

Profile

Applicant: Regional Application
Grant Manager: Celeste Cote
Name of Organization: The Maine Highlands
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Date of Incorporation: December 19th, 2002
EIN: 42-1568342

What were the top three highlights from the previous fiscal year?

- 1.The Maine Highlands began the fiscal year with a physical move. Since it's inception, TMH has been housed and managed by Eastern Maine Development Corporation.As situations shifted with EMDC, charges to The Maine Highlands increased.With no cap on indirect expenses and fringe costs that were passed through, the agreement between EMDC & TMH no longer made good fiscal sense.The Maine Highlands ended it's relationship with EMDC and moved its operation to a new location in Bangor.The current office space provides a physical location for meetings, equipment and communication between members and the grant manager.With office expenses considerably lower than in the former space, more allocated funding can be used for marketing projects.Material is conveniently stored in the space used by the Greater Bangor Convention & Visitor's Bureau next door.With board members in close proximity, communication is facilitated more efficiently.Overall, the actual move and subsequent office set up proved to be a short term disruption and The Maine Highlands has a new home.
2. Something new in our project offerings in FY 13 was the addition of a subgrant that was offered to our sub-regions, the regional Chambers and CVB. We felt that the availability of additional funding to support a marketing related project to be completed by our members not only highlights The Maine Highlands organization's benefit to the sub-regions, but introduces new tools that will bolster The Maine Highlands throughout the year.
- 3.As part of the co-op program with MOT, The Maine Highlands was able to participate in two new travel shows, Philadelphia & Washington DC. The DC show opened our eyes to a market that we had not been considering as important as it is. At the Travel & Adventure show, we were able to expose The Maine Highlands to visitors with interests in line with attributes of the region such as hiking, biking & rafting. This is an area that we will continue to explore in the new grant year.

Please state your three primary goals for the next year and how you expect them to increase tourism revenue for the region with cooperative funds.

The three primary goals for the next year are:

- 1.The Maine Highlands would like to continue its campaign of market awareness with attendance at and participation in consumer, travel, media, and trade shows. We want to take advantage of the MOT's show co-op program which allows us to have a presence at shows we couldn't afford on our own. We will also attend shows that historically have been beneficial, such as the World Fishing & Outdoor Expo and the Big E.
2. Asset creation was part of our past two fiscal years and has allowed us to build a stock photo library to draw on for advertising. In this fiscal year, The Maine Highlands would like to work towards video asset creation to compliment the stock still images. Videos would be used on our website, shared with MOT & our members, used online in platforms such as YouTube, sent as links to satisfy inquiries, and used in television commercials.
- 3.Drawing upon the photography assets The Maine Highland would like to create a new regional visitors guide. The guide that is currently in use was created in the 2009 grant year. Though not obsolete, our current guide has served us well but we need to update the styling, include new items, and provide fresh informational content.

Each of these concepts lends itself to the overall goal of bringing more visitors to the region. We feel that though many people aspire to visit Maine, they aren't necessarily knowledgeable about areas in the state that offer alternatives to lighthouses and lobster. We recognize the value of the coastal regions in drawing people to Maine but believe that The Maine Highlands needs to focus on educating travelers about the region's assets. We want to provide reasons for the visitor to the coast to venture inland

and explore, extend their visit to the state, and give them the information they need to plan the next trip. We want to make the impact that brings them here.

Please describe the overall strategy you will implement to achieve these goals.

The Maine Highlands overall strategy varies depending on the project, of course, but in all cases will begin with planning. Concepts for the regional guide will be developed early in the year, so as to allow for design adjustments and printing, with the new guide ready for distribution for the 2014 summer season. Planning will also be the first step with regards to the spring show season. Upon approval, accommodations and transportation will be secured. We plan to create a timeline that will be followed to make the best use of resources, pairing show appearances with targeted ads or mailings to the areas of the shows. Website updates will be implemented as progress is made toward the new guide, adjusting design and style to compliment the guide. Strategic planning in the timing of projects so as not to overwhelm resources, advancing project when time allows, and adherence to the year's projection concepts will lead to better execution and completion.

How do these goals and strategies fit with the Office of Tourism's?

The Maine Highlands overall goal of more visitors to the region is completely in line with the Office of Tourism's campaign of marketing outside of the state. We plan to advertise in niche markets complimentary to those that are in the OT's media schedule. Updating our distribution materials and partnering with other regions to effectively draw visitors to the state will accent the OT's efforts. Participation in the travel show program will assist the OT logistically in staffing and our plan to strategically target ads and mailings around our show schedule can only benefit the OT with additional exposure. Our attendance at other shows brings visibility to our region and by virtue of The Maine Highlands location within the state, any visitor coming to TMH in most cases would be coming through other regions, also contributing to the OT's goals.

Please describe how the financial resources will be monitored by your organization.

The Maine Highlands financial resources are monitored on a day to day basis by the regional grant manager. The office uses Quickbooks for accounting. The financials are distributed and reviewed by the executive committee and the board at meetings, held monthly or semi monthly. A tax accountant manages the annual tax filings and therefore provides critical analysis of the organization's financials. An annual report is filed as well. The Maine Highlands currently has two bank accounts, both of which are reconciled each month. Checks over the amount of \$1000 require two signatures. Signers on the accounts are members of the executive committee. The grant manager holds a debit card for use when a credit card is necessary, such as in booking hotel rooms and ordering office supplies, but has no signing authority. Funds may be transferred from the main account to the operating account in increments of \$5000. No cash is kept in the office and checks are stored in a locked file.

Primary Analysis

Research

Is your region or event conducting any research initiatives this year?

Yes

If you have Research Initiatives, please state the purpose and give a brief description of each.

