

# North of Ordinary

## North Coast Tourism Council 2019-2020 End-of-Year Report

### Board Members:

Del Norte: Cindy Vosburg (*Treasurer*), Lynnette Braillard  
Humboldt: Julie Benbow (*Chair*), Marc Rowley  
Mendocino: Katrina Kessen  
Lake: Larry Galupe (*Secretary*), Brian Fisher, Michelle Scully  
Administrator: Travis Scott (Mendocino)

Meetings were held in September 2019, January, April and July 2020.

During the past year, NCTC undertook an organizational evaluation focusing on business, budget, administration and marketing. The following changes were discussed and agreed upon:

- **Governance:**
  - Board officers were elected for a term of one year (2019-202): Larry Galupe, Secretary, Cindy Vosburg, Treasurer, and Julie Benbow, Chair.
  - The Bylaws were updated to reflect the organizational and administrative changes.
- **Funding / Budget:**
  - County Dues: FY 2019-2020 - Del Norte, Humboldt and Mendocino each gave \$11,000 and Lake County \$5,000 to the organization.
  - Travis undertook an analysis of 2018-2019 income and expense. There were some unpaid invoices (international mission) and some administrative expenses that the Board agreed to pay, however discontinue in the future.
  - The Board reviewed operational expenses and personnel commitment as presented by Travis, and decided:
    - There would no longer be any paid staff. Council business operations and general administration would be undertaken by Travis Scott, Mendocino.
    - No longer pursue international travel missions. The majority of funds will be invested in marketing with the focus on in-state and domestic markets.
  - Due to the organizational changes, the Visit California funding application was completed and submitted late in the year. NCTC received a \$45,000 match. This included funds for attendance at three trade events. When COVID-19 hit, these events were cancelled and NCTC redirected funds: a half page ad in the VisitCA Road Trip Magazine; and the creation of original content as specified in the grant.
  - In previous years, Associate Memberships had been offered to a few hotels and attractions and they were prominently promoted on the website, at trade events and on international missions. Associated membership brought in an estimated \$13,500. Signed contracts and a description of benefits and NCTC commitment could not be located. The Board voted to discontinued Associate Memberships deciding to promote all assets equally. It was agreed to keep the logos and links on the website through the end of 2019-2020 fiscal year. Associate members were contacted personally and advised of the organizational changes.

- **Marketing:**
  - The designation (by Visit California) of North Coast Tourism Council (as a region name) did not include Lake County, as they aren't coastal. The group agreed to a DBA and the outward facing name was changed to *North of Ordinary*. NCTC did not renew the website and social marketing contract with ThisCrowd. It awarded the contract to Lynnette Brillard/LuLish, (a company working with Del Norte and other DMO's) to develop a new website, update content and produce digital campaigns.
  - The NCTC map & brochure was updated and corrected. 25,000 were printed and Certified Folder Display were contracted with for distribution to specific sites and Visitor Centers in California and Southern Oregon. Funds from the 2019-2020 budget covered these costs.
- **Visit California:**
  - Due to the dire financial impact on VCA's funding, grants of only \$15,000 were awarded to all rural counties for the 2020/2021 fiscal year. NCTC agreed to invest the majority of funds in marketing, as no travel or in-person trade events are planned for the remainder of the fiscal year.
  - Dues: FY 2020-2021 – Not knowing the real impact on future funding, each County has agreed put \$5K into NCTC with Del Norte, Humboldt and Mendocino pledging an additional \$6K if needed after a 6-month budget review.
- **Rural Tourism Advocacy:**
  - In April, the NCTC met with Senator McGuire to lobby for support for our rural communities. He was very interested and supportive.
- **Covid-19 Impacts:**
  - In June, a weekly 3-county Covid Economic Reliance meeting was established to discuss concerns, share information, and connect different agencies. Del Norte, Humboldt and Mendocino participate. This is a very informative and idea sharing forum and a good resource.
  - Due to the disparity in the individual county mandates (mask wearing, social distancing), the steps for lodging to become compliant with regulations, the closure of all/most indoor eating and drinking establishments, cultural institutions, and the moratorium on all social gatherings (festivals, events), it was predicted that tourism revenue would take a deep dive.
  - And initially it did. March 19 through May saw no sanctioned out-of-county travel except for essential workers. Some lodgings temporarily closed, some hosted essential workers. Many travel-related businesses scrambled to understand the guidelines for re-opening and applied for PPP assistance.
  - In the run up to Memorial Day weekend, people were traveling to rural counties to escape from cities and towns in the State. As predicted, they were road trippers. Visitors, while bringing some revenue, also brought anxiety and concern for the residents' health and safety.

Then came the wildfires.

  - September: And still they come from across the states to the rural counties in cars and RV's. In some areas, revenue from accommodations may see a small downturn. Revenue from events and festivals will be almost non-existent.
  - While many sectors of the travel/tourism trade have taken a huge revenue hit (air travel, cruise lines, amusement parks) and will take perhaps years to rebound, it is the smaller locally owned and operated restaurants, bars, casino's and retail trade that may not survive.

- Anecdotal impacts: People are on the move away from cities, many are now working remotely and have chosen to relocate (temporarily?) to rural counties where the cost of living is lower, there are fewer people, and the promise of a better quality of life awaits.

Seven months into the pandemic, the long-term impact on tourism and travel is unknown.

Now, more than ever, tourism is an important revenue generator for our counties. What can we, the North Coast Tourism Council, do as a group, and as individual counties, to ensure our continued DMO funding?

**Stats from the 2019 Visit California Tourism Impacts Report by Dean Runyan and Associates.**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>TRAVEL RELATED</b>	<b>STATE &amp; LOCAL TAX</b>	<b>% NORTH COAST REGION SPENDING</b>
DEL NORTE	\$ 150.5M	\$ 12.6M	11.6%
HUMBOLDT	\$ 483.7M	\$ 41.8M	37.2%
MENDOCINO	\$ 484.0M	\$ 46.2M	37 %
LAKE	\$ 180.7M	\$ 12.8M	13.9%

**2019 Tourism Spending Impact  
County Comparison**

	\$ Total	Percentage Increase over 2018	State & Local Tax Revenue	Industry-related Employment	% Total Regional spending	<u>Travel Spending by Industry Segment</u>				
						Food Service	Lodging	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	Retail Sales	Local Trans. & Gas
Humboldt	483.7 M	6.7	41.8 M	6 K	37.2	131.2 M	96.8 M	59.6 M	46.1 M	67.6 M
Mendocino	484.4 M	0.04	46.2 M	6.4 K	37.3	138.9 M	134.2 M	62.8 M	53.1 M	53.3 M
Siskiyou	206 M	2	16.4 M	1.8 K	16.9	59.5 M	51.1 M	27.9 M	24.3 M	24.1 M
Shasta (Cascade)	544.7 M	4.8	44.1 M	5.1 K	44.6	138 M	123.1 M	62.3 M	71.8 M	78.9 M
Trinity	60.7 M	1.3	3.7 M	712	5.1	16.3M	13.1 M	8.01 M	6.8 M	8.7 M
Lake	180.7 M	8.2	12.8 M	1.8 K	13.9	51.4 M	32.6 M	25 M	23.2 M	22.2 M
Del Norte	150.5 M	11	12.6 M	1.6 K	12%	41.6 M	33.3 M	19.7 M	16.8 M	19.7 M
Sonoma	2.2 B		203.5 M	22.3 K		580.1 M	504.7 M	354.4 M	348.2 M	183.6 M