



*Pacific NorthWest
Economic Region*

PNWER Regional Tourism Council Business Case

Background and Context

During the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region's (PNWER) 2023 Annual Summit in Boise, Idaho, the PNWER Tourism Working Group proposed the formation of a Regional Tourism Council. The Working Group asserted that **more bilateral coordination between industry and government will enhance regional destination competitiveness, sustainability, and resiliency**. Given that Tourism is a broad-ranging sector that reaches across cultural and socio-economic groups, the Working Group framed this approach as an economic development and destination management strategy, designed to inclusively build prosperity for the entire PNWER region. Recognizing that Tourism is a key economic driver for the Pacific Northwest United States and Western Canada, the PNWER Executive Board approved the formation of the Regional Tourism Council (RTC) to promote bilateral coordination between the U.S. and Canada and to facilitate timely dialogue and collaboration between industry and government.

While it is clear that the PNWER region has evolved into a world-class tourism destination, our regional tourism economy has both challenges and competitive advantages that would be better managed with coordinated regional tourism governance, under a framework of bilateral destination management. With COVID lessons learned, industry and government now have the opportunity to collaborate on the challenges of workforce, sustainable tourism dispersion throughout our vast geography, management of the complexity of tourism transportation, mitigation of the impacts of tourism on the climate, and contributions to the efficient operation of our international border.

On a more immediate horizon, the opportunity and risk of the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup provides motivation to build a regional governance and management model for PNWER's tourism economy. The World Cup highlights and catalyzes the need to establish strong lines of communication and collaboration across borders and between industry and government.

With this in mind, the RTC will provide guidance and input to government and industry on the development of regional tourism priorities with a bilateral, cohesive, and inclusive focus. Through bilaterally developed programs, domestic and international travelers will be encouraged to explore the U.S., Canada, our respective First Nations and their Indigenous tourism products. Sustainability and Resiliency in the form of emergency preparedness will also be key policy topics. Importantly, the RTC will collaborate with other organizations such as the Future Borders Coalition to promote a cohesive vision of the U.S.-Canada border based on the principles of efficiency, safety, and security.

With oversight from the PNWER Executive Board, the RTC will be supported by a Secretariat and a strategic issue sub-committee, or Industry Advisory Committee. As a key connection to the business of Tourism, the Industry Advisory Committee will be populated with industry

representatives, policy experts, and a diversity of other industry and government stakeholders. These topic experts will identify strategic bilateral and regional tourism issues to inform the RTC's discussion and policy development.

Through the RTC, the PNWER region has the opportunity to become a leader in destination management and tourism resiliency, protecting our valuable "ecoasis" and, using this model of consistent regional tourism stewardship, become the best managed regional tourism economy in the world. Since the PNWER region is known globally for its innovation and progressive leadership, this initiative is a natural partnership opportunity for all PNWER members and has the potential to take our tourism economy to a world-leading level.

Vision:

PNWER and its Regional Tourism Council will become the de facto bilateral leader for responsible, sustainable, and resilient tourism in the region. The PNWER RTC will develop regional best practices to ensure the regional tourism economy is optimized and sustainable.

Objectives:

- Develop an efficient, effective, and inclusive Regional Tourism Council
- Develop a research-based agenda used for informed, diverse, and decisive advocacy across the region and inform industry and government in a consistent fashion
- Use the Regional Tourism Council to oversee tourism growth in the region including analysis of long-haul supply lines, infrastructure, border issues, communication, crisis planning, environmental impact, and government regulations
 - Examples include preclearance border screening, disaster management planning across the region, transportation development, pandemic planning, etc.
- Continually monitor the inventory of regional tourism products, looking at best trade practices, gaps in product supply, people management, and diversity of product in PNWER
 - Create business cases for additional development, working with the public and private sectors to execute plans to facilitate the "Three Nation Vacation" (U.S./Canada/Indigenous)

See Addendum for Initial Priorities including regional coordination for 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Governance Structure

The PNWER Executive Committee approved the formation of the Regional Tourism Council in September 2023, and the RTC will be under the auspices of the PNWER Executive Committee.

The RTC will replace the current Tourism Working Group with areas of focus including safe, sustainable, and competitive recovery of cross-border tourism; tourism and destination marketing; Three Nation Vacation; border issues such as security for border crossings and preclearance; and emergency management preparedness and response planning

The Regional Tourism Council will consist of an appointed public sector and private sector representative from each of PNWER's ten jurisdictions. These representatives will be appointed for a term of two years. Appointed alternates are encouraged from each jurisdiction to ensure that each jurisdiction's interests and expertise are being represented on the Council. The ten

PNWER jurisdictions include Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Northwest Territories, Oregon, Saskatchewan, Washington, and Yukon.

