



# OKANOGAN COUNTRY TOURISM DESTINATION MASTER PLAN

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MARCH 2021





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*We would like to acknowledge the support and contributions to the Tourism Destination Master Plan from the following entities. Thank you for your guidance and participation throughout the planning process.*

**Okanogan County Tourism Council Members**

**Tourism Advisory Group Members**

**Okanogan Lodging Tax Advisory Committee  
(LTAC) Members**

**Okanogan County Commissioners**

## CONSULTANT TEAM:

**Otak Incorporated**  
www.otak.com



**Earth & Sky Studios, LLC**







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# 1

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## In this chapter:

- » OVERVIEW OF OKANOGAN COUNTRY CONTEXT
- » OKANOGAN COUNTY TOURISM COUNCIL
- » INTRODUCTION TO THE TOURISM DESTINATION MASTER PLAN
- » THE BENEFITS OF EXPANDING TOURISM IN OKANOGAN COUNTRY



# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND





**ROCK CLIMBING:** Okanogan Country features many great spots for novice and experienced rock climbers alike.





**The Okanogan is a  
place like no other.**

## OVERVIEW OF OKANOGAN COUNTRY CONTEXT

*Okanogan County, also called The Okanogan and “Okanogan Country” for purposes of tourism marketing, covers 5,281 square miles making it the largest county in Washington. Most of the land is state and federal and only 30 percent is in private ownership. The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation comprises approximately 2,100 square miles of the county. Descending from the North Cascades and surrounding wilderness into exceptionally scenic river valleys and shrub-steppe landscapes, The Okanogan is a place like no other.*

Okanogan Country is known as a getaway for outdoor adventure with over 1,000 miles of scenic trails, 200 water and wildlife access areas, 3 million acres of public land, and over 300 days of sunshine. The landscape is as varied as it is beautiful, from the North Cascade Mountains to river basins, high deserts, canyons, agricultural areas, and wide-open range lands. Recreation opportunities are numerous, with hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, mountain biking, off-roading, camping, wildlife watching, fishing, hunting, and sight-seeing as some of the most common activities visitors enjoy. The county has a rich cultural history and many existing tourism assets including museums, historic sites, ghost towns, and interpretive centers that provide information about the geologic and cultural history of the region.

There is also an emphasis on public art throughout the county—from stand alone works and sculptures to murals on town building walls celebrating the area’s history, culture, and uniqueness. Creativity is visible everywhere.

Okanogan Country is dotted with small historic towns and is otherwise generally rural and natural in character. The county has a population of just over 42,400 (2020). The population grows slowly (.55 percent from 2019-2020). In addition to tourism, agriculture and forestry are major economic generators of the county.

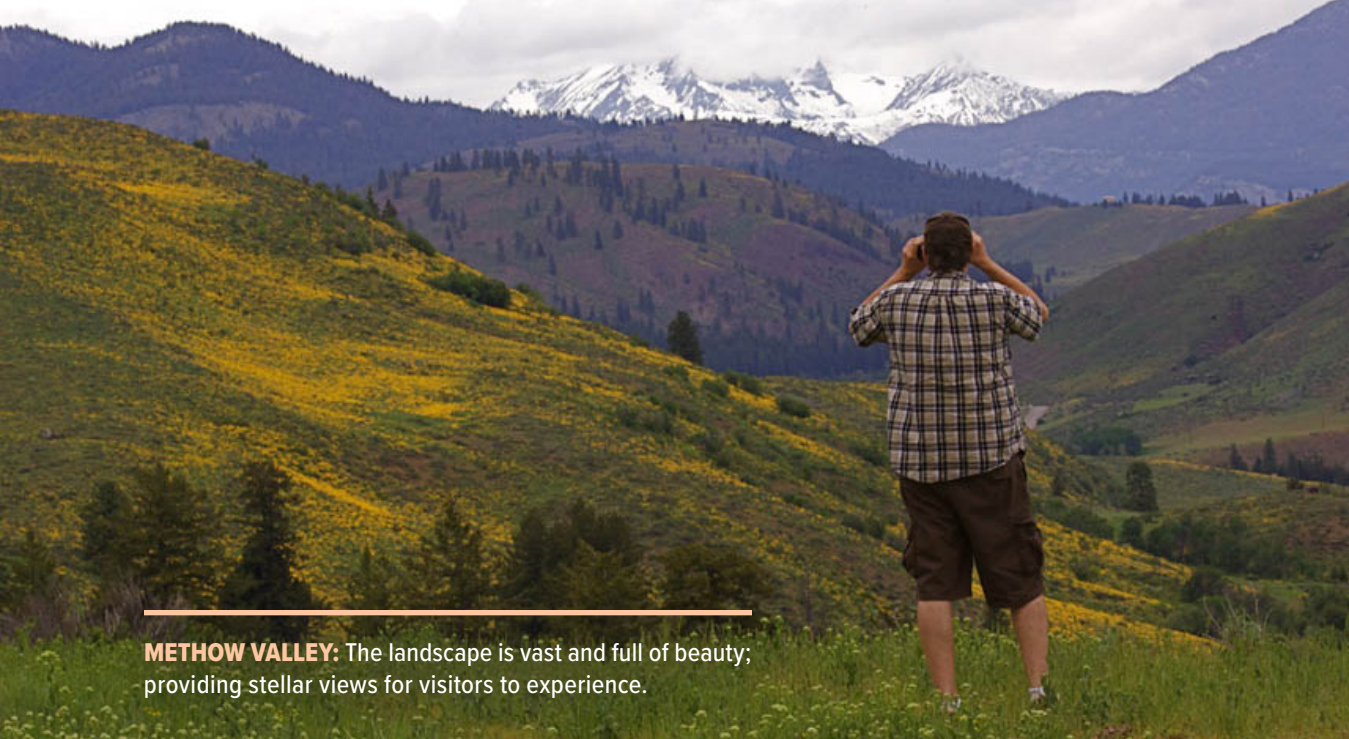
Okanogan Country includes four major subregions: Methow Valley, the Heart of the Okanogan, North Okanogan, and the Columbia River, as depicted on **FIGURE 1**.



**FIGURE 1**  
The Four Subregions of Okanogan Country







**METHOW VALLEY:** The landscape is vast and full of beauty; providing stellar views for visitors to experience.

The Methow Valley is world famous for its extensive year-round trails network and the sparkling Methow River. The Methow Valley extends from the North Cascades to the confluence of the Methow and Columbia Rivers. With unique places to visit such as the frontier town of Winthrop and the artsy enclaves of Twisp and Pateros, the Methow draws thousands each year as an active lifestyle destination. Pateros is known as a gateway to both the Methow Valley and the Okanogan Valley.

The Heart of the Okanogan is an important hub for visitors to the county and includes the town of Okanogan, the County Seat, and Omak, the largest city in the county, with populations of 2,607 and 4,852 respectively. Both towns are located along the Okanogan River, north of its confluence with the Columbia River. Scenic and historic Conconully established as one of the earliest towns in the county (and once known as Salmon City), is nestled in a mountain valley, northwest of Omak. Towns in the Heart of the Okanogan are known for year-round events. Visitors can experience the wild west with annual rodeos, working ranches, and just about every type of festival imaginable.

North Okanogan is a gateway to vast areas of wilderness, as well as to British Columbia, Canada. This area includes Many Lakes, on the west side of the Okanogan River, and the Okanogan Highlands, on the east side. Tonasket and Oroville offer services as well as glimpses into the area's past with unique places to visit such as the Depot Museum



in Oroville, Chief Tonasket Park in Tonasket, the Borderlands Historical Society Museum, and other places. The historic towns of Loomis, Nighthawk, Molson, Chesaw, Curlew, Wauconda, and Republic (in adjacent Ferry County) also offer opportunities to step back in time. Travel the Highland Historic Loop Drive to experience this area (see map, next page). Visitors can also access amazing outdoor adventures here, such as world class fishing, camping, hiking, climbing, and the Pasayten Wilderness, with over half a million acres of lands to explore.

The Columbia River subregion stretches from Pateros and Brewster east to the Grand Coulee Dam and the adjacent towns of Nespelem, Coulee Dam, and Elmer City, as well as Grand Coulee Dam and Electric City, located just across the county line. This area's tourism revolves around recreation on the Columbia River and the attraction of the Grand Coulee Dam.

Learn more about these areas and tourism assets throughout the county in Chapters 4 and 5.



**FIGURE 2a**  
**Highland Historic Loop Drive**



## Highland Historic Loop Drive

Okanogan Country in North Central Washington State offers everything from snow-capped mountains to high deserts, verdant agricultural areas to wide-open range. You'll find friendly towns and quiet corners to explore here, the largest county in Washington State. With 1,000 miles of scenic trails, 200 water and wildlife access areas, three million acres of public land, and over 300 days of sunshine, you can experience almost any outdoor adventure imaginable.

[www.OkanoganCountry.com](http://www.OkanoganCountry.com) • 1(888)431-3080



**FIGURE 2b****Highland Historic Loop Drive Map Key****1****Oroville Area Historic Sites**

- Full Services, Gas, Shopping, Dining, & Lodging
- Visitor Information Center (VIC) 476-2739
  - Railroad Depot Museum & Log House
  - 1.1 Story of First Orchard Sold to Smith by Chief Tonasket
  - Osoyoos Museum Society, 19 Park Place (250) 495-2582
  - NK/MIP Desert Cultural Centre, 1000 Rancher Creek Rd.
  - Osoyoos, BC (888) 495-7901

**1****Oroville Attractions & Lodging**

- Full Services, Gas, Shopping, Dining, & Lodging
- May Festival - 2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend, May
  - Rendezvous Blues Festival, Labor Day Weekend
  - Alpine Brewing Company, Tours 476-9662
  - Copper Mountain Winery, 33345 Hwy 97 476-2762
  - Lake Crest Winery, 718 Apple Way 476-2259
  - Okanogan Estate & Vineyards, Tours 476-2736
  - Antiques/Galore Collectibles & More 476-2970
  - Camaray Motel, 1320 Main 476-3684
  - 1A Oroville Golf Course 476-2390
  - 1B Oroville Municipal Airport 476-9976
  - 1C Osoyoos State Park (888-CAMPOUT)

**2****Molson Area Historic Sites**

- Molson School Museum
- 2.1 Circle City Site
- 2.2 Historic Site of Sidley
- 2.3 Sidley Lake
- 2.4 Old Molson Museum & Ghost Town
- 2.5 Molson Cemetery
- 2.6 Historic Kipling Town Site

**2****Molson Attractions & Lodging**

- Molson Summerfest (3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. in June)
- 2A Eden Valley Guest Ranch & Trail Rides 485-4002

**3****Chesaw Area Historic Sites**

- 3.1 Hee Hee Stone Indian Legend
- 3.2 Bolster Ghost Town
- 3.3 Chesaw Cemetery

**3****Chesaw Attractions & Lodging**

- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Chesaw Rodeo
- 3A Lost Lake (Fishing, Camping, Nature Trails)
- 3A Lost Lake Fish Hatchery
- 3A Lost Lake CCC Camp
- 3A Lost Lake Lutheran Ortoa Camp

**4****Havillah Area Historic Sites**

- Havillah Church built in 1917
- 4.1 Havillah Cemetery (early 1900's)

**4****Havillah Attractions & Lodging**

- 4A Sitzmark Ski Area 485-3323 or 486-2700
- 4B Highland's Sno Park (Separate Trails for Skiers & Snowmobiles, Forest Service 486-2186)
- 4C Highland Stage Company 486-4699

**B****Bonaparte Mt. & Beaver Canyon Attractions & Lodging**

- B.1 Beth Lake (Fishing, Camping, Nature Trails)
- B.2 Beaver Lake (Fishing, Camping, Nature Trails)
- B.3 Bonaparte Lake (Fishing, Camping, Trails)
- B.4 Bonaparte Resort

**5****Toroda Creek Area Historic Sites**

- Toroda Historic Town Site (1898)
- 5.1 Wauconda Community Hall (1917)
- 5.2 Bonnie Brice Laurie Homestead (circa 1915)
- 5.3 First Toroda Meadow School
- 5.4 Old Toroda Townsite (1897)
- 5.5 Historic Bodie Town Site 1896
- 5.6 Historic Johnson Sawmill Site (Beaver Canyon Jt.)
- 5.7 Oscar Wheaton Homestead Site
- 5.8 Historic Browns Sawmill Site (built 1937)
- 5.9 Corkscrew Mt. - Site of Geological Interest & Indian Legend
- 5.10 Eagle Cliff Cemetery
- 5.11 Smallest state park in WA. State

**6****Curlew Area Historic Sites**

- Full Services, Gas, Shopping, Dining, & Lodging
- Long Alec Burial Site
  - Curlew Cemetery
  - Catholic Indian Mission
  - Curlew School
  - Ansoorge Hotel Museum 779-4961
  - 6.1 Chief Tonasket Store & Grave Site

**6****Curlew Attractions & Lodging**

- Full Services, Gas, Shopping, Dining, & Lodging
- Curlew Hotel 779-4260
  - Barrel Derby Days, 1<sup>st</sup> Weekend in July
  - 6A Wolfgang's Riverview Inn 779-4252
  - 6B Curlew Motel 779-4260

**7****Malo Area Historic Sites**

- 7.1 Antique Husky Auto & Truck Museum 779-4961
- 7.2 Somday Allotment (Indian) Victorian House & Stage Stop
- 7.4 Historic Kermit's School
- 7.5 Malo Historic Grange Hall
- 7.6 Malo Store still operating (built 1903 era) 779-4979
- 7.7 Rumsey Homestead Owner

**7****Malo Attractions & Lodging**

- 7.3 Empire Creek llama B&B 779-4139

**8****Republic Area Historic Sites**

- Full Services, Gas, Shopping, Dining, & Lodging
- 8.1 Karamin School
  - 8.2 Republic Visitors Center, 775-3387, 775-2295
  - Stonerose Interpretive Fossil Center, 775-2295
  - Ferry County Historical Center, 775-229
  - Eureka Arts Gold Mountain Gallery 775-8010
  - 8.3 Murals & Historic Walking Tour (guides at Stonerose)
  - 8.4 Republic San Pail Grange (1900s)
  - 8.5 Republic Cemetery (late 1800's)
  - 8.6 Eureka "Gold" Gulch formerly along Granite Creek
  - 8.7 Knob Hill Mine

**8****Republic Attractions & Lodging**

- Full Services, Gas, Shopping, Dining, & Lodging
- WA State Fiddle Contest (2<sup>nd</sup> weekend August) 775-3819
  - Prospector Days (2<sup>nd</sup> weekend June) 775-2704
  - Mountain Music Festival (1<sup>st</sup> weekend August) 775-3536
  - Wings Over Republic Fly In (4<sup>th</sup> weekend August) 775-3911
  - Stock Car Races (alternating summer weekends) 775-3508
  - Klondike Motel 775-3555, 800-213-2812 (reservations only)
  - Northern Inn 775-3371
  - Prospector Inn 775-3361
  - Ferry County Fair (Labor Day weekend) 775-3146
  - 8A Tiffany's Resort 775-3152
  - 8B Fisherman's Cove Resort 775-3641
  - 8C Curlew Lake State Park 775-3592
  - 8D Ferry County Airport 775-2101
  - 8E Black Beach Resort 775-3989
  - 8F K&K Guest Ranch 775-3536

This map produced by the Okanogan County Tourism Council. Map information and coordination by Robin Stice, Eden Valley Guest Ranch. Design & layout by Earth & Sky Studios, LLC.

For more Okanogan County info, visit [www.economicalliance.com](http://www.economicalliance.com)

**9****Wauconda Area Historic Sites**

- General Store & Restaurant (1928)
- 9.1 Old Wauconda Town Site (Summit Highway 20)
- 9.2 Sweet Creek Camp Ground & Historic Site
- 9.3 Pflug Mansion (1908)
- 9.4 Wauconda Pioneer Cemetery

**9****Wauconda Attractions & Lodging**

- Historic Flag Day Celebration (Sunday Closest to Flag Day, Since 1914)
- Wauconda Community Hall Free Stuff Day

**10****Tonasket Area Historical Sites**

- Full Services, Gas, Shopping, Dining, & Lodging
- Tonasket Visitors Center (VIC) 486-4543
  - Indian Interpretive Center @ the VIC
  - 10.1 Anasas Valley Historic Site
  - 10.2 McLaughlin Canyon Battle Site
  - 10.3 Historic Stage Stop Site
  - 10.3 Anglin - Old Town Site & Cemetery
  - 10.4 Sunny Slope School

**10****Tonasket Attractions & Lodging**

- Full Services, Gas, Shopping, Dining, & Lodging
- Visitor's Center & Indian Interpretive Display
  - Antique Stores
  - Founder's Day & PRCA Rodeo (first weekend after Memorial Day)
  - Farmers Market (May through October Thursdays 3 to 6 p.m.)
  - Father's Day Fly In - Father's Day
  - Truck and Tractor Pull - 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of July
  - Garlic Festival (4<sup>th</sup> Weekend Aug., 411 Western Ave)
  - Demolition Derby (Sunday of Labor day weekend)
  - Okanogan Family Faire - Early October
  - Winterfest (1<sup>st</sup> Friday December)
  - Red Apple Inn 486-2119
  - The Junction Motel 486-4500
  - Junior Rodeo - Middle of April
  - 10A Caanan Guest Ranch 486-1191

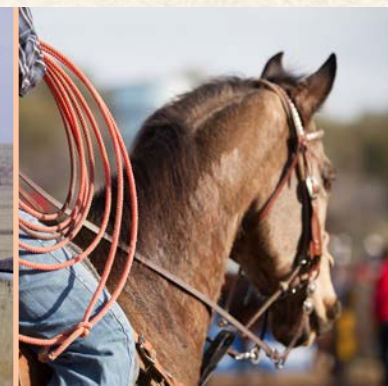
**11****Ellisforde Area Historical Sites**

- Old Okanogan Mission Monument & Cemetery

Special Feature	Distances in Miles
Oroville to Molson	15
Boulder Creek Indian Trail used by Hudsons Bay Co. & General Sherman from Oroville to Curlew.	17
	25
	12
	7
	22
	17
	24
	14

\*All phone numbers in (509) area code unless noted.





# OKANOGAN COUNTY TOURISM COUNCIL

The Okanogan County Tourism Council (OCTC) is an organization dedicated to marketing and promoting tourism throughout Okanogan County. The purpose of OCTC is to advertise Okanogan County and bring together the many individual tourism promotion efforts to achieve greater focus, effectiveness, and economy in promoting tourism for all of Okanogan County. OCTC includes a broad membership and a volunteer Board of Directors who represent the tourism industry to other organizations, gather data, provide ideas, and perform certain tasks. OCTC publishes a website focused on promoting tourism throughout the county. OCTC also publishes printed guides and publications each year, including the annual Visitors Guide, as well as a Hiking Guide and Fishing Guide, which are available at visitor centers and hotels throughout the county. *Additional information about Okanogan Country and the OCTC is available at: [www.okanogancountry.com](http://www.okanogancountry.com).*

## **OKANOGAN COUNTY FAIR:**

The fair brings regional culture and an assortment of fun activities for the whole family to enjoy.



*The Tourism Destination Master Plan includes the following chapters:*

## **CHAPTER 1**

Introduction and Background  
(current chapter)

## **CHAPTER 2**

Purpose, Process, and Vision

## **CHAPTER 3**

Okanogan Country History

## **CHAPTER 4**

Okanogan Country Today:  
Tourism Destination Experiences,  
Visitation, and Tourism Statistics

## **CHAPTER 5**

Tourism Assets Database

## **CHAPTER 6**

Tourism and Economic Development  
Strategies and Concepts

## **CHAPTER 7**

Action Plan: Recommended  
Actions and Projects

## **CHAPTER 8**

Implementation

# INTRODUCTION TO THE TOURISM DESTINATION MASTER PLAN

In 2019, the OCTC retained Otak, Inc. to develop this Tourism Destination Master Plan—a ten+ year tourism plan for Okanogan Country. The county-wide destination master plan has been created to provide a roadmap to enhance the Okanogan County tourism industry's competitive positioning relative to other tourism destinations and to anticipate the future state of tourists' needs and tourism-related markets. Expanding tourism opportunities brings a variety of economic benefits to the region, including more jobs more business activity and related revenues, as well as an enhanced quality of life for residents. Development of the plan has included data collection and mapping of the county's tourism assets, analysis of existing tourism infrastructure, planning and identification of improvements needed to serve visitor interests, and engagement of public and private stakeholders. The plan includes a variety of recommended strategies, actions, and projects to guide tourism promotion and enhance the visitor experience in Okanogan Country for the next ten years and beyond.





# THE BENEFITS OF EXPANDING TOURISM IN OKANOGAN COUNTY

Tourism and related spending and revenues are economic drivers in Okanogan County, as well as Washington state. In 2020, the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office released a report on the *Economic Benefits of Outdoor Recreation in Washington*. This report showed that there are more jobs (199,000) related to Outdoor Recreation in Washington than related to the Tech Industry (191,000). When people participate in outdoor recreation and tourism activities, they also purchase or rent gear and equipment, and they buy fuel, groceries, food and beverages, and lodging. Tourism activity documented in the report included outdoor recreation generated revenues by out-of-state visitors as well as Washington residents. People in Washington LOVE to be outdoors. In 2019, Washingtonians participated in outdoor recreation more than 600 million days. \$18.8 billion in trip-related spending occurred in 2019 in Washington, and \$7.6 billion in equipment purchases were made for outdoor recreation, reaching a total spending level of \$26.42 billion. In Okanogan County alone, \$222,022,071 tourism-related spending occurred in 2019, with total estimated contribution to the economy of \$373,345,193.



Outdoor recreation is a strong focus of tourism in Washington and Okanogan County, bringing many benefits:

- » Local, regional, and state economic growth
- » Job stability and growth
- » Business stability and growth
- » Reduced health care costs
- » Community development and education (tax revenues)
- » Environmental preservation (many projects that fund tourism and recreation improvements also benefit the environment)



Of key importance in Okanogan County is balancing tourism activity with protecting and preserving the unique qualities of the environment and outdoor areas that draw people to this amazing and extraordinary setting. This plan sets the foundation for responsible tourism planning and implementation—encouraging patterns of visitation that draw visitors to a diversity of places throughout the County with the potential to reduce congestion and impacts in those areas that are often being overly loved. The OCTC and its partners support tourism promotion and outreach efforts that emphasize stewardship and “Leave No Trace” ethics. With key messages such as “take only memories, leave only footprints” and training and education to encourage sustainable tourism and hospitality, Okanogan County is poised for a bright future, with tourism that brings triple bottom line benefits—people, planet, and prosperity.



# 2

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## In this chapter:

- » PURPOSE OF THE TOURISM DESTINATION MASTER PLAN
- » PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
- » VISION STATEMENT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES
- » THE OKANOGAN COUNTRY EXPERIENCE: VISIONING WORD MAPPING



# PURPOSE, PROCESS, AND VISION





**DOG SLEDDING:** Tourists come from all over to witness the excitement of the annual dog sledding races in Conconully.





**The plan will be implemented by OCTC, with the support of tourism entities and communities.**

## PURPOSE OF THE TOURISM DESTINATION MASTER PLAN

The countywide Tourism Destination Master Plan (TDMP) provides a roadmap to maintain and enhance Okanogan County tourism destinations and to anticipate the current and future needs of visitors and tourism-related markets. Under the leadership of the OCTC and various partners, the TDMP focuses on identifying strategic implementation and tourism infrastructure needs, and as a strategic plan it will serve as a “blueprint” in providing direction and focus for the regional tourism industry. The plan will be implemented by OCTC, with the support of tourism entities and communities throughout the region, local businesses, government agencies, and various specialized entities involved in outdoor recreation, trails, agritourism, wine, culture, and other sectors.





# PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the planning process, the project team met with the OCTC board, as well as a separate Tourism Advisory Group (TAG) assembled for the purposes of providing insights and input to guide development of the TDMP. In order to gather information and input from broader tourism interests, a series of public engagement workshops were held in multiple locations throughout the county in October 2019. Ten workshops were held in the cities of Winthrop, Twisp, Oroville, Conconully, Tonasket, Okanogan, Omak, Grand Coulee, Pateros, and Brewster. Workshop participants were shown a presentation that provided an overview of the planning process, tourism assets documented and mapped to date, and other background information. Participants were then asked to provide input on a variety of topics including important aspects of the visitor experience and tourism activities in their geographic areas, needed improvements to enhance the visitor experience, recommended marketing and promotional strategies, and other suggestions. Group discussions in each meeting location were documented, and some participants filled out comment sheets, which were referenced in the development of this plan.



In addition to the in-person workshop sessions, an online survey was made available to the public from November 2019 to January 2020. The survey included questions for public input on similar topics as were addressed in the workshop sessions. There were 50 respondents to the online survey who provided input on 14 questions. Respondents were from throughout the entire county.

Input and results from the public and stakeholder engagement efforts summarized in Chapters 4 and 5 and has helped to inform the strategies recommendations, actions, and projects addressed in Chapters 6 and 7.

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**Participants were asked to provide input on a variety of topics.**

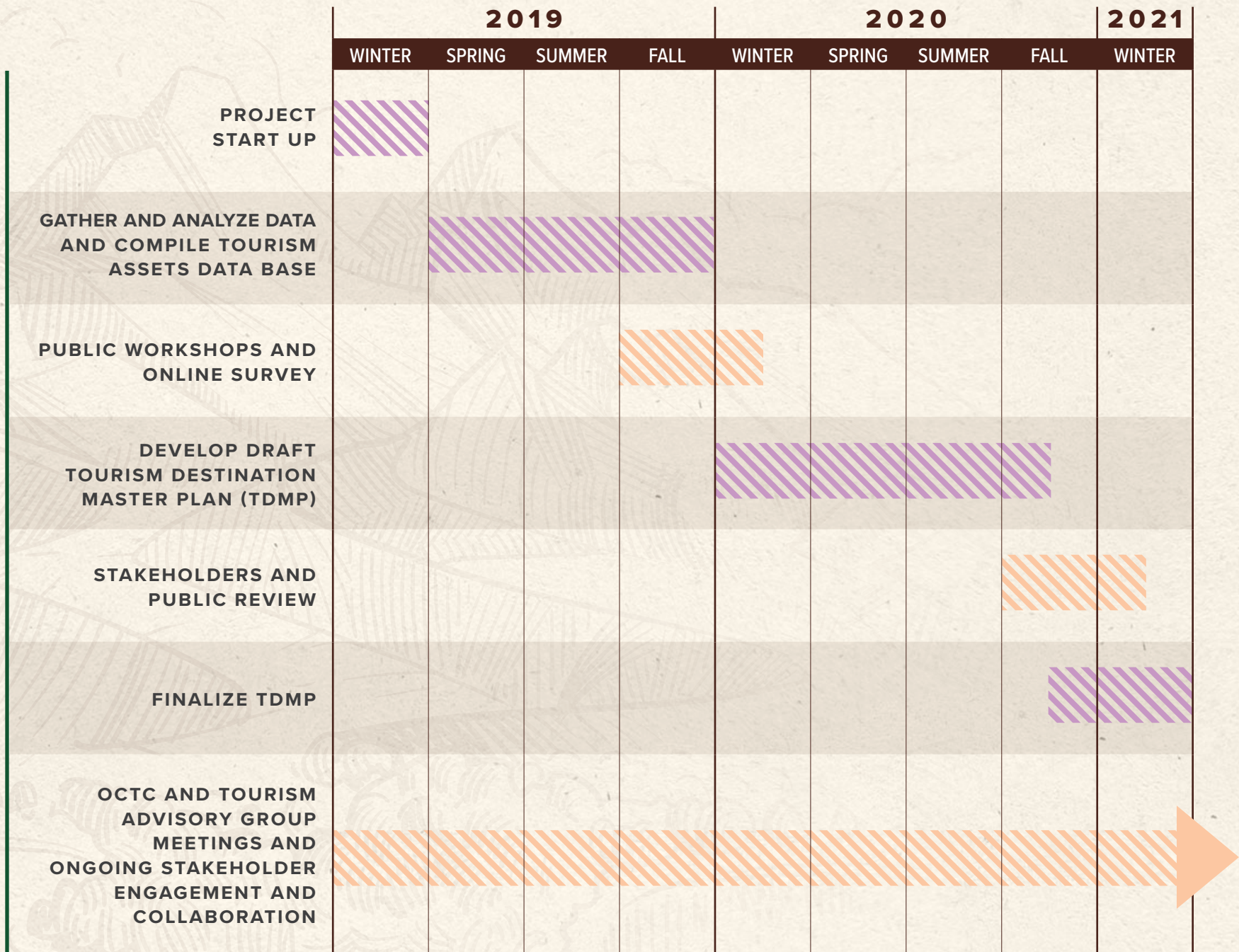
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The Draft Okanogan Country TDMP was presented to OCTC and the TAG for review in October and November 2020, followed by a public review period in December 2020. Given social distancing policies related to the Covid-19 pandemic, online public meetings were held, focused on each of the four subregions of Okanogan Country. December 7-10, 2020, the draft plan was presented in the online public meeting and participants were given the opportunity to provide comments and feedback in the meeting. They also were given information about how to submit written comments on the draft plan. The final plan addresses comments and input received on the draft.



**FIGURE 3**  
**Planning Process Chart**







**NATURE AND WILDLIFE:** With such a large, vast landscape, Okanogan Country is home to an extensive variety of wildlife.

# VISION STATEMENT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The planning team, which included the TAG and consultants, worked through several visioning exercises to identify the true essence of the Okanogan Country visitor experience and what it offers visitors currently, as well as what it should offer in the future with implementation of this plan. A vision statement and guiding principles for tourism promotion and management below and on the next page were the outcomes of this work.

## Vision Statement

With more than 300 days of sunshine every year and 3 million acres of public land, Okanogan Country has everything for everyone. With access to the Cascade Mountains, North Cascades National Park, the Okanogan Highlands, the Columbia River, and dozens of historic sites and charming small towns, we're also a portal to Canada and to some of the most rugged and remote places on the planet. Our places, people, and experiences are authentic. You can get off the grid, unplug, and plug in to nature at every turn—immersing yourself in the outdoors with a diversity of wildlife, from hundreds of species of birds to moose, deer, black bear, and many other

creatures. With over 120 miles of groomed, interconnected trails for hikers, fat-tire bikers, snowshoers, and backcountry skiers, we offer the largest ski-trail system in North America, along with hundreds more miles for backroad adventures. From peaceful past-times to extreme adventures, you can interact with friendly people under wide open blue skies or enjoy the a starry night sky that stretches to the horizon. Our festivals, rodeos, and small town events offer enjoyment year-round, and with agritourism and diverse cultural events and activities, you can experience the true West—like it once was, long ago, and like it is today, in living, breathing color.



## Guiding Principles

1. Work together as a region to balance visitation patterns and leverage all tourism assets countywide.
2. Enhance and promote those experiences and places that represent the authentic, true experience of Okanogan Country—Open for Adventure, with a strong focus on outdoor recreation.
3. Preserve and restore historic places, settings, monuments, buildings, and landscapes and promote these as part of the Okanogan Country experience.
4. Preserve and protect natural areas, wildlife habitat, and other natural resources. Inspire visitors to become stewards and encourage eco-friendly tourism that respects nature and avoids impacts to the natural and scenic qualities of the region. Best practices in communications (Leave No Trace, No Littering, Carry In/Carry Out, etc.) should be emphasized.
5. Ensure that tourism infrastructure and support facilities are available where needed and compatible with their surroundings.
6. Expand tourism infrastructure and support facilities, in all areas, but with a particular interest in drawing more visitors to the east and north parts of the county.



