

**OREGON WINE COUNTRY PLATES  
WINE AND CULINARY TOURISM PROMOTION  
DISTRIBUTION  
GUIDELINES**

**OREGON TOURISM COMMISSION**

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## **Overview**

ORS 805.274 mandates that, “After payment of the cost of production of the wine country registration plates including administrative expenses relating to marketing the wine country registration plates issued under ORS 805.266, the Oregon Tourism Commission shall distribute the moneys received from the Department of Transportation pursuant to ORS 805.272 as follows:

(a) One half of the moneys shall be distributed as matching grants. The commission shall develop a matching grant program and shall award grants to tourism promotion agencies for tourism promotion of wine and culinary tourism.”

And the statute further directs that,

“(b) One half of the moneys shall be distributed to tourism promotion agencies for the purpose of wine and culinary tourism promotion. The commission shall distribute the moneys in proportion to the amount of acreage in each region used for wine grape production. The commission shall designate a tourism promotion agency for each region.”

On December 9, 2014 the Oregon Tourism Commission (OTC) adopted administrative procedural rules and directed staff to move forward with process of further rules promulgation to support these programs.

OTC directed staff to draft Wine Country Plate (WCP) Rule language, provide notice as required by law and provide vehicles for public input. The Oregon Tourism Commission adopted a package of WCP rules on February 10, 2015.

Notice was further provided and a public hearing held on June 14, 2016 after which the OTC took action on additional administrative rules which require tourism promotion agencies to collaborate with the Oregon Wine Board and relevant regional winery associations in keeping with changes to ORS 805.274 introduced through SB1543. These guidelines were amended to reflect OTC direction and in adherence with ORS 805.274 and OAR 976-002-020.

### **Definition of Regions**

Region 1, also known as the Mid-Willamette Valley region: Marion, Polk and Yamhill counties.

Region 2: Lane, Linn, Benton, and Clackamas counties.

Region 3: Curry, Douglas, Josephine, Jackson, Klamath and Lake counties.

Region 4: Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wheeler, Grant, Harney, Baker and Malheur counties.

Region 5: Columbia, Washington and Multnomah

Region 6: Hood River

Region 7: Jefferson, Deschutes and Crook

Region 8: Lincoln, Tillamook, Clatsop and Coos

### **Goals of the Wine Country Plate Wine and culinary tourism promotion Guidelines**

- Comply with the requirements of all applicable Oregon Revised Statutes and Administrative Rules, including definitions as cited in ORS 320.300(7) “Tourism promotion” means any of the following activities:
  - (a) Advertising, publicizing or distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists;

- (b) Conducting strategic planning and research necessary to stimulate future tourism development;
- (c) Operating tourism promotion agencies; and
- (d) Marketing special events and festivals designed to attract tourists.
- Optimize the benefits of regional tourism efforts to Oregon's economy.
- Encourage regional tourism promotion and collaboration.
- Provide simple, straightforward WCP promotion distribution procedures.
- Encourage leveraging of existing statewide and regional programs where beneficial.
- Minimize WCP-related administrative burden on OTC and the regional designee.

### **Procedural Guidelines**

- A. Each of the WCP regions will be represented by a designated tourism promotion agency that will contract with OTC to:
  1. Consider the entire region, including rural areas, incorporated and unincorporated communities in planning for use of WCP resource,
  2. Serve as OTC's primary WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion distribution contact,
  3. Use WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion distribution money in a manner intended to advance and promote Oregon's tourism industry,
  4. Serve as fiscal agent by contracting with OTC to receive and be accountable for WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion funds. Designee will be responsible for the actions of any subcontractors or as it relates to use of these funds.
  
- B. The OTC staff will provide recommendations on the regional WCP distribution designee and any amendments to the WCP rules or guidelines for OTC consideration and action. At least once every fiscal biennium, Travel Oregon CEO will notify OTC of then current designees and any recommendations for future designees as appropriate.
  
- C. Regional Designees must:
  1. Have non-profit status or be a governmental agency that has a recognized purpose that includes promoting Oregon's Wine industry or is a recognized Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) representing at least two counties in that region.
  2. Have been in existence for not less than three years.
  3. Provide OTC with a written narrative (plan) for proposed use of WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money that includes goals/objectives, strategies, tactical timing, budgets with particularity, expected outcomes and anticipated ROI. WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money will not be distributed to a regional designee until a final, written narrative on proposed uses of WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money, including all plan components as identified above is provided to OTC.
  4. Demonstrate that collaboration with the Oregon Wine Board (OWB) and relevant regional winery associations took place when expenditure plans were developed. That demonstration may be met by one of the following means:
    - a. Providing OWB and relevant regional winery associations with copies of draft plans before any final determinations on expenditures are made. This outreach by tourism promotion agencies to demonstrate collaboration efforts must include a request for feedback on draft plans which includes where to send feedback, must

include a solicitation for suggested improvements to the draft plan and must allow for not less than two weeks for the OWB and relevant regional winery associations to respond, or;

b. Including a representative from at least one relevant regional winery association from the region on the Advisory Committee identified below in section “G” and sending OWB copies of draft plan in manner described above.

