

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Marlyn Chisholm & Associates in association with Geoscape Environmental Planners, Clover Point Cartographics, and Insight Research and Consulting, has been commissioned by the Salmon Arm Economic Development Corporation and the Columbia Shuswap Regional District to identify opportunities for community-based tourism development in the Shuswap region of British Columbia. The Shuswap Tourism Opportunity Strategy is intended to do the following:

- identify a short list of tourism products that hold high commercial potential;
- provide a regional evaluation of these products;
- map the tourism products;
- identify the linkages between the communities of the Shuswap region and the opportunities;
- develop a tourism action strategy and make recommendations for future implementation; and,
- evaluate in further detail a selected tourism opportunity related to each community.

During the past two years, several Tourism Opportunity Strategies (TOSs) have been carried out in BC. These were initiated as part of the provincial government's thrust to help diversify local economies in a way that is sustainable. Most of the TOS studies were undertaken on behalf of the former Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) to assist rural communities, First Nations and entrepreneurs to identify new tourism development opportunities. The focus of the TOS studies has generally been ecotourism, adventure travel, and heritage and culturally-based tourism development. The principal benefits arising from the TOS studies are:

- formulation of a comprehensive data base on regional tourism features and operations,
- contribution to a better understanding of regional resources and how they can be developed as a starting point for other, long term tourism initiatives; and,
- providing a framework for evaluating future opportunities.