7. Tell stories and interpret resources in multiple ways to create lasting, memorable experiences. Interpretation instills respect and fosters stewardship. Education about natural and cultural resources can instill community pride and strengthen sense of place.
8. Enhance community gateways and create positive first impressions at key portals and hubs (including small town downtowns). Respect and enhance community character and sense of place.
9. Enhance the journey as well as destinations along the journey. Provide wayfinding and places to stop and rest and learn more about what is over the next rise. Help visitors find their way through wayfinding elements, maps, and information at key gateway locations and important tourism sites.
10. Get tourists out of their cars and immersed in the outdoors.
11. Continue to build a strong brand identity and expand visitor awareness of the Okanogan Country experience, as a true outdoor recreation destination experience.
12. Recognize that tourism has limits and must be managed. Savvy communities always ask how many tourists are too many? Ensure that tourism development does not exceed the carrying capacity of ecosystems and sensitive areas.
13. Work together as partners to pursue funding opportunities to successfully implement the recommended projects and actions in this plan. On a regular basis (every two to three years) update the plan and reprioritize the actions as needed.
14. Focus on promoting the region's strongest assets, and on marketing these assets in ways that leverage the most return on investment and that support sustainable tourism over the long term.



# Envisioning the Okanogan Country Experience

The TAG thought of and posted words and phrases that represent the true Okanogan County experience. These are mapped below and listed on this page and the next page. The word map represents the number of times various words were mentioned....the more they were mentioned, the larger they are in the map.



## OUTDOORS MECCA

## TRAILS

WATER, ROCK, SNOW, HORSE, BIKING,  
WALKING, ATV, SNOWSHOEING,  
SKIING, BIRDS, WILDLIFE

## FISHING AND HUNTING

**PERSPECTIVE: BIG SKY, BLUE SKY, DARK SKY, NIGHT SKY—SKY WALK**

## WIDE OPEN SPACES

## RIVERS

## SOLITUDE

QUIET

## LIFETIME EXPLORATION

## DIVERSE AND UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

## FAMILY CAMPING

## REST, RECREATE, REJUVENATE

## YEAR-ROUND ADVENTURE

## OUTDOOR

## HISTORIC

## WILDLIFE WATCHING

## FRIENDLY

## INCLUSIVE

# WELCOME

## WESTERN

## STRONG COMMUNITIES

## SENSE OF COMMUNITY

## INCREDIBLE COLORS

## EXTREME

## SCENIC BEAUTY



AUTHENTIC PLACES AND EXPERIENCES

REGIONAL—CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

FESTIVALS, RODEOS, FAIRS, MARKETS,  
EVENTS FOR ALL INTERESTS

HISTORY AND CULTURE

CONNECT WITH YOUR ROOTS

FRUIT

REAL FOOD

RURAL

WILD/WILDERNESS

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

NATURE ALL AROUND

HIKING, HIKING, HIKING

WILDLIFE WATCHING

VIEWS

MOUNTAINS

INTEGRITY

PEOPLE, PLACES, AND NATURE

GET OUTSIDE

CONNECT WITH NATURE

FREEDOM

SCENT OF PINES AND SAGEBRUSH

ABUNDANT NATURE

SERENE

OFF THE GRID

UNPLUG

RELAX

PURPOSE, PROCESS, AND VISION



**OKANOGAN COUNTY EXPERIENCE:** With all the cultural and natural abundance in the area, there are endless possibilities to explore.







**FAMILY BIKE RIDES** With the abundance of trail locations and types, there are many opportunities for families to enjoy time and activities together.



# 3

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## In this chapter:

- » NATURAL HISTORY
- » FIRST PEOPLES
- » THE FRONTIER
- » SETTLEMENT INTO THE MODERN ERA



# OKANOGAN COUNTRY HISTORY





**NATURAL HISTORY:** Okanogan Country geography features expansive vistas of the Cascades, Columbia Plateau, and lowland waterways.





**Glaciers once covered much of the Okanogan.**

## NATURAL HISTORY

*In North Central Washington, the Cascades and the Columbia Plateau form the Okanogan Valley region, with mountains as high as 8,000 feet and dropping in elevation to 911 feet at Osoyoos Lake on the United States side of the border with Canada. There is a broad highland area separating the Northern Rockies and the North Cascade mountain ranges.*

In Okanogan County, the valleys of Okanogan, San Poil, Similkameen, and Methow have rivers and a bountiful number of creeks. This water all feeds the Okanogan River and then the Columbia River with its origins in the Missourian Montana Region. The Okanogan River is fed by a group of lakes starting with Okanogan Lake, Vaseux Lake, and Osoyoos Lake, all that begin in British Columbia. Osoyoos Lake is eleven miles long and is divided by the International Boundary. By the time the Okanogan River reaches the Columbia River, the elevation is 1,036 feet.

**FIGURE 4**  
**Geologic History Map of the Okanogan Highlands**

**Unconsolidated deposits**  
 Quaternary sediment  
 Quaternary glacial deposits

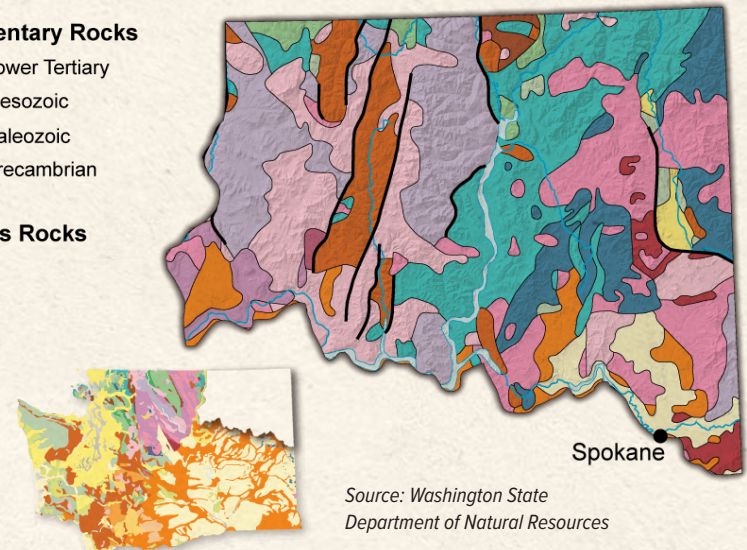
**Metamorphic Rocks**  
 Pre-Tertiary  
 Pre-Cretaceous  
 Paleozoic  
 Precambrian

**Volcanic Rocks**  
 Upper Tertiary Columbia River Basalt  
 Lower Tertiary  
 Mesozoic

— Fault

**Sedimentary Rocks**  
 Lower Tertiary  
 Mesozoic  
 Paleozoic  
 Precambrian

**Intrusive Igneous Rocks**  
 Tertiary  
 Mesozoic



Source: Washington State  
Department of Natural Resources



The geologic history of the region was formed through many complex processes over hundreds of millions of years. Some of the oldest rocks in the state from the original North American continent were deformed and metamorphosed when island arcs were accreted onto the continent during the Jurassic. Subsequent faulting during the Eocene formed metamorphic core complexes and extensional basins. Bedrock in this area was covered by ice during the latest ice age. The intensely deformed bedrock has also been a prolific source for economic mineral production, which later resulted in mining activities in the region. The rocks in the eastern portion of the Okanogan Highlands are of Precambrian age (540 million years old and older) and consist mainly of metasedimentary rocks, formed when sedimentary rocks are later subjected to heat and pressure (Washington Department of Natural Resources, 2020).

There are many interesting geologic formations in the area. For example, Pipestone Canyon not far from Winthrop and Twisp, has rock that was formed during the Paleocene epoch, 66 to 56 million years ago, as well as some formations from the Cretaceous period, over 100 million years ago. The Okanogan Highlands, once located along the western edge of the North American two hundred million years ago, is an



**Pipestone Canyon** geologic formation near the Methow Valley

area filled with geologic wonders—volcanic lava flows, ancient rock outcroppings, glacial features, and more (Washington Department of Natural Resources, 2021).

Between approximately 2.6 million and 12,000 years ago, continental glaciers repeatedly advanced from the north of the region, shaping the surface of the landscape. Glaciers once

covered all of the Okanogan County, and evidence of glacial activity and other Ice Age events is seen throughout the region (kame terraces, kettles, coulees, ice compacted and carved landscapes and rock formations, erratic boulders, etc.). Many benches of sandy, silty, and gravelly terraces stand as high as 500 feet above the valley floor.



# FIRST PEOPLES

*Native peoples have lived for thousands of years in this region since time immemorial. Their customs, cultures and traditions are part of the Okanogan Country today. The Syilx, the Okanogan people, had a large territory that ranged from just north of modern day Revelstoke, BC, with the eastern boundary being between Kaslo and Kootenay Lakes, the western border extending into the Nicola Valley, and the southern boundary extending to the vicinity of Wilbur, Washington. Their language was and is ḥsəlχ čih with variations due to the size of their territory.*



**MEDICINE WOMAN**, Okanogan Tribe, ca.  
1880 Courtesy History of North Washington

Prior to contact in 1810 by David Thompson, an explorer who first journeyed down the Columbia River to the ocean, the population of the native peoples in this area exceeded 30,000. This is a conservative estimate. They were and are a salmon people and had a number of fisheries in the region that included the Okanogan Falls, Sx̣wə́χʷnitkʷ, in British Columbia, Sín klíp Falls near Oroville, Kettle Falls, Shon it kʷu, near the town of Kettle Falls.

The salmon ran two times a year, once in the spring and the other in the fall. There were five species of salmon that ran in the Columbia River system to which the Okanogan and Snake Rivers were the large salmon producers of the entire Columbia River fisheries. These fisheries caused great gatherings of the Syilx People. Kettle Falls had gatherings of as many as 10,000 people came for the spring or fall

runs of salmon. These gatherings had great celebrations of weddings, dancing, horse racing contests, stick games, family reunions, and more. These celebrations had a Salmon Chief who was responsible for making sure all of the fish caught were equally distributed and that no one left hungry and without salmon. These gatherings were looked forward to with great anticipation each year.

Within the communities, there was a daily and annual effort to make sure all were cared for and no one was hungry. The women gathered food and medicine from the spring to late fall. The women gathered roots and berries in the spring, and as different varieties became available into fall time. Medicine was an important item to be stored for the winter time. The men hunted and fished for their families, as well as the community, so no one was hungry. They lived in Pit Houses and Tule Mat lodges in communities from a few hundred to several hundred depending upon the season and the harvesting of salmon. Many of the native communities in Okanogan County and British Columbia are where towns are today. A day's walk apart.



The Syilx traded with the Thompson tribes of the north as well as traveling across the Cascades to trade with coast bands. For example, the Methow band would travel across the mountains to trade sunflower seeds for other goods. They also traveled to the Montana area for buffalo hunts. There were disputes

with other tribes especially the Blackfeet Tribe and the Shuswap of the north. In general, their lives were peaceful, and they had much to be thankful for living in this area.

While the first major contact with people that were not native was in 1810 with David Thompson's party. Earlier in 1805 a group of Syilx traveled to the see the Lewis and Clark Expedition party as they traveled the Columbia below where Yakima is today. The Syilx party was given one of the Lewis and Clark medallions.

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**Packers brought furs from surrounding areas including far north in Canada to Fort Okanogan.**

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**CHILWIST JIM LAKEKIN** was one of the last traditional leaders of the Methow Tribe (part of the Southern Okanogans), and he was recognized as a chief, medicine man, and horse trainer. *Studio Portrait by Frank Matsura, Okanogan County Historical Society*

## THE FRONTIER

*In 1811, at the confluence of the Columbia and Okanogan Rivers, the first American settlement was built in what would become Washington State and Okanogan County. The fur trading post at the confluence was for John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company—a wood and sod roof building. Because of the War of 1812, this post would be sold to British owned Northwest Company and then to the Hudson's Bay company. A fort was built here about four years later. The building of Chief Joseph dam stopped the salmon from moving further up the Columbia river and covered the site of Fort Okanogan.*

After over 3,000 beavers were taken from Okanogan County the first year, the environment of Okanogan County began to change. However, it was at Fort Okanogan that the packers brought the furs from the far north in Canada, leaving their horses, children, and wives to take canoes down the Columbia River to Astoria to sell. Today there is a sign overlooking this area at a pull off along Highway 97, before crossing the Okanogan River. Visitors also can learn about the history of the fort and frontier life at the interpretive center at Fort Okanogan.





Climbing at McLaughlin Canyon

The Cariboo Trail would lead to the broader opening of what is now Okanogan County. The Columbia and Okanogan Rivers always had been passageways for natives peoples since time immemorial. That was also the case with the Cariboo Trail. Beginning in the mid-1800s, supplies, including good meat on the hoof, were needed in the Fraser and Cariboo mining areas. This would begin the opening of what is now Okanogan County. Today's Highway 97 generally follows the Cariboo Trail route north into British Columbia.

The miners who were taking the Cariboo Trail through to the gold fields found the natives restless with the number of people going through the land. This situation set up what became known as the 1858 McLoughlin Canyon ambush. Today, visitors can view a sign near McLoughlin Canyon describing this historic event and can take an easy three-mile round trip hike to enjoy magnificent canyon views. A fire in 2007 decimated many of the trees, but the wildflowers bloom in spring and summer. The canyon is a favorite for rock climbers and for bouldering today.

**GOLD!** In 1859 there was a GOLD RUSH on the Similkameen River. The American Border Survey Commission was working to establish the boundary between the United States and British North America. The international border that was created cut across Lake Osoyoos. The surveyors had a group of soldiers to protect their work and to assist as needed. The leader of the troops was General Sherman, who would become well known during the Civil War. On a fateful day, several of the soldiers went to wash clothes in the Similkameen River and discovered nuggets of gold. Almost overnight, there were over a thousand miners camped by the river. The area became known as "Okanogan City". A sign stands today near this site describing this interesting history, and at the Depot Museum/Visitor Information Center in Oroville, visitors can obtain a permit to try their hands at seeking gold in this area.

By the 1870s, all of what is now Okanogan County was part of the territory "Okanagan" recognized as homelands the native peoples of the region. The territory as set by President Grant. The first non-native settlers in Okanogan County arrived in approximately 1860. Two men would settle by the international border that year, John Utz and Hiram "Okanogan" Smith. John Utz stayed for only a short time, and his log cabin would later become a Customs House. Hiram Smith planted the first apple orchard at Smith Point and helped build the apple and fruit industry that would become an important part of Washington state's economy.



The log cabin that would later become the Customs House of Okanogan County  
Source: Borderlands Historical Society Museum



“Okanogan” Smith would make a mark in the beginnings of Washington State. He was the first permanent white settler in Okanogan County, a Territorial Legislator 1865-66, and had the first log cabin in Okanogan County. His native wife ran the first post office in Okanogan County, and he received the first state approved ferry in Okanogan County. He also developed the first Quartz Mine, was the first white cattle rancher, and is considered Father of the commercial apple orchards industry in Washington state. He worked with Steward to purchase Alaska, and his last home is still standing. Visitors can make an appointment to visit this historic home at the Depot Museum/Visitor Information Center in Oroville.

Interesting remnants of Frontier history are still abundant throughout Okanogan Country today—from the Methow to the Okanogan Highlands. Often, this region has been called the “Late Frontier” because it was one of the later areas of the United States that developed, as chronicled in the book *Late Frontier, A History of Okanogan County, Washington* by Bruce A. Wilson. Still to this day, areas of Okanogan Country look and feel remote, rustic, and rugged—and this is part of the draw to this setting—an open-to-the-sky landscape that is reminiscent of times gone by and that puts visitors in immediate touch with history, as well as nature and wilderness.

## SETTLEMENT TO THE MODERN ERA

*The first census, in 1878, for the Okanogan district did not list native citizens but it showed 35 white settlers and five Chinese settlers. At this time, the district was actually part of Stevens County. The native peoples lost more of their land when more of the reservation was opened to mining and settlement by non-natives. The miners and settlers needed supplies so small towns began to be founded. Historic maps document the pieces of land that were removed from the reservation over time.*

In 1887, the name Okanogan was changed to Okanogan by the state legislature as to not be confused with the Canadian spelling. The County formed was the largest county in the state. By that time, homesteaders were coming to the area from the East, Midwest, Canada, and western Europe, the Far East, and other places, and by trains, wagons, steamboats, and horseback. Before motor vehicles were widely owned, farmers used horses for towing farming and mining equipment. Steamboats also were an important early form of transportation in the early 1900s, providing access to Pateros, Brewster, and Riverside and, with high water, Oroville. Steamboat travel not only brought more homesteaders to the area, it also helped locals travel more efficiently between communities.

The number of towns in Okanogan County increased substantially, and by 1900, there were

71 post offices. Today, many of the towns are now ghost towns or gone all together.

While towns like Oroville, Tonasket, Loomis, Conconully, Riverside, Omak, Nespelem, Coulee Dam, Okanogan, Malott, Twisp, Methow, Winthrop, Brewster, and Pateros have homes, post offices, and other services, other former pioneer and mining towns are more rustic.

Maps showing many sites of former towns and directions to these places can be found at visitor centers. Hardy explorers will find places like Conconully, Loomis, Molson, Chesaw, and Ruby interesting because you still can get a sense of what these old towns were once like decades ago. Although in the case of Conconully, the town is still very much an active community today, where as other towns are no longer



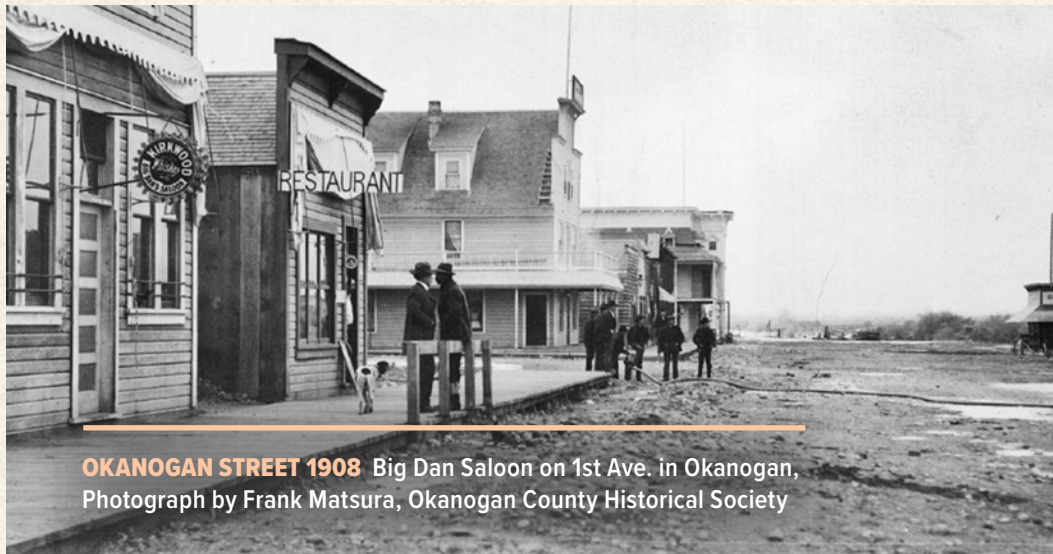
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## Visitors can learn about former town sites at visitor centers throughout Okanogan County.



inhabited. The mining town of Ruby was the first county seat and some of the building outlines can still be seen today. Conconully was the second county seat in 1888. Chesaw has a unique history of being named after a Chinese man whose name was Chee Saw. He had a store that supplied miners and farmers. Chesaw apparently is the only town in the United States named after a Chinese person. Molson was and still is Old Molson, Central Molson, and New Molson. Visitors can walk through Old Molson as a representation of a true “Old West” town, with many of the original buildings moved into the walking tour area. Central Molson had the main school, and that building is open in the summer as a museum. New Molson has occupied homes. The Ice Fishing Tournament held every January in Molson draws many visitors.

In 1901, Frank S. Matsura came to Okanogan County from Japan, and documented scenes of daily life and portraits of many people in more than 1,800 photographs and glass plate negatives, which have been preserved by the Okanogan County Historical Society and Washington State University. His first photography studio was in Conconully. Frank Matsura died young (some sources say he was 39 years old) in 1913 of tuberculosis, as a well-respected and beloved figure in this frontier region given how he documented history with his camera. His funeral attracted more than three hundred people—a mix of Native Americans and pioneer mourners.



**OKANOGAN STREET 1908** Big Dan Saloon on 1st Ave. in Okanogan, Photograph by Frank Matsura, Okanogan County Historical Society



**ORCHARDS, OKANOGAN COUNTY, CA. 1928**  
Courtesy UW Special Collections (WAS0670)



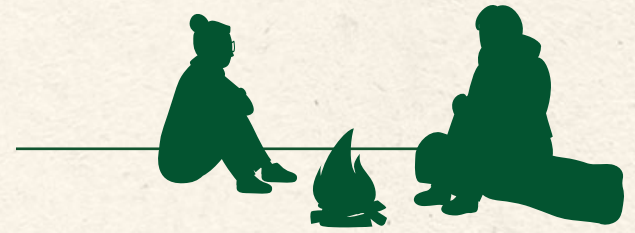
By 1907, the railroad came from Spokane through Molson to Oroville and back up to British Columbia all the way to Vancouver. The rail line followed the steepest route in the United States. The rail line carried passengers and freight, providing for crops, wheat, cattle, sheep, and other commodities to be shipped around the world. By 1916, another rail corridor extended up the valley from Wenatchee. This increased the ease of sending crops around the world. The railroad bed from Oroville west to Nighthawk is now part of the Pacific Northwest Trail and is open year-round for walking, biking, and

horseback riding. From Molson, you can take the nine mile road and easily bicycle on the railroad bed to the now main road to Oroville or loop uphill back to Molson. This area has many gravel and compacted roads and mountain biking areas available for public use today.

Forest reserves owned by the federal government became national forests, and the Chelan National Forest was established in 1908. In 1911, Okanogan National Forest was split off from the Chelan unit and still makes up the majority of land in the county both east and west of the Okanogan Valley.



**VILLAGE OF CONCONULLY, 1906** – Photograph by Frank Matsura, Okanogan County Historical Society

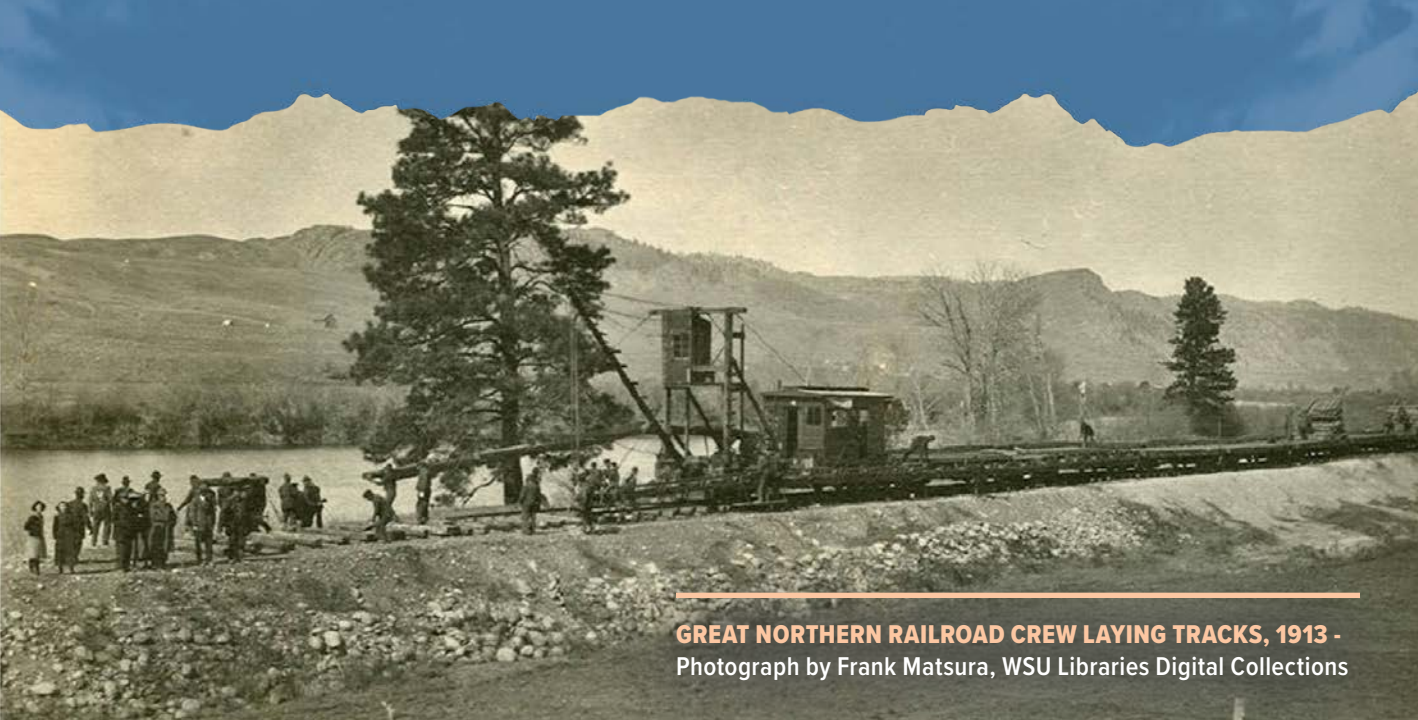


## **Hundreds of workers in the Civilian Conservation Corps built roads, trails, campgrounds, and more in the 1930s.**

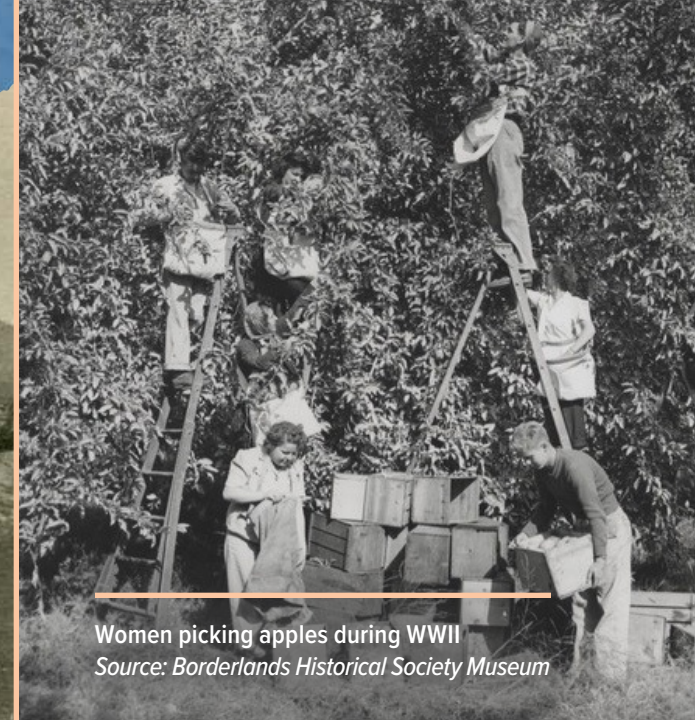
By the 1910s and 1920s, towns were becoming more populated and industries such as fruit growing began to surge. Road networks expanded, and more people began driving throughout the county. Overall though, the area still remained somewhat isolated from the growing metropolitan regions of Spokane and Seattle in Washington.

The Great Depression (1929-1939) did not devastate Okanogan County as severely as it did other rural areas in the United States. Residents already lived fairly simple lives with a high degree of self-sufficiency, and the severity was moderated by the fact that the apple industry continued to thrive, providing much-needed work for thousands of people. Relief programs during the Great Depression





**GREAT NORTHERN RAILROAD CREW LAYING TRACKS, 1913 -**  
 Photograph by Frank Matsura, WSU Libraries Digital Collections



**Women picking apples during WWII**  
 Source: Borderlands Historical Society Museum

helped farmers and merchants, and hundreds who joined the Civilian Conservation Corps built roads, trails, campgrounds, fire lookouts, the Salmon Meadows Ski Lodge, and fought fires. The timber industry struggled with falling prices, but overall demand continued. When the Government raised the price it paid for gold to \$35 an ounce, miners returned to the hills either as employees of rejuvenated operations or as independent prospectors.

Grand Coulee Dam construction occurred as part of the Great Depression era through the Public Works Administration. Construction began on the dam in 1933, resulting in the

formation of Lake Roosevelt, which extends 151 miles. Irrigation supplied by the dam enabled the cultivation of a half million acres of arid land. Today, the Grand Coulee Dam stands as one of the top producers of hydroelectric power in the world and is still the largest concrete structure ever built in the United States. The visitor center at the dam offers tours and information about the construction. The Colville Tribal Museum in Coulee Dam provides information about the history of native peoples in the area. A walking tour in the bridge spanning the Columbia River provides interpretive panels telling the story of the dam, and a nightly laser show on the spillway of the dam occurs from Memorial Day

through Labor Day. The Grand Coulee Rodeo is held on Memorial Day weekend.

Irrigation development occurred throughout the county, which supported agriculture in spite of the low spring and summer rainfall. Irrigation systems unrelated to the Grand Coulee Dam also developed. For example, in Condonully, an earthen dam was built, which formed a lake to supply water. In the northern part of the county, the Similkameen river became a source of irrigation for the valley farmers and orchardists in north county. The system was complete in 1916 with the people coming from all over Washington State and lower British Columbia to see the celebration.



As the decades rolled on, agriculture continued to expand throughout the county. More women stepped into the agricultural industry work force as more men went to war during World War II. Along with the agricultural industry, Okanogan County, the cities, and the Forest Service became primary employers in the region. The first smoke jumping experimental program occurred in 1939 in Winthrop, and the program continues to this day. The North Cascades Smokejumpers Base in Winthrop offers tours and interpretation about history of the program.

By the late twentieth century and to the present day, community development continued throughout the county. The construction of State Route 20 (North Cascades Highway) from the Skagit Valley across Okanogan County to the Methow Valley in 1972 ended some of the remoteness of the Methow, at least during the summer months. The county's first stoplight was installed in the early 1960s. A long-time resident remembers stopping at the light, and everyone getting out and running around the car, just in time to get back in and close the doors before the light turned green.



**OKANOGAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE**, Okanogan, 1923  
Courtesy UW Special Collections (Neg. No. WAS0654)

In recent decades, changes in the global economy have created challenges and declining revenues for those in the fruit industry and other agriculturalists. However, agriculture and farming are still important in the region. Currently, there are approximately 1,192 family farms in Okanogan County.

Over the last several decades, residents and businesses throughout the county have started to develop more economic opportunities around tourism and outdoor recreation. The weather and year-round recreation opportunities attract visitors from near and far. On the average, Okanogan County receives 16 inches of rain however, the higher mountains average 58 inches. Year-round recreation activities include hiking, fishing, boating, swimming, camping, wildlife watching, hunting, and winter sports (skiing, sledding, snowmobiling, ice fishing to name a few). You can fish in a new lake, stream, river, or creek every day for a year and still will not have exhausted your opportunities. Multiple fishing tournaments are held in the area, including at Osoyoos Lake and Palmer Lake, with ice fishing tournaments at Molson Lake and Sidley Lake. For more about outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the county, as well as the many places visitors can learn more about the area's history, refer to Chapters 4 and 5 in this Tourism Destination Master Plan.



