PROJECT GOALS
This statewide project facilitates and builds capacity among communities to assess local assets and determine how they might develop and sustain tourism opportunities. Community members participate in identifying and assessing local tourism assets, visiting another community to understand tourism potential and deciding what actions they wish to take in their community using the project findings.

- Identifies local tourism assets with potential for enhancement or development
- Engages local citizens in the process and decision-making
- Evaluates assessments for outcomes and impacts

Five communities are participating in the project—Central: Akeley; Northwest: Warroad; Northeast: Destination Voyageurs; Southeast: Houston; and Southwest: Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley.

COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENTAL & ECONOMIC IMPACTS
Tourism is an $11.9 billion dollar industry in Minnesota (EMT, 2013). By identifying local tourism assets and opportunities, communities can make informed decisions about opportunities that will help keep visitors in the region longer. This project grows local opportunity, strengthens regional economies, enhances community pride and builds awareness/support for protecting and maintaining regional cultural and natural resources.

Anticipated outcomes include:
- Increased understanding of the economic and social importance of tourism
- Increased community cohesion and sense of place
- Identification of asset development opportunities to inform local and regional tourism planning

COMMUNICATION AND REACH
The project engages citizens by establishing a local team to provide community leadership and assist with tourism asset inventorying. Through the project community members will become more familiar with University staff and the important applied work done by the University of Minnesota Extension.

This statewide project is a collaboration of University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, University of Minnesota Tourism Center, and University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality.

Key partners include University staff, residents of each community in the project, and Explore Minnesota Tourism.

STATEWIDE RSDP INVESTMENT = $59,000
Additional In-kind: RSDP Boards; UM Tourism Center; UM Extension Center for Community Vitality; participating communities