

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **TRAVEL OREGON BRINGS HUNDREDS OF BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS TOGETHER TO REBUILD OREGON'S TOURISM ECONOMY**

***As state begins to reopen Travel Oregon will unveil strategy to support communities reliant on tourism and travel related spending tomorrow at Governor's Conference on Tourism***

**PORTLAND, Ore. — June 15, 2021** — Nearly 500 travel and tourism professionals -- ranging from tour guides and outfitters to regional destination marketing organizations, chambers of commerce, lodging establishments to wineries and microbreweries -- will gather virtually tomorrow for Oregon's annual Governor's Conference on Tourism to reflect on the impacts of COVID-19 and wildfires, gain valuable insights and tools to amplify tourism businesses and destinations, and set the stage for a statewide economic recovery.

The pandemic and stay home orders impacted traditional tourism related businesses such as restaurants and lodging immediately during the spring and summer of 2020, which are prime travel months for many communities in Oregon. These communities felt the impact in other indirect spending from retail shops, coffee and grocery stores, outdoor guides and outfitters and wineries and small locally owned Oregon companies, which all make up the tourism economy. The most recent [Dean Runyan Associates 2020 Economic Impact Report](#) shows total direct travel spending in Oregon declined to \$6.5 billion, the lowest since 2003.

This spring, in response to industry needs, Travel Oregon released a suite of investments totaling \$4.5 million to provide direct economic recovery investments through grants and direct investments to each tourism region of the state.

The latest in this suite of economic recovery investments by Travel Oregon includes a statewide advertising campaign, [Welcome to Oregon Again](#), designed to promote in-state travel, support local tourism businesses, and keep Oregonians traveling locally. Welcome to Oregon Again launched on June 1 and prioritizes safe travel, responsible recreation and local business support throughout the summer season.

"I am so proud of how each of us in Oregon's travel and tourism industry, from every corner of the state have shown up, cared deeply and supported one another in these trying times," said Todd Davidson, CEO of Travel Oregon. "We continue to actively listen to the needs of Oregonians, communities and businesses to be as responsive as possible. And I am excited to build on that information and lessons learned from this last year to chart our strategy going forward."

To continue supporting economic recovery efforts as the state reopens to travel, Travel Oregon is first launching the agency's Rebuild Strategic Plan on July 1, 2021. This plan includes current activities in support of the state's economic recovery and places equity and inclusion at the forefront of its strategic vision.

The second, longer-term effort is the Transformational Plan. To further develop this plan, the agency will seek input and guidance from the people and communities at the heart of the tourism industry to develop a

roadmap that will extend to 2025. The plan will serve Oregon's entire travel and tourism industry based on the priorities set by these community stakeholders. Already, stakeholders have expressed a need for additional grants and funding resources, as well as marketing and promotion as priorities.

**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](http://traveloregon.com) to learn more.

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