# 4

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## In this chapter:

- » OKANOGAN COUNTRY TODAY—  
AN OVERVIEW OF EXISTING  
TOURISM AND ECONOMIC  
CONDITIONS
- » TOURISM DESTINATION  
EXPERIENCES BY SUBREGION
- » VISITATION AND TOURISM  
STATISTICS



# OKANOGAN COUNTRY TODAY:

## Tourism Destination Experiences, Visitation, and Tourism Statistics





**AGRICULTURE** contributes to the tourism economy by bringing people who visit farmers markets, farm and fruit stands, wineries, breweries, and other agritourism attractions.





**Spending and employment in the county are heavily tourism based.**

## OKANOGAN COUNTRY TODAY —AN OVERVIEW

*Tourism is an important economic sector throughout Okanogan County, with diverse year-round festivals and events and world-class destinations such as North Cascades National Park, Grand Coulee Dam, and Methow Valley trails, as well as rodeos, birding and wildlife watching, wine and culinary arts, arts and culture, and just about every type of recreational activity possible.*

Tourism continues to grow in Okanogan County as an important part of the regional economy. The diversity of tourism opportunities in the county support year-round economic activity, with festivals and events and access to world-class outdoor recreation in every season. The dry weather and bright blue skies, with 192 sunny days per year on average, are attractive to visitors, especially to those who live on the wetter, west side of the Cascades. Arts, entertainment, and recreation spending and employment in the county are heavily tourism based and growth in these sectors has been increasing for several years. The “arts, entertainment, and recreation” categories include ski and summer resorts, golf courses, museums, Fair associations, casinos, fitness centers, and other establishments. In 2009, arts, entertainment, and recreation netted 105 jobs, and by 2019 generated 189 direct jobs



countywide, an 84 job and 80 percent upturn during the ten-year period. By comparison, total covered employment in Okanogan County decreased 4.9 percent during this timeframe, falling from 17,659 jobs in 2009 to 16,794 in 2019, which in part has been due to a decline in wood products and agricultural jobs (Meseck, Washington State Employment Security Department, Okanogan County Profile).





The agricultural industry (including tree fruits, wheat, and other crops, as well as livestock/cattle) has always been an important part of the regional economy but suffered job losses between 2015 and 2019. That said, agriculture is still an important industry for the Okanogan County economy, accounting for 26.2 percent of total covered employment in 2019. The fruit industry is not only important to the region's economy, but also to its culture and heritage—ever since the first orchard was planted in 1858,

the area has continued to develop the tree fruits industry. Diversification of the agricultural industry and related businesses that have more direct interface with the public have helped to improve economics. In recent years, hobby farmers, creative marketers in agriculture, and craft industry entrepreneurs have developed a variety of roadside farm stands and shops, restaurants, cafes, breweries, wineries, tasting rooms, and even lodging establishments around fruit, wine, and other agricultural products.

Even before the pandemic that started in 2020, economic conditions in Okanogan County were variable. While nonfarm employment rose 0.9 percent (up 110) jobs between 2017 and 2018, to 12,810 jobs, 2019 brought a loss of 100 jobs, taking the total down to 12,710. Virtually every major industry in Okanogan County's nonfarm economy (except health services, state and local government, and education) lost some jobs during calendar year 2019. Total employment declined from 17,432 in 2018 to 16,794 in 2019, a 3.7 percent downturn. Nearly 85 percent of all jobs lost countywide were in the agricultural industry.

With the pandemic that began in March of 2020 and continues into 2021, there have been major negative effects on the tourism industry in Washington as well as nationwide and worldwide. In 2019, visitor volumes, expenditures, tourism-related tax contributions, and tourism jobs all increased in Washington. However, in 2020, there were dramatic declines in these areas. Between March 1 and June 1, 2020 visitor spending in Washington declined by \$3.8 billion compared to 2019 figures. Traveler spending, hotel room occupancy rates, lodging taxes, and other revenues dropped severely, and tourism-related job losses represented 42 percent of all job losses in Washington during that same timeframe.



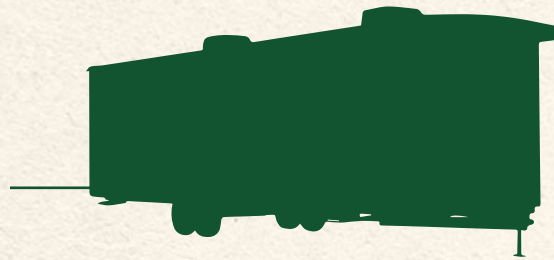
A man wearing a white cap, sunglasses, and a brown jacket is riding a black and white snowmobile with red accents. The snowmobile has "POLARIS" and "RMK" branding. He is in a snowy landscape with evergreen trees in the background. Another snowmobile is partially visible in the background to the right.

**SNOWMOBILING** is a popular winter recreation activity in Okanogan County.

Interestingly, at the same time these economic declines in visitor spending, lodging rates, and tourism-based jobs occurred in 2020, visits to the outdoors were spiking at many places across Washington and the West. For example, visitation to Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area, which includes some sites in proximity to Okanogan County, increased from 1,358,818 in 2019 to 1,519,403 in 2020. Regional sales of recreational vehicles have been increasing, and in general, people seem to be spending more time in the outdoors than previous to the pandemic with hiking and camping as predominant activities. A review of hotel/motel/lodging tax revenues in Okanogan County shows a decline in 2020 from 2019 numbers, but not as dramatic a decline as might have been expected given trends that occurred statewide and in other destination counties. Total lodging tax revenues in the county and all cities in 2020 amounted to \$1,266,667, compared to \$1,332,045 in 2019, and 2020 revenues were still higher than 2018 revenues of \$1,251,428.

As we approach the outdoor recreation travel season of 2021, there are signs of economic recovery and more resources are becoming available to support businesses and mitigate their losses. With more widespread vaccinations, many are hopeful that the tourism industry



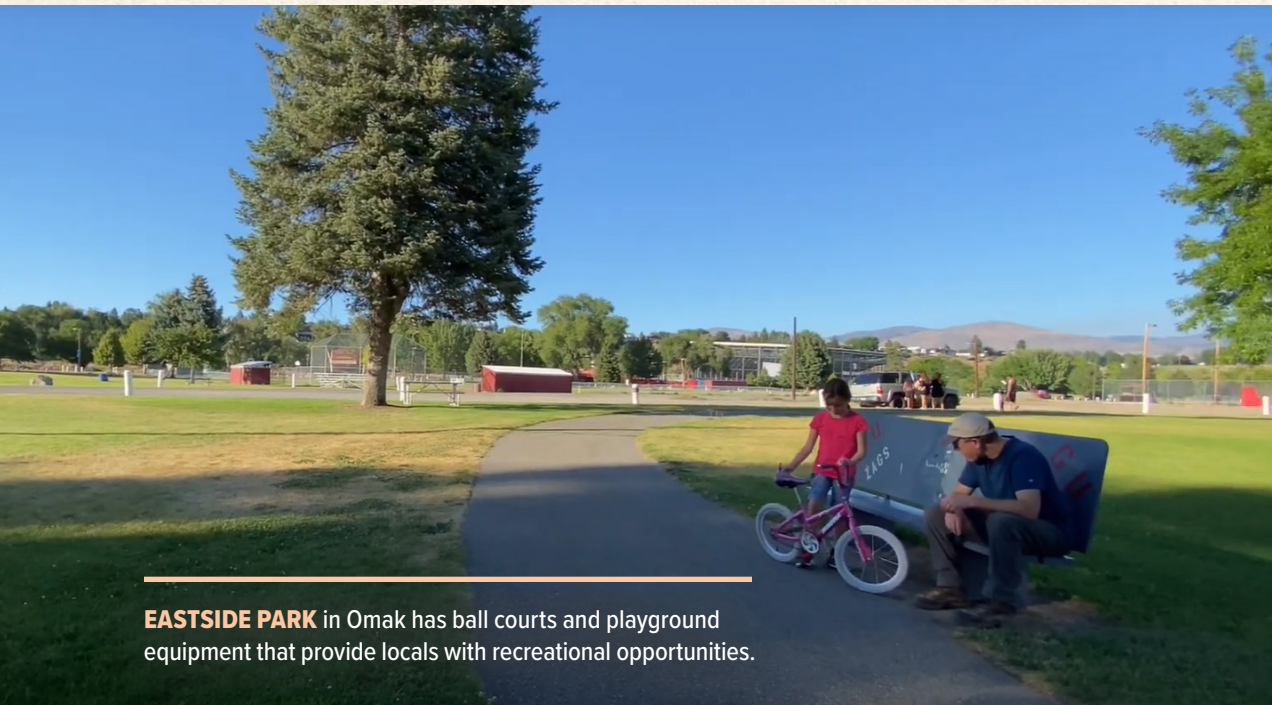


## Regional sales of recreational vehicles have been increasing.

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will see a return to pre-pandemic trends, if not by later in 2021, certainly by 2022. Official long-term (i.e. ten-year) industry employment projections produced by the Employment Security Department are for a 1.3 percent average annual nonfarm growth rate from 2017 to 2027 for the five county area of Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, and Okanogan (the North Central Workforce Development Area) and for a 1.5 percent annual growth rate overall for Washington state (Meseck).

Resiliency, ingenuity, and flexibility have been and will continue to be important characteristics in supporting local economic endeavors, given that the County's economy continues to experience challenges year after year. One of the most important actions the county and regional partners and interests can take is investing in tourism and economic development to further support and sustain employment levels and economic growth. It will be important to monitor trends in the coming years. Will people change the patterns of where they live and work given the proven ability to work remotely that was shown during the pandemic? Will people continue to seek refuge in the great outdoors in increasing numbers as occurred in many places during the pandemic? How will these patterns affect tourism activities in Okanogan County in the coming years? We are on a new horizon for the future and as such, it is the perfect time to plan ahead and be ready to proactively manage and expand tourism through planning and collaboration countywide.



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**EASTSIDE PARK** in Omak has ball courts and playground equipment that provide locals with recreational opportunities.



# TOURISM DESTINATION EXPERIENCES

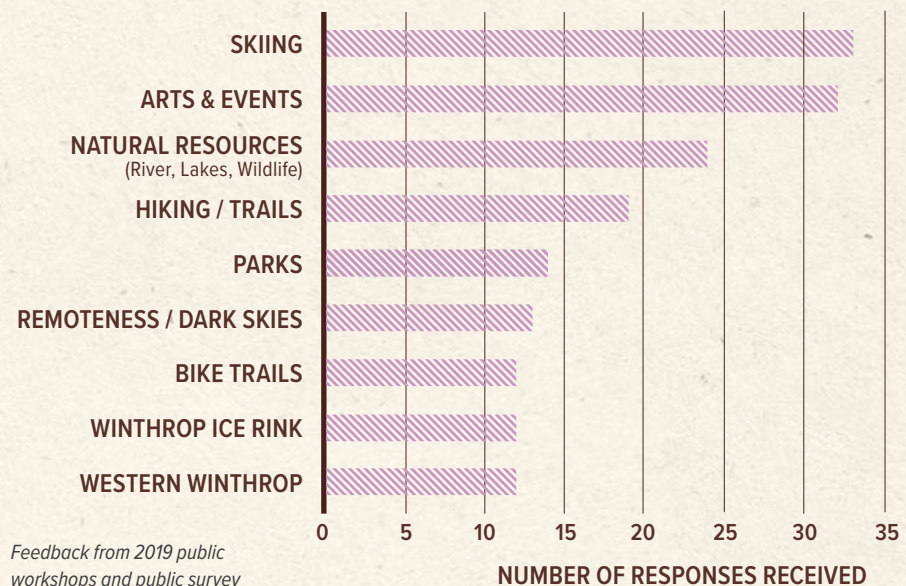
*Okanogan County offers a diverse spectrum of destination experiences for visitors, with the proven ability to draw tourism from the metropolitan regions of Seattle/Tacoma/Olympia, WA (Puget Sound); Portland, OR/Vancouver, WA; British Columbia, Canada; and various other origins throughout the US and abroad. A detailed summary of the tourism destination experiences available in each subregion of Okanogan Country follows. An inventory of specific tourism assets (places, activities, events, and other attractions) throughout the County is presented in Chapter 5.*

## The Methow Valley—

*From the North Cascades to the Methow and Columbia Rivers, the Methow Valley's scenic beauty offers plenty of recreational and cultural opportunities. Here visitors enjoy some of the world's best cross-country skiing, hiking and mountain biking, local organic farming, galleries, theater and live music.*

The Methow Valley extends from the North Cascades to the confluence of the Methow and Columbia Rivers. This subregion is the busiest destination in the county. Access to outdoor recreation is the primary attraction, followed by arts and cultural events and destinations. This area boasts some of the world's best cross-country skiing with over 200 km of groomed trails and hut-to-hut skiing. Hiking and mountain biking are also popular activities in the area. Visitors also enjoy river rafting, guided trail rides and wilderness trips, and many other outdoor

**FIGURE 5**  
**Top Tourism Assets in the Methow Valley**





recreation activities year-round. The Methow Valley is a base for accessing the North Cascades National Park and the Pasayten Wilderness. The Old West town of Winthrop has historic attractions and galleries as well as shopping and dining. Twisp is popular for its arts scene as evidenced by many sculptures throughout the town, art galleries, and the TwispWorks arts campus. The Methow Valley has also become popular for local products offered by local growers, makers, and brewers at farmers markets and local shops. Many of the dining establishments prominently display signage that details what produce they get from farms in the area. Much of the lodging in the Methow Valley is made up of smaller inns, lodge/resorts, and cabins. There are also RV parks and campgrounds. **FIGURE 5** shows the Top Existing Tourism Assets in the Methow Valley identified by workshop participants and survey respondents.





## Places and Activities

**WINTHROP:** Boardwalks, cowboy boots, and big cowboy hats thrive in the Old West town of Winthrop, but visitors can also find wine tasting, art galleries, and great shopping and dining. Abundant year-round events draw visitors including the Balloon Roundup in March or the famous 49er Days in May. Visitors can explore the Shafer Museum's famous outdoor replica pioneer village, wander the boardwalks, and take the time to experience Winthrop's two walking bridges, one north and one on the south edge of downtown.

**TWISP:** In the heart of the Methow Valley, Twisp is home to musicians, thespians, painters, sculptors, and glass, metal, and fabric artists. Enjoy live theater at the Merc Playhouse and art exhibits at the Confluence Gallery. For great food and cool brews, visitors can stop by one of the local restaurants and breweries. On seasonal Saturdays, the famous Methow Valley Farmers Market is open right off the main highway. As the summer heats up, visitors can take a dip in the Wagner Pool and enjoy the Twisp Park, at the confluence of the Twisp and Methow Rivers. In the Twisp River Recreation Area, visitors can enjoy numerous trails for outstanding hikes and camping.



**The Methow Valley  
is a fantastic base  
for exploring North  
Cascades National Park.**



**THE GREAT OUTDOORS:** For the outdoor enthusiast, the Methow Valley is a fantastic base for exploring North Cascades National Park or the half-million-acre Pasayten Wilderness. Autumn brings deer hunting season, and fishing in the Methow River or many of the streams and lakes is a popular pastime year-round.

### **NORDIC SKIING DESTINATION:**

Visitors enjoy skiing on the largest cross-country ski trail system in the US with the Methow Trails. The snow quality and grooming of the trails is the best in the nation and draws athletes from around the world. With over 200km of groomed trails and hut-to-hut skiing, trails are available for every age and skill level.

### **MORE WINTER ADVENTURES:**

Alpine skiing, snowboarding, Nordic skiing and tubing for all ages are a short drive away at the Loup Loup Ski Area, a fantastic family ski area with a 1,240 vertical drop and a quad chair lift. For the snowmobilers, the Methow offers 450 miles of groomed trails and many snoparks. Heli-skiing rewards the truly adventurous with unsurpassed snow. Everyone will enjoy ice skating at Winthrop's outdoor ice rink.



**UNIQUE SPOTS:** Spring is a time of extravagant beauty as the wildflowers bloom. The best view is while running Methow Trails' Sunflower Relay in May, which takes runners through trails of wild sunflowers with views of snow-capped peaks. The annual Ride to Rendezvous includes horses, mules, and stagecoaches riding through Twisp every spring on their way to the famous 49ers Days in Winthrop (supported by the Washington Outfitters and Guides Association/ WOGA). Visitors can learn about the history of smokejumping and take a guided tour of the birthplace of smokejumping at the North Cascades Smokejumper Base south of Winthrop.

**KIDS & PETS:** The Weather Channel declared the Methow as the number one place in the nation for family vacations! In Winthrop, visitors can tromp the wooden boardwalks, play mini golf, and check out the ice cream shop and bakery. There are many easy well-maintained trails that are perfect for the family. Some, like Falls Creek, Blackpine Lake, Rainy Pass Trail, and the Washington Pass Overlook are designed for wheelchair and stroller access.

## Visitor Information Availability

### WINTHROP VISITOR CENTER

202 Riverside Ave  
509-996-2125  
[winthropwashington.com](http://winthropwashington.com)

### TWISP VISITOR CENTER

201 Highway 20 South  
509-997-2020  
[TwispWA.com](http://TwispWA.com)

### METHOW TRAILS

509-996-3287  
800-682-5787 (trail report)  
[methowtrails.org](http://methowtrails.org)

### SUN MOUNTAIN LODGE TRAILS & ACTIVITIES

800-572-0493  
509-996-2211  
[sunmountainlodge.com](http://sunmountainlodge.com)

## Unexpected Treasures

### NORTH CASCADES BASE CAMP

Mazama, Ecology Center, nature programs, retreats, 509-996-2334  
[northcascadesbasecamp.com](http://northcascadesbasecamp.com)

### WINTHROP FISH HATCHERY

Winthrop, tour newly remodeled facility, open daily, 509-996-2424  
[fws.gov/winthropnfh/index.cfm](http://fws.gov/winthropnfh/index.cfm)

### NORTH CASCADES SMOKEJUMPER BASE

Winthrop, tour the birthplace of smokejumping, 509-997-9750  
[northcascadessmokejumperbase.com](http://northcascadessmokejumperbase.com)

### METHOW VALLEY INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Twisp Explore area's Native American inhabitants and natural history, 509-997-4904  
[methowvalleyinterpretivecenter.com](http://methowvalleyinterpretivecenter.com)





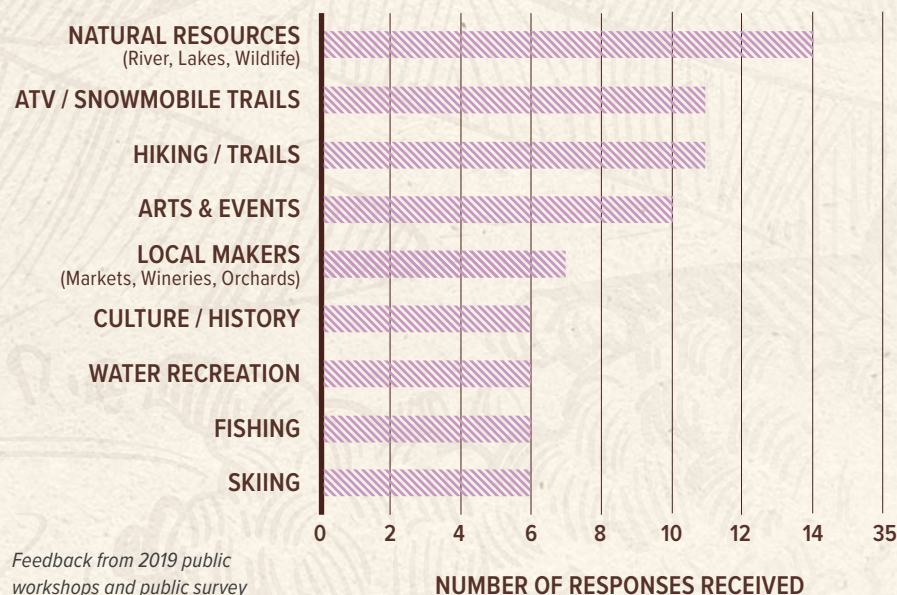
# The Heart of the Okanogan—

*Warm summers, mild winters, working ranches, real cowboys and American Indians, and a rich agricultural heritage combine to create the Heart of the Okanogan.*

The Heart of the Okanogan is the central subregion of the Okanogan Valley and is centrally located within the county. Traditional tourist activities in this subregion include working ranches, water recreation, horseback riding, fairs, rodeos, and other special events, as well as museums, arts and culture, and downtown restaurants and shops. Okanogan and Omak offer historic attractions and a variety of annual events and festivals. Conconully is known for its annual unique Outhouse Races and other events. It is a key destination for off-roading with many miles of groomed

snowmobile and ATV trails. The Heart of the Okanogan also has ski areas and trails that provide winter and summer recreation, though these activities are currently not as established here as they are in other subregions of the county. Omak is the largest city in Okanogan County and has some larger hotels for lodging, as well as camping, smaller hotel/motels, and resort lodges. This subregion is also home to the county fair held each year, with animal barns, arts, sewing, and crafts displays and contests. The 12 Tribes Resort Casino is another popular attraction in this subregion. **FIGURE 6** shows the Top Existing Tourism Assets in the Heart of the Okanogan identified by workshop participants and survey respondents.

**FIGURE 6**  
**Top Tourism Assets in the Heart of the Okanogan**





## Places and Activities

### OKANOGAN TRAILS SCENIC BYWAY AND THE CASCADE LOOP NATIONAL

**SCENIC BYWAY:** A beautiful 83-miles byway that begins in Pateros and follows the Okanogan River to the Canadian border, a portion of the Okanogan Trails Scenic Byway is also part of the Cascade Loop National Scenic Byway. Both byways provide the opportunity to visit roadside fruit stands as you travel through orchards, many owned by third and fourth generation farmers, and historical markers narrate a rich history along the byway routes. Okanogan Trails provides access to the Audubon Society's Great Washington Birding Trail, Lake Osoyoos and Conconully state parks, as well as the Highland Historic Loop Drive and the Many Lakes Historic Loop Drive. The Cascade Loop extends from the shores of Puget Sound across the Cascade Mountains to the valleys on the other side—including the Methow and the Okanogan—and back around through the mountains again. Washington's ultimate road trip, visitors can experience nine distinct regions of the state and thousands of adventures. For more information, visit: [okanogancountry.com](http://okanogancountry.com), [okanogantrails.com](http://okanogantrails.com), and [cascadeloop.com](http://cascadeloop.com).



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**The Okanogan region provides an opportunity to step back in time and experience the past.**

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**OKANOGAN:** A visit to Okanogan immerses visitors in the rich history of the area. Visitors can enjoy a self-guided walking tour of the historic downtown and enjoy murals of renowned 19th century photographer Frank Matsura and other artists displayed on the town's historic buildings.

**OMAK:** Omak is home to the annual Omak Stampede and the World Famous Suicide Race, always the second weekend in August. An encampment held during the Stampede draws tribal members from around the country for dancing, drumming, and competition. Downtown Omak boasts a Main Street Historical Tour and many murals. There is also a self-guided walking tour of the historic downtown of Omak.

**CONCONULLY:** Conconully offers true “from your door” snowmobiling and ATV-ing. Conconully Museum focuses on the area as it was at the turn of the century and features everyday living including mining and ranching. The Fall Cattle Roundup in Conconully includes a cattle drive through town. Conconully State Park is a treasured destination for sportsmen and families.



**SNOW BIKING** allows visitors to get out and experience the great outdoors even during the winter.



**THE GREAT OUTDOORS:** Visitors can enjoy boating, water sports, rafting/floating the Okanogan River, horseback riding, camping, golfing, fishing and hiking here. At night, the night sky is spectacular. Visitors can look up and admire the stars...folks from around the world swear they are brighter here than anywhere else.

**FAIRS & RODEOS:** The Okanogan County Fair and Rodeo in September is a “don’t-miss” event. Visitors can enjoy music, food, rodeo, and the carnival. The local 4-H and FFA barns provide opportunities to see animals proudly shown by local youngsters.

**ARTS & CULTURE:** The Omak Performing Art Center in Omak is a countywide destination

for the performing arts. The Okanogan County Historical Museum and Firehall Museum Complex in Okanogan takes visitors back in time with an old-fashioned main street, settler’s cabin, and a display of apple industry history.

In Omak’s Eastside Park, a sculpture collection depicts the American Indian legend of “How the Animals Got Their Names.” A variety of artists participated in this installment made possible by the Colville Tribal Artists’ Association.

In January, visitors can enjoy Conconully’s famous Outhouse Races. The three-person teams consist of a ‘rider’ and two ‘pushers,’ and the results are guaranteed hilarious. Visitors staying through to the following weekend can experience the annual Snow Dog Super Mush.





**UNIQUE PEOPLE & PLACES:** In 1903, Frank Matsura, a Japanese immigrant, arrived in the area as a cook's helper. He became a beloved member of the community and world-renowned photographer, recording the frontier era and Native American heritage. The Okanogan County Historical Society houses many of Matsura's photographs and a replica of his studio.

The historic Cariboo Trail runs from southern Canada to the Columbia River. A major trade route throughout its history, it first was used for fur trade, then later for the Canadian gold rush. Look for the Cariboo Trail sign four miles south of Okanogan on Highway 97.

**KIDS & PETS:** The Eastside Park in Omak has playground equipment, ball courts, trails, and a swimming pool. In Okanogan, Alma Park has a swimming pool, picnic area, playground equipment, and sports field.

## Visitor Information Availability

### OMAK VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

401 Omak Avenue, Omak  
509-826-4218  
[omakvic@northcascades.net](mailto:omakvic@northcascades.net)

### OMAK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PO Box 3100  
Omak, WA 98841  
509-826-1880  
[www.omakchamber.com](http://www.omakchamber.com)  
[omakchamber@gmail.com](mailto:omakchamber@gmail.com)

### OKANOGAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

509-422-4034  
[okchamber@communitynet.com](mailto:okchamber@communitynet.com)  
[www.okchamber.com](http://www.okchamber.com)

### CONCONULLY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1-509-826-9050  
[www.conconully.com](http://www.conconully.com)

## Unexpected Treasures

### LOUP LOUP SKI AREA

Okanogan, 1,240 vertical feet with 10 cut runs,  
866-699-5334  
[skitheloup.com](http://skitheloup.com)

### OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Okanogan, recreated Main St. & Frank Matsura  
studio, 509-422-4272  
[okanoganhistory.org](http://okanoganhistory.org)

### CARIBOO TRAIL

Okanogan, 509-422-4272  
[okanoganhistory.org](http://okanoganhistory.org)

### OUTHOUSE RACES

Conconully, races down Main St. for prizes,  
509-826-9050  
[conconully.com](http://conconully.com)

### ISLAND PARK TRAIL

Okanogan, popular for fishing, birding, wildlife  
and photography, 509-826-5107





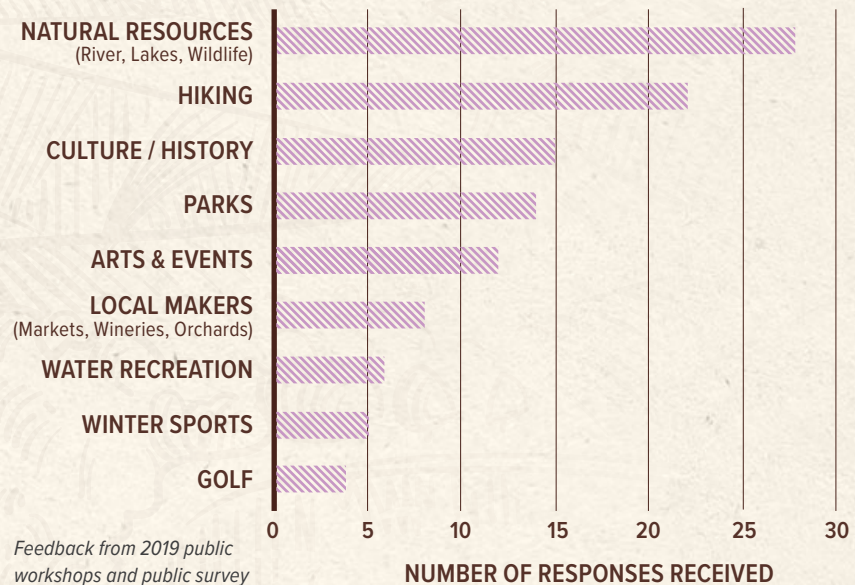
## North Okanogan—

*From the Canadian border to Ferry County, the North Okanogan is a geological jewel and a secret treasure to hosts of outdoor enthusiasts, nature lovers, and history buffs.*

North Okanogan is a destination for outdoor adventurers and history buffs. It includes the Many Lakes region on the west side of the Okanogan River and the Okanogan Highlands on the east side. Fishing, hiking, and camping are popular activities here. This subregion is rich in farming, mining, and logging history. The Highland Historic Loop is a driving tour that includes ghost towns, scenic views, trails, and fishing lakes (see a map of the loop drive at the end of Chapter 1). Oroville, a few miles south of the Canadian border, serves as the midpoint of the 1,200-mile Pacific Northwest Trail. Each year, more and more hikers use Oroville as a stop for rest and supplies along the trail. Tonasket offers some shopping and dining and is also a good basecamp for hiking, climbing, and fly fishing. Visitors can roam through many antiques and second hand shops in Oroville and Tonasket. Lodging in this subregion is mostly made up of small inns and resorts/ranches. **FIGURE 7** shows the Top Existing Tourism Assets in the North Okanogan identified by workshop participants and survey respondents.



**FIGURE 7**  
**Top Tourism Assets in North Okanogan**





## Places and Activities

**TONASKET:** The community of Tonasket is the home of the annual Okanogan River Garlic Festival and the Founder's Day Rodeo, as well as other rodeos and events. Visitors can discover a great selection of antique shops, pamper yourself in a day spa, or enjoy local culture and food at the restaurants. A must see is the mural on the Community Cultural Center building, a block west of Hwy 97 between 4th & 5th. McLaughlin Canyon is another visitor destination near Tonasket.

**OROVILLE:** At the border with British Columbia, Oroville has great locally grown bounty at its fruit stands and wine tasting at the four local wineries. Nearby Lake Osoyoos is a popular destination with parks and a variety of water recreation opportunities. For more history, visitors can visit the Depot Museum run by the Okanogan Borderlands Historical Society. Guided tours are available from the Depot Museum. Access to the Pacific Northwest Trail also is available here.

**LOOMIS:** Loomis was once a historic mining town with eight saloons and two dance halls. Today it is a quiet town with a scattering of homes and Bighorn sheep that wander through town.

**OLD MOLSON GHOST TOWN, SCHOOL MUSEUM, AND MOLSON:** Located a short drive away from Oroville, visitors can explore history at multiple indoor and outdoor sites including the Old Molson Ghost Town Museum and the Molson Schoolhouse with four floors of displays on early pioneer life and education. Molson Summer Fun Day is typically held the third Saturday in June.

**CHESAW:** Named for early resident, Charley Chee Saw, who started a store to provide supplies to miners and homesteaders, The town of Chesaw thrived during a brief gold rush from 1896 to 1900. The 4th of July Chesaw Rodeo has been ongoing since 1942.

**WAUCONDA:** Along Hwy 20, Wauconda has been a central location for pioneers, miners, farmers, ranchers and travelers for over 100 years.