Our ongoing research monitors requests for information that are the result of website visitation and incoming email. This year we will begin saving more data that is available when information is requested via the website, such as interests, party size, planned visitation season, along with name, email, mailing address. In FY 13, we did a trial at the Saltscapes Expo in Halifax, NS. Allowed by show management to conduct a sweepstakes, we created a specific landing page for visitors to the show and also gathered handwritten entries. Several businesses donated towards the prize. The Maine Highlands partnered with DART for this show, and therefore will share the analytics data and entry data. At the end of the summer, we plan to send out a survey to both the website entrants and those who entered using the paper form. We hope to do a conversion study of those who actually came to our areas. If this proves to be a successful method of tracking ROI, we will consider repeating it at other shows.

Public Relations

Who is the person/company that is responsible for your PR program?

Company: The Maine Highlands

Address: The Maine Highlands is not currently using a public relations person. PR is managed internally.

Phone: 207-941-1411

Email Address: info@themainehighlands.com

Would you be interested in participating in a two-hour public relations workshop?

Yes

Would you like to be contacted regarding PR efforts?

Yes

Please provide a list of editorial contacts:

(No Response)

Please provide a list of publications and/or broadcast outlets you would most like to target:

The Maine Highlands would like to target our niche markets in publications like:

Backpacker magazine

Outside magazine

Group Tour

Saltscapes magazine

Birds & Blooms

Birdwatcher magazine

Paddler magazine

Yankee magazine

Maine magazine

We would like to be able to advertise in broadcast markets in the southern New England, NY, NJ, mid Atlantic regions, including the Boston Globe, New York Times, the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Washington Post.

Co-Op Efforts

In what type(s) of co-op effort, if any, is your group participating?

Internal, e.g. A local matching program with hotels and inns., External, e.g. Partnerships with other groups., State-wide, e.g. Coordinated intra-state vacation effort in partnership with the MOT, participate in MOT/PSA

Please describe in further detail your co-op efforts:

The Maine Highlands works in partnership with member Chambers and CVB in supporting the creation of marketing material. We partner with other regions at trade and travel shows. We participate in the MOT's travel show program. The Maine Highlands also co-ops with Bangor International Airport to host media receptions at direct flight locations.

Website Development & Maintenance

If you currently have a website, please provide us with your URL:

URL: www.themainehighlands.com

Please provide a brief description of the overall goal of your site and the functionality that the site offers to its visitors:

The overall goal of The Maine Highlands website is to provide details and contact information that will assist potential visitors in planning their vacation. We participate the techshare program and enjoy the benefits of integrated data for events, organizations, packages and specials. The Maine Highlands website is intended to allow visitors to enjoy images of the region, explore activities, lodging accommodations, dining options, and request further information. They can link directly to the hotels, restaurants, and outfitters. Descriptions are available to learn about the different areas of the region, their history, and recreational assets.

Please provide a brief description of the intended strategy for improvement over the next one to two years:

The Maine Highlands website was revamped and relaunched in February 2012. At that time, new copy was written and more content was developed. We plan to update the existing website during the year and put to use the images from our photography project to freshen up the site. As we work towards the design of our new visitors guide, we plan to make changes to the website that would create a cohesive look and feeling to the website. When we complete the video project, we will add pages to support viewing them. Changes to the Office of Tourism's data sharing platform will certainly affect the plan for our website.

Visitor Database

Do you collect and compile information on your visitors (names, addresses, areas of interest, etc.)?

Yes

If so, please describe how the database is currently structured and how it is used for marketing and communication initiatives:

The Maine Highlands keeps data from website users who subscribe and request information.

Current items included:

Email address

contact frequency

name

address

preferences of interest

seasons

We send regional information to those who request it. In the coming weeks, we will complete an FY13 project that includes establishing an account with Constant Contact. We plan to create an email newsletter and instigate regular mailings to subscribers.

Budget Summary

Current Projects

Project 1: Administrative Costs

Description: The Administrative fee cannot exceed 20% of the regional grant allocation and does not require a match.

MTMPP Award: \$23,000.00

Project 2: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Project Type: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows: Registration, Operation, Exhibit Design & Upgrade

Description: The Maine Highlands participates in many travel, consumer, and trade shows within our fly and drive markets.

Element 1: Maine Office of Tourism Travel Show Partners Program

Project: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Element Description: The travel show partners program was a great benefit in the 2013 show season. The Maine Highlands would like to participate in this program once again. The shows of interest include Boston Globe Travel Show, New York Times Travel Show, Philadelphia Inquirer Travel Show and the Washington DC Travel & Adventure Show.

Timeline: The Maine Highlands will indicate interest in the above mentioned shows to Margaret Hoffman at the Maine Office of Tourism. Once approved, we will begin planning travel arrangements, staffing, and will follow through each show until it has been completed.

Tracking: The Maine Highlands will track website activity, visitor requests, and phone calls that correspond to the show's geographical location to see whether our attendance has garnered increased visitation. The Maine Office of Tourism will be tracking this project as well and will report back to the regions.

Target Market: At all of these shows, the travel consumer is the target. The shows we have selected are shows that we would not be able to afford. The target audience are the regional markets that are reached by each of the publications hosting the show in the cases of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. With the Washington DC show, the target audience is both the traveler who aspires to visit Maine in their lifetimes, have already been to the Maine coast but are unaware of The Maine Highlands region, and the adventure market who is interested in many of the regions offerings such as rafting, hiking, climbing, biking, etc.

Rationale: The collaborative effort of the Maine Office of Tourism with the regions to create a unified Maine presence at these shows makes a much larger impact than a single region could do alone. A big impact translates to more attention which ultimately equals more leads. The ability to participate in travel shows that reach large audiences and result in high attendance is something we could not achieve as a stand alone region.

