



VISIT CENTRAL OREGON

ADVENTURE CALLS

CENTRAL OREGON EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Revised RCTP FY20-21

Travel changed in the blink of an eye around the world, hitting Central Oregon's vibrant tourism industry with a crushing force this past March. Since then, this unprecedented and unsettling time has caused public health and economic uncertainty, impacting every corner of the state. Traveler sentiment seems to be turning and visitors are starting to (or are at least thinking about) booking travel again. However, things will feel and look different for tourism. Our businesses are starting to reopen, welcoming back visitors with hidden smiles under their face masks, free hand sanitizer and awkward air hugs.

- How Visit Central Oregon is responding to industry needs during COVID-19 recovery?

When "Stay Home. Save Lives." was mandated by Gov. Kate Brown, Visit Central Oregon paused all paid marketing, any non-essential spending, and made difficult staffing decisions to alleviate cash-flow. Bracing for a devastating drop in TRT revenue, pairing down operations was necessary in order to sustain the organization and allow for Marketing the region when it is time to do so again. Additionally, knowing the challenges our regional tourism businesses are facing due to the pandemic, Visit Central Oregon eliminated our conventional Membership Program. (The even smaller-but-still-mighty-team at) Visit Central Oregon will move forward by supporting our regional tourism stakeholders through thoughtful and compelling content development, our multi-tiered Marketing strategies and collaborative co-opportunities, and will continue to promote Central Oregon businesses without requesting any membership dollars.

- Departmental strategies - how will they shift and change in response to COVID-19 recovery?

As we maneuver through this rapidly changing environment and phased re-opening, Visit Central Oregon appreciates the opportunity to repurpose Central Oregon's FY20-21 Regional Cooperative Tourism Program (RCTP) funds. Re-strategizing and adapting to support some of the overwhelming and immediate needs of the region, Central Oregon's revised FY20-21 RCTP plan shows 75% (\$640,875) of RCTP funds allocated for Marketing, Destination Development, Strategic Partnerships and Sales; 30% of the fund (\$256,350) is allocated to leveraged opportunities with Travel Oregon, with some contingency funds set aside as future opportunities arise from Travel Oregon's dynamic Menu of Investment leveraged co-opportunities. As Visit Central Oregon's conventional Membership Program has been eliminated, leveraging RCTP funds is valuable and beneficial at this time of recovery efforts, optimized by the vast reach of Travel Oregon's Global departments.



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GLOBAL MARKETING:

Visit Central Oregon's marketing strategy follows a 4 Phase Plan,

1. Staying Connected - Maintaining top of mind awareness with informational and inspirational messaging during the crisis, but without the invitation to visit - opposite of what our messaging has been in the past
2. Planning Ahead - Driving Awareness and consideration for travel with inspirational and informational messaging with renewed caution
3. Getting Excited - Engaging the full funnel marketing plan and campaigns, encouraging travelers seeking an escape to proactively get out and explore and break their cabin fever.
4. Booking Travel - Continuing the full funnel marketing plan and campaigns, focus on highest potential conversion opportunities - encouraging booking travel and resuming normal travel behavior.

Each Phase leverages Visit Central Oregon's engagement with consumers and thoughtful messaging for destination visitation through multi-tiered, highly targeted advertising, compelling multimedia content development, public relations and consumer sales programs. Leveraged strategies and Visit Central Oregon's destination marketing investments in out-of-state target markets ensures the highest and best use of industry resources.

Visit Central Oregon will continue to utilize the TORP and the Oregon Welcome Center programs to distribute the Official Central Oregon Visitors Guide, utilizing Travel Oregon's distribution channels. This will allow maximized reach of the guide at a much lower cost than distributing independently.

Paused due to the pandemic, Visit Central Oregon will re-implement conducting visitor center surveys throughout the region when the time is right to do so. Our continued investment in valuable research and analytics will set a good foundation for planning for the next biennium and will allow Central Oregon to be more successful in positioning the destination during this rapidly evolving time for Destination Marketing.



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DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT:

Visit Central Oregon's RCTP revised plan will support and allow Discover Your Forest (DYF) to move forward with their "Deschutes National Forest Ambassadors" program. Supporting Central Oregon's National Forest with their public outreach efforts is more important than ever. Three "Ambassador Site" trailheads selected and overseen by DYF will serve as communication touch-points for public health and sustainable messaging to trail users.

