



**Mt. Hood/Columbia River Gorge
Region Tourism Alliance**

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Oregon Tourism Commission
Alana Hughson, Chair
Travel Oregon Staff

October 3, 2016

Dear Chair Hughson, Commissioners and Staff:

As the Mt. Hood/Columbia River Gorge Region Tourism Alliance (MHCRGRTA), we respectfully submit our recommendation to Travel Oregon for consideration of realignment of the designated regions for the Oregon Wine Country License Plate program (WCP) in the next biennium. The currently designated four major wine producing regions include:

Region 1, also known as The Mid-Willamette Valley region, consisting of Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties.

Region 2, consisting of Lane, Linn, Benton, Lincoln, Tillamook, Clatsop, Columbia, Washington, Multnomah and Clackamas Counties.

Region 3, consisting of Coos, Curry Douglas, Josephine, Jackson, Klamath and Lake Counties.

Region 4, consisting of Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Jefferson, Deschutes, Crook, Wheeler, Grant, Harney, Baker and Malheur Counties.

MHCRGRTA recommends that Travel Oregon realign the WCP regional boundaries to be in alignment with the seven marketing regions as identified by Travel Oregon through the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program (RCTP). The RDMO within each of the seven regions would also serve as the recognized tourism promotion distribution entity for the WCP funds and program administration. This realignment would streamline the management of the WCP program by fitting within the existing structure of the RCTP.

We recognize the creation of these larger wine regions was intended to support stronger collaboration between multiple regions, although this created an administrative burden when trying to manage marketing initiatives that don't align with these extended boundaries and additional regional partners involved.

- Hood River and Wasco County account for more than 1/5 of the funds for Region 4 (\$4,550) out of the total \$21,176
- Hood River and Wasco County are part of the Mt. Hood/Gorge region for the RCTP
- EOVA is the tourism promotion entity for Region 4 and they historically do not include Hood River and Wasco County in tourism programs
- The first year of the biennium, EOVA was not fully aware they were even responsible for including Hood River and Wasco County in their WCP funded programming
- EOVA needs to make a conscious effort to create a campaign and messaging for a one-off program which includes Hood River and Wasco County

The MHCRGRTA is in the position to receive and administer the WCP funds from Hood River and Wasco County in continuation of brand/messaging programs which promote culinary and wine tourism within our region.

We look forward to any additional opportunities for discussion and input as the realignment of WCP boundaries are being considered by staff and commission.

Sincerely,



Jeannine Breshears
Clackamas County Tourism
& Cultural Affairs



Mike Glover
Hood River County Chamber of Commerce



Lisa Farquharson
The Dalles Area Chamber

Cindy Passannante

Cindy Passannante
West Columbia Gorge Chamber of Commerce

From: Eastern Oregon Visitors Association [<mailto:eova@eoni.com>]
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2016 10:50 AM
To: 'Breshears, Jeannine'
Cc: Jeff Hampton
Subject: RE: Wine Country License Plate boundary realignment

Jeannine, Thanks for sharing this with me. I agree that it would be good to bring the Wine regions in line with the RCTP regions. I will cc Jeff Hampton on this correspondence to indicate EOVA's support of that concept.

In regards to the statement in the memo:

EOVA needs to make a conscious effort to create a campaign and messaging for a one-off program which includes Hood River and Wasco County

It has been difficult to coordinate a team or establish contacts in the other counties within Wine Region 4. I have not been diligent in reaching out to find them. It would be helpful if Mt. Hood/Gorge region could give me direction on who to contact.

Thanks.
Alice



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