A public sector Chair and a private sector Executive will be elected from amongst the members.

Each member will have one vote, and in a member's absence, a designated alternate can vote in their place. When a vote is necessary, a quorum of half of the appointed members of the Regional Tourism Council plus one must be present.

A strategic sub-committee, otherwise known as the Industry Advisory Committee, will be formed. The Industry Advisory Committee will be populated with industry representatives, policy experts, and other relevant industry and government stakeholders. These stakeholders will ensure there is representation on issues of environment, Indigenous and First Nations representation and culture, DEI, transportation modes, emergency management and disaster resilience, and other important topics. The Industry Advisory Committee will identify strategic bilateral and regional tourism issues to inform the RTC's discussion and policy development. They will be able to serve as subject matter experts and advise the Council as needed.

A dedicated Program Manager will support the RTC and will work with industry and government to ensure execution of initiatives in a timely and consistent fashion.

The RTC will collaborate with other PNWER Working Groups such as Transportation and Border Issues.

The RTC will engage with other organizations such as the [Future Borders Coalition](#) and the Border Policy Research Institute at Western Washington University to collaborate on a research agenda and provide tourism insight.

Program Management and Budget

In order to facilitate and coordinate the Council, it is estimated that \$200,000 will be required over a 30-month period through the 2026 FIFA World Cup. This includes meeting expenses and a salary to support staffing a full-time program manager position. Sustainable funding would be pursued to continue the program beyond this 30-month timeline with the additional goal that the RTC will be permanently supported by all PNWER members.

2024 - \$85,000

2025 - \$85,000

2026 - \$30,000

Total - \$200,000

Funding is required to coordinate efforts across the region and support the RTC. A full-time program manager is needed to coordinate the Regional Tourism Council and focus on key priorities of the region. The full-time position will serve the Council and report directly to the PNWER Secretariat. The staff position will focus on the following:

- Identify and set priorities for the Regional Tourism Council
- Host regular Regional Tourism Council Meetings

- Develop agendas for in-person meetings during the PNWER Economic Leadership Forum and PNWER Annual Summit
- In preparation for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, identify materials and address gaps and encourage planning for regional hospitality, emergency preparedness, and smooth intermodal transportation, catalyzing programs that encourage global visitors to explore the region
- Work with the Council to quantify tourism economic development throughout the region to continue to develop the PNWER Regional Tourism Dashboard, ensuring regional data is collected and research is undertaken to accurately report on the regional prosperity delivered by tourism
- Develop a bilateral/regional destination management approach that inspires sustainable tourism development in the PNWER region
- Encourage and promote the development of Indigenous tourism
- Engage with government to become a relied-on collaboration and research source to proactively handle tourism issues and build effective policy approaches

Communication and Reporting

The Regional Tourism Council will work with PNWER, regional Destination Marketing Organizations, tourism associations, and industry representatives to ensure industry information is shared to industry, government, and the general public.

The Program Manager will coordinate information dissemination to RTC members and additional PNWER members and supporters, ensuring consistent statistics and data for advocacy purposes.

The Program Manager and the RTC will provide a presentation at PNWER's Annual Summit as well as additional milestones as determined by the Executive Committee.

Addendum

Initial Priorities:

- Prepare for the 2026 FIFA World Cup by addressing gaps and encouraging planning for regional hospitality, emergency management, and smooth intermodal transportation, catalyzing programs that encourage global visitors to explore the PNWER region and return.
 - Discuss ways to ensure travel accessibility for visitors of all cultures and abilities.
 - Provide tourism insight to the Future Border Coalition to strengthen the end-to-end passenger journey and ensure information is readily available in streamlined fashion for the traveling public, tour operators, and the general tourism industry.
- On a longer-term basis, develop a bilateral/regional destination management approach that inspires sustainable tourism development in the PNWER region, ensuring that growth:

- Fosters dispersed economic development throughout the PNWER region, while protecting the beautiful environment that so many world citizens aspire to visit.
- Contributes to the preservation of key cultural, historic, and natural tourism assets that comprise PNWER's globally unique experience inventory (protect our "Ecoasis").
- Inspires bilateral cooperation between industry and government on border issues, focusing on clear communication and policies to better handle conditions of normal travel and pressures brought on by growth and crisis (e.g. find ways to preserve critical business and cultural travel during times of crisis).
- Inspires public and private investment in tourism experiences and critical travel infrastructure such as borders and ports, as well as development of tourism enabling policy such as trusted traveler programs.
- Encourage the development of Indigenous tourism.
- Continue to develop the PNWER Regional Tourism Dashboard, ensuring regional data is collected and research is undertaken to accurately report on the regional prosperity delivered by Tourism.
- Engage with government to become a relied-on collaboration and research source to proactively handle tourism issues and build policy.
- Oversee tourism-specific emergency management planning, building industry resilience wherever possible.
 - In times of crisis, be ready to assume the role of a "tourism disaster cabinet" that could quickly convene tourism experts and support government with tourism and travel insight.

DRAFT Terms of Reference

- The PNWER Regional Tourism Council will meet:
 - quarterly by virtual means, and
 - in person at the winter Economic Leadership Forums and summer Annual Summits to discuss regionally important matters that contribute to the sustainable governance of the region's tourism and travel economy.
- The RTC will follow Destination Management best practices and endeavour to work on tourism and travel issues of bilateral importance between the U.S. and Canada.
- Each committee member will attend two PNWER meetings per year, and as research and policy initiatives develop, member states and provinces will consider funding the Council as appropriate.
- It is hoped that Council members will come from diverse backgrounds, with a mix of private sector tourism, hospitality and accommodation professionals, tourism marketers, travel officials, and other public officials involved in tourism and travel policy.