Partners: The Maine Office of Tourism and any other region that participates in the blocks of space reserved for the Maine tourism contingent. A benefit of the group participation is the allowance to send more of our regional guides to these shows and having a member who is invested in the region to serve as an information resource to attendees interested in what is available.

Budget Description: The budget for this project will include the the partner fee of \$250 per show paid to the Maine Office of Tourism for participation. Travel expenses for the staff person or volunteer to attend will also be paid for out of this budget. If a volunteer attends a show for our region, the volunteer's time will be considered as in kind match. Funds paid out by our members for the volunteers will be considered as cash match. All of the shows in the partnership programs are in drive or fly markets. Those in the fly markets could also be staffed by Bangor International Airport staff. Funds paid by BGR will be considered as cash match.

Budget figures below are calculated with no cash match and with \$120 in kind, presuming BGR's staffing of New York Times travel show. Commitments will be confirmed upon MOT approval.

MTMPP Award: \$6,000.00
Cash Match: \$0.00
In-Kind Match: \$1,200.00

Element 2: Eastern States Expo

Project: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Element Description: The Maine Highlands has had a continuing presence at this show for years. This show really allows the region to come into contact with the drive market from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York. The Big E is especially important for the areas in our region with outdoor adventure offerings such as snowmobiling, fishing, and hiking.

Timeline: This show will take place from September 13 to September 29, 2013. For this year's show, we have been offered the full 17 days of operation. Discussions have already begun with potential volunteers and partners for this event. A block of hotel rooms has been tentatively reserved for staff and volunteers if needed. We have also received notice of interest to partner with The Maine Beaches and have extended the offer to the Downeast Acadia Region and also, for the first time, to our sub regions. Once we have received MOT approval, we will begin confirming volunteers for coverage and partnerships. We will also begin advertising for our brochure distribution program.

The project is expected to be completed once the show dates have passed and all expenses have been accounted for.

Tracking: Business partners who participate in the brochure distribution opportunities have spoken of the direct sales generated by this show. The Maine Highlands will track the success of this event by studying the website analytics during and after the show to see if there is an increased number of visits generated from the show's area range.

Target Market: The market for this show is the travel consumer from Massachusetts and surrounding states, Connecticut and New York. Since this show is attended by people from all over the US and Canada, the target market is the travel consumer with an interest in visiting Maine and The Maine Highlands. Some of our niche markets can also be reached at this show, such as snowmobilers, fishing and hunting enthusiasts, and those with ancestral or historical ties to the region.

Rationale: This show and market have proven to be productive for our region. We will exhibit here until it proves otherwise or the structure of the Maine building is changed by the Department of Agriculture.

Though rates for booth space have increased over the past few years, we feel that there is enough interest from the market and from our member chambers to warrant this year's attendance.

Partners: In 2011, The Maine Highlands partnered with The Maine Beaches for the first week of the show. This proved to be a successful cooperative relationship that was repeated in 2012. Again for 2013, the board of The Maine Beaches has approved sharing the booth with us for 10 days.

This year we will try a new partnering program. We hope to gain support from our member chambers by offering the shared space specifically for their members and their regional guides would be highlighted for the days of support. We feel this would successfully lower the cost for The Maine Highlands and work for the regions in the same manner that the MOT travel shows do for The Maine Highlands.

The region supports a brochure distribution program, where members of the member chambers of commerce and CVB can participate in all the regional trade shows by paying to distribute their individual brochures within the regional booth.

Budget Description: The budget for this project will cover the booth fee, travel expenses, staff time at the show and in marketing efforts prior to the show.

The Maine Highlands partners for this show will pay for the time at the show. Their contribution will be considered cash match for this project. Cash match will also be earned through the brochure distribution opportunity offered to our member businesses.

Volunteer time contributed by member chambers and businesses will be considered in kind match.

MTMPP Award: \$6,900.00

Cash Match: \$2,700.00

In-Kind Match: \$4,400.00

Element 3: World Fishing & Outdoor Expo

Project: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Element Description: This will be the sixth year at this show. Suffern, New York is a great market for our outdoor recreation visitors. This show has proven to be a great investment for our region, with special focus on the niche sporting market. This year we will be including several new pieces of marketing material that are specific to this market, including a fly fishing map developed by the Piscataquis County sub grant and our new regional map.

Timeline: The World Fishing & Outdoor Expo will be held February 27th through March 2nd, 2014. Upon funding approval, hotel rooms will be reserved. When available, we will register for the booth space. Having exhibited at this show for many years, we receive early registration information and will be prepared to reserve space at a discounted rate. A volunteer to staff this show has already come forward, replacing Bob Hamer who has been the contact and fishing expert for this show. We will look for another volunteer to help staffing the long hours of this 3 day show. In January, we will begin advertising for the brochure distribution opportunity and coordinate show materials.

Volunteers will travel 2/26/14, set up at the show, exhibit 2/27/14-3/2/14, then pack up and travel to Maine 3/3/14.

Project completion is anticipated within when final expenses are accounted for.

Tracking: Tracking for this show can be done by observing spikes in specific visits from New York and other geographical locations to our regional website and by monitoring our visitor information request. Tracking will also be done through our business partners that are participating in the region's brochure distribution program. The region encourages participants to keep track of where their guests heard about them.

Target Market: The targeted audience for this show is the sportsman from New York and surrounding areas.

Rationale: Two of our largest sub regions, the Moosehead Lake and Mt Katahdin areas are huge outdoor sporting locations, for both fishing and hunting. We send our most knowledgeable outdoor sports enthusiasts to represent the region at this show.

Partners: The region supports a brochure distribution program, where members of the member chambers of commerce and CVB can participate in all the regional trade shows by paying to distribute their individual brochures within the regional booth.

Budget Description: The budget for this project covers: travel expenses, supplies, marketing efforts that are required to gain partnerships with our brochure distribution program, exhibition time and booth rental.