"Take Care Out There" messaging will further complement DYF's and the region's trailhead messaging efforts, utilizing the toolkit of the new set of messages within the "Take Care Out There" brand and framework. The new messages reflect current guidance from the Governor and Oregon Health Authority regarding recreational access and will be updated on an ongoing basis to remain current and accurate.

These programs allow for Central Oregon's RCTP to benefit from Travel Oregon and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) collaborative Oregon Trails Fund (OTF) to improve trail infrastructure via planning, development, and maintenance of Oregon's trail network. RDMO projects that qualify for the OTF will receive an unencumbered reimbursement of 45% of the total project cost once the project has been completed.

Additionally, Visit Central Oregon will continue to serve as a key stakeholder with Deschutes Trails Coalition and the Discover Your Forest Advisory Committee.

GLOBAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS:

Due to the re-strategizing of RCTP funds for more immediate needs and the demand of administrative bandwidth necessary to run a successful grant program, the Central Oregon Matching Grants Program (COMGP) is paused indefinitely. Central

Oregon's tourism industry should be proud to know that in the three years of Visit Central Oregon facilitating the Central Oregon Matching Grants Program (COMGP), \$558,250 of RCTP matched grant funds have been infused back into 42 of our region's non-profits, DMO/Chambers and Resort Group Sales Development projects. Visit Central Oregon will continue to be a conduit of information and a resource for regional stakeholders for beneficial grant opportunities and webinars/workshops.



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As a necessary tool for valuable insights into the performance of the regional hotel industry and short-term vacation rentals, Visit Central Oregon will subscribe into STR's hotel performance and AirDNA vacation rental (AirBnB and VRBO) reporting to remain connected with regional performance trends and tracking the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. RDMO outreach efforts in collaboration with STR are being developed for a more robust regional data-set.

GLOBAL SALES:

International travel has been devastatingly affected globally by this pandemic. Knowing that recovery for international visitation into Oregon will be at a slower pace than drive-distance or via domestic flights, FY20-21 commitment for Global Sales shows a significant decrease. Continued efforts for Visit Central Oregon in this platform will utilize FY19-20 rollover funds, engaging with the most appropriate markets, heavily leveraged through Travel Oregon Global Sales co-opportunities.

Efforts to retain air service currently suspended through RDM due to the pandemic will be crucial for the region. As a stakeholder for the Central Oregon Air Service Taskforce (COAST), Visit Central Oregon has retained and will rollover the full amount budgeted into FY20-21 (\$50K).

STAFFING & ADMINISTRATION:

Visit Central Oregon's entire team invests significant time and resources to support the Central Oregon RCTP, ensuring full integration of the region's RCTP programs. In this time of emergency response to support Oregon's RDMO's, Travel Oregon is allowing up to 40% of FY20-21 RCTP funds to go towards RDMO program implementation. As Visit Central Oregon receives additional funding through a portion of Deschutes County TRT, operations are allocated between the two budgets. 25% (\$213,625) of RCTP funds will go towards our organization's administration of regional RCTP.

- How your organization is working/sourcing information from stakeholders

During "Stay Home. Save Lives", Visit Central Oregon created a Regional Recovery Survey which was distributed to DMOs to garner information on how we can help with reopening and marketing once open.



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In the planning process for our recovery campaign, Visit Central Oregon has been working with our industry partners to provide a marketing coop opportunity for each community in our region. In doing this we have been collecting information from stakeholder surveys distributed to local DMOs and CVBs as well as our other industry partners so that we know what is important to our stakeholders as well as what difficulties they may be facing, and to make sure that the co-ops are showcasing the best our communities have to offer and are aligned with the geo markets where local DMOs and CVBs already have a marketing presence.

The Travel Oregon revised RCTP Guidelines were introduced to regional stakeholders during Visit Central Oregon's virtual webinar on May 20th. At that time, the dynamic Menu of Investment Opportunities was not available from Travel Oregon to share our revised plan as being currently submitted. However, Visit Central Oregon's marketing strategies and top-line RCTP budget re-allocations were shared with the attending stakeholders, with the opportunity to ask questions and offer feedback.

Post-submission to Travel Oregon, the FY20-21 revised RCTP plan and Executive Summary will be sent out via Industry eNews as a final opportunity to review and offer stakeholder feedback prior to finalization with Travel Oregon and implementation July 1, 2020.

****THANK YOU!****