

# DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH ACROSS OREGON

## CENTRAL OREGON



PHOTO: PETE ALPORT

## TOURISM SUPPORTS OREGON'S ECONOMY

In 2003, Oregon faced one of its highest unemployment rates in history. As part of a statewide initiative to create new job opportunities for Oregonians, the Oregon Tourism Investment proposal was signed into law. This bill made tourism and hospitality a pillar of Oregon's economy by establishing a 1% state lodging tax, which dedicated the revenue into tourism development and marketing for all of Oregon. In 2016, the legislature increased the state lodging tax to 1.8% through June 2020, when it decreases to 1.5%. In addition, state statute dedicated 30% of the state lodging tax to regional tourism organizations and grant programs across Oregon. This industry investment has delivered results with an increase in visitors which has equated to increased resources for regional programs that support jobs, culture, infrastructure and public services.

## THE INVESTMENT IS PAYING OFF

Through Travel Oregon's Regional Cooperative Tourism Program, the Central Oregon region is scheduled to receive \$1.6 million over the 2019-2021 biennium. The funding is programmed to achieve the following goals:

- Define a Central Oregon brand that incorporates all of the regional communities.
- Build brand awareness and market the visitor experiences that make Central Oregon a unique premier travel destination.
- Encourage year-round visitation while supporting rural tourism development through visitor dispersion.
- Create regional opportunities for tourism development, and industry stakeholder innovation and collaboration.

## CENTRAL OREGON:

IN 2010	IN 2018	CHANGE
<b>Direct Employment</b> 7,020 jobs	9,920 jobs	+4.4%
<b>Employee Earnings</b> \$146 million	\$277 million	+8.3%
<b>Visitor Spending</b> \$557 million	\$875 million	+5.8%
<b>Taxes (State/Local)</b> \$22 million	\$42 million	+8.3%

## STATEWIDE:

IN 2003	IN 2018	CHANGE
<b>Direct Employment</b> 84,500 jobs	115,400	+37%
<b>Employee Earnings</b> \$1.7 billion	\$3.6 billion	+112%
<b>Visitor Spending</b> \$6.5 billion	\$12.3 billion	+89%
<b>Taxes (State/Local)</b> \$246 million	\$560 million	+128%

More than 120 cities and counties across Oregon collect a local transient lodging tax to expend on local programming. A study conducted by ECONorthwest in 2018 found that cities and counties that levied a local transient lodging tax spent the revenue on the following programs that directly benefit Oregonians in those communities:

Program Category	Expenditures	Share
General Services	\$84,194,912	39%
Tourism Facilities	\$58,312,100	29%
Tourism Promotion & Marketing	\$48,965,052	18%
Arts, Culture & Entertainment	\$20,855,625	6%
Events	\$9,184,891	1%
Economic Development	\$4,071,652	5%
Chambers of Commerce	\$4,035,060	2%
Other	\$2,062,897	1%
Administration & Overhead	\$1,170,350	0%
Total	\$232,852,539	100%

These dollars, especially those expended in the tourism facilities and promotion and marketing programs, can be leveraged against the regional destination management organization and state tourism investments.



PHOTO: SUNRIVER RESORT



"In Prineville, a town that seems to have a majority of small businesses, tourism dollars have a lasting effect. The money brought in via tourism will travel not only to the local restaurant or retailer, but it infuses money into the local community as well. This has a snowball effect of economic support throughout the entire local supply chain, including the city and county."

**KIM DANIELS**

*Executive Director, Crook County Chamber and Visitor Center  
Prineville*



"At Oregon Adaptive Sports (OAS), many are surprised to learn that about half of the individuals with disabilities we serve are visitors from outside of our home region of Central Oregon. A recent small grant from Travel Oregon has allowed OAS to continue to showcase the power and importance of travel and tourism for individuals with disabilities. The desire to seek new places, to learn and grow through travel and adventure should not be lost when one experiences a disability. Visitors with disabilities are part of a healthy travel economy that supports Central Oregon. We are honored to be a part of the travel industry in this great state and to continue to expand access to the wonders of Central Oregon to visitors of all abilities."

**PAT ADDABBO**

*Executive Director, Oregon Adaptive Sports  
Bend*



"Visitors to the Warm Springs reservation, who are often passing through on Highway 26, tend to be interested in visiting the casino or the Museum at Warm Springs, and the dollars they spend create a significant number of jobs for people in the community. Sometimes these travelers are curious about the unique cultures of the tribes who live here, and are interested in buying locally-made art and value-added foods. Tribal members who interact with visitors enjoy sharing a small piece of the community and some of the local culture with those who are curious about and respectful towards the culture."

**CHRIS WATSON**

*Executive Director, Warm Springs*



"Tourism makes up a sizable part of the Central Oregon economy and is, in turn, a large part of Bend's diverse economy. As a Bend citizen, I value the beautiful natural landscape and outdoor recreation opportunities in our backyard. Therefore, I recognize the value of attracting people while instilling the value of our outdoors, including stewardship."