Cash match source is estimated from brochure distribution opportunity offered at the show.

In kind match source is the value of volunteers time preparing, traveling, and exhibiting at the show.

MTMPP Award: \$2,500.00

Cash Match: \$700.00

In-Kind Match: \$1,200.00

Element 4: Discover New England Summit

Project: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Element Description: Discover New England Tourism Summit and International Marketplace is an annual conference aimed at educating the New England hospitality industry about international tourism marketing and forming the connections between suppliers and buyers. The summit has a really unique "speed-date" format that gives suppliers the chance to meet with tour operators, receptive operators and travel media to sell their product. The conference location rotates around the New England states each year.

The international market seems very interested in discovering that there is more to Maine. We are seeing an increased visitation from the Netherlands, French and German operators and press.

Timeline: The 2014 Discover New England Summit will take place May 19th through May 22nd, 2014 in Mystic CT.

Historically, registration information has not become available until mid October. Once announced, we will register for the event and reserve accommodations.

Approximately 6 weeks prior to the event, DNE announces the availability of buyer lists, those who have registered as buyers and will participate in this event. Vendors like our region can then request meetings with buyers.

Meeting schedules are released in the weeks prior to the summit. After these are available, we will research the buyers we will be meeting with and prepare to present relevant information.

Project will be considered complete after final expenses from summit are accounted for.

Tracking: The effectiveness of this show can be determined by the reception to the region's product offerings in the marketplace and by any press that the region may receive from the travel writers that attend. The addition of our regions information to international tour operator's itineraries, perhaps the addition of a day or a route through the area, would be an indicator of success of this summit.

Target Market: International tour operators, receptive operators, and travel writers are the immediate target audience for this project. Ultimately the goal is to have more international visitors as a result of the exposure from the summit.

Rationale: The Discover New England summit is an opportunity to speak directly with people who are planning tour routes and activities in New England for the international traveler. Making them aware of our region's assets can lead to more visits by groups or individuals on planned tours.

Partners: Not applicable for this show.

Budget Description: The budget for this show includes: travel expenses, supplies, staff time in preparation and execution and the show's registration fee.

MTMPP Award: \$1,500.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Element 5: Saltscapes Expo

Project: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Element Description: This will be the sixth year that the region will be exhibiting at the Saltscapes Expo. Located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the region has found that this market is one that is already visiting us. The interaction level with visitors at this show is unlike any other show that we attend. People love Maine and The Maine Highlands region is often a stop along the way. Many plan trips for shopping in Bangor, making this show a great showcase for the Greater Bangor region.

Timeline: The Saltscapes show for 2014 will be held 4/25 - 4/27/14, with travel days on 4/24 & 4/28.

When registration is available, we will register for the space early to qualify for a discounted rate. Hotel reservations will be made at the same time. Discussion will begin regarding volunteers and staffing for this show.

In mid February, our brochure distribution flyer will go out to our members for them to share with their members. Coordinating payments and product will be shortly afterwards.

Organization of show materials will take place in the days prior to travel.

Project will be considered completed after final expenses are accounted for.

Tracking: Tracking for this show can be done by observing spikes in specific visits from the Nova Scotia area, surrounding providences and other geographical locations to our regional website and by monitoring our visitor information request. Tracking will also be done through our business partners that are participating in the region's brochure distribution program. The region encourages participants to keep track of where their guests heard about them.

The 2013 Saltscapes Expo included a partnership opportunity with DART. A new addition of a sweepstakes offer became the method to gather attendee information to conduct a conversion study. As

of this time, the conversion study has not been completed but when completed, will be used to measure ROI and viability.

Target Market: Consumers/Travelers from the Atlantic Canada market. This is an especially important show for the Bangor area and directly targets Canadians who come to the region to shop. Important not only during the back-to-school and Christmas shopping seasons, the Canadian tourist from the Eastern Provinces can be seen in the region year round. We feel that reinforcing the assets of the Greater Bangor area is fundamental in supporting this part of our region.

Rationale: With 30% of the passengers who fly out of the Bangor International Airport being Canadian, and busloads of Canadian shoppers before the holidays, we know the Canadians are coming to the region. Our goal with participating at Saltscapes is to provide them with information about all the other opportunities they have when visiting The Maine Highlands. We hope to encourage longer stays and more frequent visits.

Partners: For Saltscapes 2012 and 2013, The Maine Highlands partnered with Downeast Acadia Regional Tourism. We shared the booth and space and distributed brochures from both regions. We hope to repeat this successful pairing in 2014, but this is not confirmed at this time. Other co-op opportunities include our brochure distribution opportunity that members can participate in and the ability to send a representative from their organization to this show.

Budget Description: The budget for this project covers: travel expenses, supplies, marketing efforts that are required to gain partnerships with our brochure distribution program, exhibition time and booth rental. In 2013, the budget also contained funds for a special landing page created for this event which contained an entry form to a sweepstakes jointly offered by both regions. It is not known at this time whether we will offer this in 2014. The decision will be based on the success of the conversion study.

The cash match will come from the brochure distribution program and the in kind will be based on the value of the volunteer's time. DART's contribution, if the region decides to participate again, has not been calculated into this budget.

MTMPP Award: \$3,400.00

Cash Match: \$400.00

In-Kind Match: \$800.00

Element 6: New England Tourism Trade Shows

Project: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Element Description: In partnership with the New England Tourism Center, The Maine Highlands is able to get our regional brochure out into the Canadian market economically and effectively. We are also able to participate in their road show offering which gets our region into the upstate New York market, as well as several locations throughout Canada.

Timeline: The project begins when the grant cycle starts and ends when the cycle concludes.

Tracking: The region receives leads from New England Tourism Center and we also follow up with any specific road show locations. Tracking this project can also be done through our website's analytics and through visitor information requests.