**CURLEW:** Curlew is home to the Curlew school, bridge and Ansoorge Hotel. Walking into the lobby of the Ansoorge Hotel Museum is like walking through a time portal into 1936. Nearby, visitors can experience Toroda's Ranald McDonald gravesite and mural, Chief Tonasket's gravesite, the Antique Car and Truck Museum, Malo's Historic Store, as well as Curlew Lake State Park.



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## Loomis was once a historic mining town with eight saloons and two dance halls.

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**REPUBLIC:** The Republic Historical Center features regional history and the historic Kaufman Cabin. Stonerose Interpretive Center provides hands-on discovery at a 50-million-year-old fossil site where the public is welcome to learn, dig, and take home fossils.

**OTHER UNIQUE EXPERIENCES:** The 14,000-acre Sinlahekin Wildlife Area was originally established to protect mule deer habitat and is a bird watching paradise with trails and parking for visitor access. The area's four lakes teem with brook, rainbow, and cutthroat trout.

The Nighthawk Historic Townsite, a registered ghost town, boasts the Nighthawk hotel, original schoolhouse, a mining office and old mill, all relics from the first decades of the twentieth century.



There are two fantastic driving tours in this area, the 80 mile Many Lakes Loop and the Highland Historic Loop. These loops tour most of the highlights of the subregion. Maps are available at [www.okanogancountry.com](http://www.okanogancountry.com) and area VICs.

### THE GREAT OUTDOORS:

The Similkameen Trail, extending northwest from Oroville along the Similkameen River, is wheelchair and stroller accessible. Trail visitors can view salmon and steelhead runs and incredible scenery. Interpretive panels along the trail tell the history of the Okanogan and Similkameen Valleys. The North Okanogan subregion is replete with lakes, trails and outdoors to explore. The fishing is extraordinary and each lake has its own fishing requirements. Visitors can contact the WDFW for current regulations: 800 833-6388, [www.wdfw.wa.gov](http://www.wdfw.wa.gov).

**FAMILY FUN:** Families can explore historic towns to find reminders of history, such as murals painted by a famous western artist in the 1940s in Tonasket, as well as ghost towns and places like the Old Molson Ghost Town Museum on five acres with accessible paths (kid and dog friendly). The Molson Schoolhouse Museum is open Memorial Day through Labor Day. Guest ranches welcome families with horseback riding, trail rides, wildlife viewing, tours, and summer camps.

## Visitor Information Availability

### TONASKET CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

509-486-4543

[tonasketchamber.com](http://tonasketchamber.com)

### OROVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

509-476-2739

[orovillewashington.com](http://orovillewashington.com)

### REPUBLIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

509-775-2704

[www.ferrycounty.com/rrvcb/](http://www.ferrycounty.com/rrvcb/)

## Unexpected Treasures

### K DIAMOND K GUEST RANCH

Republic, 1600 acre working dude ranch.  
Relax or join in and help work on the ranch!

509-641-1003

[kdiamondk.com](http://kdiamondk.com)

### EDEN VALLEY GUEST RANCH

Oroville, horseback riding, birdwatching & adventures galore! Also home of the Washington State Star Party and year-round night sky activities, as well as narrated wildlife and history tours. Entertainment for adults and children (dogs and horses are welcome too). The outdoor Eden Valley Farm Museum is open to all guests at no charge. 509-485-4002

[edenvalleyranch.net](http://edenvalleyranch.net)

### SITZMARK SKI AREA

Tonasket, take a beautiful and relaxing trip to Okanogan Highland's winter ski retreat  
509-485-3323 • 509-486-2700

[gositzmark.org](http://gositzmark.org)

### STONEROSE FOSSIL CENTER/ INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Republic, learn how to identify fossils, and then dig your own and take home with you.  
509-775-2295

[stonerosefossil.org](http://stonerosefossil.org)

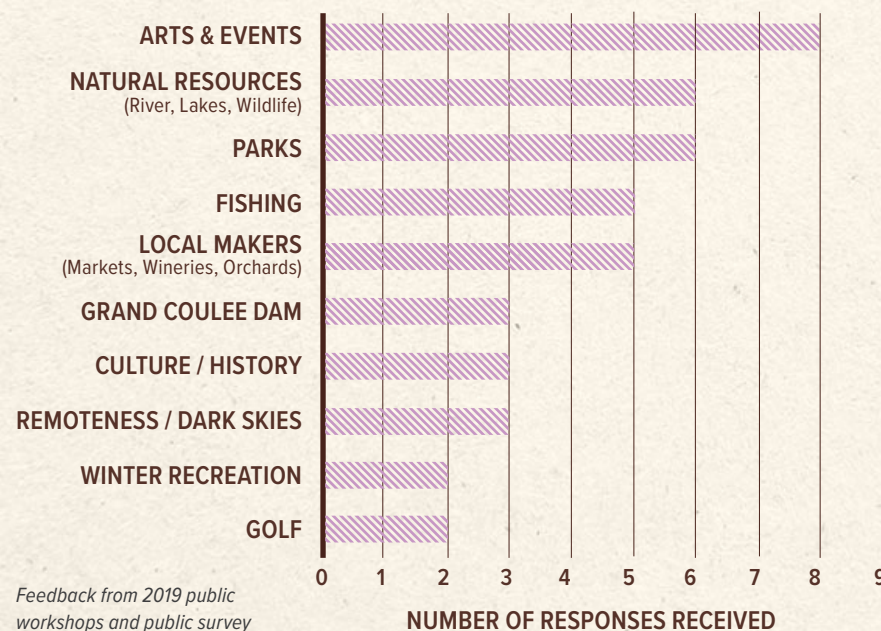




# The Columbia River—

*This subregion stretches along the Columbia River from Pateros to Grand Coulee Dam. It includes fascinating geological features, the Colville Confederated Tribes Reservation, and unsurpassed recreational opportunities.*

**FIGURE 8**  
**Top Tourism Assets in the Columbia River Subregion**



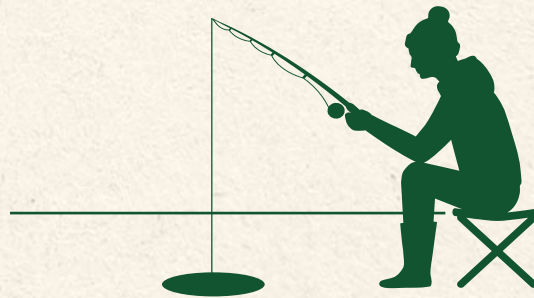
The major tourism attraction for this subregion is, of course, the Grand Coulee Dam and the Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area which stretches east and northeast from the dam to the Canadian border. The dam is bordered by small towns that offer various historic and cultural sites related to the dam and the geologic history of the area. Other towns in this subregion include Nespelem, Brewster, and Pateros. With a direct connection to the river, water recreation opportunities are a big draw, and multiple towns feature arts and events related to the river such as fishing derbies or boat races. Pateros and Brewster are located on US-97, the Cascade Loop Scenic Highway and the Okanogan Trails Scenic Byway. The Grand Coulee area is part of the Coulee Corridor Scenic Byway. Pateros has a unique position that is close in proximity to Chelan and the Methow Valley, but is far less congested. Pateros is the gateway to the Methow Valley as well as the Okanogan Valley to the north. Thousands of acres of orchards blanket the landscape around Pateros and Brewster. Most lodging facilities for this subregion are small hotel/motel establishments and the RV parks that are typically a part of each town's community park or waterfront. **FIGURE 8** shows the Top Existing Tourism Assets in the Columbia River subregion of Okanogan Country identified by workshop participants and survey respondents.





## Places and Activities

**PATEROS:** Pateros was originally established as Ive's Landing around 1896 by Lee Ives when he began farming near the confluence of the Methow and Columbia Rivers and built his landmark hotel on the banks of the Columbia. Today, Pateros is a vibrant community with parks, picnics, swimming areas, fruit stands with fresh local fruit, fishing, and dining. Visitors can take a walk along the river, watch the hydroplane or dragon boat races, take part in the annual Apple Pie Jamboree, or get in some incredible salmon and steelhead fishing.



**Pateros was originally established as Ive's Landing around 1896 by Lee Ives.**

**BREWSTER:** Brewster's location at the confluence of the Okanogan and Columbia Rivers has made it a gateway to the vast lands of the north since before Astor's Pacific Fur Company established the first American inland fur trading post nearby. Today, Brewster is at the heart of a large fruit industry.

**BRIDGEPORT:** Nestled between beautiful hills along the Columbia River, Bridgeport's main area industry is agriculture with apple and cherry orchards in and around the area. Outside Bridgeport, wheat fields are prevalent. The area, rich with outdoor recreation opportunities and beautiful scenery, is a popular destination for anglers, hunters, kayakers, boaters, photographers, and other outdoor enthusiasts.

**GRAND COULEE DAM:** This engineering marvel is nearly a mile across, over 500 feet tall and spans the largest volume river flowing into the Pacific Ocean. The mighty dam harnesses the power of over six trillion gallons of water, sending clean hydro power into eleven states. Visitors can check out the laser light show every night all summer and dam tours, which are unique, extraordinary experiences.





## The Colville Tribal Museum in Coulee Dam is rich with heritage.



**COLVILLE TRIBAL MUSEUM** in Coulee Dam features historical displays for visitors to learn about early Native American history.

**COULEE CORRIDOR NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY:** The Coulee Corridor follows State Route 155 from Omak, extending southeast through the lands of the Colville Confederated Tribes to the Grand Coulee Dam area, and then south along State Route 17 through Soap Lake and Moses Lake and beyond. This amazing 150-mile road trip reveals the story of the Ice Age floods when vast reservoirs of water flooded and receded from this valley hundreds of times. One of the most unique natural landscapes in the United States, this area was formed as the force of water fought against the strength of basalt rock. For more information, visit: [couleecorridor.com](http://couleecorridor.com) and <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/54772>.

**GRAND COULEE DAM AREA:** There are multiple towns and tourism destinations in the Grand Coulee Dam area. The town of Coulee Dam is located at the southernmost tip of Okanogan County and is the headquarters for Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area, managed by the National Park Service. The town of Grand Coulee is just south of the Grand Coulee Dam at the junction of Highway 155 and 174. Grand Coulee is home to North Dam Park where many large events are held including Colorama, the Festival of America, and the Harvest Festival. The nearby town of Electric City also offers services and facilities for visitors. The Grand Coulee Dam area is the perfect place to get out and enjoy the spring before the snow has melted anywhere else. This warm, dry area of Okanogan County features some amazing geology with gorgeous basalt cliffs that jut right up from the Columbia River.

### **COLVILLE CONFEDERATED TRIBES:**

The Colville Tribal Museum in Coulee Dam provides a glimpse of the rich heritage of the people who make up the twelve tribes of the Colville Confederated Tribes. Historical displays of early Native American settlements, history, and lifestyles are featured in the museum. Indian encampments and powwows are held around the Fourth of July in Nespelem, early spring features the Sun Flower Festival at Paschal Sherman Indian School, and an Encampment is held the second weekend of August during the Omak Stampede and World Famous Suicide Race in Omak. In addition, Fort Okanogan Interpretive Center, located just shy of the Highway 97 intersection on Highway 17, features the rich history and artifacts of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and specifically concerns the Okanogan Tribe and fur trade industry in Washington State.



**NESPELEM:** Nespelem is home to the Colville Tribal Cultural Center and the grave of Nez Perce Chief Joseph. The 4th of July Pow Wow is the Colville Tribe's largest cultural event and attracts the best singers and dancers throughout Indian Country. Stick games and a parade accompany the celebration.

**UNIQUE PLACES & EVENTS:** As previously noted, the Grand Coulee Dam puts on a stunning laser light show during the summer months where the enormous man-made structure illustrates its capacity by spilling water down its face while a complex series of lasers tell the story of Lake Roosevelt, the Columbia River, the Grand Coulee Dam and the settlers around it. This is an entertaining (and educational) "don't-miss" extravaganza for all ages. In Pateros, learn about the history of the town at the Pateros Museum & VIC at the confluence of the Columbia & Methow Rivers (located in the City Hall building). Also, the Methow tribal art and interpretive exhibit is a must-see wayside in the Pateros waterfront area. Gamble Sands Golf Course & Resort in Brewster offers opportunities for recreation and relaxation.



**Festivals and events  
will ensure that your  
kids are never bored!**







**FOR THE KIDS:** Fishing, camping, boating, museums, festivals and events will ensure that your children are never bored! Pateros Park welcomes pets and has a long walking trail along the river. Rivers Restaurant is a great family place, and the Sweet River Bakery in Pateros has incredible pizza and baked goods! Grand Coulee hosts the Colorama in May: a festival, rodeo, parade, carnival, and hours of family activities. The Brewster City Pool has two water slides, two diving boards, and is right next to the Brewster City Park.

## Visitor Information Availability

### PATEROS (CITY HALL)

509-923-2571

[pateros.com](http://pateros.com)

### BREWSTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

509-689-3464

[brewsterchamber.org](http://brewsterchamber.org)

### COLVILLE CONFEDERATED TRIBES

800-881-7684 • 509-634-2200

[colvilletribes.com](http://colvilletribes.com)

### GRAND COULEE DAM AREA CHAMBER

509-633-3074

[grandcouleedam.org](http://grandcouleedam.org)

### COULEE PIONEER MUSEUM

509-631-0303

[birds@ifiber.tv](mailto:birds@ifiber.tv)

## Unexpected Treasures

### GRAND COULEE DAM TOUR & LASER SHOW

Grand Coulee, all new laser light show starts Saturday May 24th and runs through September 30th, 509-633-3074

[grandcouleedam.org](http://grandcouleedam.org)

### HYDROPLANE RACES

Pateros, join the fun in Pateros Memorial Park, along Lakeshore Drive, 509-923-2571

[pateros.com](http://pateros.com)

### STEELHEAD FISHING

Pateros, the upper Columbia River and the Methow River are perfect for Steelheading, 509- 923-2571

[pateros.com](http://pateros.com)

### GROOMED SNOWMOBILING TRAILS

Pateros, access to literally hundreds of miles of trails and Sno-Parks just a short drive, 509- 923-2571

[pateros.com](http://pateros.com)





# VISITATION AND TOURISM STATISTICS

*The most recent (2016 through 2019) visitation and tourism statistics available for Okanogan County are summarized on this page and the following pages, based on multiple sources, including the Washington Tourism Alliance, Dean Runyan Associates, and others.*



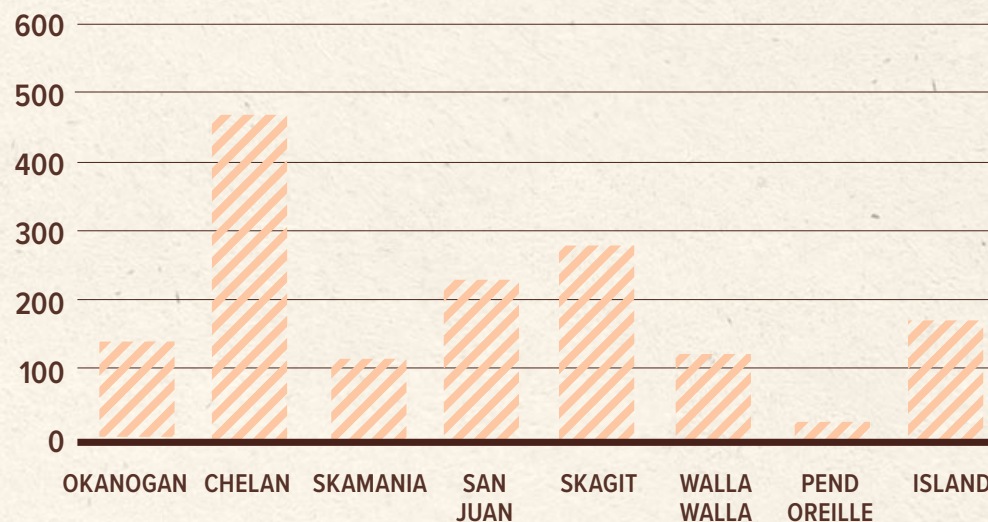
## 2019 Visitor Spending Comparison

Travel spending in Okanogan County, in comparison to other counties with tourism destinations is presented in **TABLE 4** and **FIGURE 9** below.

**TABLE 4**  
**2019 Visitor Spending in Washington - Comparison of Counties**


	Okanogan	Chelan	Skamania	San Juan	Skagit	Walla Walla	Pend Oreille	Island
<b>DESTINATION SPENDING</b> (2019 IN \$MILLIONS)	142	469	102	236	288	126	24	173

**FIGURE 9**  
**Destination Spending (2019 in \$Millions)**



Source: Washington Tourism Alliance





**HORSEBACK RIDING** is an enjoyable activity to traverse the wide lands of Okanogan County.

## Visitor Spending Impacts

- » \$78,837 of visitor spending supports 1 job
- » \$100 of visitor spending generates \$36 of employee earnings
- » \$100 of visitor spending on lodging generates \$8.40 of tax revenue

## Visitor Spending Supported by Overnight Stays

- » If each resident household encouraged 1 additional overnight visitor, visitor spending would increase by \$2,507,000
- » If each resident household encouraged 1 additional overnight visitor, employment would increase by 32 jobs

## Visitation Contributions to Economy

- » Travel share of total employment = 8.9%
- » Visitor share of taxable sales = 18.9%
- » Overnight visitor share = 13.5%

*Source: Dean Runyan Associates, Based on 2016 and 2017 Annual Spending and Employment Statistics*

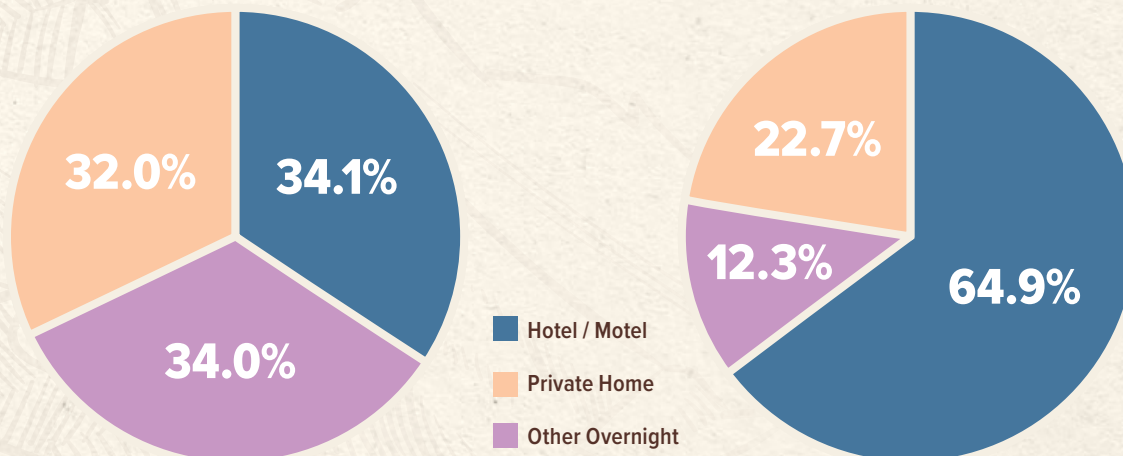


# Overnight Visitor Spending by Type of Accommodation

Visitors who stay in private homes typically comprise the largest share of overnight visitor volume. Visitors who stay overnight in commercial lodging typically have the greatest economic impact. Most rural and suburban areas have high shares of private home visitation. Urban areas tend to have greater shares of hotel/motel stays. **FIGURE 10** shows proportion of visitor stays by type of lodging facility and visitor spending related to these categories in Okanogan County. **TABLE 5** depicts visitor volumes, including the number of trips, and overnight stays per person (in thousands) and correlating visitor spending (in millions) for 2017.

**FIGURE 10**

**Visitor Spending by Type of Accommodation in Okanogan County (2017)**



## A NOTE REGARDING RECENT TOURISM SPENDING IMPACTS

*Recent impacts to tourism related to the pandemic have affected spending and activities. Outdoor recreation activities (hiking, camping, etc.) have increased, while lodging and dining have decreased. The statistics in this plan from previous years are based on more typical tourism patterns, and should be representative of future trends that will occur after the pandemic. For more about the pandemic and recovery strategies, see Chapter 6.*

**TABLE 5**

**Okanogan County Visitor Trips, Overnights, and Spending in 2017**

	PERSON TRIPS (THOUSANDS)	PERSON NIGHTS (THOUSANDS)	VISITOR SPENDING (MILLIONS)
<b>HOTEL/MOTEL</b>	445.8	699.3	97.3
<b>PRIVATE HOME</b>	323.1	697.4	18.5
<b>OTHER OVERNIGHT</b>	234.1	656.9	34.1
<b>ALL OVERNIGHT</b>	<b>1003</b>	<b>2053.6</b>	<b>149.9</b>

**NOTE:** Person trips and person nights are in thousands. Visitor spending is in \$millions. Details may not round to total due to rounding. Annual overnight visitor days divided by (resident population) x 365.

**Source:** Bureau of Economic Analysis and Bureau of Labor Statistics. Estimates by Dean Runyan Associates.

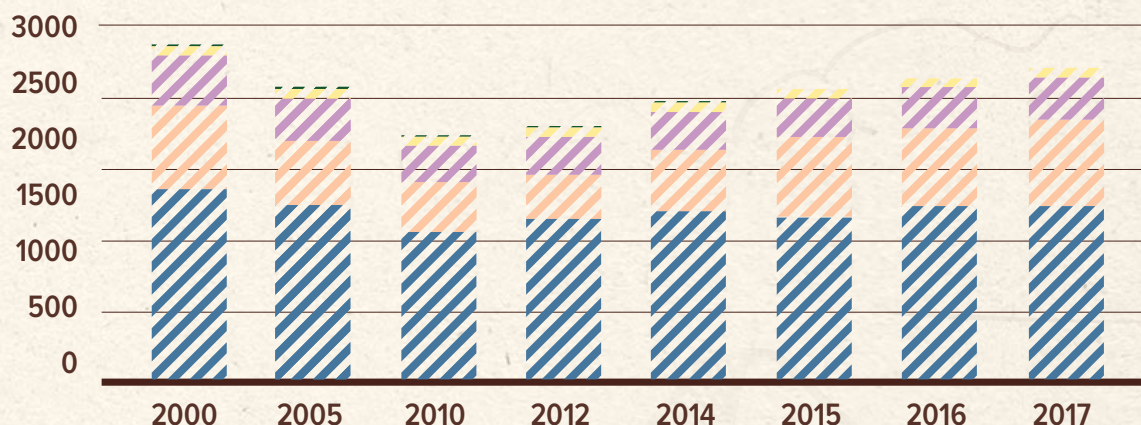


Visitor spending on various types of commodities purchased can provide insight into business opportunities and how spending is trending.

**FIGURE 13** shows visitor spending from 2000 through 2017 for Okanogan County; all types of commodities have trended upward with the exception of arts, entertainment, and recreation and retail sales, which have remained fairly steady. Food service had the highest growth over the time period. Employment levels related to visitor spending are shown from 2000 through 2017 in **FIGURE 11**, and the impact of the recession is clearly discernable. **FIGURE 12** shows that visitor spending in Okanogan County has been trending upward from 2015 through 2019, with over 20% growth in the five-year period.

**FIGURE 11**

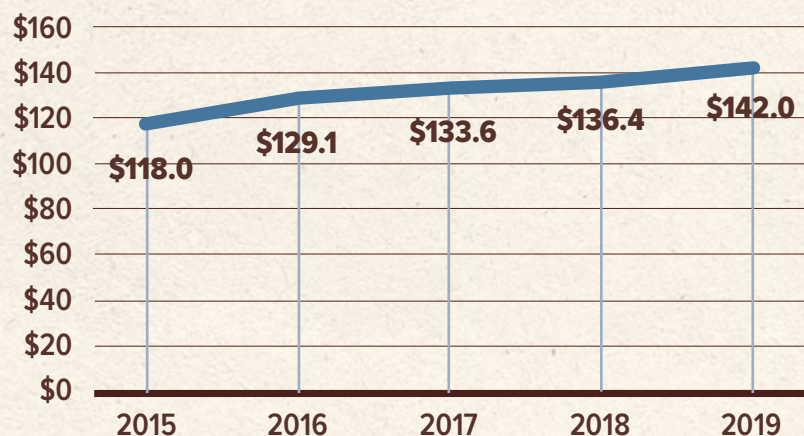
**Employment Generated by Visitor Spending in Okanogan County, 2000-2017**



Source: Tourism Economics

**FIGURE 12**

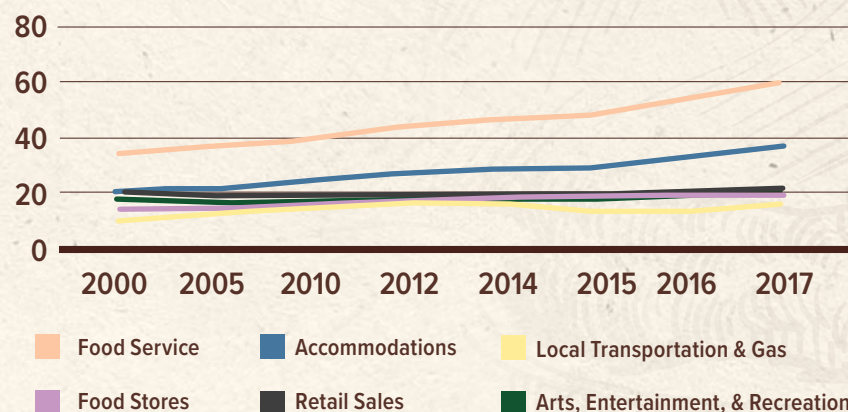
**Visitor Spending Trends are Growing in Okanogan County**



Source: Washington Tourism Alliance

**FIGURE 13**

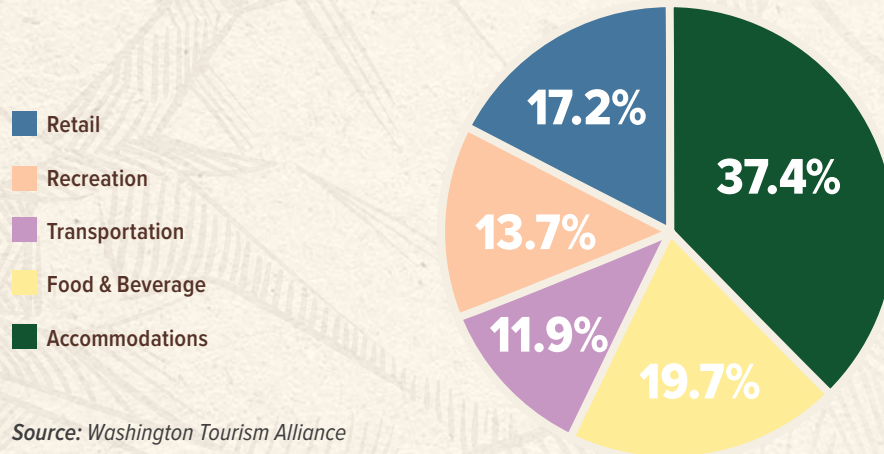
**Visitor Spending by Commodity in Okanogan County, 2000-2017**



Source: Tourism Economics

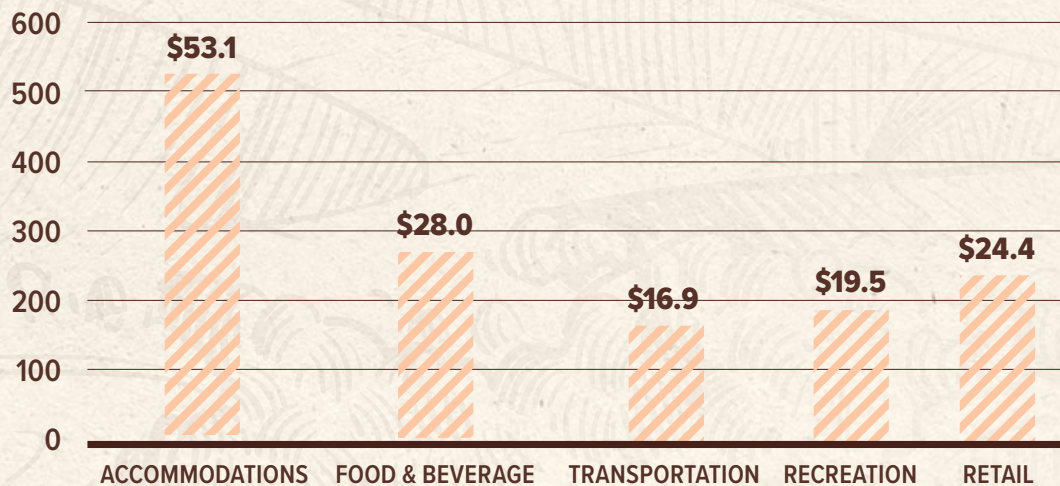


**FIGURE 14**  
**2019 Visitor Spending Share in Okanogan County**



Source: Washington Tourism Alliance

**FIGURE 15**  
**2019 Visitor Spending by Commodity in Okanogan County (\$Millions)**



Source: Washington Tourism Alliance

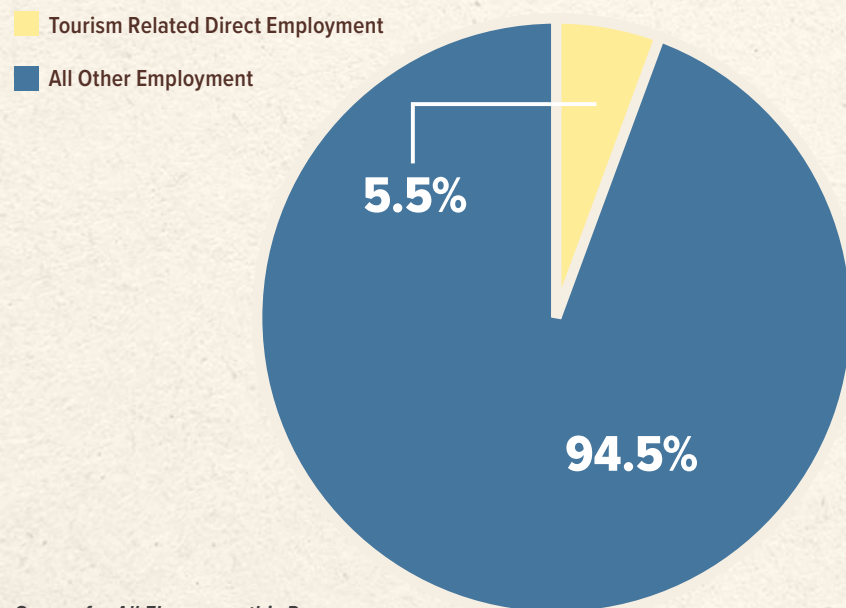


More recent data from 2019 is presented on this page related to visitor spending by commodity purchased. **FIGURES 14** and **15** show visitor spending by commodity in millions, and the proportion of visitor spending on various commodity categories. Accommodations as the largest sector of spending, followed by food and beverage.



Regarding visitor spending and the economic impact on the regional economy, **FIGURES 16** through **19** show how visitor generated revenue supports labor income in the county, as well as impacts related to state and local taxes and county employment, based on 2019 statistics.

**FIGURE 16**  
**2019 Direct Employment Share Supported by Tourism in County**



Source for All Figures on this Page:  
Washington Tourism Alliance

While the the proportion of direct jobs related to tourism is relatively low, the impacts from visitor spending on income and employment are high as shown in **FIGURES 17, 18, and 19**.

