) - Provide up to 3 words or phrases describing your perception of how you might feel if you were to vacation or recreate in Montana's High Plains:

Enjoy/Positive remarks	35
Enjoyable	4
Enjoyed	1
Great	4
Good	3
Excited	3
Exciting	1
Free	2
Fun	2
Awesome	1
Explore	1
Extremely grateful	1
Feel good	1
Good experience	1
Happy	1
Happy to be back!	1
Happy to see more of MT	1
Hate to leave	1
Pleased	1
Probably enjoy it	1
Rewarding	1
River trip is fantastic and beautiful	1
Satisfied	1
Welcome	1

Relaxed/Peaceful	32
Relaxed	14
Relaxing	1
Relaxing atmosphere	1
Peaceful	5
At peace	1
Fulfilled	2
Inspired	2
Enlightened	1
In touch (with self)	1
Refreshing	1
Regenerated	1
Rested	1
Solitude	1

Bored/Alone	16
Alone	4
Bored	4
Isolated	2
Bored if not prepared	1
Distanced	1
Homesick	1
Remote	1
Unhappy	1
Uninspired	1

Physical discomfort/Negative remarks	15
Dry	1
Hot	3
Hot & cold	1
Limited activities	1
Long drive	1
No way	1
Not pretty enough	1
Thirsty	1
Too hot	1
Very windy	1
Watch for militias	1
Windy	1
Wouldn't	1

Unknown/Misc.	8
Different	2
Don't know	1
None	1
Not sure	1
Repeat	1
Unknown	1
Unique historical places	1

Homey	7
At home	1
Close to home	1
Comfortable	1
Educational	1
Find family history - roots	1
I grew up there	1
Nostalgic	1

Open space	6
Beautiful open spaces	1
Big space	1
Open space	1
Outdoors	1
Small	1
Less bothered	1