



STATE OF WASHINGTON

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY, TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
TOURISM OFFICE**

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Washington State Tourism Releases 2008 Travel Impacts Report

Annual Study Showcases Economic Benefits of Tourism Industry in Washington

OLYMPIA – In 2008, visitors to Washington spent \$15.7 billion in the state – an increase of 5.7 percent from 2007, according to a report released today by the Dept. of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) and Washington State Tourism.

“This report shows that the Washington travel industry will be an important contributor to our state’s economic turnaround,” said Gov. Chris Gregoire. “I put a strong emphasis on the travel industry in my Next Washington plan because it is one of our state’s economic drivers. I am pleased to see that our focus on tourism has led to another strong year for the industry in Washington.”

The annual Washington State Travel Impacts report studies the state’s travel industry and its statewide economic effects. Prepared for CTED by Dean Runyan Associates, the full Travel Impacts report is available on Washington State Tourism’s industry Web site, www.ExperienceWA.com/Industry.

“The tourism industry positively impacts all regions of our state, generating tax revenue and creating jobs, and our efforts are squarely focused on strengthening those economic benefits,” said Larry Williams, CTED interim director.

Washington’s Travel Industry Generates Job Opportunities

Total employment directly generated by travel spending was 149,900 in 2008, which represents approximately 3.8 percent of all jobs in Washington.

Washington’s Travel Industry Generates Tax Benefits

In 2008, travel spending accounted for more than \$1 billion in local and state tax revenue. On a household level, visitors from outside Washington (residents of other states or countries) generated \$250 of tax revenue for each Washington household and resident travel within the state generated an additional \$150 of tax revenue per household.

Washington’s Travel Industry Benefits All Regions of the State

Many of Washington's smaller counties have a greater number of travel-generated jobs in relation to total employment, making those counties more dependent on the travel industry. The six counties with more than 10 percent of travel-generated jobs in 2008 were non-urban (Skamania, Pacific, San Juan, Grays Harbor, Jefferson and Chelan). Additionally, the 12 counties with more than six percent of travel-generated jobs were also non-urban.

Additional report findings include:

- There were an estimated 5.9 million domestic air passenger visitor arrivals to Washington in 2008.
- International visitors accounted for \$1.5 billion in visitor spending in the state in 2008, a one percent increase over 2007.
- Residents from other states accounted for \$7.1 billion in visitor spending in Washington in 2008.
- Visitors who stayed overnight in commercial lodging (hotels, motels, resorts, bed & breakfasts) spent \$6.8 billion in 2008.

To help its statewide industry network of destination marketing organizations (DMOs) and convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs) convey the importance of tourism in their own communities, Washington State Tourism has developed a digital brochure, entitled "Tourism Matters to Washington." The brochure includes highlights of the Visitor Impact report as well as key milestones from the Washington State Tourism Commission, which was created by Gov. Chris Gregoire in 2007, and is available for download at www.ExperienceWA.com/Industry.

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For more information about Washington State Tourism, visit www.ExperienceWA.com. CTED (www.cted.wa.gov) is the lead state agency charged with enhancing and promoting sustainable community and economic vitality in Washington.