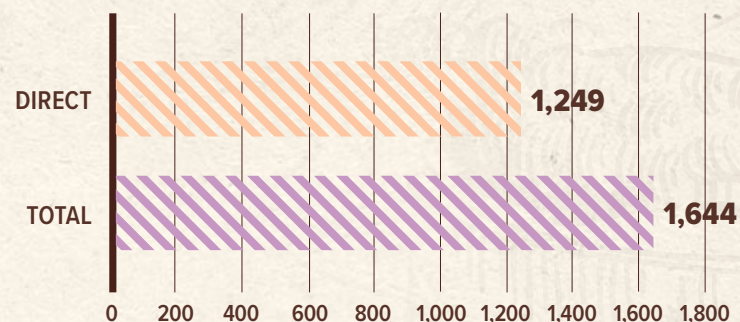
**FIGURE 17**  
**2019 County Labor Income Impacts**



**FIGURE 18**  
**2019 State & Local Tax Impacts (\$Millions)**

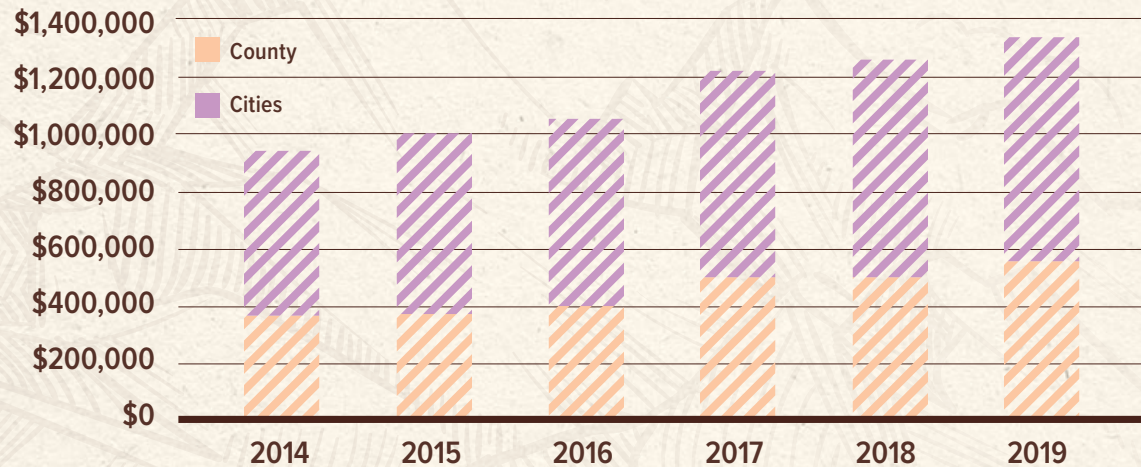


**FIGURE 19**  
**2019 County Employment Impacts (Jobs Generated)**

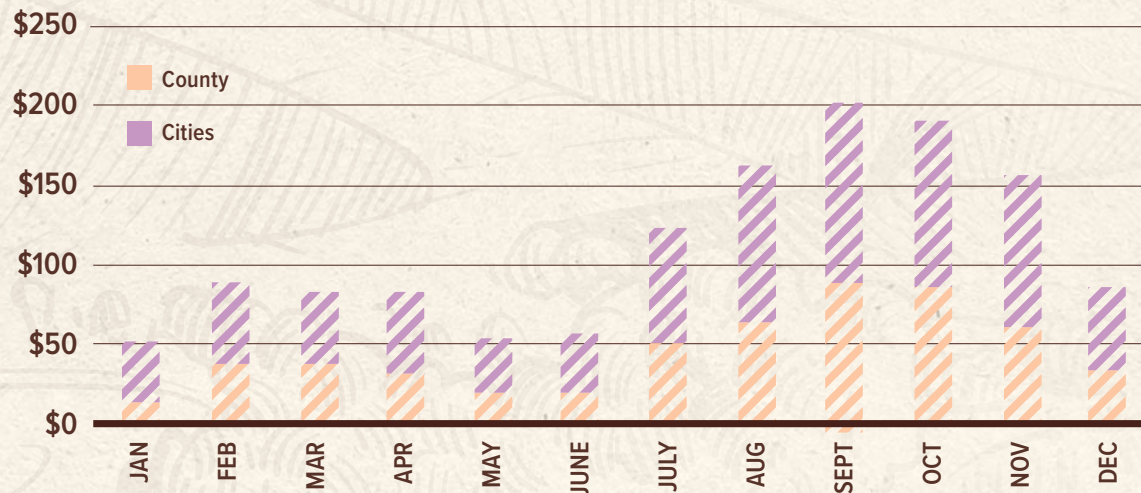




**FIGURE 20**  
**Hotel / Motel Tax Generated 2014 to 2019**



**FIGURE 21**  
**Hotel / Motel Tax by Month in 2019**



Source for Data on This Page: Okanogan County Tourism Council



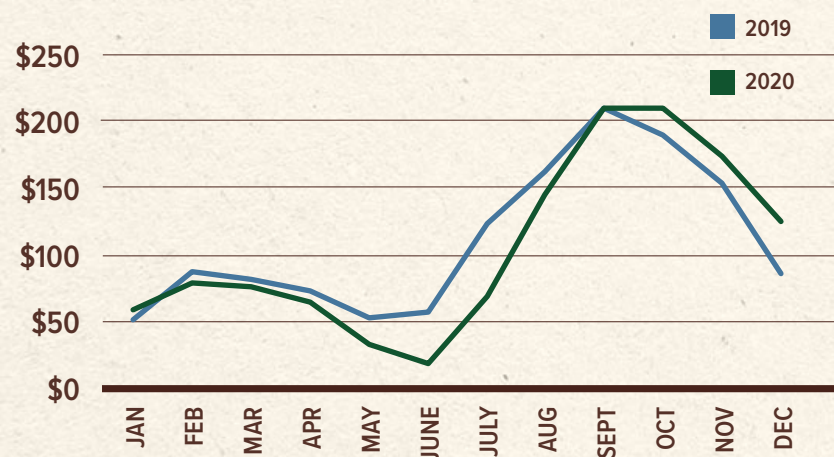
Trends in hotel/motel tax revenues from 2014 to 2019 are shown in **FIGURE 20** and by month for the year 2019 in **FIGURE 21**. **FIGURE 20** shows that revenues have been trending upwards year upon year.

Monthly tax revenues from lodging facilities are reported after each month's activity. As such revenue reported per month represents the activity of the previous month. For example, revenue shown September is for August activity.



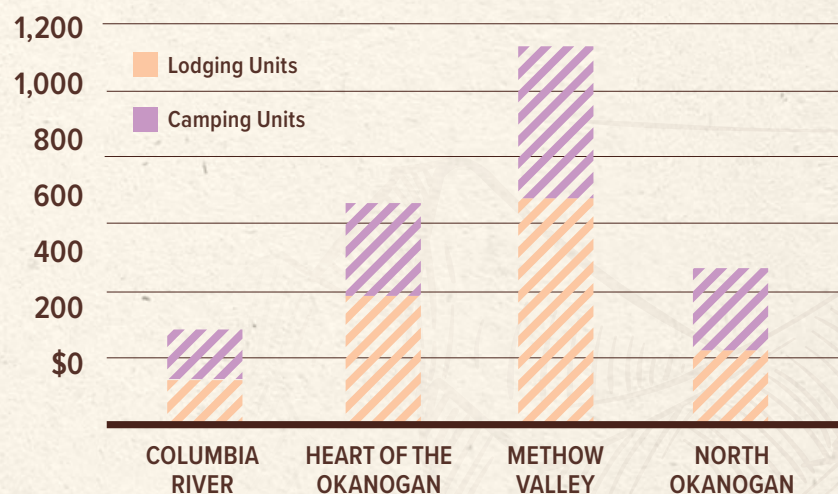
**FIGURE 22** shows a peak pattern in visitation from July through November, with September as the peak month. **FIGURE 23** shows hotel-motel tax by month through June in 2019 compared to the same timeframe in 2020. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is clearly visible in Spring and Summer 2020, but later in the year, revenues exceeded 2019 levels for the months of October through December 2020.

**FIGURE 22**  
**Hotel / Motel Tax by Month in 2019 and 2020**



Source for Data on This Page: Okanogan County Tourism Council

**FIGURE 23**  
**Lodging Inventory – Units by Subregion, 2019**



As shown in **FIGURE 23**, the Heart of the Okanogan and Methow Valley currently have more camping units than the other subregions of Okanogan Country.



# 5

## TOURISM ASSETS DATABASE AND TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

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### In this chapter:

- » TOURISM ASSETS DATABASE
- » INTRODUCTION TO TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS
- » TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS IN THE SUBAREAS OF OKANOGAN COUNTRY







**OKANOGAN COUNTRY EXPERIENCE:** Festivals in the region draw visitors from all over with events and activities known for their authenticity, charm, and creativity.



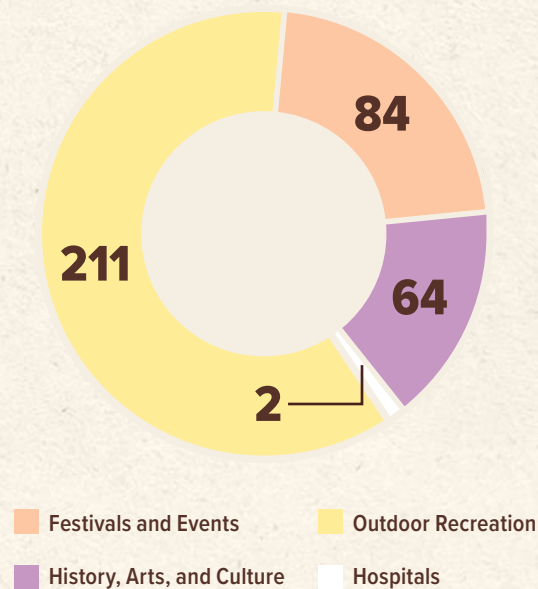


**361 existing tourism assets have been identified, mapped, and characterized.**

## TOURISM ASSETS DATABASE

*The mapping of existing tourism assets provides a geographic perspective of the places, events, activities, and attractions that currently exist in the region. Understanding these “tourism assets” and where they are located helps to inform analysis of opportunities and challenges within the existing tourism infrastructure, as well as potential strategies and actions for filling gaps in the system. Tourism assets have been mapped within a geographic information systems (GIS)-based database that OCTC will retain and be able to reference and apply in future analysis and work. Assets are geocoded and organized into categories. The database includes a listing of locations, property ownerships (as relevant), types of recreational activities offered at the location, and other information is included in the database.*

**FIGURE 24**  
**Existing Tourism Assets**



Tourism assets have been organized within three primary categories. The two primary hospitals were also mapped. To date, 361 existing tourism assets have been identified, mapped, and characterized in the database. Refer to **FIGURE 25** for a map of assets in these categories:

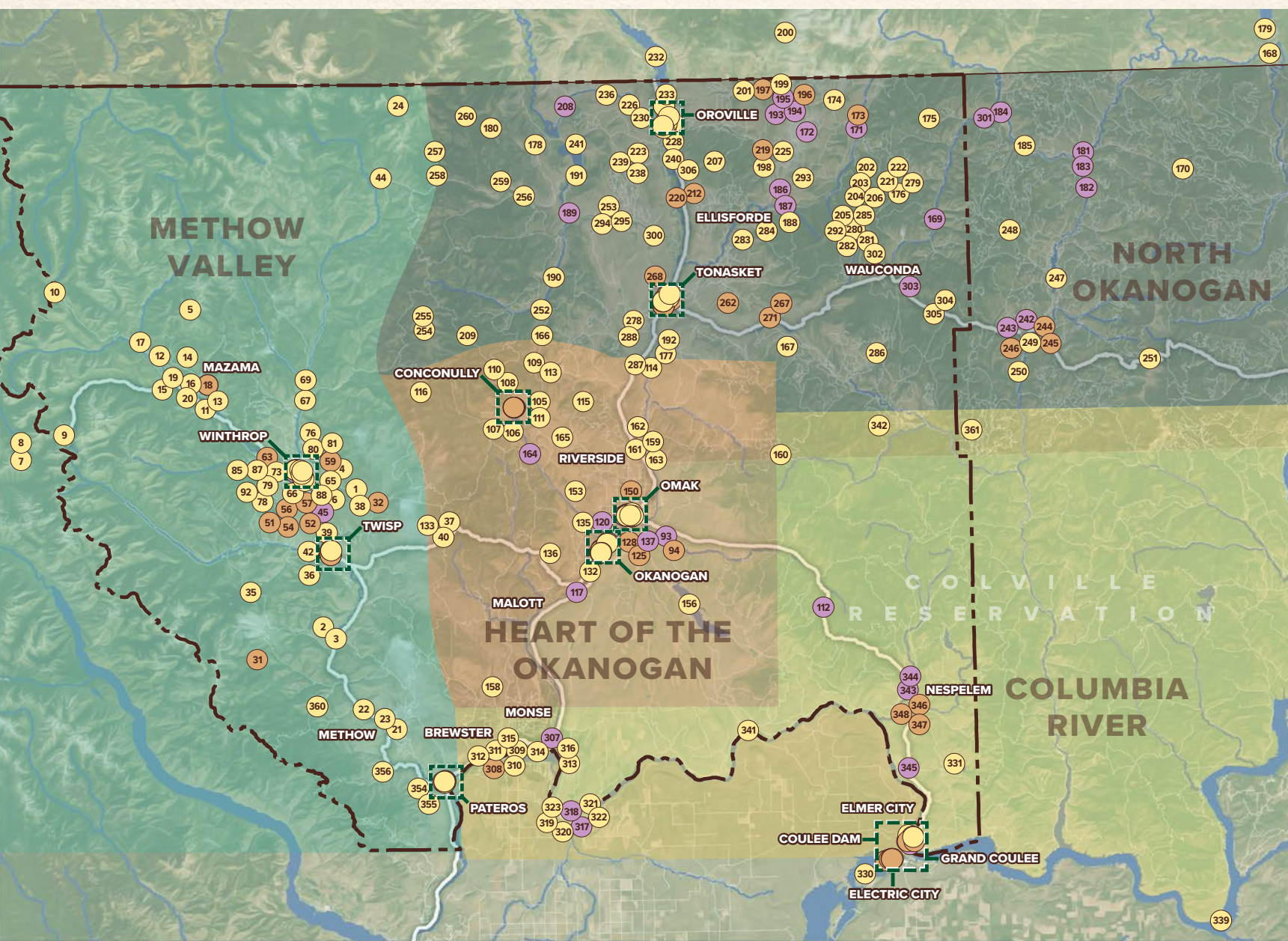
- » Festivals and Events
- » History, Arts, and Culture
- » Outdoor Recreation

**FIGURE 24** shows the proportional amounts of each of these categories of assets in the county.

Beyond its use in the planning and analysis for the Tourism Destination Master Plan, the database will go on to serve as a digital inventory to be used and updated as needed by OCTC.



**FIGURE 25**  
**Map of Okanogan County Existing Tourism Assets**







**TABLE 6** (See Page 68 Discussion)  
**Okanogan Tourism Assets Feature Class Attribute Information**

FIELD NAME	FIELD DESCRIPTION
ID	Map ID number
TYPE 1	Main Category ( <i>outdoor recreation; history, arts, and culture; festivals and events</i> )
TYPE 2	Subcategory ( <i>interpretive center, park, trailhead, etc.</i> )
NAME	Name of the asset
LOCATION	Closest city or town
SEASON	Date of event or time of year that the asset is open
SUBREGION	Region of Okanogan County ( <i>North Okanogan, Heart of the Okanogan, Methow, Columbia River Area</i> )
DESCRIPTION	Short description of the asset

## Tourism Assets Data Collection

The main data sources for the assets were research and public input. Data collection started with the research of marketing materials published by the OCTC. Destinations and events listed in the OCTC Okanogan Country Guide provided a foundation to build on. Members of the OCTC and TAG reviewed this data and provided updates and additional tourism assets, including ongoing events and open destinations.

Assets also were added based on input gathered at public and stakeholder meetings throughout 2019 and 2020—including meetings with representatives from visitor information centers (VICs), as well as public workshops held throughout the county. Participants were asked about assets that should be included and were able to provide feedback on the information gathered up to that point. Additionally, they were able to access a web map and add assets themselves. By editing data on the web map, they were able to add points, comment on other assets, or make suggestions as to how assets and attribute information should be revised. For the additional asset data gathered at public workshops that were held throughout Okanogan County in October 2019, attendees of ten different workshops were asked to list what they consider to be the top five assets of the region, and the results were added to the database. Finally, the draft TDMP was published and another round of public meetings took place in December 2020. The draft TDMP was open for public comment, and the public provided additional tourism assets. Those have been included in this Final TDMP.





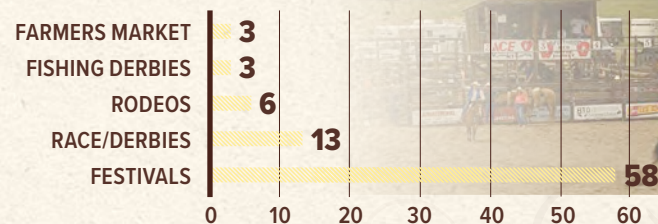
# Tourism Assets Data Summary

The GIS database is a point feature class with attribute information. **TABLE 6** on the previous page, lists the information documented and recorded in the database, including the attribute information associated with each asset. Each point represents a single destination or event except in the case of trails where a point might represent a trailhead or trail system. In the case of some natural resource assets, the point represents a large land area such as a state park or nature preserve. In these cases, the point was positioned as close to the entrance or access point of the asset as possible. For large area assets that have multiple points of entry such as a lake or recreation area with multiple campgrounds, day use areas, or resorts, the point was placed in the approximate center.

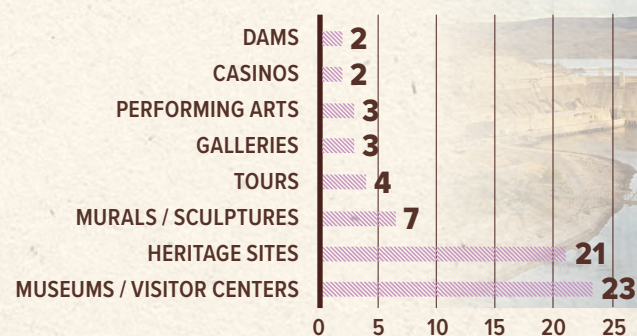
The database includes a total of 361 assets made up of 211 outdoor recreation destinations, 84 events, and 64 arts or cultural destinations. See **FIGURE 26** through **28** for the subcategory breakdown of assets.

The assets database was also used to develop a matrix that associates visitor experiences related to each asset. The full matrix and maps of the tourism assets per subregion are presented on the following pages.

**FIGURE 26**  
Festivals and Events Subcategories



**FIGURE 27**  
History, Arts, and Culture Subcategories



**FIGURE 28**  
Outdoor Recreation Subcategories





# INTRODUCTION TO TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS



**COWS AND COWBOYS:** Herding cows the old fashioned way is a true delight to see and experience.

An assessment of tourism infrastructure needs was completed to inform the development of recommended strategies, actions, and projects presented in Chapters 6 and 7 of this plan. The needs assessment is based on analysis of the tourism assets database and apparent gaps in the system, as well as on input and comments received from the OCTC, TAG, communities, other stakeholders, and the public in workshops and meetings held throughout the planning process.

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**There is a recurring interest among all sub regions is to have more detailed data on current tourism.**

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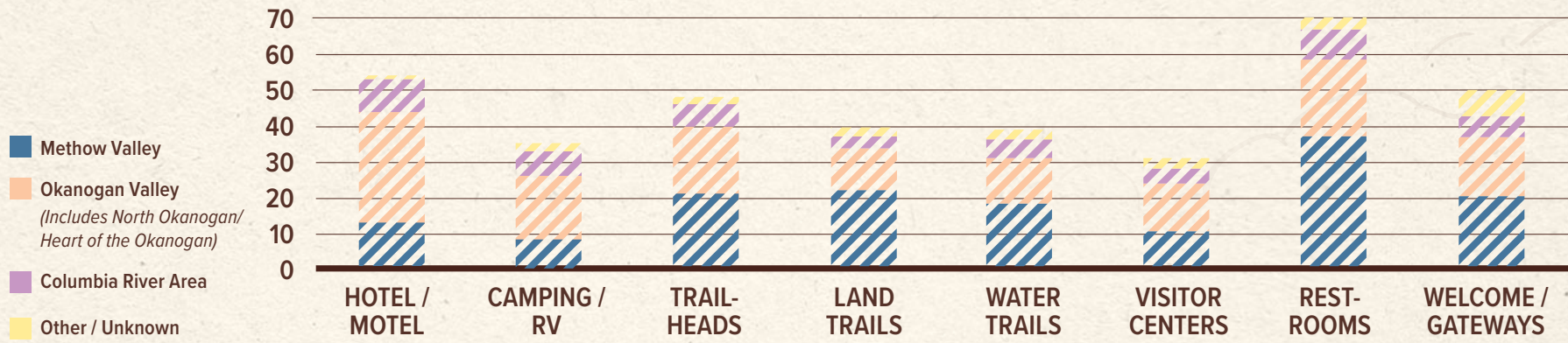


Despite differences in context and visitation patterns, there are some commonalities related to the needs and concerns across geographies in Okanogan Country. There is a recurring interest among all subregions is to have more detailed data on current tourism. People in the tourism industry want data that can help them better understand where tourists are travelling from, where they are travelling to and why, and what activities or places they are spending money on. There is a need for a consistent, countywide mapping system that allows views at different scales (town, valley, county) and is available on multiple platforms (brochure, kiosk, website, app).

Most communities have gaps in connectivity by trails and/or transportation, connecting not just the towns to the backcountry but to other neighboring towns such as through trails that link Winthrop and Twisp, Pateros and Brewster, and Okanogan and Omak. This was a consistently mentioned need in workshops, and completing the trails network includes a strong interest in enhancing water trails and river based recreation opportunities. River put-in locations for nonmotorized and motorized water craft are needed in several locations. Trailheads designed with parking to fit in various contexts (more rustic and natural areas to developed areas) are needed throughout the county.



**FIGURE 29**  
**Needed Infrastructure Improvements**



Most participants in the planning process expressed that there is an overall need for consistent signage and wayfinding to guide visitors. Many indicated that there is a need to build the identity of “Okanogan Country” across the entire county and to promote a strong brand identity so that no matter where visitors are, they are aware that they are enjoying the Okanogan Country experience. Part of this placemaking and identity-building effort includes the need for more community gateways, as well as visitor information hubs with kiosks at key locations throughout the county. Every community in Okanogan County has a strong interest in maintaining community character and authenticity as they manage or grow their tourism industry.

As is typical in tourism destination planning, many throughout the county expressed a need for restrooms to serve the traveling public. Many also expressed a need for more hotel/motel accommodations, which is partially being filled through the uprise in vacation rentals through services such as VRBO, Air bnb, and others. Camping and RV accommodations also was mentioned as a general need throughout the county, and with recent upward trends in RV purchases and family and group vacationing via camping and RVs, this need should be underscored.

**FIGURE 29** shows the predominant tourism infrastructure needs throughout the county based on public and stakeholder input, including the public workshops and survey conducted in Fall/Winter 2019-2020.



**Every community in Okanogan County has a strong interest in maintaining community character and authenticity.**



# TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS IN THE SUBREGIONS OF OKANOGAN COUNTRY

*Tourism infrastructure needs across Okanogan Country include additional trailheads, water trail launch points, wayfinding and identity markers, gateway signs and gateway kiosks, restrooms, and other improvements. To learn more about potential design concepts for some of these elements, refer to Chapters 6 and 7.*





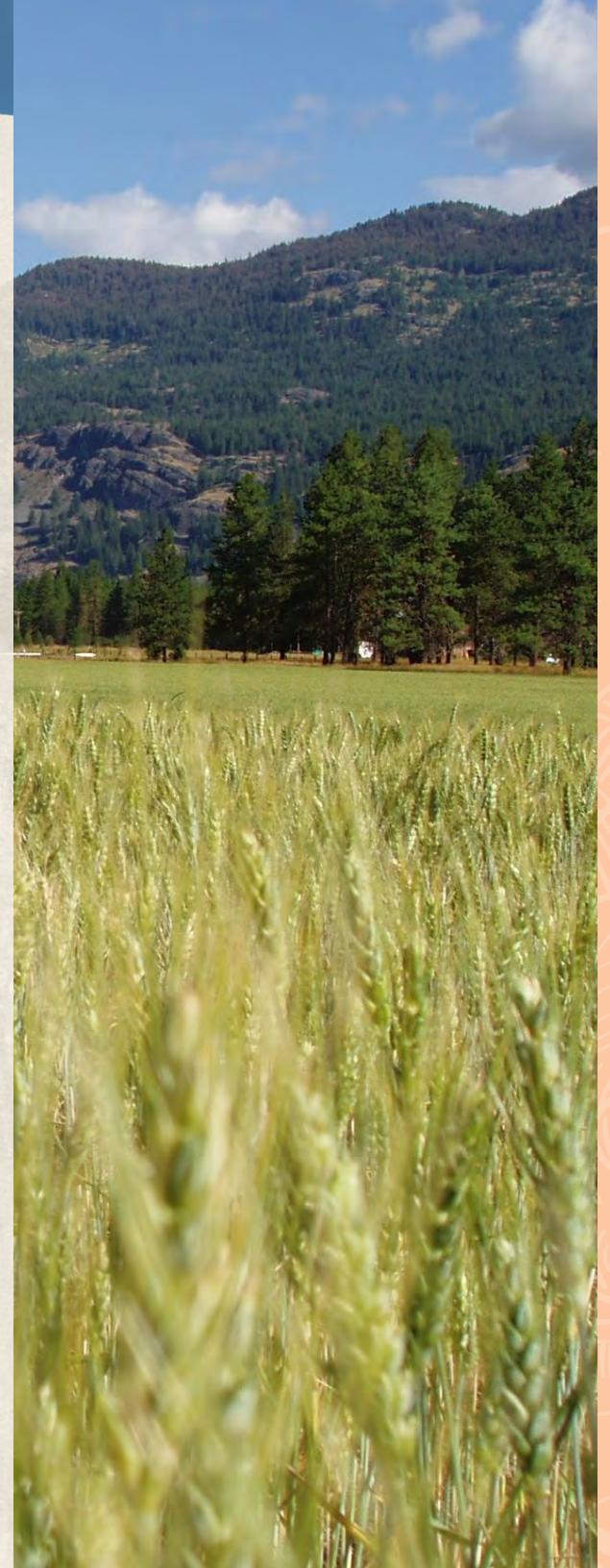
## Methow Valley—

*Tourism stakeholders throughout the Methow Valley, in general, have expressed a strong need to manage tourism and visitation to sustainable levels, particularly during the busiest summer season. Destinations in the Methow will need to plan for and mitigate impacts to resources due to heavy visitation during peak season and to promote shoulder seasons to maintain current capacity or alleviate current congestion. For example, existing infrastructure may need to be upgraded to prevent future negative impacts such as by adding public restrooms both in town and at heavily used trailheads.*



Another key concern for the Methow Valley is the need to have affordable housing options for seasonal or year-round employees of the service industry related to tourism. The second home market in the area drives up property prices, making affordability for residents an increasing problem. This lack of affordable housing also perpetuates a decreased workforce to support the tourism industry.

Currently, the popular activities for the Methow include skiing, hiking, and mountain bike riding. An area for growth is water recreation. The Methow River is a great resource for the area and there is an opportunity for more facilities to support an active and accessible water trail. Towns in the Methow Valley also see challenges related to Highways 153 and 20 traversing through the middle of towns, impacting the safety, character, and walkability of downtown areas. This is especially a concern for Winthrop as the western themed downtown is a tourist attraction itself and can be very congested during peak season. Overall, the Methow subregion lacks pedestrian facilities that provide connectivity within towns and between towns and some destinations.







## Heart of the Okanogan—

*The Heart of the Okanogan has great access to natural resources, but the town centers struggle with the need to fill vacant spaces and generate a variety of attractions that encourage through-travelers to stop and explore. There is a need for more focus and investment in downtowns to overcome this issue. Destinations in the Okanogan Valley can take lessons learned from the Methow and proactively plan for potential tourism impacts to infrastructure and resources.*

A key issue identified for the Okanogan and Omak area is the need for more diverse lodging choices including hotels/motels and vacation rental options (VRBO, Air bnb, etc.). A tourism lodging market demand analysis may be needed to determine the types of lodging that are in demand and the gaps in availability/supply. Since other subregions also have expressed this as an issue, this study could evaluate the countywide demand.

Okanogan has good access to the river but does not have supporting services or improvements that would help to activate the river corridor such as launch sites, land and river trails, and pedestrian crossings. Okanogan also needs additional signage geared toward visitor orientation and wayfinding, as well as more tourism promotion efforts other than print. Like many other towns in the county, Okanogan and Omak have a highway running through downtown, and streetscape improvements are needed to help create pedestrian friendly areas.

These places could benefit from further pedestrian improvements that provide connectivity between destinations around town or between towns (for example between Omak and Okanogan).

Conconully is a popular destination for off-roading activities, but there is potential to increase water recreation on the reservoir and lake. Improvement projects are needed to provide access and improve the visitor experience such as the creation of a beach area, water quality clean-up, and removal of invasive aquatic species. Other needs identified specific to the Conconully area include highway signage, a downtown kiosk, trail mapping, and preserving the historic character of the town.



## North Okanogan—

*North Okanogan shares similar needs to those of the Heart of Okanogan subregion. Though access to outdoor recreation is abundant, towns in North Okanogan need to generate a variety of attractions and support services that encourage through-travelers to stop and stay and return later. Focus and investment in the downtowns will help to create more energy and interest, drawing more visitors to stop.*

Participants in the planning process also noted that a key gap in infrastructure for this subregion is the lack of diverse and quality lodging. There is high demand for short notice/short-term stays (i.e. campers, hikers, off-road bikers on long trips). There is also a need for lodging offered at a diversity of price points and experience types, from high-end to camping and RV use. Existing lodging could also benefit from more promotion.

This subregion has many historic and cultural sites, but a lack of interpretive signage and wayfinding to guide visitors to these places as they are traveling through the area.

Oroville is in a good geographic location to capitalize on some new assets and enhancements such as off-road bikers that travel through town, wildlife viewing, paragliding/hang gliding activities, guide services, and adventure enthusiast events.

Participants expressed a need for more tourism promotion resources and businesses that support tourism, such as event planners, outdoor recreation guides, and outfitters.

As the gateway to and from British Columbia, North Okanogan in particular offers the potential to capture more Canadian visitors and more targeted tourism promotion support could also help serve this opportunity and need. They may also be an opportunity to promote more cross-border activities and connectivity of events, from the Okanogan in the US to the Okanogan in Canada.







## Columbia River—

*The Columbia River area currently has capacity and infrastructure to accommodate tourism, but participants in the planning process there expressed a need for more support for promoting and implementing improvement projects that enhance the visitor experience. A related issue in the Columbia River subregion is the need for better communication and involvement in tourism planning, which could aid in promoting local events and businesses.*

Pateros has the potential to act as a less-congested basecamp for summer and winter tourism in the Methow Valley, but participants in the process indicated that they need more activities offered there, as well as more places to eat, hang out, and shop. Pateros could increase businesses that support water recreation such as kayak and paddle board rentals.

