

## Profile

**Applicant:** Regional Application

**Grant Manager:** Mark Levesque

**Name of Organization:** Kennebec Valley Tourism Council

**Mailing Address:** 21 University Drive  
Augusta, ME. 04330

**Physical Address:** 21 University Drive  
Augusta, ME. 04330

**Office Hours:** 8-4

**Telephone Number:** 207-623-4559

**Fax Number:** (No Response)

**Date of Incorporation:** April 6th, 2005

**EIN:** 01-0458264

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

2004/2005 was a year of dramatic change for the Kennebec Valley Tourism Council(KVTC). The most prominent highlight of the year has been the rebuilding of the administrative structure of our organization. The KVTC removed single source provider, Evergreen Publications and Executive Director John Laitin. This was a major, long term change for the KVTC and came with many challenges. The steering committee put out RFPs for advertising work and hired Kathy Greene of Directions Marketing, Furtado Communications for design work, and Mark Levesque for grant administration. Directions Marketing was fired for not fulfilling its contracts with KVTC. Mark Levesque resigned as grant manager to take another position. The steering committee has learned a lot in this reconstruction process and is now interviewing for a new ED to execute the directives of the steering committee. Though these highlights of the past year seem difficult, the KVTC feels positive about the future and is rebuilding its organization to be stable and support its region with innovative and solid marketing plans to increase tourist visits to our region. This reconstructing is also directed at properly executing the office of tourism grant process. The second major highlight of 04/05 was the change in the look and feel of our website. Our website is a work in progress and will continue to improve in both content and promotion. The improvements done in 04/05 were based around a more modern look that represented our region well. The third major highlight of the council's work was the redesign of the regional snowmobile map and regional guidebook. The snowmobile map took longer than expected, but has a much nicer look than the old one and is now a two year map to extend value to advertisers through 06. The summer guidebook is still a work in progress, but is intended to be the promotional piece that best represents the entire region. Once this is completed it will be widely distributed.

### **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 05/06 fiscal year are straight forward and will be the basic foundation for moving the KVTC to a positive future and a leader of tourism marketing in our region and state wide. We plan to accomplish this by first, completing the rebuilding of our administrative structure and steering committee to ensure proper function of the organization long term, to best serve the tourism industry in our region through superior marketing plans and proper administration of the state office of tourism grant process. This goal will be realized through the interview and hiring of a new ED and grant administrator and the suring up of our steering committee and its sub-committees. The second primary goal for 05/06 is to complete the development of our core materials such as our snowmobile map, regional guidebook, website and other brochures to best describe and sell the attractions, activities, lodging, agriculture and other tourism based attributes of our region. This goal will also be fulfilled with the promotion of our website, distribution of these materials through inquiries to our website, and with the assistance of brochure distribution companies and cooperative trade show opportunities with OT and MTA. Answering and fulfillment services have been contracted and are being provided by the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce. The Third Primary goal for the year is to assist and partner with other tourism based organizations such as local chambers, cultural and heritage groups, the Raft Maine Association to utilize their marketing plans and help them generate tourist visits for our area. We plan to rely on these groups needs and experience to move this region forward in the coming year. These organization will have to apply for assistance with the KVTC and meet all criteria of the KVTC and The state OT, including documentation. These organizations will also have to provide the necessary matching funding for these grant dollars.

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

The Kennebec Valley Tourism Council's primary promotional strategy for tourism will be to place emphasis on those activities that are major attractions for in-state and out of state tourists. The region is comprised of very distinct areas, each with their own identity and attraction. The more northern parts of the region have a greater focus on fishing, rafting, site-seeing, hiking, and snowmobiling. The southern areas also have great outdoor activities during summer months, but also include cultural and civic events, fairs, shopping, unique dining, and vacationing. The Council's strategy will be to implement a wide variety of marketing partnership programs with other local organizations that understand their potential guests best and highlight all of the regions distinct areas with effective advertising. The Council's cooperative promotional efforts will generate inquiries, phone calls, and website visits from tourists. The Council will respond to those inquiries by providing answering and fulfillment services, which includes answering questions about the region, sending out additional information, brochures, guidebooks, maps, and responding to special requests. The effects of these programs will be measurable. Partner organizations will be required to measure the success of their programs and document their success for inclusion in OT grant reports. In summary our strategy for 05/06 is to, 1) produce superior materials, 2) Set up and execute solid distribution of those materials, and 3) Partner with regional organizations to support their efforts and generate direct tourism sales and visits for vendors in our region.

It is a component of these strategies to generate the needed financial match through ad sales in our materials and with a required match from partner organizations.

