

Accommodations of the Northeast Kingdom

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the Northeast Kingdom accommodations study is to accumulate the total number of accommodations and the total number of beds available within the three counties that make up the Northeast Kingdom. The rates (high and low) have been gathered for each accommodation. Seasonality of these accommodations is also touched on. The accommodations are organized into six categories based on the 2002 AAA Tour Book categorization or the individual accommodation's website categorization.

There are a total of 180 different accommodations in the Northeast Kingdom. Within those 180 accommodations there are 2,931 units available for rent, which can hold a maximum capacity of 5,579 people**. B&B's and Inn's make up 76 (42%) of the 180 total different accommodations, but only account for 508 (17%) of the units available for rent. There are 23 campgrounds in the Northeast Kingdom. Those campgrounds account for 1,350 (46%) of the 2,931 total units available for rent. This means that during the winter months the number of available accommodations in the Northeast Kingdom is almost cut in half (assuming all campgrounds close for the winter months). That number also does not include the B&B's that close during the winter or the cabin/cottage rentals that are unavailable. The 25 hotels/motels in the Northeast Kingdom account for 627 of the total units available for rent and 1,600 of the total beds. By Combining the campgrounds and hotel/motel categories you can see that these two categories make up around 70% of the total units available and more than 50% of the total beds available in the Kingdom.

The rates of these accommodations are only useful when broken down by category, which could be the bases of another research project. It is worth noting that rates range from 10 dollars a night for campgrounds to 500 dollars a night at the Comfort Inn and Suites.

The research has determined that Northeast Kingdom accommodations during the winter months are split nearly in half compared to the rest of the year. The profile of accommodations is different from the number of beds available, meaning the greatest number of a type of accommodation does not hold the most amount of beds available. Less than 5% of all NEKTTA accommodations are listed in the 2002 Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine AAA guide. However, 80% or approximately 123 accommodations are listed on the State of Vermont Travel and Tourism website. Any other conclusions can not be reached without further collection of data on the individual accommodations and a more in depth look at each category. The data base for this project is available through NEKTTA.

**** Campsite total beds is only based on one bed per site**

Background and Objectives

The Northeast Travel and Tourism Association (NEKTTA) is one of thirteen regional marketing groups throughout the state of Vermont. Their purpose is to market the three counties that make up the Northeast Kingdom region. These counties are Orleans, Caledonia, and Essex. They act as the regional marketing center for all tourism activity throughout the three counties.

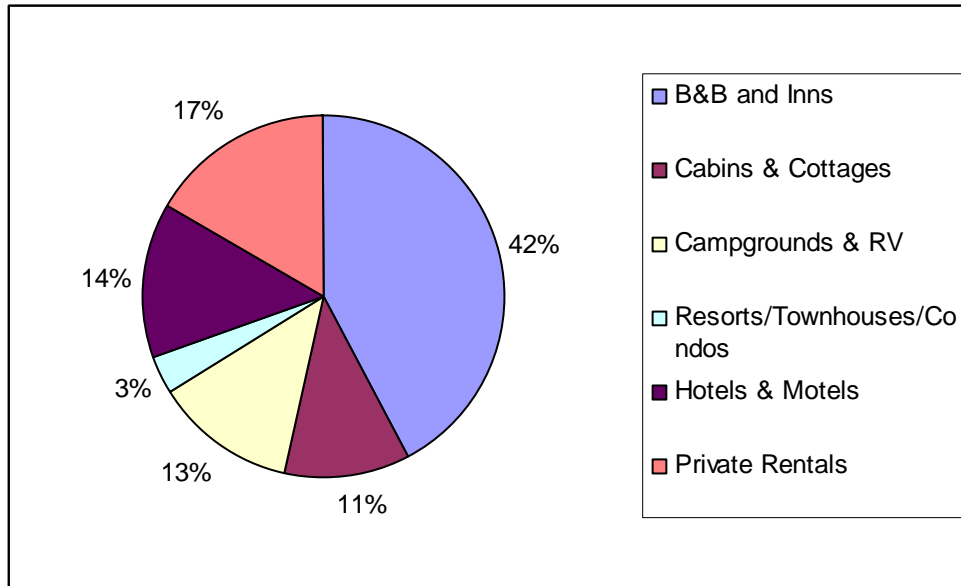
The purpose of this research project is to help NEKTTA evaluate the accommodations available within the Northeast Kingdom. The objective of this project is to provide the most accurate list of the total number of accommodations within the Northeast Kingdom. After compiling the list each accommodation is then put into one of six categories determined by the AAA guide and/or the establishments' internet website description. Data calculating the total number of rooms and bedding capacity is then gathered for each accommodation using the AAA guide, the three county chamber of commerce websites, and individual establishments official websites when available. A high and low rate was also gathered for each establishment but does not reflect seasonal rate changes. That information was also gathered using the sources listed above. Seasonal rate changes per establishment would involve extensive research and involvement by each accommodations proprietor and should be looked at as another research project to further grasp an understanding and evaluation of tourist accommodations within the Northeast Kingdom.