Both Pateros and Brewster are along US-97, and participants mentioned the need to slow highway traffic through town by installing traffic calming devices, as well as streetscape and signage improvements that also would help to promote a pedestrian friendly area and direct visitors to the local attractions.

For Brewster, the fishing season is a major visitor draw that has anglers staying in town for weeks at a time. So, the recent unreliability of the fishing season is a key concern.

In the Grand Coulee area, there is a lack of a centralized downtown. The area is made

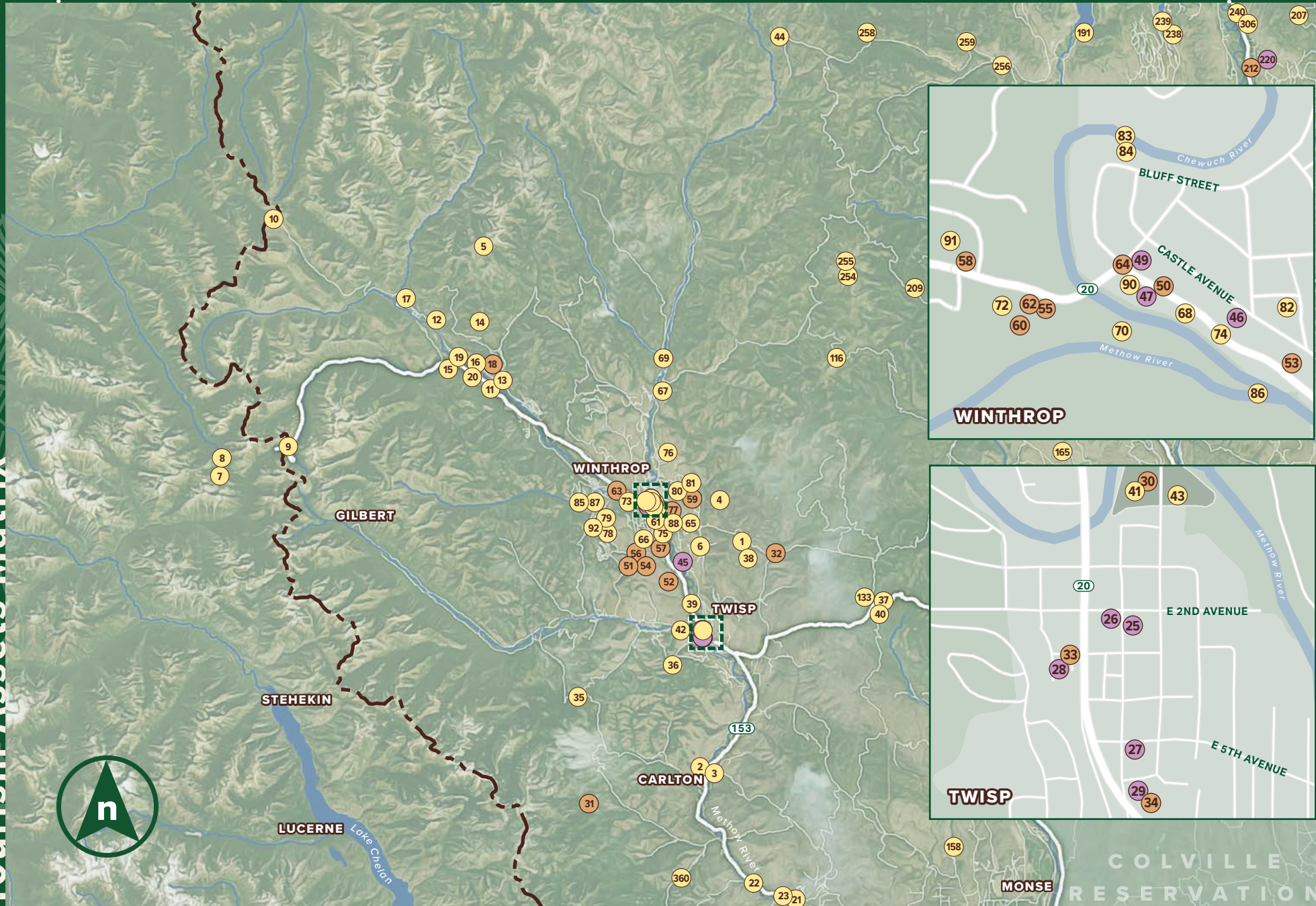


up of a few smaller towns including Coulee Dam, Grand Coulee, and Electric City. Another concern in this area is the help needed by the local chamber to support promoting local destinations such as Grand Coulee Dam and Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area.







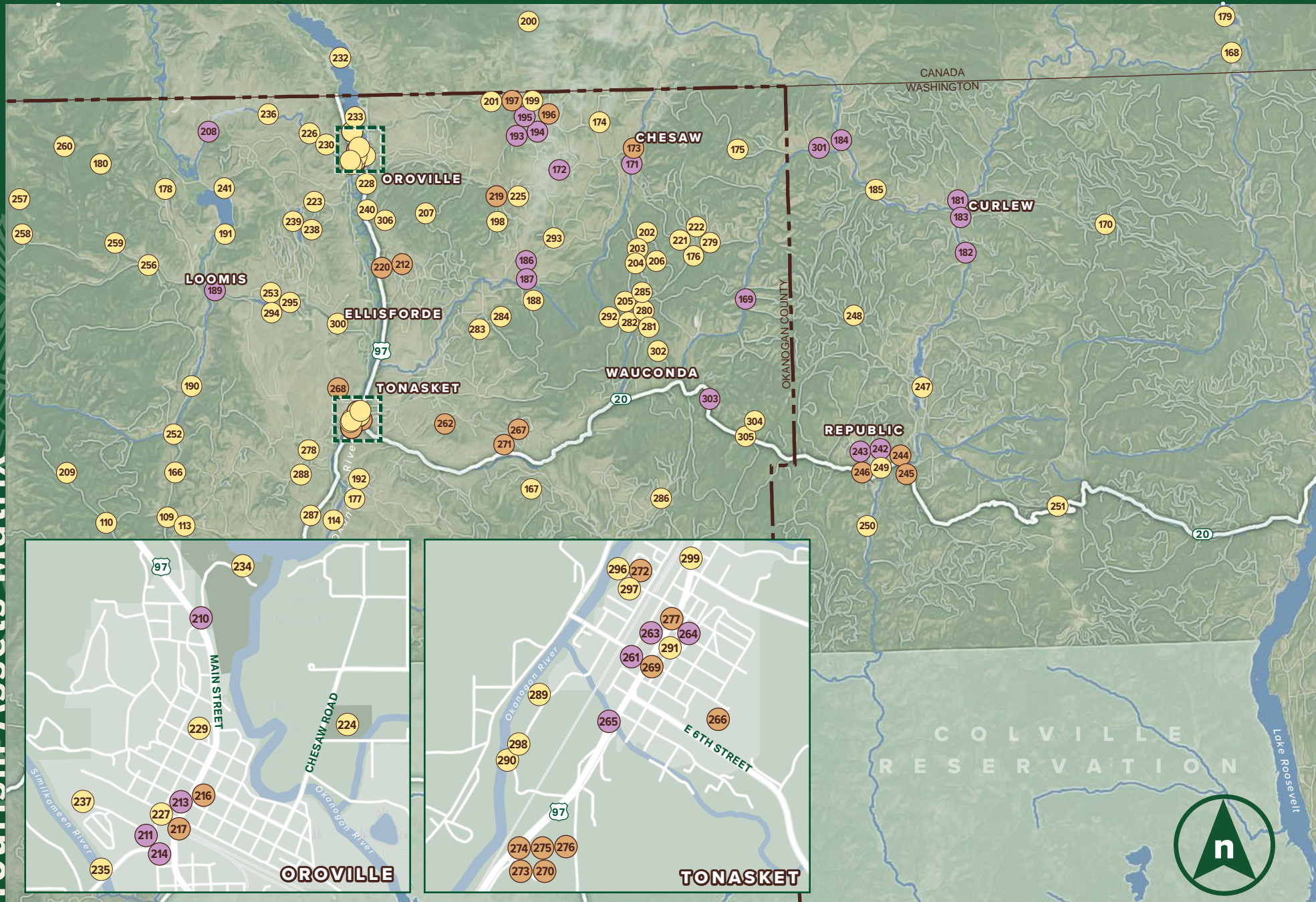




## HEART OF THE OKANOGAN













EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Display	Historic/Cultural	Guided Tours	Race/Competition	Lodging	Water Recreation	Community Park	Winter Sports	Winter Recreation	Fishing	Horseback Riding	Hiking	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
1	<b>CAMPBELL LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination at WDFW access site with gravel boat launch. Outfitter shops in Winthrop have fishing equipment	Campbell Lake	--	All Seasons																
2	<b>CARLTON RIVER ACCESS</b> Fishing, swimming and floating access to Methow River - upstream of Methow River Bridge	Carlton	WDFW	All Seasons																
3	<b>CASCADE WILDERNESS OUTFITTERS</b> Horseback riding - fully guided summer trips, standard trips, and drop camps for families, hikers, hunters, anglers, and nature lovers	Carlton	Cascade Wilderness Outfitters	Spring to Fall																
4	<b>COUGAR LAKE</b> Mudslides following the 2014 wildfires have damaged facilities. Restoration of access and facilities is unknown	Cougar Lake	--	All Seasons																
5	<b>OKANOGAN NATIONAL FOREST</b> Large and diverse landscape along the east slopes of the Cascade Range	County	USFS	All Seasons																
6	<b>DAVIS LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination with WDFW access site with gravel boat launch and USFS campground with 4 sites. Outfitter shops in Winthrop have fishing and recreation equipment	Davis Lake	USFS	All Seasons																
7	<b>RAINY PASS</b> Maple Pass 7 mile loop trail, Rainy Pass Rest Area, Cutthroat Pass Trail, Pacific Crest Trail	Frisco Mountain	USFS	All Seasons																
8	<b>RAINY LAKE</b> One mile wheelchair-accessible trail from Rainy Pass Rest Area to alpine lake with benches, picnic spot and restroom	Frisco Mountain	USFS	All Seasons																
9	<b>WASHINGTON PASS</b> Observation site with accessible trail and picnic area	Frisco Mountain	USFS	All Seasons																
10	<b>HART'S PASS</b> Trails and camping	Hart's Pass	--	--																
11	<b>EARLY WINTER OUTFITTERS</b> Guided recreation: cattle drives, kid's camps, packing school, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, and more	Mazama	Early Winter Outfitting	All Seasons																
12	<b>FUN ROCK</b> Sport climbing area with multiple places/climbs, north of Mazama	Mazama	USFS	--																
13	<b>GOAT CREEK SNO-PARK</b> Forested sno-park with access to many scenic areas on groomed snowmobile routes	Mazama	USFS	Winter																
14	<b>GOAT PEAK LOOKOUT</b> Historic fire lookout on Goat Peak north of Mazama, 5 mile roundtrip hike from trailhead	Mazama	USFS	All Seasons																
15	<b>NORTH CASCADES HELI</b> Guided wilderness ski trips based out of Mazama	Mazama	North Cascades Heli	Winter																
16	<b>NORTH CASCADES MOUNTAIN GUIDES</b> Guided climbing and skiing trips	Mazama	North Cascades Mountain Guides	All Seasons																

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive/Historic/Cultural Display	Guided Tours	Race/Lodging	Community Rodeo	Water Recreation Park	Winter Sports	Horseback Riding/Golf	Hiking	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
17	<b>YELLOW JACKET SNO-PARK</b> Forested sno-park with access to Hart’s Pass and Blackpine Basin areas	Mazama	USFS	Winter								●				
18	<b>SUNFLOWER RELAY &amp; IRON EVENT</b> Marathon, half marathon, and relay trail run through meadows from Mazama to Twisp	Mazama/Twisp	Methow Trails	May						●						
19	<b>METHOW COMMUNITY TRAIL</b> Trail connecting Winthrop and Freestone Inn in Mazama	Mazama/Winthrop	Methow Trails	All Seasons								●		●		
20	<b>METHOW TRAILS</b> Largest cross-country trail system in North America. Trails open spring to fall for mtn. biking, hiking, and horseback riding	Mazama/Winthrop	Methow Trails	All Seasons								●		●	●	
21	<b>BLUE SKY OUTFITTERS</b> Black Canyon river rafting trip on the Methow River	Methow	Blue Sky Outfitters	Summer							●					
22	<b>McFARLAND RIVER ACCESS</b> Boat access and parking, upstream from SR 163 intersection with McFarland	Methow	WDFW	All Seasons							●					
23	<b>UPPER BURMA RIVER ACCESS</b> Boat access and parking, upstream from SR 163 intersection with McFarland	Methow	WDFW	All Seasons							●					
24	<b>PASAYTEN WILDERNESS</b> Hiking, climbing, skiing, fishing	Pasayten Wilderness	USFS	All Seasons								●		●	●	
25	<b>CONFLUENCE GALLERY &amp; ART CENTER</b> Confluence Gallery and Art Center is a non-profit offering exhibits, classes, gathering space, and shops	Twisp	Confluence Gallery & Art Center	All Seasons	●	●										
26	<b>MERC PLAYHOUSE</b> Community theater in Twisp	Twisp	Merc Playhouse	All Seasons	●											
27	<b>METHOW VALLEY INTERPRETIVE CENTER</b> Interpretive center that recognizes the pre-European native inhabitants and geology and natural history	Twisp	Methow Field Institute Board	All Seasons		●	●									
28	<b>VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER</b> Visitor center located at the Methow Valley Community Center	Twisp	Twisp Chamber of Commerce	All Seasons		●										
29	<b>TWISPWORKS</b> A 6.4 acre arts campus with gardens, picnic lawn, artists studios, shop, live music, performers and classes	Twisp	TwispWorks	All Seasons	●	●										
30	<b>4TH OF JULY PARADE &amp; METHOW ARTS FESTIVAL</b> Arts festival in Twisp River Park featuring hands-on art booths, entertainment, and local food	Twisp	Methow Arts Alliance	July	●	●										
31	<b>ANGELS STAIRCASE 35K AND 60K</b> High alpine ultramarathon on a difficult and remote course through forests and meadows	Twisp	Rain Shadow Running	August						●						
32	<b>METHOW VALLEY BACKCOUNTRY HORSEMEN SPRING RIDE</b> Primary fund raiser for the Backcountry Horsemen residing in the Methow	Twisp	Methow Valley Backcountry Horsemen	April				●							●	●

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Display	Historic/Cultural	Guided Tours	Race/Competition	Lodging	Water Recreation	Community Park	Winter Sports	Winter Recreation	Horseback Riding	Fishing	Hiking	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
33	<b>METHOW VALLEY FARMERS MARKET</b> Farmers market at Twisp community center	Twisp	--	April to October																
34	<b>MISTLETOE MADNESS</b> Annual live music event held at various locations throughout the TwispWorks Campus	Twisp	Twisp Chamber of Commerce & TwispWorks	December	●	●														
35	<b>BLACK PINE LAKE TRAIL</b>	Twisp	--	Spring to Fall														●		
36	<b>LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN TRAIL</b> 2.6 mile hike to fire lookout tower	Twisp	USFS	All Seasons														●		●
37	<b>NORTH SUMMIT SNO-PARK</b> Sno-park for snowmobilers, north side of Loup Loup Pass	Twisp	USFS/State Parks	Winter									●							
38	<b>PIPESTONE CANYON</b> The canyon rim and valley trails are popular hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding destinations	Twisp	--	All Seasons														●		●
39	<b>RIVERBEND RV PARK</b> RV park on Methow River with dog park, tent sites, full hookups, laundry facilities, and convenience store	Twisp	Riverbend RV Park	April to November															●	
40	<b>SOUTH SUMMIT SNO-PARK</b> Sno-park for Nordic skiing, south side of Loup Loup Pass	Twisp	USFS/State Parks	Winter									●							
41	<b>TWISP PARK</b> Community park at the confluence of the Twisp and Methow rivers with playground, bandstand, basketball courts, and public pool	Twisp	Town of Twisp	All Seasons									●							
42	<b>TWISP PONDS DISCOVERY WALK</b> Half-mile self-guided interpretive trail for outdoor education on local salmon and wildlife	Twisp	Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation	Spring to Fall				●										●		
43	<b>WAGNER MEMORIAL POOL</b> Twisp community outdoor swimming pool	Twisp	Town of Twisp	Summer									●	●						
44	<b>LONG SWAMP CAMPGROUND AND TRAILHEAD</b> Camping, ATV, hiking, hunting	Windy Creek	USFS	Spring to Fall														●	●	
45	<b>NORTH CASCADE SMOKEJUMPER BASE</b> Visitors welcome during the fire season, normally June 1st to October 1st - Methow Valley State Airport	Winthrop	North Cascade Smokejumper Base	June to October		●		●												
46	<b>SHAHER MUSEUM</b> Old west museum with a village of buildings featuring a historic log house as the centerpiece	Winthrop	Okanogan County Historical Society	All Seasons		●	●													
47	<b>WINTHROP GALLERY</b> Art gallery located in downtown Winthrop	Winthrop	Winthrop Gallery	All Seasons	●															
48	<b>WINTHROP NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY</b> Visitors can tour the hatchery and view fish returning from May to late August	Winthrop	USFWS	Spring to Fall		●		●												●

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



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Outdoor Recreation    History, Arts, and Culture    Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Display	Historic/Cultural	Guided Tours	Race/Community Park	Water Recreation	Winter Sports	Fishing	Horseback Riding	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
65	<b>BEAR CREEK GOLF COURSE</b> 9 hole golf course in the Methow Valley	Winthrop	Bear Creek Golf Course	All Seasons								●	●			
66	<b>BIG TWIN LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination with WDFW access site with restroom and gravel boat launch. Outfitter shops in Winthrop have fishing equipment	Winthrop	--	All Seasons							●		●			
67	<b>BOULDER CREEK SNO-PARK</b> Groomed snowmobile trails with parking area	Winthrop	USFS	November to April								●				
68	<b>CONFLUENCE PARK</b> Downtown park with view of the river from the boardwalk, benches, grass area, and murals	Winthrop	City of Winthrop	All Seasons	●					●						●
69	<b>EIGHT MILE RANCH SNO-PARK</b> Groomed snowmobile trails up Chewuch River, up 8 Mile Creek and to Sweetgrass Butte	Winthrop	USFS	December to March								●				
70	<b>HECKENDORN PARK</b> Neighborhood park with basketball court, playground, picnic tables, and drinking fountain	Winthrop	City of Winthrop	All Seasons						●						
71	<b>HOMESTREAM PARK</b> Trail with benches, sculptures by Smoker Marchand, and public gathering area with shelters, tables, interpretive signs, etc.	Winthrop	--	All Seasons		●				●						●
72	<b>MACK LLOYD PARK</b> Community park along river, features covered picnic area, drinking fountain, riverside walks, playground, and public restrooms	Winthrop	City of Winthrop	All Seasons						●						
73	<b>METHOW RIVER RAFT AND KAYAK</b> Tour company offering rafting, kayaking, tubing, and education	Winthrop	Methow River Raft and Kayak	Summer						●						
74	<b>METHOW TRAILS OFFICE</b> Office for Methow Trails. Largest cross-country ski area in North America and year round trail hub for skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, biking, fatbiking, horseback riding, and more	Winthrop	Methow Trails	All Seasons							●		●	●		
75	<b>METHOW VALLEY CAMPGROUNDS</b> Campgrounds around the Methow Valley and other lodging options	Winthrop	--	All Seasons											●	●
76	<b>METHOW VALLEY HUNTING</b> Public lands in the Methow offer access to hunting. Area Popular for mule deer in October, grouse in September, cougar August to March, and black bear August to November	Winthrop	--	Fall							●		●		●	●
77	<b>MORNING GLORY BALLOON TOURS</b> Hot air balloon tours based at the Winthrop Inn	Winthrop	Morning Glory Balloon Tours	Summer		●										
78	<b>PATTERSON LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination with WDFW access site with gravel boat launch	Winthrop	--	All Seasons						●			●			
79	<b>PATTERSON MOUNTAIN TRAIL</b> 4.2 mile hike through woodlands and shrub steppe to the summit	Winthrop	WDNR	Summer									●			●
80	<b>PEARRYGIN LAKE</b> Popular state park close to Winthrop with cabins and camping, picnic, and day-use areas. Winter recreation includes ice skating and trails for fatbiking and snowshoeing.	Winthrop	--	All Seasons						●			●			

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



Outdoor Recreation    History, Arts, and Culture    Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Historic/Cultural	Guided Display	Race/Community	Water Recreation	Winter Sports	Lodging	Rodeo	Community Park	Horseback Riding	Fishing	Hiking	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
97	<b>CONCONULLY TROUT DERBY</b> Annual fishing competition for youth and adults	Conconully	Conconully Chamber of Commerce	April						●									
98	<b>INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION</b> Annual event featuring car show, silent auction, pie eating contest, parade, duck race, food, and crafts	Conconully	Conconully Chamber of Commerce	July	●														
99	<b>MEMORIAL WEEKEND BAZAAR</b> Annual event	Conconully	--	May	●														
100	<b>OPENING DAY OF HUNTING HOLIDAY BAZAAR</b> Annual event where crafters exhibit and sell wares in downtown Conconully	Conconully	--	October	●	●													
101	<b>OUTDOOR QUILT AND CRAFT SHOW</b> Annual event with homemade quilts, crafters, food vendors, raffles, music, and demonstrations	Conconully	Conconully Chamber of Commerce	August	●	●													
102	<b>OUTHOUSE RACES</b> Annual event featuring head-to-head races with participant constructed outhouses mounted on a pair of skis	Conconully	Conconully Chamber of Commerce	January						●									
103	<b>SANTA DAYS AND TREE LIGHTING</b> Annual event with holiday crafts, tree lighting, parade, gifts from Santa, hot cocoa and cookies, raffle, and bonfire	Conconully	Conconully Chamber of Commerce	December	●														
104	<b>STEW-N-BREW</b> Annual event with local stews and brews to sample	Conconully	Conconully Chamber of Commerce	September	●														
105	<b>CONCONULLY LAKE</b> 313-acre lake popular for fishing	Conconully	--	All Seasons						●				●				●	
106	<b>CONCONULLY RESERVOIR</b> 350-acre reservoir popular for fishing	Conconully	--	All Seasons						●				●				●	
107	<b>CONCONULLY STATE PARK</b> 97-acre park with camping and boating facilities and day-use areas	Conconully	Washington State Parks	All Seasons						●	●			●				●	●
108	<b>COTTONWOOD CAMPGROUND</b> 3 camp sites at the North Fork Salmon Creek	Conconully	USFS	All Seasons														●	
109	<b>FISH LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination near Leavenworth, Wa	Conconully	USFS	All Seasons										●				●	
110	<b>KERR SNO-PARK</b> Located across from Kerr campground, access to groomed snomobile trails in National Forest	Conconully	USFS	Winter						●									
111	<b>LIARS COVE RESORT</b> Cabins, RV's, Campsites	Conconully	Liars Cover Resort	All Seasons				●		●								●	
112	<b>SASQUATCH</b> 18-foot metal sculpture by Smoker Marchand	Disautel Pass	--	All Seasons	●														

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



## EVENTS &amp; DESTINATIONS

Location

Asset Manager

Season

Arts & Entertainment Festival  
Interpretive Display  
Historic/Cultural  
Guided Tours  
Lodging  
Race/Competition  
Community Park  
Water Recreation  
Winter Sports  
Horseback Riding  
Fishing  
Hiking  
Wildlife Viewing  
Camping  
Vistas

**113 COULEE/SCOTCH CREEK** Hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding - east end of Fish Lake to Hess Lake Trail

Fish Lake

WDFW

Spring to Fall

**114 MCLOUGHLIN FALLS**  
Kayaking and canoeing access on the Okanogan River

Keystone

--

Summer

**115 BLUE LAKE**  
Camping, hunting, and fishing

Limebelt

--

Spring to Fall

**116 MT. BALDY**  
Hike to old lookout site on north side

Mt. Baldy

USFS

Summer to Fall

**117 CARIBOO TRAIL HISTORIC MARKER**  
Marker for historic trail from Canada to Columbia River

Okanogan

--

All Seasons

**118 FIRE HALL MUSEUM**  
An exact replica of the 1910 building with antique fire equipment

Okanogan

Okanogan County Historical Society

May to September

**119 FRANK MATSURA PHOTOS AND MURALS**  
Self-guided tour of nine murals

Okanogan

Okanogan

All Seasons

**120 MID-VALLEY HOSPITAL**  
Hospital located in Okanogan

Okanogan

Mid-Valley Hospital

All Seasons

**121 OKANOGAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE**  
Hallways include interpretive displays of regional history

Okanogan

Okanogan County

All Seasons

**122 OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM** Historical museum featuring a replica of an old west town of the 1900's

Okanogan

Okanogan County Historical Society

May to September

**123 FARM LIGHTS FESTIVAL** Holiday celebration featuring a tractor parade, lighting of the town tree, and Santa

Okanogan

Okanogan Chamber of Commerce

November

**124 HARVEST FESTIVAL** Annual event featuring vendors, kid's activities, pig roast, pet parade, beer garden, and Sugar Rush Sprint

Okanogan

Okanogan Chamber of Commerce

October

**125 OKANOGAN COUNTY FAIR** Includes exhibits, vendors, music, ProWest rodeo, horse racing and lots of animals

Okanogan

Okanogan County

September

**126 OKANOGAN DAYS** Festival including pancake breakfast, 5k run, basketball tournament, vendors, kids art center, bouncy house, art show, and parade

Okanogan

Okanogan Chamber of Commerce

June

**127 OKANOGAN VALLEY FARMERS MARKET**  
Regional farmers market

Okanogan

--

May to October

**128 VINTAGE FAIRE** Vintage, antique, repurposed, and handcrafted goods from pacific northwest vendors

Okanogan

Vintage Faire

April



Outdoor Recreation



History, Arts, and Culture



Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Display	Historic/Cultural	Guided Tours	Race/Community	Water Recreation	Winter Sports	Horseback Riding	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
129	<b>ALMA PARK</b> A community park in Okanogan with swimming pool, playground and picnic area	Okanogan	City of Okanogan	All Seasons							●			
130	<b>AMERICAN LEGION PARK</b> Community Park with camping, picnic area and farmers market from spring to fall	Okanogan	City of Okanogan	All Seasons							●		●	
131	<b>BOAT RAMP/RIVER OVERLOOK</b> Access and view of Okanogan River at the mouth of Salmon Creek	Okanogan	--	Spring to Fall							●			● ●
132	<b>ISLAND PARK TRAIL</b> 3-mile trail created by a 12th grade English class at the local high school in an area with a rich variety of native birds and plants	Okanogan	City of Okanogan	Summer									●	●
133	<b>LOUP LOUP SKI BOWL</b> Alpine skiing including facilities for luge sledding, tubing, and xc skiing	Okanogan	Loup Loup Ski Education Foundation	Winter							●			
134	<b>OKANOGAN CITY POOL</b> Community swimming pool	Okanogan	City of Okanogan	Summer							●			
135	<b>OKANOGAN VALLEY GOLF CLUB</b> 18 hole golf course with a unique layout	Okanogan	Okanogan Valley Golf Club	All Seasons								●		
136	<b>LEADER LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination with boat launch facilities and campgrounds	Okanogan/ Twisp	--	All Seasons								●	●	
137	<b>12 TRIBES CASINO</b> Casino Resort with hotel and spa	Omak	Colville Casinos	All Seasons	●									
138	<b>HOW THE ANIMALS GOT THEIR NAMES</b> Sculpture in Eastside Park made possible by the Colville Indian Artists Association	Omak	City of Omak	All Seasons	●									
139	<b>OKANOGAN VALLEY ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS</b> Shows throughout the year at the Performing Arts Center in Omak	Omak	Okanogan Valley Orchestra and Chorus	All Seasons	●									
140	<b>OMAK MAIN STREET HISTORICAL TOUR</b> Self-guided walking tour along Main Street in downtown Omak	Omak	City of Omak	All Seasons		●								
141	<b>OMAK PERFORMING ARTS CENTER</b> Theater auditorium location at the Omak High School serving the greater Okanogan community	Omak	Omak PAC	All Seasons	●									
142	<b>OMAK VISITOR CENTER</b> Visitor information center with maps, brochures, gifts, and souvenirs related to the area, and a local Native American display	Omak	--	All Seasons		● ●								
143	<b>FRIENDLY OK CAR CLUB SHOW</b> Annual holiday festival	Omak	Friendly OK Car Club	May	●	●								
144	<b>OKANOGAN VALLEY FARMERS MARKET</b> Regional farmers market	Omak	--	June to October	● ●									

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive/Cultural Display	Guided Tours	Race/Lodging	Community Rodeo Competition	Water Recreation Park	Winter Sports	Horseback Riding	Fishing Golf	Hiking	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
145	<b>OMAK ANNUAL FILM FESTIVAL</b> Annual film festival held at the Mirage Theater in downtown Omak	Omak	Omak/Mirage Theaters/ Wenatchee Valley College	February	●	●											
146	<b>OMAK CHRISTMAS ON MAIN</b> Holiday festival with multiple events in various locations around downtown Omak	Omak	City of Omak	December	●												
147	<b>OMAK STAMPEDE: INDIAN ENCAMPMENT AND NATIVE ART SHOW</b> Features teepee village, dancing, drumming, singing,and stick games	Omak	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	August	●	●	●										
148	<b>OMAK STAMPEDE: WORLD FAMOUS SUICIDE RACE</b> The Omak Stampede festival is a weekend of western entertainment	Omak	Stampede Association	August	●					●							
149	<b>OMAK WARRIOR STAMPEDE RACE</b> 4+ mile loop obstacle course that begins and ends at the Stampede Rodeo Arena, within Eastside Park	Omak	Omak Warrior Stampede	September						●							
150	<b>ORCHARDS IN BLOOM HALF MARATHON</b> Half marathon and 10k race on rolling hills	Omak	Omak Fit 4 Life	April						●							
151	<b>CARL PRECHT MEMORIAL RV PARK</b> Shady RV Park with 68+ spaces and a limited area for tent camping. Located in Omak’s Eastside Park	Omak	City of Omak	All Seasons							●					●	
152	<b>EASTSIDE PARK RIVER ACCESS</b> Boat launch ramp and river access in Omak’s Eastside Park	Omak	City of Omak	All Seasons							●	●					
153	<b>GREEN LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination	Omak	--	All Seasons									●				
154	<b>OMAK CIVIC LEAGUE PARK</b> Omak’s oldest park - a traditional green square featuring a band shell, restroom facilities, and playground	Omak	City of Omak	All Seasons							●						
155	<b>OMAK EASTSIDE PARK</b> includes camping, skate park, rodeo arena, swimming pool, sports fields, sports courts, playgrounds and more	Omak	City of Omak	All Seasons							●	●				●	
156	<b>OMAK LAKE</b> Largest saline lake in Washington with limited public shoreline access, a few primitive camping sites, and picnic tables	Omak	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	All Seasons							●		●		●		
157	<b>OMAK MUNICIPAL POOL</b> Community swimming pool	Omak	City of Omak	Summer							●						
158	<b>RAT LAKE</b> Popular trout fishing destination with WDFW access area with concrete boat launch	Rat Lake	--	All Seasons									●				
159	<b>BELL TOWER PARK</b> Community park on Main Street with benches and restroom	Riverside	Town of Riverside	All Seasons							●						
160	<b>CRAWFISH SNO-PARK</b> Sno-Park open to mainly snowmobile traffic in winter season	Riverside	USFS	Winter								●					