Target Market: Consumer

Rationale: By allowing the NE-TC to distribute our guides at the shows they attend, we receive exposure to markets we could not afford to attend on our own.

Partners: Not applicable for this project.

Budget Description: The budget for this project is used to cover brochure distribution costs and program costs with NE-TC, as well as shipping.

MTMPP Award: \$1,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 3: Sports Commission

Project Type: Special Projects

Description: The Maine Highlands will participate with the Maine Office of Tourism in a collaborative effort with six of the seven other regions to support a Sports Commission to examine trends and opportunities and encourage Maine as a location for sports events, both traditional and alternative.

Element 7: Sports Commission

Project: Sports Commission

Element Description: The Maine Highlands will participate with the Maine Office of Tourism in a collaborative effort with six of the seven other regions to support the Maine Sports Commission which was established to examine trends and opportunities and encourage Maine as a location for sports events, both traditional and alternative.

Timeline: This is the 2ND in a three year commitment to this project. Segments of the project to be provided by the board of the Maine Sports Commission.

Tracking: The Maine Highlands is provided a monthly report by the board of the Maine Sports Commission. As bid opportunities become available, regions are informed. The Maine Highlands then shares this information with our member chambers and CVB. If the particular events requirements are capable of being met by any of the regional businesses or organizations, they are encouraged to apply or respond accordingly. It is assumed that if a member of the region is awarded the opportunity to host an event, The Maine Highlands, the regional chamber, and the potential venue would see increased activity on their respective websites which could be tracked by analytics. The resulting increase in overnights, venue investment, and area business activity would be another indicator of the effectiveness of the project.

Target Market: From the perspective of the Maine Sports Commission, the target market for this project is the sporting commissioners, sporting event planners, group tour directors, and sports directors who have an interest in an alternate location for their event. Additional target specifics to be provided by the board of the Maine Sports Commission.

The Maine Highlands, in supporting the Maine Sports Commission with this project funding, is doing so with the goal of increased visitation to the region. As agent for the tourism industry in Maine, the Maine Sports Commission acts as representative to the markets of influence in the sports and events organization market.

Rationale: Partnering with the MOT and other regions in the support of this commission is expected to result in more sporting events being brought to Maine and to The Maine Highlands.

Budget Description: Money that is set aside for this project will go to the Maine State Sports Commission for expenses incurred in research, advertising, and operating expenses. Full accounting to be provided by the board of the Maine Sports Commission.

MTMPP Award: \$10,000.00

Cash Match: \$10,000.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 4: Fulfillment Leads

Project Type: Fulfillment: Brochures, Guides, Maps & Distribution

Description: Using qualified leads from TMH trade shows, MOT trade shows, the New England Tourism Center, print ad response, and information requests from our website and phone; follow up would be with consumers, travel agents, travel writers, and tour operators.

Element 8: Fulfillment Leads

Project: Fulfillment Leads

Element Description: In partnership with the trade shows that the Maine Office of Tourism and The Maine Highlands attends, this project would help foster and further the relationships formed on the show floor. Follow up would

include any correspondence with travel agents, travel writers, tour operators and consumers and would include costs incurred with direct mailings, shipping of materials and basic costs incurred with maintaining those relationships.

Timeline: This element would run as needed throughout the grant cycle and conclude at its end.

Tracking: Tracking this project will be done through gauging interest from the parties involved, tracking articles and other media generated through lead follow up, whether gathered at a trade show or passed along to the region.

Target Market: Consumers, travel agents, travel writers, and tour operators.

Rationale: Our goal is to increase the region's visibility by developing relationships with the travel industry and the media. Leads generated by these contacts can only help the tourism industry in Maine on the whole. Press coverage, relationships with tour operators and travel professionals will increase visitation to our region.

Partners: We will be using our own sources for leads, from our website, phone calls, as well as qualified leads from the MOT, the New England Tourism Center, and those generated by our marketing efforts in general.

Budget Description: The budget includes coordination for the follow ups, possible printing, shipping and any travel expenses.

MTMPP Award: \$1,100.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Element 9: Visitors Guide Supplements

Project: Fulfillment Leads

Element Description: The Maine Highlands tourism region will partner with our sub-region chamber of commerce members and GBCVB member to help supplement their 2014 publications. The project will coordinate one to two pages of advertisements or information consistently through all the six guidebooks. This influx of cash will also help the sub-regions fund the production of this vital visitor resource for their area. This project has proven very successful in the past.

Timeline: The project will start at the beginning of the grant cycle and conclude at the end.

Tracking: Tracking will be done by monitoring our website traffic and analytics and through our visitor inquiries.

Target Market: The Greater Bangor CVB and the Chambers of Commerce (six sub regional members) as well as travelers interested in visiting Maine and The Maine Highlands region.

Rationale: The Maine Highlands will partner with our Chambers/CVB to help supplement their 2014 publications. This influx of cash will also help the sub-regions that are having a hard time producing vital visitor resources for their area.

Partners: By supplementing the cost of the regional marketing material, we become tourism partners to our member chambers and CVB. Guides are distributed by the individual chambers and CVB, as well as by The Maine Highlands at designated trade shows and packet mailing.

Budget Description: The budget for this project includes: creation of advertisement/editorial for sub-region guidebooks and payment to sub-regions.

MTMPP Award: \$12,000.00

Cash Match: \$25,000.00

In-Kind Match: \$6,000.00

Project 5: Advertising

Project Type: Paid Advertising: Print, Broadcast, Online

Description: The Maine Highlands recognizes the importance of our website as the ultimate information resource for our region. It is also a formidable method of data collection and valuable gauge for trends. With this in mind, we plan to use advertising tools to promote website visitation. Our advertising plan will include the

creation of niche targeted ads to compliment ads designed in FY13. Shopping and entertainment, outdoor recreational interests and bird watching target markets will be the focus of this year's advertising.

