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PNWER Executive
Committee***

News Release

U.S.-Canada Cross-Border Organization Applauds the Re-Opening of the U.S. Land Border to Fully Vaccinated Canadians

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OCTOBER 14, 2021---The Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) celebrates the Biden administration’s announcement yesterday to allow fully vaccinated travelers from Canada to enter the U.S. at land borders and ferry crossings beginning in November.

“This is great news for U.S.-Canada relations and a long-awaited decision for those with family and business ties on both sides of the border. We look forward to prompt and timely communication regarding specific timelines, protocols, and other entry requirements in the coming weeks. It is essential to minimize confusion and potential delays as much as possible to travelers and operators”, said Matt Morrison, PNWER CEO.

Upon hearing the announcement, PNWER President, Richard Gotfried, Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, applauded the news and stated, “The re-opening of land borders between our two countries is welcome news to the many businesses and individuals who rely on the visitor economy. The land border between Canada and our U.S. neighbours is the longest in the world, and the free flow of goods, services, and visitors across the border has a valuable role to play in enhancing ties with our largest trading partner as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and build back stronger.”

The re-opening of the U.S.-Canada border will have a significant and positive impact on hard-hit sectors, particularly in tourism and hospitality. The PNWER region averaged \$71.4 billion in visitor expenditures annually prior to the pandemic.

Montana State Senator Mike Cuffe, former PNWER President, said, “While this is great news, I have been eagerly awaiting the re-opening of the border for some time. The economic impact of these 20 months of closure has really hit my district of northern Montana hard, especially during peak tourism season. PNWER has suggested pilot projects that can implement this policy efficiently. I am excited to welcome our friends from the North back to our community.”

The land border between the U.S. and Canada has been closed to non-essential travel since March 2020. PNWER has been urging the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to implement a phased safe re-opening of the border with Canada since July 2020 and called on them to reciprocate when Canada allowed fully vaccinated Americans to cross the border in July 2021, including identifying pilot projects in the region.

*Partial listing

“As a bi-national organization, we will continue to support bilateral coordination and government-industry collaboration in order to make the U.S.-Canada border more secure, efficient, and resilient to future pandemics and other external shocks”, said Laurie Trautman, Co-Chair of PNWER’s Border Working Group and Director of the Border Policy Research Institute at Western Washington University.

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About PNWER

Founded in 1991, PNWER is the only statutory, non-partisan, bi-national, public/private partnership in North America. PNWER is the forum for collaborative bi-national planning involving both the public and private sectors and offers leadership at the state/provincial level in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, the Yukon, and at the national level in Washington, D.C. and Ottawa.

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