

## **Creating an Eco-Tour: Potential Items to Consider**

*Below, we have listed items to consider for an Eco-Tour whether it be self-guided, virtual, or guided. The topics are broken down by general categories.*

### Planning Committee/Organizations Involved

- What partners do we need on board to plan a tour?
- Who is in charge of making this happen?
- If a joint effort, who is the key contact agency or person for visitors with questions?
- Do we need volunteers?

### Basics

- Will the tour be virtual, self-guided, or guided?
- How often will the tour be offered?
- How often, if at all, will the tour be updated? Who will update the tour?
- Are we targeting a special interest group (e.g. a tour for walkers, cyclists, etc.)?

### Marketing

- How will the tour be promoted or marketed?
- Are any press releases needed?
- What audience are we targeting?
- Are there any social media networks of which we could take advantage?
- Should the project be kick-off be tied to another event (e.g. Earth Day, etc.)?

### Messages

- What “green” behavioral changes or action (if any) do we hope visitors make after completing the tour?
- What do we want visitors to take away from each stop?
- What overall message do we want to share?
- Are we encouraging carpooling?
- What mission statement or “Who We Are” do we want to share about our organization?
- Do we want to further promote anything about our organization(s), sponsors, funders during the tour?
- Do we need to include reminders, such as Do Not Pick Plants, or Do Not Hike Off Trail, Take any Trash you Generate at this Site with You, etc.?
- What clothing, maps, bug spray, etc. do we recommend visitors bring with them?

### Budget

- Do we need sponsors for our Eco-Tour?
- What is our budget, both incoming and outgoing funding or costs?
- What fee will we charge for the tour?
- Are there grant funds available for the project?

### Material

- How will tour information be available to the public?
- Are photos or images needed for each site?
- Is a written description needed for each site?

- Do tour guides need a “cheat sheet” or script for each stop?
- Will the Eco-Tour have an online map (e.g. Google Maps)?
- Will the Eco-Tour need GPS points taken at each site?
- What online links should we provide?
- If directions are created from internet sources, can someone ground truth them?
- Where will we list our informational sources (i.e. citing data sources, image credits, etc.)
- Will audio be used at all on the tour?

#### Logistics

- Liability issues to consider
- Are there any special accommodations for accessibility to consider?
- Do we need to arrange transportation?
- What deadlines do we need to meet?

#### Route Planning

- Estimated time it takes to complete the tour
- Estimated time visitors will spend at each stop
- Seasonal nature of some stops (if any)
- Access of stops (public vs. private property)
- What unique features, best management practices, restorations, etc. do we want to highlight?
- Do we want to include “non-eco” sites on our tour, such as a Historical Marker or something that’s already on the way for added interest?
- What directions do visitors receive (e.g. paper map, online map, written directions, etc.)?
- If stops are at public facilities, do we need to list hours of operation, etc.?
- Do we need to arrange for speakers at certain stops?
- What order do we want the tour to go through? What is logical, or is there a benefit to planning our tour in a certain sequential order (e.g. starting at watershed headwaters or timing it so we end up in town at lunchtime)?
- Are we offering lunch or any other meals/snack stops?

By the way, an eco-tour I saw that was very well planned:

<http://www.bergenswan.org/resources.aspx?categoryid=21>