Element 10: Print ad design

Project: Advertising

Element Description: Often times advertising opportunities arise that we want to take advantage of. Publications that are financially out of range for us have space they want to fill as they near their deadlines so they sell whatever space they have leftover at severely discounted rates. The difficulty with this is that their deadlines are often extreme and we currently don't have ads designed to be able to quickly send artwork to the publications. Our goal with this project would be to have a series of ads created with a consistent look, feel, and message. We would have them created in a variety of standard advertising specifications.

This would allow us to send the camera ready artwork to the publication, taking advantage of the discounts, without serious interruption to workflow. The FY 13 budget contained \$1000 for this purpose. We intend to build on the designs developed and expand our resources into designs appropriate for a larger variety of ad sizes and formats, including banner ads.

Timeline: We would begin the design work at the beginning of the grant cycle. We want to have the ads created and stored for use throughout the year.

Tracking: In the past, we've been forced to turn down some great advertising opportunities due to the lack of pre-designed ads and grant manager's time constraints. Often discounted ad space is available at great rates but with short deadlines. We plan to add to the ads designed in FY13 and create designs specifically for niche markets. We expect that with online ads we would see click through results that we could use for tracking purposes. With print ads, The Maine Highlands plans to design them with an offer, code or landing page reference that will help us determine effectiveness.

Target Market: Ultimately the target market is the consumer who sees the ads and has an interest in visiting The Maine Highlands. Though we do intend to use some general interest ads in broader markets, we plan to design more niche specific ads to be used in publications targeted at the recreational/outdoor activities market - birding, hiking, biking, and canoe/paddle. We also intend to design a series of ads to target the Canadian market with an interest in shopping, dining, and urban opportunities of the Greater Bangor area.

Rationale: Over the course of the year, many opportunities arise to advertise in publications at discounted rates. These publications regular ad rates are too expensive for The Maine Highlands to advertise in. These discounted rates are offered to fill space that would otherwise go unsold as the publication goes to print, known as remnant space. Because of the nature of these types of ads, at the last minute, the grant manager must immediately divert attention from other projects to coordinate the creation of the artwork needed. Our goal with this project is to expand upon our series of ads designed in FY 13 to include niche markets that can easily be sent to these publications as the opportunities arise.

Media Type: Print and online advertising artwork would be created. The Maine Highlands will draw upon photography assets and use design elements that will compliment our planned regional guide and website.

Co-op Opportunity: In the past, we have shared ad space with the Bangor International Airport and Downeast Acadia Regional Tourism. There is the possibility of partnering with them again on some of the ads we create. Niche markets also allow for co-op opportunities with our sub-regions. An example of this would include working with the Greater Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau to create an ad to place in Canada's eastern provinces that would promote shopping for Christmas or back to school.

Budget Description: The budget for this project includes the cost of a professional designer and the cost of time to facilitate the work's completion.

MTMPP Award: \$3,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$250.00

Element 11: Ad space

Project: Advertising

Element Description: The Maine Highlands is planning to secure ad space, both print and online, in niche markets that compliment the Office of Tourism's media calendar as well as the seasonal opportunities of the region, such as foliage and outdoor enthusiasts, shoppers and festival goers.

Timeline: Upon approval of this project, we will secure ad space appropriate to the region's seasonal cycle. The project will begin immediately by contracting with publications. It will end before the end of the grant cycle

dependent upon publication timing.

Tracking: Print publications generally offer to collect leads through their response cards. They then forward a database of leads for us to use to send information. Online advertising would be gauged through either the click through or by general increases in activity on our website. We can track the unique leads that come in off the advertisements through website analytics and direct phone calls based on the call to action that we use within our marketing. All sub regions would be informed of the timing of the ads placed and asked to report direct responses from either their members or their website.

Target Market: Our target market with this project is anyone interested in traveling to the state of Maine and specifically The Maine Highlands region. Outdoor recreation and shopping have been proven to be some of the most popular reasons people visit the region. A main focus of this project would be placing strategic advertisement that hit these segments.

Rationale: Through advertisements we can educate potential visitors about the many different vacation options that The Maine Highlands has to offer. Increased visitation and increased length of stay are our main goals. We know that our region has assets that appeal to specific niche markets. With targeted advertising, we expect to inform and entice visitors to explore the area further. The region is home to species of birds that are on the birder's life list, so we plan to advertise in one of the birding publications. Outdoor enthusiasts are another market we plan to target, making bikers, hikers, and paddlers aware of the region's assets. Shopping and live entertainment are additional attractions that we plan to highlight in our ads this year.

Media Type: Print, online.
Birds & Blooms or Birdwatcher magazine

Co-op Opportunity: The Maine Highlands is always open to co-op advertising opportunities with other regions, the state, or our sub-regions. This project lends itself to co-op opportunities with multiple sub-regions, such as the Greater Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau for shopping and entertainment promotions and with the Katahdin and Moosehead Lake regions for advertising promoting outdoor activities such as hiking and birding.

Budget Description: The project's budget covers the cost of placing ads, cost of creative time, and cost of coordinating the cooperative opportunities between entities.

MTMPP Award: \$10,400.00

Cash Match: \$500.00

In-Kind Match: \$500.00

Element 12: Maine Invites You

Project: Advertising

Element Description: The Maine Invites You travel publication is a very important piece to the tourism-marketing puzzle. MIY is the state of Maine's official travel planner and is taken to all of the state's pavilion trade shows. It is extremely important as a region to have a strong regional representation through individual member's advertisements. The cooperative advertising opportunity is extended to all sub-regions within The Maine Highlands tourism region. This year it is a goal to increase the regional representation within the publication by one page of advertisements.

