

**TOURISM**  
**Monday, July 24, 2017**  
**2:30-5:30**  
**Co-Chairs: Rep Gael Tarleton and David Cowen**

**FINDINGS**

1. Tourism must now be analyzed as its own unique, measurable economic sector in the PNWER jurisdictions, generating positive economic impacts to states/provinces/territories and local jurisdictions. Tourism generates \$177 billion and 742,830 jobs (2016 statistics) to PNWER participants. Furthermore, from a tax and regulatory perspective, Tourism must now be recognized by the U.S. and Canada as a sustainable, wide-impact, job rich and stable export sector that has a high rate of return when marketing dollars are strategically invested.

The Tourism Dashboard produced by Paul Nursey demonstrates that the Tourism Industry in PNWER states, provinces and territories has taken specific steps to evaluate the performance and impact of public funds used to expand tourism and travel in their respective regions. Travel Oregon and #BCTourismMatters have analyzed tourism data and found that the direct benefit to local economies has a significant positive multiplier effect, where tax dollars spent are returned 10 to 15 times in new revenues to state/provincial and local authorities.

*Attachment: Please see Tourism Dashboard slides that describe economic impacts of visitors – jobs, tax revenues, etc.*

2. PNWER jurisdictions that appropriate resources to publicly funded tourism offices are able to collect data, analyze performance of monies spent, and prove the economic/social/environmental benefits to supporting, developing, and expanding a sustainable tourism strategy as an economic sector.

Analyses show that the whole region benefits when each entity maintains and sustains a professionally staffed office to implement tourism programs and to develop strategies to expand the reach and impact of tourism throughout their own jurisdiction and across PNWER. Experience shows that when one PNWER partner loses a voice in the tourism sector – especially when Washington State closed its office – the whole region loses a voice as well. The regional partners continue to build their networks despite the loss of institutional support but this is the equivalent of swimming with one arm tied behind your back.

3. Tourism to the U.S. and Canadian Pacific Northwest requires a disciplined and intentional strategy to make the Pacific Northwest the place where tourists find a single point of entry and then fan out to all corners to experience our region as a diverse and dispersed destination.

PNWER must be the “pathfinder”, advocating for or facilitating development of tools that show visitors from other parts of Canada, the United States, and the rest of the world how to create and navigate their Pacific Northwest experience. Tour operators in our own region as well as tour operators and destination planners will send tourists to our region if we show them how to reach their destination and enjoy their experiences – by air, land and sea.

4. History has shown that unclear communication about border regulations leads to a reduction in bilateral Tourism. For example, post 911 U.S. visitation to Victoria B.C. dropped by upwards of 50%. As border requirements became more widely known by the traveling public and tour operators, after several years tourism levels gradually improved. Tourism operators presently report that potential visitors from some countries sometimes give up on their visit to the PNWER region due confusion about border regulations and frustration about multiple application processes.

