

Current progress and future improvements of Lake Toya Area Ecomuseum Project, Usu Volcano,

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<http://www.town.sobetsu.hokkaido.jp/eco/index.htm>

Prologue

Around Lake Toya and Usu Volcano area is located inside the Shikotsu-Toya National Park. Throughout the year, 5-6 million tourists visit this area. I introduce ecomuseum project which are spread throughout the area (volcano, natural environments, farms, forests) will be integrated into one open-air museum with resident participation.

1 Background and Concept

The eruption of Usu volcano in March 2000 caused great damage in the Lake Toya Area. The remains caused by the recent 2000 eruption have become a tourist attraction.

By developing an Ecomuseum comprising such tourism resources and volcanic remains, this concept is aimed at forming the Lake Toya area into a more attractive tourist spot and relaxing countryside.

*History

March 2000, Mt. Usu Volcano erupted.

September 2001, Ecomuseum Concept Formulation Meeting Office established

June 2002, Concept was finalized and released.

October 2002, Declaration of Ecomuseum, and Logo mark is decided

*Satellites: Geological heritage sites,

Mount Showa-Shinzan (active volcano)

Mount Usu Volcano Memorial Park, others

*Information Center:

Mimatsu Masao Memorial Museum (Mount Showa-Sinzan Museum)

Ecomuseum Core Center will open on November

*Organization:

Lake Toya Area Ecomuseum Promotion Conference

Chairman, Kiyoshi YAMANAKA, Mayor of Sobetsu Town

Member of Organization

Municipalities: Date City, Toyoura Town, Toyako Town, Sobetsu Town

Hokkaido Regional Development Bureau, Hokkaido Government

*Support Friends of Sobetsu Ecomuseum, others

2 Main Themes

Burning Mountain and History of our Northern Land - By learning of the volcanic benefits, recognizing the earth endowed with nature and discovering the ways of living of our ancestors.

3 Three areas and themes

Volcanic Boon (Remains) Area

Boon of the Earth and Culture Area

History of Ancestors and Marine Treasures Area

4 The aims of the Ecomuseum Concept

Creation of opportunities for comprehensive study area for local people

Passing down the history of the coexistence with the volcano

Expectation of reduced future disasters

Promotion of regional development by resident participation

Promotion of new coordinating activities among neighboring areas

Fostering of local industries and tourism

5 Conclusions

The Lake Toya Area Ecomuseum promotion conference is now promoting the Project. Friends of Sobetsu Ecomuseum was organized. The volunteer guide, utilized the ecomuseum facilities, is also active. From the above reason, we are sure that Lake Toya Area Ecomuseum has many good conditions as a candidate of first an authorized Geopark in Japan.