Methodology

The research for this project was gathered and organized by means of secondary data. The list of accommodations is based on an existing data base the NEKTTA already had compiled. This database was then reevaluated and configured to an updated version reflecting new establishments and establishments that no longer exist. The data base is then broken down into categories based on the self-labeling of each individual accommodation by it's proprietor (when possible) and the use of internet homepages for each accommodation as well as internet website compilations of accommodations within the Northeast Kingdom such as individual Vermont chamber websites and the Official Vermont Travel and Tourism website. The 2002 Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine AAA Tour Book is also somewhat useful. It should be noted in this report that only 5% of all NEKTTA accommodations are listed in the AAA guide. The number of units, total bed capacity, and rates are all taken from the above information resources. After compiling the above information each category is separated into its own worksheet using Microsoft Excel. These worksheets were then totaled by category and used to form a totals table in number base as well as percentage base, of the whole accommodations industry within the Northeast Kingdom.

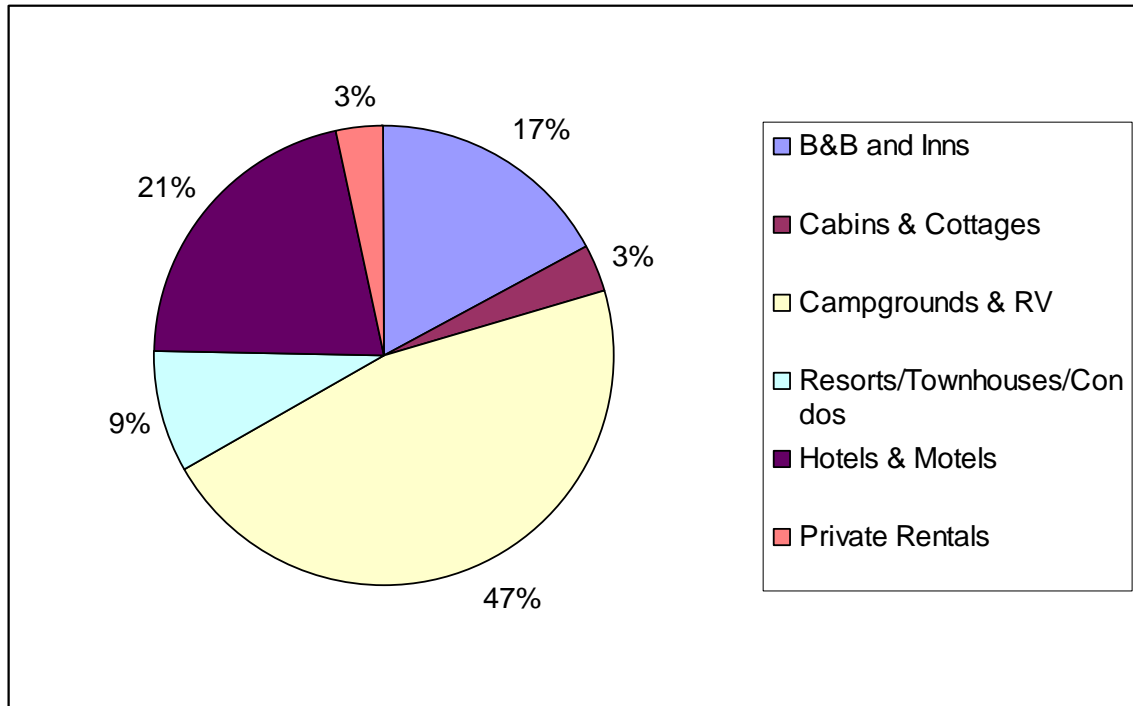
The new data base can be configured to determine accommodations by town, county, region, category, number of units, number of beds, or rates charged. This data base represents the most accurate accumulation of data available at this time in respect to the objectives provided for this project. The data base is available through the NEKTTA.