**SALLY RUSSELL**  
*Bend Mayor*

### TOURISM BENEFITS CENTRAL OREGON

- Central Oregon transient lodging tax revenues accounted for \$18.9 million in 2018. Of that, Deschutes County leads the Central Oregon region, generating \$17.5 million of the transient lodging tax revenue.
- In 2018, travel spending directly generated 9,920 jobs in Central Oregon, up 5.6% over 2017.
- In 2018, visitor spend in Central Oregon was nearly \$1.28 billion, an increase of 7.6% from \$1.19 billion over 2017.

### EMPLOYMENT & REVENUE ACROSS OREGON

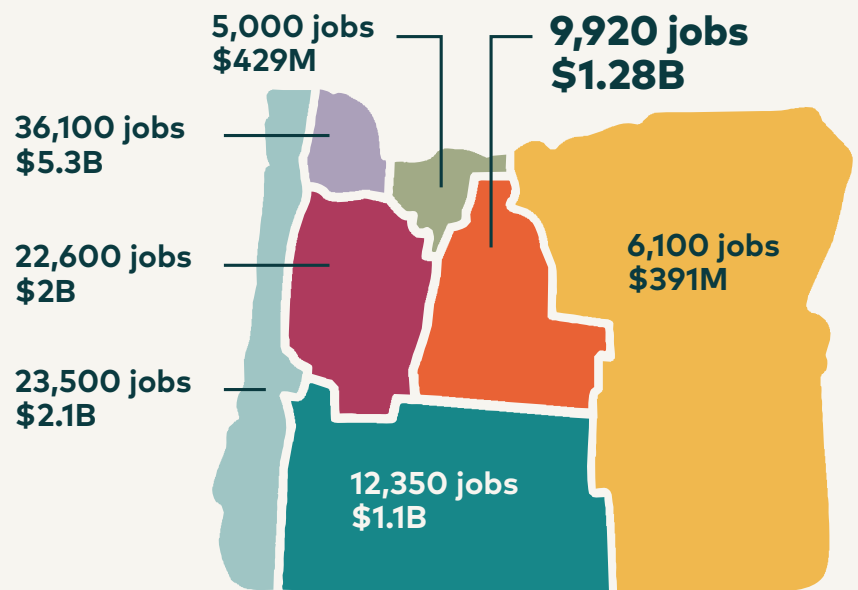


PHOTO: BY DYLAN VANWEELDEN



PHOTO: RUSS ROCA



PHOTO: AUSTIN SHEPARD



## TRAVEL OREGON'S COMPETITIVE GRANTS:

In the last biennium, \$125,000 in Travel Oregon Competitive Grant funding helped to enhance and promote tourism efforts in Central Oregon by supporting a variety of projects including the following:

- Discover Your Forest to support Deschutes Trails Collaborative (DTC) efforts in convening diverse stakeholders to find socially equitable and economically feasible solutions to creating a sustainable trails system in Central Oregon.
- Warm Springs Community Action Team to relocate the hundred-year-old Old Commissary building in Warm Springs to a strategic site near Highway 26.

## CENTRAL OREGON'S REGIONAL COOPERATIVE TOURISM PROGRAM:

The Central Oregon regional program received \$1.2 million over the 17-19 biennium and completed a variety of projects, a few of which are highlighted below:

- Investment in a Commercial Air Service Development and Marketing Fund provides the leverage necessary to be a successful applicant for federal Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP) grant. The Central Oregon Air Service Team (COAST), in support of the Redmond (RDM) airport, has successfully received these grants and air service has grown. Currently there are about 60 daily direct flights arriving into and departing from RDM, up from 52 daily direct flights in 2017. Departures increased 14% from calendar year 2017 to 2018 while seats increased 20%.
- More than \$240,000 was allocated to a Central Oregon Matching Grant Program (COMGP), providing funds to regional non-profits including:
  - \$50,000 for the High Desert Museum for two exhibitions.
  - \$25,000 for the Sunriver Nature Center to expand and modernize their campus.
  - \$30,000 for the Central Oregon Film Office for an online media expansion and exhibition at the American Film Market Location Expo.
  - More than \$20,000 for Discover Your Forest for both a ranger program and a capital campaign funding feasibility study for the Smokejumper and Wildland Fire Education Center.
  - \$50,000 to In A Landscape: Classical Music in the Wild outdoor concert series.
  - \$20,000 for the Airshow of the Cascades for product marketing and development.



Oregon Tourism Commission  
 319 SW Washington St. Suite 700  
 Portland, Oregon 97204 USA  
 P 971.717.6205  
 F 503.967.1579  
 industry@traveloregon.com  
 industry.traveloregon.com



Visit Central Oregon  
 57100 Beaver Drive, Suite 130  
 Sunriver, OR 97707  
 industry.visitcentraloregon.com  
 visitcentraloregon.com  
 541.389.8799