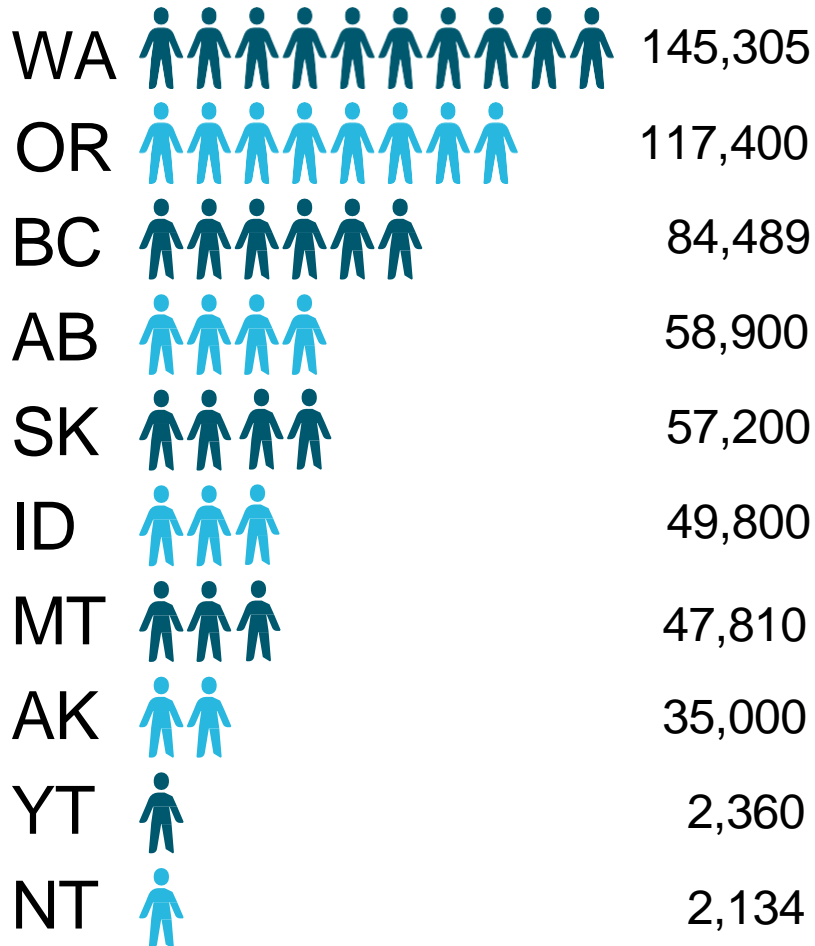


DESTINATION GREATER
VICTORIA

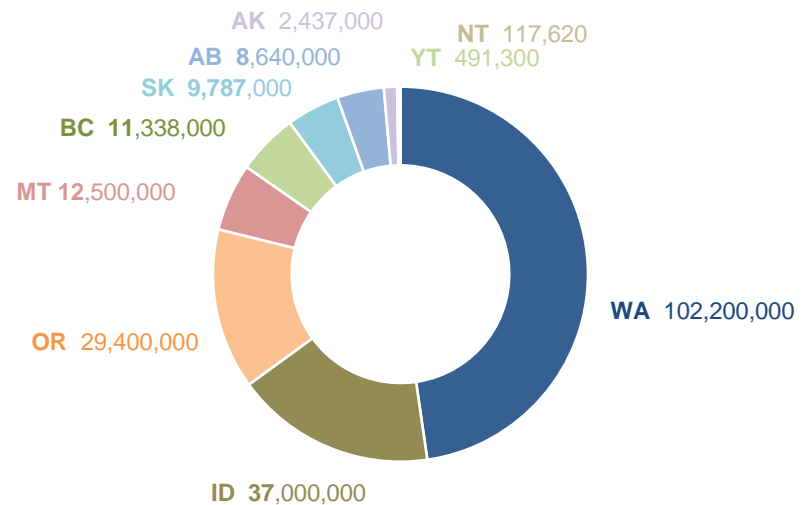
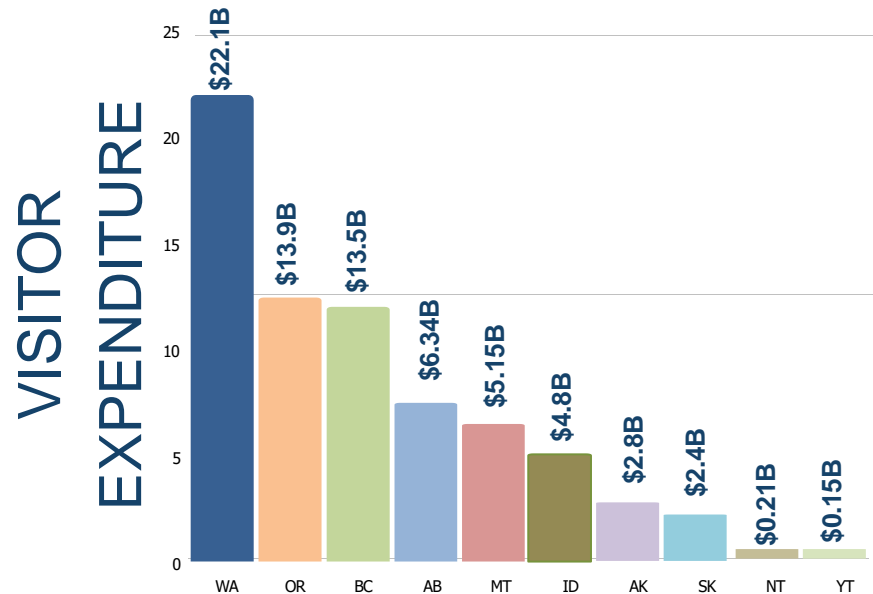
**PNWER 2023 Tourism Dashboard
Update and Value of Tourism**

PNWER VALUES OF TRAVEL & TOURISM

TOURISM EMPLOYMENT



Produced by Destination Greater Victoria using data from a range of online industry sources including PNWER members. Estimates are based on selected key indicators which could vary by data collection date and/or methodology across the jurisdictions. The main source for Canadian data is Statistics Canada. Updated July 2023.



VISITORS

PNWER VALUES OF TRAVEL & TOURISM

ALL JURISDICTIONS



\$71.3 BILLION SPENDING



TOTAL VISITOR EXPENDITURE



Produced by Destination Greater Victoria using data from a range of online industry sources including PNWER members. Estimates are based on selected key indicators which could vary by data collection date and/or methodology across the jurisdictions. The main source for Canadian data is Statistics Canada. Updated July 2023.

PNWER VALUES OF TRAVEL & TOURISM

Compared to data for 2019 (pre-pandemic):

- Across PNWER jurisdictions, tourism-related jobs decreased by almost 200,000 (-24%) from 2019 to 2021 / 2022.
- Reduction in jobs was greatest in Alberta (-57%) and British Columbia (-49%).
- Visitor expenditure across PNWER jurisdictions increased by \$2 billion (+3%).
- Total visitor volume across PNWER jurisdictions decreased by 6 million (-3%), most significantly within Canadian destinations.
- From 2019 to 2021/2022, tourism-related jobs within PNWER jurisdictions decreased to a much greater extent than changes in visitor volume and spending, indicating there was probably significant stress on human resources and service delivery.