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

Our goals and strategies are consistent and fit with those of the office of tourism in that they are directed at actually producing interest and tourist visits to our region. Our strategies will be directed primarily toward out of state tourists with a minor focus on distribution of materials in state to attract visitors that are already in state up to our region.

Our materials and campaigns will also meet OT goals with inclusion of necessary state logos and themes on our materials.

Our intended strategies also fit that of the state OT by intending to be measurable and being properly documented. This has been an area of concern with OT in the past and is one that the new KVTC plans to address.

The Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign will be supported by the Council (at least at this point) and is viewed as an effective means with which to promote in-state attractions to in-state vacationers. This effort is also part of the OT's Strategic Five Year Plan.

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

The organizations' finances and budget shall be directly monitored by the Executive Director/Grant Manager and treasurer. Oversight of the budget and financial status shall be the responsibility of the Steering Committee. The Grant Manager and Treasurer shall brief the Steering Committee on a month by month basis on the current status of grant expenditures and how they are tracking with budget commitments. The Council's focus will be to meet all approved budget elements as a first priority, while maintaining all administrative expenses within the percentage allowed by the MTMPP Guidelines. Independent review and maintenance of the Council's financials and budgets are conducted by an independent outside company, Accounting Solutions CPA.

## 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.

The only research initiatives planned for 05/06 will be the collection of data and other supporting information that can be collected to establish the effectiveness of our marketing plans and initiatives. It is a key component of our marketing effort; to as best as possible determine how people find our materials, who those consumers are and what did they do while in our region. We plan to start this research with the most basic level of monitoring activity with direct questions to inquiries during answering and fulfillment and basic monitoring of web statistics. These basic steps will also be required of partner organizations applying for grant support.

## Public Relations

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

**Company:** PR is the responsibility of our Executive Director

**Address:** We are currently interviewing for this position and will report these details upon hire of this company or individual. Current Contact is the Steering Committee Chair  
Joseph Christopher  
Three Rivers  
P.O. Box 10  
The Forks, ME 04985

**Phone:** 207-831-7373

**Email Address:** joe@threeriversfun.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:

Joseph Christopher 831-7373  
Kim Lindlof 873-3315  
Peter Thompson 623-4559

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

Boston Globe  
Boston.com  
New England Cable networks  
Boston Magazine  
Any Greater New England newspapers or publications or online editorial  
Portland Press Herald

## Co-Op Efforts

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

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:

Co-operative efforts are one of the core goals of our 05/06 plan. Our marketing committee is in the process of developing ideas and selecting 05/06 marketing partners. It is our intention to use the remainder of our marketing budget after production and distribution of materials to support these partnership promotions. The Raft Maine Assoc. is a major tourism organization in our region and has requested assistance with its radio advertising budgets and PR campaigns. These are the type of programs we will be supporting this year. We hope to have interest and include support for some of the fairs and festivals in our region as well as other lodging and attraction vendors. We would like to ask for some latitude in detailing these programs until or selection process is completed before year end (June).

The Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign is supported by the Council and is viewed as an effective means with which to promote in-state attractions to in-state vacationers.

## Website Development & Maintenance

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

URL: [www.kennebecvalley.org](http://www.kennebecvalley.org)

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

Our website is informationally based and its reconstruction and improvement is still in progress. Its aim is to educate possible travelers of the many activities, attractions, shopping, cultural and heritage opportunities that exist in our area. Through the coming year, it is our intention to improve site functionality by providing more linking opportunities for regional vendors and attractions and improving the site's exposure through paid listings and improving its organic listings with search engines through site submission and improving content relevancy for the desired search phrases we are seeking. These strategies will increase distribution of our materials.

Maintenance and improvement of our site has been contracted to Furtado Design.

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

Our plan for improvement of our website over the next two years is similar to the approach we are using for our entire organization. We are striving to create a good foundation for our marketing efforts with our website. We will accomplish this by adjusting content to keep it current with events and attractions. Improving exposure through relevant content and paid listing. One of the largest improvements intended for our web advertising is to improve link possibilities and exposure for tourism vendors and attractions by adding clear, accessible links on our site to produce actual sales and visitors to the region. These links may be offered at very reasonable rates, but may be utilized to generate some matching funds. The adding of specific packages, discount rates and offers from region vendors is in the discussion phase and may become a tool, utilized to produce business for the region.

## 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:**

Our visitor and inquiry data base is in an infant stage. The data base of inquiries was maintained by Evergreen Publications and was not transferred to the council in their dismissal. Currently, we are simply collecting the data for inquiries only and will maintain this data for use in future promotions. We also plan to improve data collection on our website, through requests for materials and online contests. We also hope to implement the collection of permission based email addresses for use in future promotions.