180 Places to Stay in the Northeast Kingdom



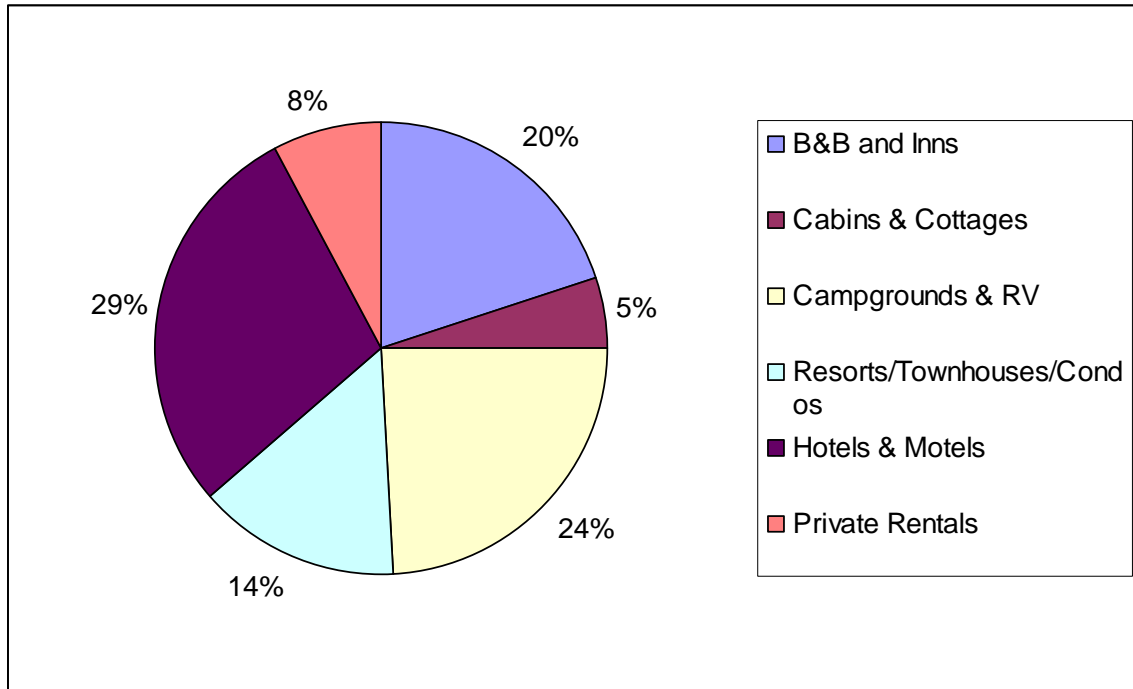
There are 180 different accommodations within the Northeast Kingdom. The B&B's and Inn's category accounts for 76 of the 180 total different accommodations. There are 20 cabin and cottage establishments, 23 campgrounds, 6 Resorts/Townhouse/Condo rental accommodations, 25 hotels and motels and 30 private listings found at the time this data was compiled. We can see that B&B's and Inn's far out way all other categories in terms of number of establishments.

