

# Behind the Scenes of Tourism in the North

## Local Destination Marketing Organization Promotes Landmass Larger than New Brunswick

**M**any Northern Albertans are familiar with their local Destination

Marketing Organization (DMO). Images on their websites and social media pages help remind us how truly beautiful and amazing it is in our own backyard. Mackenzie Frontier Tourist Association (MFTA) is one such DMO.

“We’re continuously looking for new ways to support and grow tourism in Northwestern Alberta,” said Alaura Wardley, MFTA Chair.

### How, What & Where

As their top priority—their guiding North Star—MFTA’s goal

is to make it easier for visitors and new residents to enjoy what the Mackenzie Frontier has to offer.

As a not-for-profit, collaboratively-managed organization, the MFTA board receives support from Mackenzie County, the Town of High Level and the Town of Rainbow Lake to enhance all tourism sectors in the region.

“MFTA represents a vast area of Northern Alberta including the communities and surrounding areas of Blue Hills, Fort Vermilion, High Level, La Crete, Rainbow Lake, Rocky Lane and Zama City,” said

Wardley. “Our landmass is larger than the province of New Brunswick.”

MFTA recently added a platform that offers interactive features to make it more accessible for patrons to navigate through what their communities have to offer.

“We enhanced our tourism promotion by purchasing a Qwick Tourist Kiosk,” said Wardley. “The Qwick Tourist is a platform that allows us to build an interactive tourism directory that’s easy to use and helps increase visitor engagement.”

In addition, MFTA wrapped up another successful tradeshow season. Twelve board members attended eight tradeshows throughout Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

“We spoke to over 3,500 people during the course of the season, gave away prizes and toured other communities to see what types of tourism they offer,” said Wardley.

### Take a Day Trip!

“We’ve developed numerous publications and marketing materials, and we work hard to ensure they are appealing, informative and available to visitors,” said Wardley. “We’ve curated a pre-planned Day Trip for each community with some of our most outstanding must-see places and must-try spots.”

Each MFTA publication features top-notch local photography as well as useful traveller information such as where to sleep, eat, shop and stop. In addition to segmenting audiences by which town they are visiting, MFTA has developed specific tours tailored to different traveller tastes.

“For example, we have Day Trips for foodies, geocachers and golfers,” said Wardley. “Life can be so busy and sometimes making time to plan a trip or a weekend getaway is too much. Our publications and Day Trips can make any getaway easier and more fun.”

### Publication Guides

“We are still beaming about *Winter in the Frontier*, which was a big project we completed last year that highlighted winter activities and the brand-new ski hill in the La Crete area,” said Wardley. “This publication has been in the works for 10 years, so it felt great to finally finish it.”

MFTA also recently finished *Stay in the Frontier*, a re-brand of their camping brochure and their directory

mixed with history, scavenger hunts and more.

Other interesting and fun guides MFTA has published are *Wildlife in the Frontier*, *Mackenzie Frontier Golf Courses*, *Fort Vermilion Historical Guide* and *Stay in the Frontier*.

### Great Northern Alberta Circle Tour

For MFTA’s board members, building relationships with other organizations is key. It’s a good way to make new connections, receive assistance and to learn. Collaborating with like-minded organizations can also be an opportunity to create new attractions and exciting adventures that target an even larger audience.

“We just partnered with Mighty Peace Tourism and Travel Alberta on the Great Northern Alberta Circle Tour, which is a three-day tour with 23 recommended stops in our region, and it spans over 386 kilometres,” said Wardley.

The Circle Tour is the perfect trip for nature-loving explorers of all ages and has everything from rivers and lakes to hiking trails and lookout points.

### Move Up Magazine Partnership

MFTA is excited to renew its partnership with *Move Up Magazine* for another year to promote its mission, vision and its members.

“This partnership allows us to reach every home and



business in our area as well as a vast number of people further south and beyond. We hire them to do profiles on our members, and we promote what we’re doing as well as everything the Mackenzie Frontier has to offer, all on a quarterly basis,” said Wardley.

### Join Our Membership Today

Becoming a member of MFTA is easy, affordable and highly beneficial. Members immediately gain support from MFTA and are promoted through their many publications, tours, social media pages, website as well as during their tradeshow season.

“Our goal is to build tourism in our region, and having a wide variety of members allows us to offer the best for tourists,” said Wardley.

### Attend our AGM

Always on the lookout for new board members, MFTA encourages anyone interested to attend their upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM) and to bring their fresh ideas and perspectives with them.

“Our AGM will be this November. Check out

our Facebook for the time and location. We encourage participation and would be happy to invite new members to join the board,” said Wardley. “We love seeing new faces and working together to generate new ideas!”

For more information, visit [mackenziefrontier.com](http://mackenziefrontier.com) and follow MFTA on Facebook and Instagram.

### Join MFTA Today

#### HOME-BASED BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP

1 year: \$50  
2 years: \$90  
3 years: \$130

#### SMALL BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP\*

1 year: \$150  
2 years: \$225  
3 years: \$300

#### CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP\*\*

1 year: \$250  
2 years: \$450  
3 years: \$675

\*Buy a small business membership for three years and get one year free

\*\*Corporate businesses with 50+ employees get 10% off each year they purchase



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