## Budget Summary

**Current Projects**

**Project 1: NMC PR Package**

**Description:** The NMC PR Package includes: Assistance with the development of a "Most Wanted" media list, assistance with story development, one (1) special event feature story, and up to four (4) press releases written and distributed.

**MTMPP Award:** \$4,000.00

**Project 2: Snowmobile Campaign**

**Project Type:** Advertising

**Description:** This years Snowmobile campaign will consist of a reselling of ads and reprinting of our two year Map. We will distribute the map at many local vendors, through MTA brochure distribution and through promotion on or website.

**Element 1: Reprint Snowmobile Map**

**Project:** Snowmobile Campaign

**Element Description:** After selling more ads into our two year snowmobile map we will reprint a limited number of those maps for the new advertisers

**Timeline:** New Ads will be placed and reprinting of maps to be done by late September for fall distribution.

**Tracking:** We will track this program by the number of maps purchased at vendors through out the region and by tracking the number of requests for the map on line

**Target Market:** Snowmobilers from the greater north east looking to try riding in our region

**Rationale:** Snowmobiling is a large part of the year round economy in our region and needs the support of state grant dollars to flourish

**Media Type:** Print

**Co-op Opportunity:** Ads are offered to all local lodging and snowmobile oriented businesses in the region to create the matching dollars for the program

**Budget Description:** Approximately \$2000 for reprint

**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

**Element 2: Snowmobile map distribution**

**Project:** Snowmobile Campaign

**Element Description:** We will use paid brochure rack distribution to increase circulation

**Timeline:** Distribution through fall and winter 05/06

**Tracking:** we will track effectiveness by the number circulated and the number of calls to fulfillment for maps and through assessment of advertising vendors success

**Target Market:** Snowmobilers greater northeast

**Rationale:** To highlight our region superior trail system

**Media Type:** Print

**Co-op Opportunity:** Ads sold to regional vendors  
**Budget Description:** 500 for Brochure rack distribution  
**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00  
**Cash Match:** \$0.00  
**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

### Element 3: Online and Print Media

**Project:** Snowmobile Campaign

**Element Description:** We plan to advertise our snowmobile map in Greater Northeast snowmobile publications to increase its distribution. We would also like to advertise the map online

**Timeline:** Ads Placed in the October, November, and December of snowmobile publications

**Tracking:** We will track the # of maps requested from these ads through ordering and fulfillment.

**Target Market:** Snowmobilers greater North East

**Rationale:** Increase rider visits to our region

**Media Type:** Print

**Co-op Opportunity:** Ads sold in Snowmobile map

**Budget Description:** We intend to spend approx. \$3000.00 on advertising the map

**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

### Project 3: Regional Guidebook

**Project Type:** Advertising

**Description:** With the completion of our new guidebook and its increase circulation will need to reprint the guidebook and dedicate significant funds to advertising the book and its distribution.

### Element 4: Printing Guidebook

**Project:** Regional Guidebook

**Element Description:** To reprint 10,000 additional copies of our regional guidebook

**Timeline:** Reprint necessary in fall or early winter to fulfill inquiries from tourist planning for following year

**Tracking:** We will track response through answering and fulfillment and by brief survey of advertising vendors

**Target Market:** Travels thinking of traveling to our region

**Rationale:** to generate more visits to our region

**Media Type:** Print

**Co-op Opportunity:** Ads are sold to regional vendors for match rate.

**Budget Description:** Printing 10,000 copies \$7000.00

**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

### Element 5: Brochure Rack Distribution

**Project:** Regional Guidebook

**Element Description:** We would like to distribute this guide through greater newengland with brochure distribution companies

**Timeline:** we would like to continue to distribute the guide book throughout the summer

**Tracking:** Track through vendor feedback.

**Target Market:** Greater Newengland travelers

**Rationale:** To attract visitors to our region

**Media Type:** Print

**Co-op Opportunity:** Ad sales for regional vendors to participate at match rate

**Budget Description:** \$5000.00

**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

## Project 4: Paid Online Listing and Links Campaign

**Project Type:** Advertising

**Description:** We plan to advertise our website and improve its traffic with some pay per click advertising for relevant and productive search phrases. We also will strive to improve its organic listings with a relevant links campaign

### Element 6: Overture and Google Listings

**Project:** Paid Online Listing and Links Campaign

**Element Description:** The goal of this element is to increase visitor traffic to our website during key times of the vacation season.

