



STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE
COMMUNITY AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Office of Economic Development

Sarah Palin, Governor
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Summer 2008 Visitor Volume Estimate Released

(Juneau, AK) Just over 1.7 million out-of-state visitors visited Alaska between May and September 2008, according to the newly released Alaska Visitor Statistics Program (AVSP) Visitor Volume report. Total visitors, measured by the mode of travel by which they exit the state, declined by 0.4 percent from Summer 2007. A 1.3 percent drop in visitors exiting by air was primarily responsible for the decline. Caryl McConkie, manager of the State's tourism development programs said, "Even though we had indications that international air visitors would be up this summer because of the weakened U.S. dollar, the increases in international visitors did not make up for the decreased numbers of domestic air travelers." The only growth segment was cruise exits, which increased a modest 1.1 percent.

Visitors exiting by highway and ferry continued a three year pattern of decline since 2005, decreasing by 6.8 percent and 2.8 percent respectively between 2007 and 2008. The number of visitors exiting via the Alcan Highway dropped by 18 percent; exits on the Haines Highway dropped by 15 percent; and exits on the Top of the World Highway dropped by 9 percent. Only exits on the Klondike Highway increased by 7 percent.

The visitor volume estimates are developed for the Summer and Fall/Winter periods for three consecutive years after the year-long AVSP survey project. The secondary research allows the State of Alaska and the travel industry the ability to track visitor trends in air, highway, ferry, and cruise transportation sectors.

The AVSP research is a statewide program periodically commissioned by the Alaska Office of Economic Development within the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development. The AVSP V project team was led by McDowell Group, an Alaska research and consulting firm, and was assisted by Davis, Hibbitts, & Midghall and DataPath Systems.

The AVSP report is available online at www.commerce.state.ak.us/oed/home.htm along with information about other Alaska Office of Economic Development tourism programs. In addition to the AVSP, these programs include the Alaska tourism marketing contract, *AlaskaHost* customer service training program, Developing Alaska Rural Tourism, Tourism Business Mentorship Program, the Tok Public Lands Information Center and the Alaska Film Program.

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