Campgrounds Make Up Almost Half of the Total Amount of Accommodation Units Available in the Northeast Kingdom



There are 2,931 total accommodation rooms/units available for rent within the Northeast Kingdom. The Campground category accounts for 1,350 of those units. B&B and Inns make up 508 rooms, 95 rooms for Cabins and Cottages, 256 rooms for Resorts/Townhouses/Condos, 627 rooms for Hotels and Motels, and 95 rooms for Private Rentals. We can see that the campground category plays a big part in tourism within the Northeast Kingdom and therefore splits the number of total rooms/units in half during the winter season due to closings of the campground category.

“Big Three” Accommodation Categories Make Up Nearly 75% of the Total Bed Capacity within the Northeast Kingdom



There is a maximum bedding capacity of 5,579 beds available within the Northeast Kingdom. The three major categories of B&B and Inns, Campgrounds, and Hotels/Motels account for about 75% of this number. B&B and Inn’s account for 1,123 beds, Campgrounds 1,350**, Hotels and Motels 1,600, Cabins and Cottages 274, Resorts/Townhouses/Condos 798, and Private Rentals account for 434 beds. Accommodations capacity is affected drastically during the winter season due to campground closings.

**** Campground bed availability is based only on 1 bed per unit.**

**B&B's and Inns make up the
largest number of establishments but
Campgrounds hold the highest number
of units available**

Accommodations Type	Establishments	# of rooms/units	# of beds
B&B and Inns	76	508	1,123
Private Rentals	30	95	434
Hotels & Motels	25	627	1,600
Campgrounds & RV	23	1,350	1,350
Cabins & Cottages	20	95	274
Resorts/Townhouses/Condos	6	256	798
Totals	180	2,931	5,579

The B&B and Inn category make up the largest number of establishments in the Northeast Kingdom; however it is the Campground and RV category that offers the largest number of units. This fact alone cuts the number of available units during the winter months in half in comparison to the rest of the year.**

**** The number of available units during the winter months does not take into consideration any of the other categories that may have individual establishments closed during certain parts of the year.**

Other Accommodations

It should also be noted that a survey conducted by Rod Zwick for the state Wildlife and Outdoor Conservation Committee found that of 646 respondents to a survey of over 1500 second home/camp owners of the Northeast Kingdom, only 57 (8.8%) of them rent out their property. Of those 57, an average of two weeks out of the year was compiled with regards to amount of time rented. Another survey conducted by Linda Mitchell found that about 63% of Northeast Kingdom residents have a guest from 40 miles or further away stay in their homes at least once every 6-months. These figures are not included in the data base.

Conclusion

According to the Vermont DET 2001 Report on Economic Growth and Development the population of the three Northeast Kingdom counties makes up about 10.3% (or 72,433) of the total state population. The population coupled with the bedding capacity of the three counties, and the 63% of Vermont residents that have had at least one house guest *, increases the potential population to 123,645. This number is nearly double the residential population.

During the winter months the number of accommodations is split almost in half compared to the rest of the year, putting a cap on potential economic gains. We also see that of the type of accommodation with the largest number of establishments does not carry the highest capacity of bedding accommodations. It is note worthy to recognize that the Northeast Kingdom has the highest amount of campground sites in the state. Any other conclusions can only be reached with further collection of data on the individual accommodations and a more in depth look at each category. Listed below are a few of many possibilities for opportunity to expand on this project.

1. A more in depth look at seasonality in terms of rate changes, highest occupancy season, and closing dates if applicable.
2. Rates charged per establishment broken down by category and what the establishment offers for those rates.
3. Location of establishments with a focus on rates charged in that area, as well as occupancy rates.
4. Location in correlation with different things to do (attractions) within a determined radius, in comparison with occupancy rates for establishments in that radius.

* This information is a result of data gathered by a Linda Mitchell marketing research project.