**Timeline:** Summer

**Tracking:** This program is accompanied by a tracking program

**Target Market:** Potential visitors

**Rationale:** Drive traffic to web site

**Media Type:** Online Advertising

**Co-op Opportunity:** (No Response)

**Budget Description:** (No Response)

**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

## Project 5: River Brochure Distribution

**Project Type:** Advertising

**Description:** We have quantity of left over rack cards advertising local vendors and attractions. We intend to distribute them through Brochure distribution companies

### Element 7: Distribution

**Project:** River Brochure Distribution

**Element Description:** Distribute River Brochure 50,000 copies  
**Timeline:** summer  
**Tracking:** track number distributed, response of vendors  
**Target Market:** greater New England travelers  
**Rationale:** generate visits  
**Media Type:** *(No Response)*  
**Co-op Opportunity:** *(No Response)*  
**Budget Description:** *(No Response)*  
**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00  
**Cash Match:** \$0.00  
**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

## Project 6: Regional Partnerships

**Project Type:** Advertising  
**Description:** We intend to work with regional organizations such as chambers and other organizations to utilize their marketing plans and knowledge of their markets to generate tourist visits to their areas. They will be required to provide match dollars and all proper documentation including conversion information.

### Element 8: Regional Partners (8)

**Project:** Regional Partnerships

**Element Description:** Possible and Desired Partners: Augusta Area, Waterville Area, Raft Maine, Jackman Area, Belgrade, Bingham, Fairs and Festivals, Hotel Co-op  
**Timeline:** Proposed projects will have to be specific and be tracked properly  
**Tracking:** Partnership Participants are required to track all response to programs supported by the KVTC and submit report on their conversion.  
**Target Market:** Target audience will be decided by the intended target market of the involved partner.  
**Rationale:** Utilizing the partners will utilize state grant dollars to generate actual visitors through using effective marketing plans of regional organizations while minimizing work load for the KVTC in this time of change. These organizations also will be providing the needed matching funds to satisfy grant requirements.  
**Media Type:** *(No Response)*  
**Co-op Opportunity:** These partner organizations will presumably be offering co-op opportunities to their members  
**Budget Description:** *(No Response)*  
**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00  
**Cash Match:** \$0.00  
**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

## Project 7: Administration

**Project Type:** Advertising  
**Description:** This is the grant dollars associated with administering these grant programs and the proper reporting to the Office of Tourism

## Element 9: ED and Grant Administration

**Project:** Administration

**Element Description:** Costs associated with administering advertising programs and grants

**Timeline:** Year Round

**Tracking:** Monthly Cost

**Target Market:** None

**Rationale:** Needed Administration to accomplish the goals with success

**Media Type:** na

**Co-op Opportunity:** *(No Response)*

**Budget Description:** *(No Response)*

**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

## Project 8: Public Service Announcements

**Project Type:** Advertising

**Description:** PSA Through the state OT

### Element 10: PSA

**Project:** Public Service Announcements

**Element Description:** Public Service Announcement through State OT

**Timeline:** na

**Tracking:** na

**Target Market:** na

**Rationale:** na

**Media Type:** na

**Co-op Opportunity:** na

**Budget Description:** na

**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

## Project 9: Financial Review

**Project Type:** Advertising

**Description:** Cost of financial review

### Element 11: Financial Review

**Project:** Financial Review

**Element Description:** Admin Costs associated with financial review

# Maine Tourism Marketing Partnership Program



**Timeline:** Year Round  
**Tracking:** NA  
**Target Market:** NA  
**Rationale:** NA  
**Media Type:** NA  
**Co-op Opportunity:** NA  
**Budget Description:** NA  
**MTMPP Award:** \$0.00  
**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>
<b>NMC PR Package</b>			
NMC PR Package	\$4,000.00		
<b>Snowmobile Campaign</b>			
Reprint Snowmobile Map	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Snomobile map distribution	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Online and Print Media	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Regional Guidebook</b>			
Printing Guidebook	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Brochure Rack Distribution	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Paid Online Listing and Links Campaign</b>			
Overture and Google Listings	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>River Brochure Distribution</b>			
Distribution	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Regional Partnerships</b>			
Regional Partners (8)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Administration</b>			
ED and Grant Administration	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Public Service Announcements</b>			
PSA	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Financial Review</b>			
Financial Review	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

**Budget Summary**

Proposed MTMPP Award:	\$4,000.00
Administrative Costs:	\$0.00
Cash Match:	\$0.00
In-Kind Match:	\$0.00
Total Match:	\$0.00
Total Proposed Budget:	\$4,000.00