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Display	Historic/Cultural	Guided Tours	Race/Community	Water Recreation	Winter Sports	Horseback Riding	Fishing	Hiking	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
161	<b>MARGIE'S RIVERSIDE RV PARK</b> Secluded RV Park on the Okanogan River with horseshoe pits, fire rings, and picnic areas	Riverside	Margie's Riverside RV Park	All Seasons													•
162	<b>RIVERSIDE BOAT LAUNCH</b> River access with parking and non-motorized boat launch	Riverside	Town of Riverside	All Seasons							•	•					
163	<b>RIVERSIDE PARK</b> Community park in Riverside with parking, walking path, and non-motorized boat launch	Riverside	Town of Riverside	All Seasons							•	•					
164	<b>RUBY TOWNSITE</b> One of the most famous mining towns of the northwest with only stone foundations remaining today	Ruby	--	All Seasons		•											
165	<b>SCOTCH CREEK TRAILHEAD</b> Hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding	Scotch Creek	WDFW	All Seasons												•	•
166	<b>SINLAHEKIN TRAIL</b> Hiking and skiing	Sinlahekin	WDFW	All Seasons								•				•	
167	<b>BANNON MOUNTAIN TRAILHEAD</b> Horseback and hiking trail	Bannon Mountain	USFS	All Seasons												•	•
168	<b>KETTLE RIVER FALLS AT CASCADE</b> Scenic and historic site south of Christina Lake on 395 in Canada	Billings	--	Spring to Fall		•											•
169	<b>BODIE</b> Originated as a mining town around 1888, many structures still remain	Bodie	--	All Seasons		•											
170	<b>KETTLE CREST TRAIL</b> Hiking, camping, hunting, skiing	Boulder Creek	USFS	All Seasons								•				•	•
171	<b>CHESAW CEMETERY</b>	Chesaw	--	All Seasons		•											
172	<b>HEE HEE STONE HISTORIC MARKER</b>	Chesaw	--	All Seasons		•											
173	<b>CHESAW FAMILY RODEO</b> 4th of July celebration with family games, parade and rodeo	Chesaw	--	July						•							
174	<b>CHESAW WILDLIFE AREA</b> Hiking, hunting, wildlife viewing	Chesaw	WDFW	All Seasons												•	•
175	<b>NICHOLSON CREEK</b> Hiking, hunting, riding	Chesaw	USFS	All Seasons												•	•
176	<b>BEAVER LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination with USFS gravel boat launch and campground open May to October	Chesaw	USFS	All Seasons									•			•	•

Outdoor Recreation History, Arts, and Culture Festivals and Events



Outdoor Recreation   History, Arts, and Culture   Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive/Historic/Cultural	Guided Display	Race/Community	Water Recreation	Winter Sports	Horseback Riding	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
193	MOLSON CEMETERY	Molson	--	All Seasons			●						
194	MOLSON GHOST TOWN MUSEUM Outdoor museum with a collections of pioneer buildings and equipment, accessible paths	Molson	Molson Museum Association	All Non-Snow Months			●	●					
195	MOLSON SCHOOL MUSEUM Museum in old school house with exhibits on the history of Molson	Molson	Molson Museum Association	May to September			●	●					
196	MOLSON SUMMER FUN DAY Fun run/walk, disc golf and horseshoe tournaments, games, music, food, displays, vendors, and more.	Molson	--	June	●								
197	NW ICE FISHING FESTIVAL Annual ice fishing event with craft fair, raffle, awards and more	Molson	Oroville Chamber of Commerce	January	●	●						●	
198	HALEY CANYON AND WILCOX MOUNTAIN Hiking, riding, snomobile, snowshoe	Molson	USFS	All Seasons							●	●	●
199	MOLSON LAKE Fishing destination with small dirt boat launch	Molson	--	All Seasons							●		
200	MT. BALDY Ski hill, downhill and cross-country, summer hiking	Molson	--	All Seasons					●		●		
201	SIDLEY LAKE Popular winter fishery with WDFW access site with gravel boat launch	Molson	--	All Seasons							●		
202	BIG TREE TRAIL Gravel trail amid ancient larch, wheelchair accessible	Mount Bonaparte	USFS	Spring to Fall							●		
203	LOST LAKE Fishing destination with gravel boat launch and USFS campground built in the 1940's by the Civilian Conservation Corps	Mount Bonaparte	USFS	All Seasons		●					●	●	●
204	LOST LAKE WETLAND & WILDLIFE PRESERVE Nature preserve with 38 acres of wetland, 27 acres of forest, and two hiking trails	Mount Bonaparte	Okanogan Highlands Alliance	All Seasons							●		●
205	PACIFIC NORTHWEST TRAIL	Mount Bonaparte	--	All Seasons							●	●	●
206	STRAWBERRY MOUNTAIN Hiking destination	Mount Bonaparte	USFS	Spring to Fall							●		
207	SUMMIT LAKE Summer fishing destination with several camp sites	Moses Mountain	--	All Seasons							●	●	
208	NIGHTHAWK An old mining town that also served as a supply center for other mines in the area	Nighthawk	--	All Seasons		●							

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



## EVENTS &amp; DESTINATIONS

Location

Asset Manager

Season

Arts & Entertainment Festival  
Interpretive/Historic/Cultural  
Guided Display  
Lodging  
Race/Competition  
Community Park  
Water Recreation  
Winter Sports  
Horseback Riding  
Fishing  
Hiking  
Wildlife Viewing  
Camping  
Vistas

**209 SALMON MEADOWS CAMPGROUND** Primitive campground est. 1937 by the CCC with a picnic gazebo, registration booth, and nine campsites

Okanogan Highlands

USFS

May

**210 CULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL ART FENCE**  
Metal sculptures by students

Oroville

--

All Seasons

**211 DEPOT MUSEUM AND LOG CABIN** Old train depot museum with a focus on railroad history and McDonald log cabin

Oroville

Okanogan Borderlands Historical Society

May to September

**212 ESTHER BRICQUES WINERY & VINEYARD**  
Winery and music venue

Oroville

Esther Bricques Winery &amp; Vineyard

All Seasons

**213 MURAL ON CAMARY MOTEL**

Oroville

--

All Seasons

**214 OROVILLE VISITOR CENTER**  
Visitor center part of the Depot Museum

Oroville

Okanogan Borderlands Historical Society

May to September

**215 LAKE OSOYOOS CUP JET SKI RACES**  
Closed course races at Deep Bay Park on Lake Osoyoos

Oroville

Oroville Chamber of Commerce

June

**216 MAY DAY FESTIVAL** Three day festival with various activities featuring a parade down Main Street

Oroville

Oroville Chamber of Commerce

May

**217 OROVILLE HERITAGE DAYS & AIRPORT FLY-IN**  
Annual event, various locations downtown

Oroville

Oroville Chamber of Commerce

July

**218 RALLY AT THE BORDER BLUES FEST**  
Annual music event held at Deep Bay Park

Oroville

--

August

**219 TABLE MOUNTAIN STAR PART** 5-day even in mid-summer for astronomy enthusiasts, programs for children and adults

Oroville

Table Mountain Star Pary Association

Summer

**220 TUMBLEWEED FILM FESTIVAL**  
Annual independent film festival, location changes

Oroville

Tumbleweed Film Festival

August

**221 BETH LAKE** Fishing destination with campground, concrete boat launch, and hiking trail

Oroville

USFS

All Seasons

**222 BETH LAKE CAMPGROUND**  
Campground with 15 camp sites and two boat launches

Oroville

USFS

All Seasons

**223 BLUE LAKE**  
Fishing, swimming, hiking, kayaking, camping on alkali lake

Oroville

--

Spring to Fall

**224 BUD CLARK MEMORIAL FIELD**  
Community park with ballfields and a walking trail

Oroville

City of Oroville

All Seasons

Outdoor Recreation History, Arts, and Culture Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Display	Historic/Cultural	Guided Tours	Race/Competition	Water Recreation	Community Park	Winter Sports	Lodging	Rodeo	Horseback Riding	Fishing	Hiking	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
225	<b>EDEN VALLEY GUEST RANCH</b> Guest ranch offering cabin rentals, horse hotel, play area, picnic area, and trails	Oroville	Eden Valley Guest Ranch	All Seasons					●			●						●	●	●
226	<b>ENLOE DAM</b> Scenic historic site, four miles west of Oroville	Oroville	--	All Seasons		●														●
227	<b>MADLINE WELLS PARK</b> Community park with playground and picnic facilities	Oroville	City of Oroville	All Seasons						●										
228	<b>OKANOGAN RIVER ACCESS</b> Primitive access to Okanogan River, just south of Highway 97 Bridge south of Oroville	Oroville	WDFW	All Seasons						●										
229	<b>OROVILLE CITY PARK</b> Community park with playground and soccer field	Oroville	City of Oroville	All Seasons						●										
230	<b>OSOYOOS DEEP BAY PARK</b> Located on Osoyoos Lake, the park features a boat launch, picnic shelters, and horseshoe pits	Oroville	City of Oroville	All Seasons						●	●									●
231	<b>OROVILLE GOLF CLUB</b> Scenic course overlooking Oroville and the Similkameen River	Oroville	Oroville Golf Club	All Seasons								●								
232	<b>OSOYOOS LAKE</b> 14-mile long lake that stretches between British Columbia and Washington	Oroville	--	All Seasons						●					●			●	●	
233	<b>OSOYOOS LAKE</b> Osoyoos Lake north of the Canadian border, major tourist destination	Oroville	--	All Seasons						●										
234	<b>OSOYOOS LAKE VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK</b> A 47-acre camping park with day use facilities	Oroville	City of Oroville	All Seasons						●	●							●	●	
235	<b>SIMILKAMEEN RIVER</b> Small, scenic river below Enloe Dam	Oroville	--	All Seasons						●					●					●
236	<b>SIMILKAMEEN RIVER</b> Camping, fishing, kayaking, hiking between Oroville and Nighthawk	Oroville	DNR	Spring to Fall						●					●	●		●		
237	<b>SIMILKAMEEN RIVER TRAIL</b> A "Rails-to-Trails" project following the old Washington and Great Northern rail bed along the river (4 mile roundtrip)	Oroville	--	All Seasons											●					
238	<b>SUN COVE RESORT</b> Resort located on Wannacut Lake with campsites, cabins, hiking, fishing, and more	Oroville	Sun Cove Resort	All Seasons					●			●			●	●		●	●	
239	<b>WANNACUT LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination with WDFW access site and a resort that offers camping, cabins, and a boat launch	Oroville	--	All Seasons						●					●			●		
240	<b>WHISTLER CANYON TRAIL</b> 24 miles of scenic multi-use trails	Oroville	USFS	Spring to Fall											●				●	●

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



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Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Historic/Cultural	Guided Display	Race/Community	Water Recreation	Winter Sports	Horseback Riding	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
257	<b>IRON GATE TRAILHEAD</b> Access to Pasayten Wilderness	Toats Coulee - Middle	USFS	Spring to Fall								●	
258	<b>MIDDLE FORK TOATS COULEE CRAG</b> Rock climbing, camping, hiking	Toats Coulee - Middle	USFS	Spring to Fall								●	●
259	<b>9 MILE CAMPGROUND AND TRAILHEAD</b> Camping and hiking	Toats Coulee - North	WDNR	Spring to Fall								●	●
260	<b>PACIFIC NORTHWEST TRAIL</b> Goodenough, Long Draw, and Boundary trails	Toats Coulee - North	WDNR, USFS	--								●	
261	<b>COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER OF TONASKET</b> Community venue offering a commercial kitchen, dining hall, and assembly hall	Tonasket	Community Cultural Center	All Seasons	●								
262	<b>LAVENDER FESTIVAL</b> Celebration of the blooming lavender	Tonasket	Okanogan Highlands Lavender Farm	July	●	●							
263	<b>NORTH VALLEY HOSPITAL</b>	Tonasket	North Valley Hospital	All Seasons									
264	<b>VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER</b> Gallery, business, and visitor information	Tonasket	City of Tonasket	--	●	●							
265	<b>U.S. ARMED FORCES LEGACY PROJECT</b> Park with over 450 plaques honoring members of the armed forces	Tonasket	U.S. Armed Forces Legacy Association	All Seasons		●							
266	<b>ANNUAL GROUNDHOG DINNER</b> Annual event	Tonasket	Tonasket Kiwanis	February	●								
267	<b>CONSCIOUS CULTURE FESTIVAL</b> Annual event with live music as well as speakers, workshops, and craft booths	Tonasket	--	June	●	●						●	
268	<b>FATHER'S DAY FLY-IN</b> Annual event featuring airplane rides for kids held at the Tonasket Municipal Airport	Tonasket	Tonasket Airport Improvement Club	June	●								
269	<b>FOUNDER'S DAY FESTIVAL</b> Annual festival featuring a rodeo, parade, car show, vendors, and more	Tonasket	Okanogan Country	June	●			●	●				
270	<b>FOUNDERS DAY RODEO</b> Part of Tonasket's Founders Day Festival, held at the Tonasket Rodeo Grounds	Tonasket	Tonasket Chamber of Commerce	June				●					
271	<b>OKANOGAN FAMILY FAIRE</b> Annual event also known as the Barter Faire started to barter surplus harvest and other goods	Tonasket	Okanogan Family Faire	October	●	●							
272	<b>OKANOGAN RIVER GARLIC FESTIVAL</b> Annual event at Tonasket History Park featuring live music, fresh produce, handmade goods, and live auction	Tonasket	Community Cultural Center	August	●								

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



## EVENTS &amp; DESTINATIONS

Location

Asset Manager

Season

Arts & Entertainment Festival  
Interpretive/Historic/Cultural  
Guided Display  
Lodging  
Race/Competition  
Water Recreation  
Winter Sports  
Horseback Riding  
Fishing  
Hiking  
Wildlife Viewing  
Vistas

**273 RUN TO THE RODEO** 5k and 10k run Saturday morning before the rodeo at Tonasket Rodeo Grounds, 1st weekend after Memorial weekend

Tonasket

Tonasket Chamber of Commerce

May

**274 TONASKET DEMOLITION DERBY** Labor Day weekend at the Tonasket Rodeo Grounds

Tonasket

Tonasket Chamber of Commerce

September

**275 TONASKET JUNIOR RODEO** Annual two-day event held at the Tonasket Comancheros Rodeo Grounds

Tonasket

Tonasket Junior Rodeo Association

April

**276 TONASKET TRUCK AND TRACTOR PULL** Annual event held at the Tonasket Rodeo Grounds

Tonasket

Tonasket Comancheros

July

**277 WINTERFEST** Annual holiday festival with live music, parade, holiday bazaars, and more

Tonasket

Tonasket Chamber of Commerce

December

**278 AENEAS LAKE** Fly fishing only lake with WDFW access site and campsites

Tonasket

--

All Seasons

**279 BEAVER LAKE CAMPGROUND** Tent and small trailer camping with day use site

Tonasket

USFS

All Seasons

**280 BONAPARTE LAKE** A scenic lake near Tonasket with diverse, year-round fishery, campground, and boating and fishing facilities

Tonasket

USFS

All Seasons

**281 BONAPARTE LAKE CAMPGROUND** Tent and trailer camping with boat launch, wheelchair accessible fishing dock, and day use/swimming area

Tonasket

USFS

All Seasons

**282 BONAPARTE LAKE RESORT** Resort offering cabins, RV sites, and tent sites

Tonasket

Bonaparte Lake Resort

All Seasons

**283 BURGE MOUNTAIN** Popular rock climbing area

Tonasket

USFS

All Seasons

**284 BURGE NORTH** Rock climbing area with hiking and skiing

Tonasket

USFS

All Seasons

**285 CAMP BONAPARTE** Boy scouts summer camp on Bonaparte Lake

Tonasket

Boy Scouts of America

July

**286 CANAAN GUEST RANCH** Guest ranch located in the Aeneas Valley with winter and summer activities

Tonasket

Canaan Guest Ranch

All Seasons

**287 CARTER MOUNTAIN** Carter Mountain wildlife unit includes over 2,240 acres of federal shrub steppe, dry grasslands, and mixed conifer forest

Tonasket

WDFW

All Seasons

**288 CARTER MOUNTAIN TRAIL** Carter Mountain wildlife unit, known for wildlife and rich plant diversity; includes easy to moderate hiking trails

Tonasket

WDFW

Spring to Fall



Outdoor Recreation



History, Arts, and Culture



Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Display	Historic/Cultural	Guided Tours	Race/Competition	Lodging	Water Recreation	Community Park	Winter Sports	Fishing	Horseback Riding	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
289	<b>CHIEF TONASKET PARK</b> Community park with sports fields, boat launch, picnic shelter, riverfront trail, BMX track, and skate park	Tonasket	City of Tonasket	All Seasons									•	•			•	
290	<b>CHIEF TONASKET PARK BOAT LAUNCH</b> Boat ramp and river overlook	Tonasket	City of Tonasket	Spring to Fall									•					•
291	<b>FOUNDERS DAY PARK</b> Community park with history of founders in the community; includes parking, picnic, and small camping areas for bicyclists	Tonasket	City of Tonasket	All Seasons		•	•					•					•	
292	<b>LAKE BONAPARTE SNO-PARK</b> Next to campground, offers trails for snowmobiling, xc skiing, and snowshoeing	Tonasket	USFS	Winter										•				
293	<b>SITZMARK SKI HILL</b> Ski area dedicated to providing affordable winter activities	Tonasket	Sitzmark Ski Hill	Winter										•				
294	<b>SPECTACLE LAKE</b> Popular fishing destination with two private resorts and a WDFW access site	Tonasket	--	All Seasons									•		•		•	•
295	<b>SPECTACLE LAKE RESORT</b> Waterfront motel with rooms or RV and tent camp sites	Tonasket	Spectacle Lake Resort	All Seasons					•				•		•		•	•
296	<b>TONASKET COMMUNITY POOL</b> Community pool located next to History Park	Tonasket	City of Tonasket	Summer									•	•				
297	<b>TONASKET HISTORY PARK</b> Community park with sports courts, picnic area, open lawn, and playground	Tonasket	City of Tonasket	All Seasons									•					
298	<b>TONASKET WATER RANCH</b> Splash park at Chief Tonasket Park	Tonasket	City of Tonasket	Summer									•	•				
299	<b>TRIANGLE PARK</b> Small open space park with picnic tables, hosts farmer's market in the summer	Tonasket	City of Tonasket	All Seasons									•					
300	<b>WHITESTONE LAKE</b> Popular bass fishing destination with a WDFW access site with concrete launch and dock	Tonasket	--	All Seasons											•			
301	<b>EAGLE CLIFF CEMETERY</b> Toroda Creek area historic site	Toroda	--	All Seasons	•													
302	<b>DIAMOND BELLE RANCH</b> Lake-front lodge on private Walker Lake	Waucanda	Diamond Belle Ranch	All Seasons									•		•	•	•	•
303	<b>OLD WAUCONDA TOWNSITE</b> Informational sign marking the old Wauconda townsite	Waucanda	--	All Seasons	•													
304	<b>FIR MOUNTAIN TRAILHEAD</b> Hiking trail to old lookout site	Waucanda	USFS	Spring to Fall												•		

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive/Historic/Cultural	Guided Display	Lodging	Race/Competition	Water Recreation	Community Park	Winter Sports	Fishing	Horseback Riding	Hiking	Wildlife Viewing	Camping	Vistas
305	<b>SWEAT CREEK PICNIC AREA</b> Clackamas Mountain trailhead	Waucanda	USFS	Spring to Fall												●		
306	<b>MOUNT HULL</b> Popular rock climbing area	Whistler Canyon	USFS	All Seasons												●		● ●
307	<b>FORT OKANOGAN INTERPRETIVE CENTER</b> Interpretation, preservation, public programs, changing exhibits, school tours, and educational activities	Brewster	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	All Seasons		●	●											
308	<b>BUDWEISER LOWRANCE KING SALMON DERBY</b> Annual fishing event where the Columbia and Okanogan Rivers meet	Brewster	Brewster Chamber of Commerce	August										●				
309	<b>BREWSTER POOL</b> 20 mile long reservoir upstream of Wells Dam noted for Steelhead, Chinook, and Sockeye fisheries	Brewster	WDFW	All Seasons										●				●
310	<b>BREWSTER RV PARK</b> City RV Park next to community pool, boat ramp and park along river	Brewster	City of Brewster	All Seasons						●							●	
311	<b>BREWSTER SWIMMING POOL</b> Community Pool	Brewster	City of Brewster	Summer						●	●							
312	<b>COLUMBIA COVE BOAT LAUNCH</b> Community Park with boat launch and RV Park	Brewster	City of Brewster	All Seasons						●	●						●	
313	<b>GAMBLE SANDS GOLF COURSE</b> Links golf course designed by David McLay Kidd with golf shop, Gamble Sands Inn and Danny Boy Bar & Grill	Brewster	Gamble Sands	All Seasons					●					●				
314	<b>PELICAN TO CHIEF JOSEPH DAM</b> Popular fishing destination during the summer salmon run and steelhead season in the fall and winter	Brewster	Municipal, WDFW, Tribal	All Seasons										●				
315	<b>RIVER WALK TRAIL</b> Trail along Columbus River	Brewster	City of Brewster	All Seasons											●			●
316	<b>WASHBURN ISLAND POND</b> Pond and island within the Wells Wildlife Area	Brewster	Douglas County PUD	Spring to Summer										●				●
317	<b>CHIEF JOSEPH DAM</b> Second largest hydropower producing dam in the U.S. located on the Columbia River in Bridgeport, WA	Bridgeport	USACE	All Seasons		●		●										
318	<b>FOSTER CREEK AVENUE TREE CARVING</b> 13 Sycamore trees were transformed into sculptures by chainsaw sculptor, Jacob Lewis	Bridgeport	City of Bridgeport	All Seasons	●													
319	<b>BERRYMAN PARK</b> Community park in Bridgeport, Wa with picnic area, basketball court, play area, war memorial and City swimming pool	Bridgeport	City of Bridgeport	All Seasons						●								
320	<b>BRIDGEPORT CITY POOL</b> Bridgeport community pool located at Berryman park	Bridgeport	City of Bridgeport	Summer						●	●							



Outdoor Recreation



History, Arts, and Culture



Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive/Historic/Cultural	Guided Tours	Race/Community	Water Recreation	Winter Sports	Horseback Riding	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
321	<b>BRIDGEPORT STATE PARK</b> 622 acre camping park on Rufus Woods Lake behind Chief Joseph Dam	Bridgeport	Washington State Parks	All Seasons						●	●	●	●
322	<b>LAKE WOODS GOLF COURSE</b> A challenging 9 hole public golf course, owned and operated by its members	Bridgeport	Lake Woods Golf Course	All Seasons							●		
323	<b>MARINA PARK</b> Campground on the Columbia River with RV and tent sites, boat launch, play area, picnic area and swimming area	Bridgeport	City of Bridgeport	April to October					●	●		●	●
324	<b>COLVILLE TRIBAL MUSEUM</b> Cultural history of the twelve tribes of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Indian Reservation	Coulee Dam	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	All Seasons		●	●						
325	<b>COULEE DAM HISTORIC WALKING TOUR</b> Self-guided walking tour of town, parks and history starting at the Coulee Dam Visitor's Center	Coulee Dam	--	All Seasons		●							
326	<b>CANDY POINT TRAIL</b> 2.25 mile trail up steep hillsides, built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937	Coulee Dam	--	Spring to Fall								●	●
327	<b>COULEE PIONEER MUSEUM</b>	Electric City	--	By Appointment		●	●						
328	<b>BANKS LAKE TRIPLE FISH CHALLENGE</b> Two day fishing competition for smallmouth bass, walleye and rainbow trout	Electric City	Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce	April					●		●		
329	<b>VINTNERS AND BREWERS TASTING AND AUCTION</b> Annual fundraising event featuring a live auction and showcasing wines and beers for tasting	Electric City	Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce	December	●								
330	<b>STEAMBOAT ROCK STATE PARK</b> 5,043-acre camping park with three campground areas and a large day-use area	Electric City	Washington State Parks	All Seasons						●	●	●	●
331	<b>BUFFALO LAKE</b> Located on Colville Indian Reservation	Elmer City	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	All Seasons							●		
332	<b>COULEE DAM CASINO</b> Located near Lake Roosevelt just below Grand Coulee Dam	Grand Coulee Dam Area	Colville Casinos	All Seasons	●								
333	<b>GRAND COULEE DAM</b> Visitor activities include guided tours, laser light show, and hands-on exhibits	Grand Coulee Dam Area	U. S. Bureau of Reclamation	All Seasons		●	●	●					
334	<b>4TH OF JULY FESTIVAL OF AMERICA</b> Annual two day event with food, arts, crafts, live music, laser light show and a fireworks display	Grand Coulee Dam Area	Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce	July	●								
335	<b>COLORAMA FESTIVAL AND PRO-WEST RODEO</b> Mother's Day weekend carnival, Pro-West Rodeos, Color Run, parade, arts/crafts, food, and more.	Grand Coulee Dam Area	Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce	May	●	●							
336	<b>HARVEST FESTIVAL</b> Pacific Northwest BBQ competition, motorcycle poker run, kids activities, crafts, food booths, arts & crafts, and a beer garden	Grand Coulee Dam Area	Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce	September	●	●							

Outdoor Recreation History, Arts, and Culture Festivals and Events



## EVENTS &amp; DESTINATIONS

Location

Asset Manager

Season

Arts & Entertainment Festival  
Interpretive Display  
Historic/Cultural  
Guided Tours  
Race/Competition  
Community Park  
Water Recreation  
Winter Sports  
Horseback Riding  
Fishing  
Hiking  
Wildlife Viewing  
Camping  
Vistas

- 337 KOULEE KID'S FEST** Annual event with a variety of childrens events held in different locations around the Grand Coulee area
- 338 RUN THE DAM** 5k, 10k, and half marathon across the Grand Coulee Dam, ending at the Harvest Festival in North Dam Park
- 339 LAKE ROOSEVELT NATIONAL RECREATION AREA** 130-mile long lake with water recreation, camping, hunting and historic sites
- 340 MASON CITY MEMORIAL PARK & FREEDOM POINT** Located in East-Coulee Dam with playground, picnic area and restrooms
- 341 RUFUS WOODS RESERVOIR** 51-mile reservoir between Chief Joseph Dam and Grand Coulee Dam, popular fishing for trout, kokanee and walleye
- 342 LYMAN LAKE**  
Small primitive campground and shore access
- 343 CHIEF JOSEPH REST AREA** Rest area in Nespelem with sculpture and interpretive signage on Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce
- 344 NEZ PERCE CEMETERY** Burial site of younger Chief Joseph and other Nez Perce who participated in the Nez Perce War of 1877
- 345 ROOTDIGGERS** Sculpture by Smoker Marchand depicting local women as they gather roots
- 346 JULY POW WOW AND CELEBRATION** Colville Tribes largest cultural event includes stick games and a parade
- 347 MILLPOND DAYS**  
Annual event to honor and celebrate the people of Nespelem
- 348 NESPELEM JUNIOR RODEO**  
Annual event held at the rodeo grounds in Nespelem, Wa
- 349 METHOW MONUMENT** An educational park honoring the Methow Indian Tribe with interpretive displays, sculptures, salmon bake pit and 14-ft tipi
- 350 PATEROS MUSEUM** Old Pateros fire hall converted into a museum with exhibits on the city's history
- 351 STEELHEAD**  
Sculpture designed and constructed by Roger Howe
- 352 APPLE PIE JAMBOREE** Events include jet-ski races, jog-a-thon, quilt show, kids games, car show, bass tournament, salmon dinner, and more

Grand Coulee Dam Area

Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce

June

Grand Coulee Dam Area

Grand Coulee Dam Area Chamber of Commerce

September

Grand Coulee Dam Area

National Park Service

All Seasons

Grand Coulee Dam Area

Town of Coulee Dam

All Seasons

Grand Coulee Dam Area

--

All Seasons

Lyman Lake

USFS

Spring to Fall

Nespelem

Town of Nespelem

All Seasons

Nespelem

--

All Seasons

Nespelem

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

All Seasons

Nespelem

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

July

Nespelem

Town of Nespelem

August

Nespelem

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

April

Pateros

City of Pateros

All Seasons

Pateros

City of Pateros

All Seasons

Pateros

--

All Seasons

Pateros

City of Pateros

July



Outdoor Recreation



History, Arts, and Culture




Festivals and Events



EVENTS & DESTINATIONS		Location	Asset Manager	Season	Arts & Entertainment Festival	Interpretive Historic/Cultural	Guided Tours	Race/Community Park	Water Recreation	Winter Sports	Winter Recreation	Fishing	Hiking	Horseback Riding	Camping	Wildlife Viewing	Vistas
353	<b>PATEROS HYDRO RACES</b> Annual event at Pateros Memorial Park, limited hydro's race on the Columbia River, includes food vendors	Pateros	--	August	●					●							
354	<b>ALTA LAKE GOLF RESORT</b> 18 hole golf course and hotel next to Alta Lake State Park	Pateros	Alta Lake Golf Resort	All Seasons				●				●					
355	<b>ALTA LAKE STATE PARK</b> 174-acre camping park with 2-mile long lake, camping, and day-use facilities	Pateros	Washington State Parks	All Seasons						●			●	●		●	●
356	<b>BLACK CANYON SNO-PARK</b> Groomed snowmobile trails to Chelan Ridge, Parrish Peak, Cooper Mountain, Oss Peak and Ski Peak	Pateros	USFS	December to April							●						
357	<b>LAKE PATEROS</b> Confluence of Methow River and Columbia River	Pateros	--	All Seasons						●			●			●	●
358	<b>PATEROS MEMORIAL PARK</b> Community Park in Pateros	Pateros	City of Pateros	All Seasons					●								
359	<b>PATEROS PAVILION</b> Community Park with small amphitheater and interpretive signage	Pateros	City of Pateros	All Seasons			●		●								
360	<b>SOUTH FORK GOLD CREEK SNO-PARK</b> South Fork Gold Creek area groomed snowmobile trails in winter months	Pateros	USFS	December to March							●						
361	<b>SWAN LAKE</b> Camping, swimming, trails, fishing and historic open air kitchen built by the CCC in 1936	Swan Lake	USFS	Spring to Fall		●				●			●	●		●	

Outdoor Recreation
  History, Arts, and Culture
  Festivals and Events



A woman with long blonde hair and sunglasses on her head is smiling and holding a champagne glass. In the foreground, two other champagne glasses are being held up, clinking together. The background is blurred, showing an outdoor setting with other people.

**OKANOGAN COUNTRY** is the perfect place for adults to relax and enjoy themselves at one of many fantastic wineries.



# 6

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# TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND CONCEPTS





**ICE FISHING** is one of many activities that allow people to maintain a safe and healthy distance during the COVID-19 crisis.