Tourism promotion agencies are encourage to make efforts to meet with OWB and regional winery associations for face-to-face discussions during plan development to discuss planned expenditures when possible.

- D. Designees will not only have the responsibility to implement a WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion plan and account for the WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion funds, they have the *authority* to implement that plan on behalf of the region once the recognized organization is designated by OTC and a signed agreement with OTC is in place.
- E. OTC may elect to have one designee represent multiple, perhaps adjacent, regions. This will not result in any one region no longer being seen as a “WCP region” for the purposes of determining regional share of WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion funds, but may enable efficiencies in the implementation of any tourism promotion plans. In all instances, money used to carry out regional wine and culinary tourism promotion must be consistent with ORS 805.274(1)(b) which identifies wine grape acreage as the regional distribution determinant but does not prescribe how any region use the money within or on behalf of the region other than for wine and culinary tourism promotion.
- F. Failure of a regional designee, subcontractors or other third party provided WCP promotion money by a regional designee to use the WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money in keeping with Oregon Statutes, Administrative Rules or the established OTC guidelines may result in forfeiture of WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion distribution money including the requirement that the regional designee immediately return all unspent WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money to OTC. In such an instance, OTC may implement a wine and culinary tourism promotion plan on behalf of the region or may reserve the money until OTC designates another entity to represent that region.
- G. Each regional designee will form an advisory committee for the purpose of developing an annual plan for use of WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money. WCP advisory committees are expected to make recommendations on use of WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money through a collaborative process, considering input from other tourism industry stakeholders in the region.
- WCP Advisory Committees shall:
1. Meet not less than once each calendar year.
  2. Consist of not less than three members, including at least one member representing Oregon wineries, Oregon wine producers or Oregon wine grape growers that conduct business in the region and one member representing tourism promotion at large in the region.
  3. Consider possible state or regional cooperative strategies that leverage dollars.
  4. Consider regional diversity of visitor experience in developing WCP promotion plan, including consideration of impacts on rural incorporated and unincorporated communities, Tribes, local and state agencies.

- H. Regional designees are required to partner directly with the Oregon Wine Board or another OTC designated entity in carrying out an Oregon wine grape acreage research project. Not less than once every four years, all regional designees will use a proportional share of the WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money to fund a wine grape acreage research project or to fund data gap costs in the case of existing research to provide data necessary in determining acres of wine grapes by county. The purpose of this research will be to ensure regional distribution is in keeping with ORS 805.274 (1)(b). Once the research project is completed and all then current regional designees have received results and have been given opportunity to provide feedback, WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money will be distributed from that point forward according to the results of that research project until conclusion of the next research project providing updated information on regional wine grape acreage. If grape acreage research is available for public use and is deemed by OTC to be a reliable and sufficient source of county level data to provide updated census information, that research may be used in place of conducting a new research project.
- I. Multi-regional marketing efforts are strongly encouraged. A regional designee may elect to contract with another WCP tourism promotion designee or any recognized tourism promotion agency to implement their annual wine and culinary tourism promotion plan. Designees are expected to develop a multi-county approach and engage in wine and culinary tourism promotion strategies focused on visitor experience.
- J. WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion funds cannot be spent to promote any destination that is outside of Oregon. However, in the case of a region that may be involved with a joint promotion campaign with destinations in a bordering state, WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion funds may pay for the relative share of the Oregon region's participation in that campaign.
- K. Annual year-end accomplishment reports, including an accounting for the use of regional WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion money and status updates in the case of multi-year initiatives as well as results of ROI anticipated in plan as compared to actual results will be provided to OTC CEO or a designated staff member by July 31 of each year. These regional year-end accomplishment reports will be used to inform the annual report provided to the Oregon legislative and executive branch as required.

For the 2015 WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion distribution, contracts will be for a number of months from execution of contract with Travel Oregon to June 30, 2017, to align contracts with a July 1-June 30 fiscal biennium.

Subsequent WCP wine and culinary tourism promotion distribution contracts will be for a period of 24 months, beginning on July 1 and ending on June 30.

In all cases, money will not be distributed to a regional designee until OTC receives the prior year annual year-end report and receipt of final wine and culinary tourism promotion plan for use of new funds.

*Any region wishing to modify its defined boundary should bring that request to the attention of the OTC CEO or designated staff. Region 1, Mid-Willamette Valley region is established in ORS 805, all other regions established in OAR 976-002-0040*

*Thanks to Travel Southern Oregon, Willamette Valley Visitor Association, Eastern Oregon Visitor Association, Travel Salem and the Oregon Wine Board for serving as WCP guidelines advisory committee.*

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Adopted: