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Travel Oregon's Destination Ready program awards \$913,000 to projects across the state

Portland, ORE. – Feb. 25, 2021 – The Oregon Tourism Commission, dba Travel Oregon, has awarded \$913,000 for the development, enhancement and stewardship of key visitor experiences that are COVID-19 appropriate, will aid in economic recovery, enhance local livability and provide access to a diversity of explorers through the Destination Ready program.

“These ‘Destination Ready’ projects are crucial in ensuring visitors and Oregonians have access to safe and enjoyable experiences as we rebuild Oregon’s tourism economy while navigating the pandemic,” said Todd Davidson, CEO Travel Oregon. “Communities across the state rely on tourism as an essential component of their economic fabric. These communities need visitor-ready attractions and experiences that continue to prioritize public health measures and Travel Oregon is excited to support these local initiatives that will play a significant role in the state’s economic recovery.”

Originally announced as a \$250,000 opportunity, Travel Oregon received more than \$4 million in requests through 135 applications. In response to this high demand, the agency reviewed internal program dollars and reallocated resources to increase the award amount \$913,000, which allowed 34 projects to be awarded across the state. Projects will be managed by the agency’s Destination Development team and range from direct investments to more collaborative projects, where staff will work closely with awardees through implementation.

The Destination Ready program awardees are:

- **Greater Hells Canyon Council** (\$21,711) to help with mapping and trail maintenance operations for The Blue Mountains Trail, a 556-mile thru-hiking experience through northeast Oregon.
- **Salmonberry Trail Foundation** (\$22,000) for trail improvements and a new volunteer program in support of the Salmonberry Trail.
- **Mt. Hood & Columbia River Gorge Regional Tourism Alliance** (\$30,000) towards creation of a Columbia Gorge Waterfall Corridor hop-on-hop-off trolley system.
- **Visit Central Oregon** (\$40,000) to launch "Navigate Oregon" transportation pilot project in partnership with Oregon-based transportation company, Northwest Navigator.
- **Eastern Oregon Visitors Association** (\$20,000) for land stewardship and maintenance efforts to prepare Eastern Oregon’s most visited public lands for the coming season including Wallowa Whitman National Forest, The Owyhee Region, The Steens Mountain Wilderness and the Alvord Desert.

- **Discover Your Forest** (\$12,500) to help install trailhead signage in the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests that will promote stewardship by providing visitors access to resources and information to get involved in supporting their national forests.
- **Trailkeepers of Oregon** (\$11,100) to integrate the Take Care Out There responsible recreation messaging pillars into materials used by the Trailhead Ambassador program.
- **Travel Southern Oregon** (\$40,000) to make important infrastructure improvements to Spring Creek access points that address high-use impacts at Collier State Park.
- **Cascade Volunteers** (\$18,175) to work with tour operators to create voluntourism travel packages that will both support local lodging properties and trail recovery efforts in the wildfire-impacted McKenzie River corridor.
- **Applegate Trails Association** (\$25,171) to fund installation of a vault toilet and safe recreation signage in the East Applegate Ridge Trail trailhead parking lot.
- **Mt. Hood & Columbia River Gorge Regional Tourism Alliance** (\$31,375) for design and construction of a comprehensive trail signage program for 8.6 miles of new hiking trails developed by Mt. Hood Meadows in 2020.
- **Port of Cascade Locks** (\$25,000) to fund enhancements to Cascade Locks Port parking lot that will provide access to multiple recreation modalities.
- **Southern Oregon Trail Alliance** (\$16,622) for rehabilitation of sections of the Taylor Creek Trail following the Klondike Fire and construction of five trailhead kiosks along Taylor Creek Trail.
- **Eastern Oregon Visitors Association** (\$24,500) for updates to six Eastern Oregon Farm Trail brochures with distribution, and creation of a new on-the-ground kiosk.
- **Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance** (\$15,000) for updates to East Gorge Food Trail brochure, creation of new bilingual signage, trainings and a digital footprint for businesses.
- **Visit Corvallis** (\$13,400) for updates and distribution of a Mid-Willamette Valley Food Trail brochure and digital footprint audit, and assistance for businesses.
- **Rogue Valley Vintners** (\$31,300) for a “digital footprint” audit and technical assistance to support for 19 wineries in the Rogue Valley improve their on-line information and presence.
- **US Farm Stay Association** (\$11,500) for a “digital footprint” audit and technical assistance for 12 farm stays across Oregon to improve their on-line information and presence.
- **Columbia County Economic Team** (\$28,600) to develop four bike hubs that include rack, bench, repair station, signage and an informational kiosk in three communities in Columbia County.
- **Prosper Portland** (\$50,000) to offer safe experiences on bicycle and foot and enhance locations where people can stop to enjoy local businesses along the Portland Green Loop.
- **City of Coburg** (\$11,700) to develop a bike hub that includes a fix-it station, lockers, picnic table, signage and device chargers on the southern anchor of the Willamette Valley Scenic Bikeway.
- **City of Westfir** (\$17,506) for bike hub development to complement wash and repair stations for the mountain bike destinations of greater Oakridge and Westfir area.
- **Tugman State Park** (\$23,378) for the installation of an ADA accessible kayak launch on Eel Lake.
- **Willamette Valley Visitors Association** (\$50,000) for enhancements along the Willamette Water Trail including portable floatation devices, safety kiosks, river guardians, river sanitation support and discovery paddles for BIPOC community groups.
- **Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife** (\$25,000) to make infrastructure and accessibility improvements to establish Marr Pond as the only ADA accessible fishing facility in Wallowa County.

- **Tillamook Coast Visitors Association** (\$10,000) to install two kayak launchers at water access points in Nehalem and purchase an additional beach wheelchair for the Netarts/Oceanside area.
- **City of Garibaldi** (\$16,715) for additional infrastructure for trash receptacles as well as COVID-19 appropriate visitor seating for the Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad.
- **Portland Bureau of Transportation** (\$47,600) for development and implementation of temporary wayfinding and placemaking for 20 Portland Healthy Business Plazas directing people towards outdoor dining areas in high-visitation neighborhoods.
- **Albany Downtown Association** (\$43,487) for enhancements to parking and public spaces to increase outdoor seating and expand outdoor dining in historic downtown Albany.
- **City of Cottage Grove** (\$30,000) for construction of three outdoor public parklets in that will support restaurant and business activity the Downtown Cottage Grove Historic District.
- **City of Florence** (\$44,161) for additional seating areas, trash receptacles and bike racks in Florence’s Old Town and along the Port of Siuslaw’s Boardwalk.
- **City of John Day** (\$35,000) to create a community “pit stop” with food truck stalls, improved parking and new public restrooms.
- **Port of Bandon** (\$20,000) for creation of an outdoor seating area along Bandon’s historic waterfront.
- **The Dalles Main Street** (\$50,000) to expand the 2020 Parklet/Pedestrian Bypass infrastructure to support additional outdoor dining on main street in 2021.

About Travel Oregon The Oregon Tourism Commission, dba Travel Oregon, works to enhance visitors' experiences by providing information, resources and trip planning tools that inspire travel and consistently convey the exceptional quality of Oregon. The commission aims to improve Oregonians' quality of life by strengthening the state’s tourism economy that employs thousands of Oregonians statewide. Visit traveloregon.com to learn more.

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