Timeline: Focus on this project will begin after the grant has been approved. It has been proven that the earlier the region releases the sales materials to the sub regions, the better the response. The Maine Tourism Association decides all of the space reservation deadlines for the individual page buys.

Tracking: Tracking will be done through our visitor packet requests, direct phone calls and the website's analytics.

Target Market: The target market for this publication is the traveler that is interested in finding out more about Maine. This publication is distributed in a wide variety of methods and locations. It is THE publication for the Office of Tourism and is distributed at travel and trade shows, at visitor's centers throughout the state, and included in information requests through the Office's website. The target market is broad based and generalized. Though we do strive to distinguish the region within the publication, it is a venue for sub regional vignettes that highlight each areas assets with the goal of drawing more attention to each and to The Maine Highlands as a whole.

Rationale: The Maine Invites You travel publication is a very important piece of the tourism marketing puzzle. MIY is the state of Maine's official travel planner and is taken to all of the state's pavilion trade shows. It is extremely important to have strong regional representation through individual member's advertisements. The cooperative advertising opportunity is extended to all sub-regions within The Maine Highlands tourism region.

Media Type: Print

Co-op Opportunity: The Maine Highlands works within the sub-regions to create cooperative advertising pages within the MIY publication. The chambers of commerce and the Greater Bangor CVB sell the ads to their members and merge their advertising pages together to create a cohesive look and feel to the regional section. This is our largest co-op opportunity of the year. Member chambers and CVB work hard to sell ads, design their pages, and coordinate with other areas and with the TMH grant manager to complete this project.

Budget Description: The budget for this project includes the coordination of the pages between the sub-regions and for the cohesive page designs for the regional section.

MTMPP Award: \$1,500.00

Cash Match: \$18,000.00

In-Kind Match: \$2,500.00

Project 6: Create new regional guide

Project Type: Brochures

Description: The Maine Highlands needs an updated regional guide

Element 13: New Regional Visitor's Guide

Project: Create new regional guide

Element Description: The Maine Highlands needs an updated regional guide. With the last guide having been created in the FY 09 grant cycle, we feel that it is necessary to refresh the look and provide current information about the region.

Timeline: Upon approval, we will create a storyboard and determine the size and layout of the guide. We will create a request for proposal for the design work and begin assembling images and writing copy. Working with the awarded designer, we will complete the layout by the end of November. Another request for proposal would go out to solicit bids for printing the guide. A vendor will be selected, final layout confirmed and sent to printer. Our goal for completion on this project would be to have the guides ready for distribution for the summer 2014 season.

Tracking: We will use the statistics of the website and from other trade shows to gauge if TMH as a region is getting increasing hits to our site and affiliate sites.

Target Market: The traveling public is the target audience for this budget element. We plan to distribute this guide to fulfill requests for information from the website, at travel and consumer shows, at tourist information centers in the state, and at any and all opportunities that arise.

Rationale: Our current visitor's guide will be four years old when this project is completed. Some data is out of date, businesses have been added, others closed, and we have access to new images to give it a fresher, more contemporary, easier to read guide to The Maine Highlands.

Distribution Plan: This will be the main marketing piece for the coming few years so we expect to distribute the final product in every avenue possible - we will distribute at travel/trade/consumer shows, at visitor's centers, as fulfillment for website information requests, at the Bangor International Airport info kiosks and at our regional chambers of commerce and CVB.

Budget Description: The budget will include staff time for initial design/concepts, writing and distributing two requests for proposals, creating content. Costs for professional design and layout will be included as are expenses related to printing, packaging and transport to distribution.

MTMPP Award: \$25,000.00

Cash Match: \$7,500.00

In-Kind Match: \$3,500.00

Project 7: Video Creation

Project Type: Asset Development: Professional Photography, Video

Description: The Maine Highlands would like to create video segments that could be added to our website, our YouTube channel, and be available to be used in campaigns.

Element 14: Video Asset Creation

Project: Video Creation

Element Description: The Maine Highlands would like to create video to be used on our website, YouTube channel and in TV advertising. We will use some existing video that was created as part of another project. We hope to integrate the existing video with new and updated footage that would result in longer segments with fresh appeal.

Timeline: Upon approval of funding, The Maine Highlands would gather existing video and determine need. We would then create a request for proposal and begin soliciting bids for the project. We plan to include foliage footage so filming would need to be done during the season. Our goal for completion of this project would be at the end of December.

Tracking: Since the use of the footage would be across several advertising types, tracking would have to be multi faceted. When used on our website, we would monitor Google analytics to track visits to the video page. On our YouTube channel, we would need to establish a benchmark by which to monitor increases, given that this would be a new type of advertising for us. When we work to create an ad we can then use for TV, the overall campaign will be tracked by monitoring increased activity on our website, requests for information, and feedback from members based on their experiences.

Target Market: The target market for this element is wide spread. We believe that each use of the video will result in exposure to different markets. Adding video to our website will reach visitors coming to our site, resulting in longer time on site and more information requests and downloads of our digital guide. The video on the YouTube channel would reach potential visitors searching for recreational activities. The portions that would be used in TV ads has the potential of reaching a broader market, but has yet to be determined.

Rationale: In discussing potential avenues for advertising, we kept returning to the idea of television advertising. Costs for ad creation can be diminished by using video we have created. We are considering this as a first step in that direction. Our rationale in terms of video use on our website and YouTube is simply the recognition that as a marketing tool, it is becoming an expected method of communicating.

Image Categories: Bangor downtown tour - highlight shops and restaurants
Greenville - Moosehead Lake Seaplane fly in, recreational opportunities
Katahdin area recreational opportunities
Fishing
Biking
Hiking
Dining
Accommodations

Budget Description: The budget for this project will include the cost of hiring a videographer to film in the region and edit the footage into manageable segments.