To facilitate trip planning for independent travelers, business development for tour operators and to ensure the desire to travel is not frustrated by uncertainty about border regulations, PNWER tourism professionals recommend that steps are taken to develop a single, simple to understand and trusted source of border information for travel to both countries from all source markets. This is particularly important for Trusted/Known Traveler Programs. Furthermore, industry thinks there is commercial opportunity if PNWER continues advocacy for synchronized application processes wherever possible, particularly for ESTA/ETA and visas.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO PNWER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- 1) Establish the PNWER Tourism Committee with one delegate from each of the PNWER jurisdictions who will agree to participate for the next two years in quarterly teleconference calls and the Winter PNWER meeting. We need to ramp up awareness of Tourism as an Economic Sector in its own right.
- 2) PNWER lead the effort to implement the Pre-Clearance legislation and regulations in Canada so that tourists entering via a U.S. or Canadian Port can obtain Pre-Clearance to enter the other country as part of a pre-approved tour group. Explore whether Pre-Clearance may be established as a core component of the “Beyond the Border Action Plan.”
- 3) PNWER advocate for “Reciprocity Status” within the PNWER jurisdictions. If travelers apply for and are granted access to enter any PNWER jurisdiction, then they are authorized to enter other PNWER jurisdictions under a special Mutual Agreement among the PNWER jurisdictions with our respective federal authorities.
- 4) PNWER's Tourism Committee continue to examine a “one-stop-pass” for multi-modal transportation within the PNWER area, where ferries can connect to bus trips, or airlines can connect to float planes, etc. In particular, that the Committee support as needed the following initiatives:
  - i) Backball Ferry Line/Wilson's Transportation/Quick Shuttle collaboration to build a ‘NORPASS’ style integrated ferry pass
  - ii) Harbour Air's initiative to create float plane service between Vancouver and Seattle
  - iii) Greater Victoria Harbour Authority's initiative to develop Pacific NW cruise itineraries and also become a home port that will allow for growth and flexibility in Alaskan itineraries
- 5) PNWER's Tourism Committee develop within the next two years a PNWER tourism vision for “Destination Pacific Northwest 2025.” Oregon's vision says “build a better life for Oregonians through strong, sustainable local economies.” Examine best practices for funding models for sustainable, success-based funding.

## **PROPOSED ACTION ITEMS FOR WINTER 2017 MEETING IN VICTORIA**

- 1) Determine the one delegate from each PNWER jurisdiction who will commit to serving 2 years on the Tourism Committee.

- 2) Evaluate two or three initiatives already in the planning stages that will expand tourist access to multiple PNWER jurisdictions, for example: WA-OR-BC, or MT-ID-Alberta, or BC-Alaska-NW Territories. Recommend whether PNWER should share these packages as “destination experiences” with tour operators and partners who have already identified a demand to visit the Pacific NW.
- 3) Develop a web page on the PNWER website to post tourism economic impact studies, tourist “ratings” on travel experiences in the Pacific Northwest (from tourism operators), photos of PNWER “destination highlights” and examples of tours that get people into PNWER places by air, land, and sea. This web page should also include links to Tourism Offices and other resources in the PNWER region.
- 4) In collaboration with the Border and Trade Working Group, with the intended audience of the tour operator community and independent travelers, undertake initial steps to develop a simple to understand and trusted source of border information for travel to both countries from all source markets. Focus should be on ETA/ESTA, visas and trusted/known traveler programs, while also promoting NEXUS and EDL benefits. (If you are an XXX citizen, how to cross the border 101).
- 5) Discuss and activate advocacy opportunities for the development of synchronized application processes, particularly for ESTA/ETA and visas from key source markets
- 6) Develop advocacy plans for the following opportunities:
  - i) Development of trusted traveler programs and in particular North American trilateral trusted traveler initiatives
  - ii) Restoration of visitor visa processing to the Canadian Consulate in Seattle
  - iii) Addition of RFID technology to Canadian travel documents (RFID passport companion card)
  - iv) Under the tried and true cargo principle of check once, clear twice, design and propose visa and ESTA/ETA synchronization projects
  - v) From a regulatory, tax and investment perspective, recognition by government that Tourism is an export sector worthy of equal treatment in comparison to other export sectors.
  - vi) Resourcing and planning for the processing of large numbers of low risk passengers in short preclearance windows
  - vii) Address impediments to border entry such as misdemeanor convictions
  - viii) Continue regional collaboration on data collection and research to support the Tourism Dashboard
  - ix) Development of tariff flexibility for provincial and state ferry operators so that package pricing can be applied by ferry operators to manage yield, increase revenue and build Two Nation Vacation interline packages
  - x) Accelerate marketing collaboration. Governments are asked to encourage and support their destination marketers in their ongoing efforts to leverage key resources and where appropriate strategically collaborate among PNWER states and provinces. NB this is not about developing a PNWER brand, but rather about stimulating visitation to and within the PNWER region and wherever possible developing dispersion strategies.
  - xi) Discuss content and design of the PNWER Tourism Strategy