MTMPP Award: \$4,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 8: Media Events

Project Type: Public & Media Relations: Familiarization Tours, Media Events

Description: The Bangor International Airport and The Maine Highlands partner to educate the travel industry professionals in the airport's nonstop flight locations about our region's recreation and vacation opportunities.

The Maine Highlands also intends to attend the semi-annual Maine Media Marketplace, an event that

introduces or reinforces Maine as a vacation destination by offering the opportunity to meet members of the travel media in New York City. Writers, bloggers, and publishers are invited to attend this evening event. Maine tourism related businesses and organizations are given the opportunity to send a representative that can connect with the media attendees.

Element 15: Receptions with Bangor International Airport

Project: Media Events

Element Description: This project was created to enhance and educate Bangor International Airport's nonstop flight location's travel industry representatives and airlines about our regional recreation opportunities. Past events of this type include a luncheon with travel writers and a reception and presentation to travel agents in the Philadelphia area and in the Fort Lauderdale direct flight locations.

Timeline: This project would begin in the fall of 2013 and be available through the end of the fiscal year or until funding is expensed.

Events are dependent upon direct flight locations, BGR's marketing allowances, and other market fluctuations that effect our involvement.

Tracking: The media mentions, FAM tours, and articles that result from meetings with travel writers will be one way to gauge the effectiveness of this type of event. Receptions with travel agents generally reach a larger group but are more difficult to track. It is assumed that by introducing or reinforcing the region's attributes to agents, they are better prepared to suggest to their clients that a visit to The Maine Highlands would be worthwhile. We would expect to see an increase in traffic to our website. BGR would see increased flights inbound from the location. Members and businesses in the region would see more guests from the target area.

Target Market: The target market for this project is the travel industry professional, agents and writers and airlines that operate with direct flights into Bangor International Airport. Travel industry professionals would be the target for the specific event/luncheon/reception but ultimately their zone of influence, the traveling public from their area, is the end target. The assumption is that writers and agents will refer to our region in their articles and to their clients.

Rationale: This project was created to enhance and educate Bangor International Airport's nonstop flight location's travel industry representatives and airlines about our regional recreation opportunities. We strive to peak their interest in the region, to encourage FAM trips, and to facilitate the distribution of information about the region. By discussing the benefits of travel to The Maine Highlands via the Bangor International Airport, reception attendees are given a taste of Maine. This region has already seen success from our Philadelphia and Fort Lauderdale receptions in 2011 & 2012.

Budget Description: The budget for this project includes travel expenses, event coordination, additional marketing that would be needed, and the cost of time for participation. Post event follow up fulfillment to leads, staff time, potential sweepstakes prizes and giveaway items/gift bags inclusions would also be included.

MTMPP Award: \$2,500.00

Cash Match: \$4,000.00

In-Kind Match: \$3,000.00

Element 16: Maine Media Marketplace

Project: Media Events

Element Description: This biannual event, which is planned by Nancy Marshall Communications, brings businesses throughout Maine together with a target group of travel media for a networking event.

Timeline: This show takes place in the spring of the year. The dates for the 2014 show have not been announced. Once announced, planning would begin. Transportation, accommodations, and other travel related plans would be made. We would also work with Nancy Marshall Communications to determine items to be included in gift bags for attendees.

Tracking: We would track the effectiveness of this event by following up with the writers and tracking the press that we get from the different travel media that we networked with. It is assumed that the writers and other press would proceed to plan to visit the area. Ultimately, we will be able to determine success by articles and references that result from the visits inspired by the event.

Target Market: High caliber editors, producers and writers are invited to this event. Held in New York City, considered the media hub of the country, the location of the Marketplace is intended to be convenient to attendees.

The lure of Maine food is also a considerable factor in the overall experience and participation in the gathering.

Rationale: As we seek to improve awareness of our region, continued focus on exposure is important. This event gives us that exposure in a way that is not available to us throughout the rest of the year. The ability to get face to face time with someone who writes about travel allows us the opportunity to reach them on a different, more personal level, making a connection that could prompt their travel to the region which could result in articles, blog posts, links or other valuable press.

Budget Description: The budget for this item includes: booth space rental, travel expenses, supplies, and staffing for exhibition time. We would also need to include funds for a promotional product to include in the gift bag offered to attendees.

MTMPP Award: \$1,200.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project Quick Reference

	<u>MTMPP Award</u>	<u>Cash Match</u>	<u>In-Kind Match</u>
Administrative Costs			
Administrative Costs	\$23,000.00		
Travel Trade & Consumer Shows			
Maine Office of Tourism Travel Show Partners Program	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00
Eastern States Expo	\$6,900.00	\$2,700.00	\$4,400.00
World Fishing & Outdoor Expo	\$2,500.00	\$700.00	\$1,200.00
Discover New England Summit	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Saltscapes Expo	\$3,400.00	\$400.00	\$800.00
New England Tourism Trade Shows	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Sports Commission			
Sports Commission	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
Fulfillment Leads			
Fulfillment Leads	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Visitors Guide Supplements	\$12,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$6,000.00
Advertising			
Print ad design	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$250.00
Ad space	\$10,400.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
Maine Invites You	\$1,500.00	\$18,000.00	\$2,500.00
Create new regional guide			
New Regional Visitor's Guide	\$25,000.00	\$7,500.00	\$3,500.00
Video Creation			
Video Asset Creation	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Media Events			
Receptions with Bangor International Airport	\$2,500.00	\$4,000.00	\$3,000.00
Maine Media Marketplace	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Budget Summary

Proposed MTMPP Award:	\$115,000.00
Administrative Costs:	\$23,000.00
Cash Match:	\$68,800.00
In-Kind Match:	\$23,350.00
Total Match:	\$92,150.00
Total Proposed Budget:	\$207,150.00