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**Tourism has been the worst effected economic sector of the COVID-19 crisis.**

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## INTRODUCTION

*This chapter of the Okanogan Country Tourism Destination Master Plan (TDMP) presents strategies for promoting tourism and economic development throughout Okanogan Country. Included are near-term strategies for tourism recovery in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis that began in 2020 and is expected to continue until vaccinations are widespread. Then strategies related to a number of important topics are presented, followed by design concepts for tourism infrastructure. While the strategies presented in this chapter serve as overarching recommendations for tourism promotion and economic development to be followed on an ongoing basis, the Action Plan in Chapter 7 presents a list of specific projects and actions to be implemented as an outcome of developing this plan.*

## RECOVERY IN THE WAKE OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS



*The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in widespread impacts to tourism around the world due to policies and practices related to social distancing and quarantines. Tourism has been the worst effected economic sector of the COVID-19 crisis, and Washington state experienced a dramatic decline in tourism in 2020 due to the global pandemic.*

Continued loss of tourism jobs and loss of taxes paid by visitors are major concerns, although as this plan is being completed in early 2021, there are signs of economic





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## Some outdoor recreation activities and visits to some national parks, protected lands, and trails have spiked during the pandemic.

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recovery across the US, in Washington, and in Okanogan County. Unemployment rates are lowering and businesses are opening while following specific health and safety practices. Interestingly, visitation to some national parks, protected lands, and trails has spiked across the West during the pandemic. As restrictions are lifting, people are less likely to fly and more likely to travel by vehicle. They are increasingly interested in escaping city life and crowded areas to get to wide open spaces and be surrounded by nature. Sales of recreational vehicles/RVs have increased sharply, along with correlating leisure activities of camping, touring, sight-seeing, and visiting national parks, monuments, historical sites, scenic byways, and other attractions across the country.

In spite of efforts by the National Park Service (NPS) to control crowds by limiting hours of entry and keeping some facilities and destinations closed, the unofficial kickoff to the 2020 summer season saw popular parks packed with people. Zion National Park in Utah was full and turning visitors away by 7:00 am on Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. Visitors have been describing the crowded conditions at national parks and some trailheads as unprecedented, hectic, and in some cases, unsafe because people are not following social distancing guidelines.

The *Crosscut* article, “‘Nature’s not closed’ during coronavirus, but should you still go hiking?” by Mandy Godwin, discussed the status of recreation in Washington as restrictions related to the pandemic were being rolled out. In 2020, all Washington campgrounds were closed, as well as trails and parks. Before Washington decided to close parks and campgrounds, beautiful spring weather and an absence of regular activities drove far more people than usual to parks and trails.

More recently, restrictions are being lifted in stages, and the *Seattle PI* reported in late July that, “Health officials have expressed that outdoor activities such as camping are generally low risk for viral transmission, and more and more people are looking to the great outdoors to fill their summer. Outdoor recreation is a bright spot today



**CONGESTION** on Bear Lake Road in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado in 2020. *Courtesy of the NPS*







**OUTHOUSE RACES IN CONCONULLY** and other outdoor public events are potential opportunities for future economic investment.

with many getting outside because alternative activities are closed,” said Kaleen Cottingham, director of the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. “We should think strongly about continuing to invest in our outdoor assets as a way to improve our economic future and enhance the beautiful places that we all enjoy.”

The *Seattle PI* article also summarized the results of a recent study on the economic benefits of outdoor recreation to Washington’s economy. “The industry employs 264,000 people, 6% of the state’s workforce, placing it just behind the aerospace industry...analysis from the Tacoma-based nonprofit Earth Economics

found that people spend \$26.5 billion annually in the Evergreen State on outdoor recreation activities, including trips to national, state, and local parks.” Sales of equipment and gear for camping and hiking have been on the increase, and state leaders have expressed support for residents getting outside as long as they follow social distancing and mask guidelines.

Fortunately, the settings and activities that make the Okanogan an attractive tourism destination are right in line with the social distancing required of post quarantine travel. With wide open spaces and outdoor recreation and tourism activities focused on nature, such as backcountry and

frontcountry hiking, camping, kayaking, boating, fishing, hunting, stargazing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing—just to name a few—people can be in the outdoors safely, socially distanced from others year-round.

The outlook is encouraging. That said, while individualized lodging facilities such as cabins, vacation rentals, and small inns may be rebounding, larger lodging establishments, resorts, and activities such as festivals and events, dining, and shopping will continue to face ongoing challenges until widespread vaccinations occur. Even as this plan is being completed, the COVID-19 cases are generally in decline across the US and Washington, with concerns that infections may rise again if people relax mask wearing and social distancing. If case levels increase, then restrictions may increase again. OCTC and stakeholders in the tourism industry should stay aware of the latest conditions and proactively plan to adjust as needed.

Resources and guidelines from international, national, and state organizations can help provide a road map for the challenging process of recovery. Central messages that have developed in tourism recovery are the promotion of innovation, sustainability, and local businesses and a shared responsibility for safe travels.

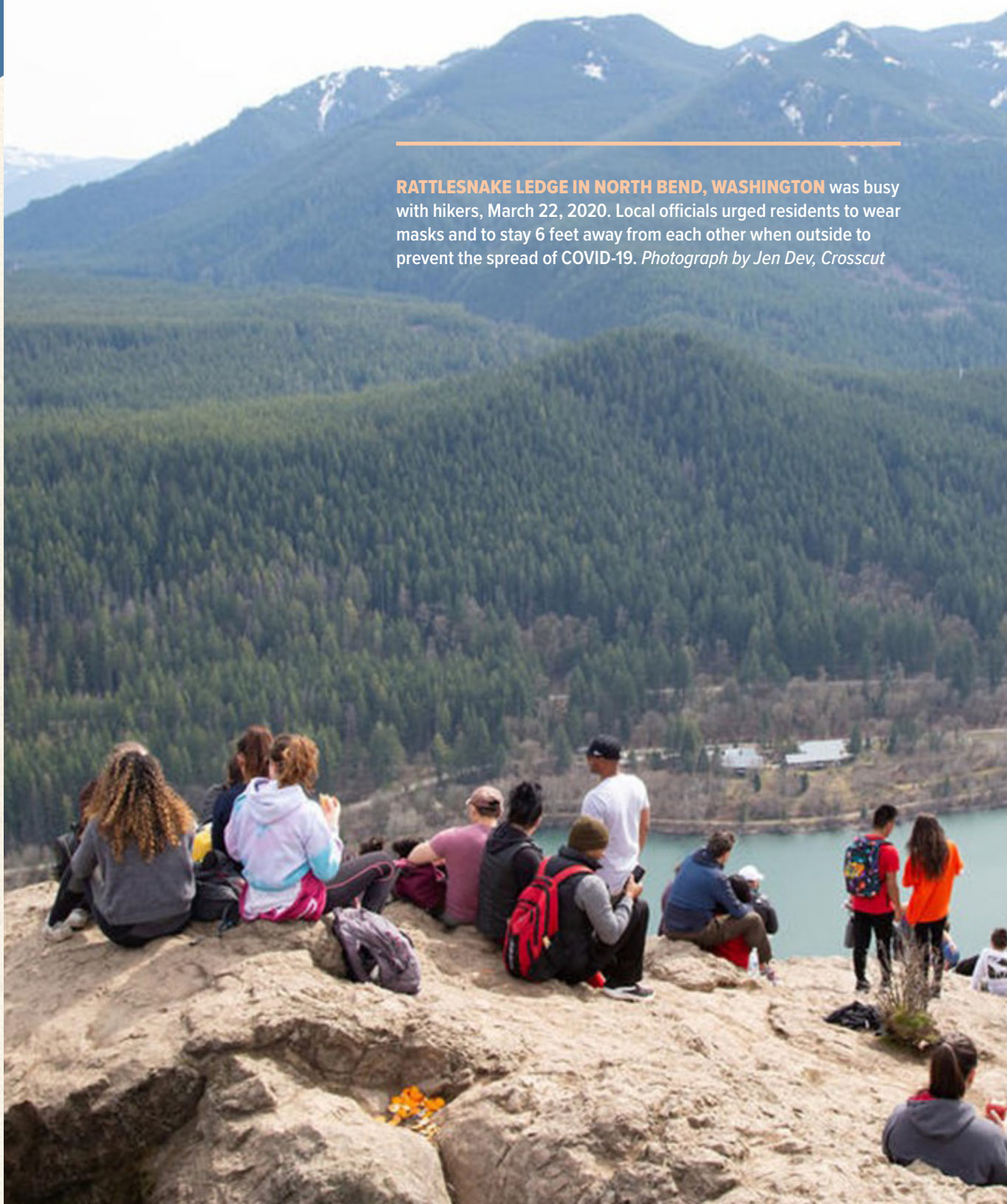


Helping local businesses apply for government funding and offering them guidance and essential support will help them survive. Also, safe and successful recovery is not just on those in the tourism industry. Marketing and messaging should let tourists know that they also share in the efforts and their actions/decisions can make a difference. There are extensive resources and widespread guidance available related to recovery strategies for tourism.

Several resources and guidelines are summarized on the following pages.



**Marketing and messaging should let tourists know that they also share in the efforts to protect everyone.**



**RATTLESNAKE LEDGE IN NORTH BEND, WASHINGTON** was busy with hikers, March 22, 2020. Local officials urged residents to wear masks and to stay 6 feet away from each other when outside to prevent the spread of COVID-19. *Photograph by Jen Dev, Crosscut*



# World Trade Organization and World Health Organization Guidelines to Restart Tourism

The World Trade Organization and World Health Organization have provided recommendations and guidelines to help the tourism sector reopen and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. Their Guidelines to Restart Tourism, published May 28, 2020, provides an overview of the impact that the crisis has had on the industry and covers two main areas for recovery considerations, priorities for tourism recovery and global guidelines. Following is a summary of the guidelines relevant to Okanogan Country tourism. For the full document visit [www.unwto.org/news/restarting-tourism](http://www.unwto.org/news/restarting-tourism).

- ▶ Government entities providing liquidity and protecting jobs is the number one suggested first step to support recovery. So applying for federal and state support through available programs to support COVID-19 recovery is critical, and OCTC can help local businesses find these resources.
- ▶ Recovering confidence through safety and security in messaging and actions taken by local businesses in the tourism industry is crucial. Okanogan County is right on track with this guidance with initiatives such as the COVID-19 business pledge: <https://okanogancountycovid19.org/business-pledge/>.
- ▶ Public-private collaboration and communication is important for efficient reopening—so ramping up coordination and communication efforts through OCTC and other organizations will be important as recovery continues.

- ▶ The World Health Organization recommends opening borders with responsibility. The US/Canada border will remain closed until the foreseeable future to slow the spread of COVID-19. The reopening of the border, when it occurs will present a promotional opportunity for Okanogan Country.
- ▶ Harmonize and coordinate protocols and procedures—consistent messaging and practices across a region are important. Okanogan County is following this guidance and should continue to do so.
- ▶ Look to the future by leveraging new technologies. Innovation and sustainability will be a new normal. Many patterns in life, tourism, and visitation will change in the wake of the pandemic. Okanogan County tourism interests should pay attention to trends and innovations and adapt. For example, will the trend in RV purchasing and camping

continue for the foreseeable future? If so, adapting and accommodating more of these uses in the county will be beneficial to the tourism industry.

- ▶ Provide ongoing training and outreach in safety and security protocols as well as safe-service delivery. OCTC can help in the training and outreach efforts and to communicate protocols and responsibilities to tourism and business operators and customers and keep them informed onsite and through digital and social media, including the following measures.

## GENERAL MEASURES FOR HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY OPERATIONS:

- » Increase the frequency of cleaning in common areas and contact surfaces. Clean all surfaces more frequently, using





products and disinfectants that meet requirements with special attention to high-touch surfaces.

- » Inform guests about existing protocols in an easy and updated manner (e.g. time of the last cleaning, contact of health manager, etc.).
- » Protect employees with various approaches, including barriers, protective coverings, and distancing.
- » Reduce touch areas where possible and sanitize high touch surfaces frequently.
- » Implement contactless check-in and provide guests with a hygiene welcome kit (including gloves, masks, sanitizer).
- » Foster flexibility for operations.

- » Explore new methods such electrostatic sprays, ultraviolet light, amongst others.
- » Redesign processes towards more digital touchless operations in all possible touch-points.
- » Get to know more about your guest in advance of the arrival to provide a more personalized service.
- » Keep spare rooms for possible sick or quarantined guests.
- » Maintain physical distancing practices for the use of all common spaces.
- » Create positions such as hygiene manager and guest guardian.
- » Set up plan in the event a guest or employee falls ill on site.

- » Introduce technological systems such as “guest messaging” for direct and rapid contact with guests for reservations, refunds, cancellations or possible information about infections.
- » Create an internal COVID-19 coordination committee to follow-up on implementation and execution of protocols and service delivery.
- » Keep record of statistical information for tourism planning and management in full coordination with local, state, and national tourism and statistical authorities.
- » Promote social dialogue and work to ensure the health and wellbeing of workers and the working environment (support employees in monitoring their health and adapt Human Resources policies).
- » Allow people to enjoy the facilities and encourage the use of masks/face coverings for guests and staff; provide facemasks, which could include promotional messages printed on the masks.
- » Reduce or manage capacity to allow for appropriate social distancing and monitor entrance and venue capacity at all times to ensure guests can maintain physical distancing within the space.



- » Engage in public/private sector dialogue and recovery mechanisms on an ongoing basis.
- » Manage density of people within the facilities to keep people or family units together and define protocols for the flow path of visitors and the use of common spaces.
- » Communicate protocols and responsibilities to the guests on an ongoing basis.
- » Place signs or markings on the pavement to outline physical distancing guides/spaces.
- » Encourage online payments & pre-bookings.
- » Implement new technologies such as augmented reality or virtual reality to improve visitors' experience before, during, and after a visit.



## Introduce storytelling for creating new tourism experiences.



**OKANOGAN FAMILY FAIRE** offers a variety of activities in one place and is fun for all ages.

### PRODUCTS AND MARKETING/TOURS AND EVENTS

- » Add new services such as take-away (picnic) service, family experiences, co-working spaces, drive and stay packages, etc.
- » Offer packed meals (avoid buffet service or coffee breaks) with due respect for sustainability options.
- » Promote proximity and domestic tourism in the short-term enhancing the local value chain (e.g. local producers).
- » Provide hand sanitizer, face masks, and other collateral gifts to guests, which could include promotional messages and advertising.
- » Implement marketing campaigns to communicate corporate values and support to local providers and workers.
- » Introduce storytelling for creating new tourism experiences.
- » Develop segmented and sustainable products focused on nature, rural areas and culture: eco-tourism, small group or individual sports, history, bird-watching tourism, traditional routes.
- » Create personalized and small group tours and packages.
- » Incentivize short trips and visits to nearby destinations in the short term.



- » Promote rent-a-car services and combined hotel and car packages.
- » Promote RV-ready locations.
- » Promote new destinations and experiences with added value and local inspiration namely with the creative industries to generate novelty in the market.
- » Create digital events with high-level speakers, videos, and technological innovation and relevant content.
- » Analyze the option to sell virtual “tickets” to experience these events. Offer value added post-event services such as discounts at local resorts and venues. Provide free access to certain parts of the events in order to obtain a base of social media followers.
- » Develop and promote a post-COVID-19 festival/event.

## DESTINATION PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

- » Support companies in the implementation and training of their staff on the new protocols (financing and training).
- » Enhance the use of technology for safe, seamless and touchless travel in your destination.

- » Introduce and adapt actionable and harmonized processes and procedures in line with public health evidence-based risk assessment and full coordination with relevant public and private sector partners.
- » Provide reliable, consistent, and easy to access information on protocols to travelers and the private sector (send SMS to tourists to inform them of national and local health protocols and relevant health contacts).
- » Partner with health and safety brands and health providers.
- » Generate alliances with health centers and providers.
- » Create programs and campaigns to incentivize tourism in cooperation with the private sector (incentive schemes, possible revision of holiday dates, transport facilities, vouchers, etc.).
- » Partner with local providers, local destination management organizations, and other players in the sector.
- » Consider the data privacy policies when there is a proposal of developing tracing apps. WHO will develop guidance on the use of digital technologies for contact tracing.



## Ensure coordination among tourism, health, and transport policies.

- » Promote new products and experiences targeted at individual and small groups of travelers, like: special interest, nature, rural tourism, gastronomy & wine, sports, etc.
- » Enhance and communicate medical capacity and protocols at the destination (e.g. safety seals).
- » Ensure coordination among tourism, health, and transport policies.
- » Define roles and responsibilities for governments, private sector, and travelers.





## Additional Resources

The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries has provided a General Requirements and Prevention Ideas for Workplaces fact sheet available on their website, <https://www.lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-topics/topics/coronavirus>.

Washington State Department of Health Workplace and Employer Resources & Recommendations can be found at <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Coronavirus/workplace>.

The American Hotel & Lodging Association has provided Safe Stay Guidelines which are updated regularly and include employee responsibilities, cleaning & disinfecting products and protocols, and physical distancing. The document can be found on the COVID-19 Resource Center section of their website, [www.ahla.com/safestay](http://www.ahla.com/safestay).

The Washington Hospitality Association (WHA) has developed guidance for hotels when there is suspected illness. This guidance is available at the WHA Coronavirus Resource Guide, <https://hub.wahospitality.org/coronavirus-resource/>.

The Washington State Guide to Reopening Restaurants details official requirements and recommendations including procedures for dine-in service, employee safety and health, signage protocols, and further resources such as CDC cleaning guidelines. This document is available at the WHA Coronavirus Resource Guide, <https://hub.wahospitality.org/coronavirus-resource/>.

The National Park Service, in particular, has published some excellent guidance and graphics that can be adapted to support outdoor recreational activity during the pandemic. These graphics provide friendly, easy to read guidance related to social distancing, trail etiquette, and best practices for health and safety related to COVID-19. Be sure to check copyright and permissions related to these graphics. The copyright status on images may vary. <https://www.nps.gov/media/photo/gallery.htm?pg=4913675&id=CF41B3F2-A93D-4F38-A482-CD02DD7488BD>





# STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Following are recommended strategies for enhancing tourism and economic development throughout Okanogan Country on an ongoing basis. These overarching recommendations should be the guiding best practices for all entities involved in tourism and outdoor recreation across the region.*

## Across Okanogan Country—Coordination and Collaboration

One of the most important and effective strategies for a region committed to successful tourism and economic development is cooperation and collaboration, which is inspired through ongoing regional coordination, communication, and commitment to the greater whole rather than to individual local community interests.



**Okanogan Country is fortunate to have many partners and friends.**

OCTC is committed to bringing together countywide interests, as well as leveraging partnerships with tourism organizations and agencies outside the county—at the local, regional, state, national, and international levels.

Committing to marketing and promoting Okanogan Country as a whole and promoting countywide assets as part of the process, with everyone working together cooperatively, will leverage the most resources, funding, partnerships, and opportunities for the region. For ongoing success, OCTC should:

- ▶ Continue monthly board meetings.
- ▶ Consider holding seasonal/quarterly broader membership meetings (via online technology), which could be themed around certain topics.
- ▶ Provide regular (seasonally/quarterly suggested) reports to the greater OCTC

membership of activities in process and how to provide input to the board on an ongoing basis.

- ▶ Inspire and promote a cooperative culture, working beyond “us vs. them” perspectives, to “we are all one Okanogan”.
- ▶ Leverage and consider the strengths, weaknesses, seasonality and weather influences, visitation patterns, and other varying factors across the region to promote year-round tourism opportunities. Consider the best opportunities within the region at different times of year, while also considering how to disperse and promote tourism countywide so everyone benefits economically.

In Okanogan Country, our partners and friends are many....the following is a list of all those who can help us succeed on an ongoing basis if we work together toward our common mission and vision.



## Celebrating Our Many Partners and Friends—Thank You!

*Note: There is not a particular order to this listing; partners and friends are listed randomly.*

- ▷ Communities/cities/local governments (including all city mayors and clerks)
- ▷ Okanogan County—all departments and County Commissioners
- ▷ Lodging Tax Advisory Committee for Okanogan County
- ▷ Tribal Nations from throughout the region including the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
- ▷ Chambers of Commerce (All)
- ▷ Visitor Information Centers (All)
- ▷ OCTC members and tourism and recreation industry reps
- ▷ Methow Trails and Methow Valley Trails Collaborative
- ▷ Methow Arts, Creative District, and TwispWorks
- ▷ Methow Valley Citizens Council
- ▷ Methow Conservancy
- ▷ Winthrop Westernization Committee
- ▷ Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance
- ▷ Omak Stampede
- ▷ Okanogan Sports Complex
- ▷ Loup Loup Ski Bowl
- ▷ Other entertainment, recreation, and sports venues
- ▷ Okanogan County Cattlemen and Women's Association
- ▷ Okanogan County Economic Alliance
- ▷ Okanogan County PUD
- ▷ Okanogan County Pomona Grange
- ▷ Okanogan County Farm Bureau
- ▷ Okanogan County Transit Authority/TranGo
- ▷ Airport Districts
- ▷ Emergency medical, sheriff offices, state patrol, rescue units, fire protection districts, Okanogan County Emergency Management, and other emergency responders.
- ▷ Private Transportation Operators
- ▷ Washington State Department of Transportation
- ▷ Lodging Associations and hotel/motel/lodging operators and organizations
- ▷ Vacation rental companies
- ▷ RV park owners/campground managers
- ▷ Washington State Outfitters and Guides Association
- ▷ Resort operators/realtors
- ▷ State and federal public land managers and agencies
  - State Parks and Recreation
  - State Fish and Wildlife
  - State Natural Resources
  - National Park Service
  - Bureau of Land Management
  - Bureau of Reclamation
  - US Fish and Wildlife
  - USDA Forest Service
  - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - USDA Rural Development
- ▷ Farmers, ranchers, agricultural industry (fruit/orchardists, wine, etc.) representatives, and other property owners
- ▷ Business owners (including lodging, guides, outfitters, dining, shops, etc.)
- ▷ Other arts and cultural organizations and councils
- ▷ International Dark Skies Association
- ▷ Douglas PUD (Brewster Pool)
- ▷ Scenic Byways:
  - Cascade Loop
  - Okanogan Trails
  - Coulee Corridor
- ▷ Recreation interests and organizations, bass fishing societies, birding groups, golf courses, sports leagues
- ▷ Universities, community and technical colleges
- ▷ School Districts and Schools (Including High School Business Clubs throughout the county)
- ▷ North Central Washington Economic Development District
- ▷ Discover Route 97
- ▷ Washington Tourism Alliance/ExperienceWA.com
- ▷ Washington Hospitality Association
- ▷ Washington State Department of Commerce/Tourism Marketing Authority
- ▷ Washington State Economic Development
- ▷ Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)
- ▷ StayinWashington.com
- ▷ Washington State Wine
- ▷ VisitTheUSA.com
- ▷ Thompson Okanogan Tourism Association
- ▷ Tourism British Columbia



*In addition, the following strategies are recommended to strengthen cross-regional collaboration.*

#### **RECOGNIZE AND PROMOTE OKANOGAN COUNTRY AS THE REGION:**

“Okanogan Country,” encompassed as the geographic area within the boundary of Okanogan County and at times reaching communities just across the county border, is the tourism planning region. This is the overarching, umbrella geography that should be promoted. The four areas of Methow Valley, Heart of the Okanogan, North Okanogan, and Columbia River are subregions of that region. This geographic recognition will help support cross-regional collaboration. Travel media outreach, FAM tours, etc. can highlight the brand of the region overall as well as subregions.

**REACH ACROSS BORDERS:** Intra-regional and extra-regional tourism planning is important. OCTC and its partners should continue to collaborate and share information with Canadian tourism organizations and interests. Within the region, tourism planning should continue to engage all communities and consider cross-regional needs and interests. Continue to reach across boundaries and borders to work together as a region and avoid “us vs. them” perspectives. Address formal decision-making processes through OCTC and Okanogan Country. Tourism and economic development across the county benefits all in the county, so working together is crucial to achieve the most return on your investment of time, resources, funding, and actions. More cross-cultural collaboration is needed—engaging the tribes in tourism development and promotion, Brewster multi-cultural opportunities, and other outreach.

**MANAGE AND DISPERSE VISITATION TO ALIGN WITH FACILITIES AND VISITOR CAPACITIES:** Promote tourism throughout the County and support effective management of peak visitation/tourism in the Methow Valley. Plan ahead for the peak summer periods when the Methow Valley reaches capacity—ensure that tourism promotion and marketing is encouraging and drawing visitors to other areas of the county (summer peak from late May to early September).

**GROW THE TOURISM BASED ECONOMY TO A STRONGER YEAR-ROUND LEVEL:** Continue to promote tourism opportunities in all seasons (and in particular the shoulder and winter seasons) to help strengthen local businesses and incomes. Provide more promotion of shoulder (spring and fall) and winter seasons tourism activities. The videos available to television promoting seasonal activities are effective and should be continued and increased. Continue and intensify social media and search engine marketing efforts, digital advertising, and email blasts, etc. with a focus on promoting shoulder and winter seasons.

#### **PROMOTE AND SUPPORT SCENIC BYWAYS AS CROSS REGIONAL EXPERIENCES AND GATEWAYS TO OKANOGAN COUNTRY:**

The Cascade Loop, Okanogan Trails, and Coulee Corridor Scenic Byways are widely promoted and marketed as unique opportunities for visitors across the state and nation, and people are trending towards driving (auto, RV, etc.)

#### **PROMOTE ALL-AGE, ALL-ABILITY, GROUP, INDIVIDUAL, AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE REGION:**

Okanogan Country provides diverse recreational opportunities and activities that EVERYONE can enjoy. Given America’s diverse generations and interests, the retiring Baby Boom generation, millennial families, and many other diverse target audiences—continue to research tourism demographics and promote the region’s diverse and unique opportunities around these target audiences.

#### **PROVIDE AND PROMOTE PET-FRIENDLY TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE REGION:**

More people are regularly seeking to travel with their pets and are looking for pet-friendly lodging and venues. Support pet-friendly tourism opportunities and look for ways to expand and encourage visitors with pets, such as by investing in dog parks in local communities and more dog-friendly trails and places to visit.



## PROTECT TOURISM ASSETS AND EMPHASIZE STEWARDSHIP IN PROMOTING

**REGION:** The natural and cultural places and resources that draw visitors to Okanogan Country are precious. These are important to preserve and protect over the long term. Promoting eco-tourism and stewardship to visitors will support preservation and protection of these unique tourism assets—surrounding natural and wilderness areas, rivers, lakes, forests, wildlife, night skies, historical places and artifacts, arts, culture, and local ways of life—these are the extraordinary elements that are inherent to the Okanogan Country experience.

Eco-tourism is promoted and sustained across the globe in many places. Some key guiding principles include:

- ▶ Preserving the natural setting and indigenous landscape.
- ▶ Constructing improvements with minimal impact to nature and the setting.
- ▶ Using locally sourced and sustainably harvested or recycled building materials.
- ▶ Using renewable energy and environmentally sensitive water and waste disposal systems.
- ▶ Supporting the local community – Employing and training local workers.
- ▶ Supporting local businesses – Purchasing food from local farmers, ranchers and fishermen. Use local craftsmen. Shopping from locally owned businesses will maximize benefits to the local and regional economy.
- ▶ Building environmental and cultural awareness – Offering excursions to natural and cultural sites.
- ▶ Respecting and interacting with the local culture – Introducing guests to authentic local cultural activities and festivals.

Stewardship is an ethic that embodies the responsible planning and management of resources, and concepts of stewardship can be applied to the environment and nature, economics, health, property, cultural resources, and many other elements. In applying stewardship in tourism to encourage responsible ethics and sustainability that protects the environment, there are many guidelines, such as:

- ▶ Encouraging visitors to stay on designated trails while hiking to minimize damage to fragile ecosystems. (Leave no trace.)
- ▶ Responsibly managing waste and promoting recycling, reduction, and reuse of waste products. Implementing protocols that reduce waste in hospitality is a key action, as well as encouraging visitors to pack out their own trash and even pick up litter they see and pack it out.



- ▶ Avoiding impacts to sensitive habitats and maintaining distance from wildlife. (Wild animals are not used to the presence of humans and we are stressful to them. A good way to give them space is to use binoculars so that you don't get too close and to stay on designated paths.
- ▶ Providing opportunities for visitors to volunteer (voluntourism) in ways that will benefit the environment.
- ▶ Encouraging water and energy conservation as part of travel.






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**Visitors are looking for authentic local experiences tied to local cultures and economies.**



## Visitor Experiences and Related Marketing and Promotions

Working with the Okanogan County Tourism Advisory Group, the planning team identified the following recommendations for enhancing visitor experiences and for marketing and promotions related to these experiences. These recommended strategies also were informed by input at public meetings and in the online survey, as well as examples from other successful regional tourism efforts.

### **CELEBRATE YOUR AUTHENTICITY AND LEVERAGE THE UNIQUE ASSETS THAT REPRESENT AUTHENTICITY:** Promote those aspects that are unique to and or strengths of Okanogan County, such as:

- ▶ Access to diverse, year-round outdoor recreation opportunities
- ▶ Access to remote areas and wilderness, nature, wildlife, birds
- ▶ Open spaces; room to breathe; fresh air; unencumbered skies; night sky viewing
- ▶ Scenic qualities; scenic byways; scenic touring
- ▶ Diverse cultures and peoples—tourism opportunities on the reservation of the Colville Confederated Tribes, local immigrant communities, Downtown Brewster, Omak Stampede—these are unique cultural opportunities that people can only experience here
- ▶ Experiential tourism and “agritainment”—Okanogan County is at the nexus of agriculture, viticulture/ wineries, craft breweries and distilleries, cuisine, farm to table, farm stands, and authentic cultural opportunities, businesses, and events—visitors are looking for authentic local experiences tied to local cultures and economies; support expansion of these opportunities

**PROMOTE AUTHENTIC, PLACE-BASED TOURISM:** Continue to focus on destination marketing to market and promote outdoor recreation, and unique, locally available activities. Continue to develop unique guides (fishing, hiking, birding, etc.); more broadly promote emerging recreation opportunities such as mountain biking, water trails (as developed), access to rivers and lakes for paddle boarding and boating, rock climbing, wildlife watching, and other activities.





**CONTINUE TO PROMOTE KEY TOURISM ASSETS:** The tourism assets identified in this plan should be the ongoing focus of marketing and promotional efforts, particularly related to diverse outdoor recreation activities year-round. Participants in developing this plan identified the following key assets and characteristics to focus promotion around:

- ▶ Great outdoors/outdoor recreation/trails year-round
- ▶ Great weather/sunshine
- ▶ Mountains and valleys
- ▶ Rivers, lakes, and streams
- ▶ Spectacular skies (big skies, blue skies, dark skies/night skies); make Okanogan County a night sky/dark sky destination; promote lunar cycle/constellations and planets in every season; best places for skywatching
- ▶ Access to wilderness/wild places, nature, wildlife, birds
- ▶ History, culture, arts/public art
- ▶ Small town life—no lines at restaurants, shops, places to visit; welcoming people and unique downtowns (Winthrop, Twisp, Pateros, Brewster, Okanogan, Omak, Riverside, Conconully, Tonasket, Oroville, Grand Coulee Dam area towns, Colville Confederated Tribes/Nespelem, and others)
- ▶ Agritourism: farms and ranches, farmers markets/farm stands/fruit tastings, culinary/farm to table meals in orchards, wine tours, organic farms
- ▶ Festivals and events— seasonal/calendar of events that is kept up to date on the website; activity schedules online and in local papers; seasonal activities
- ▶ Methow Valley trails bring in a high level of annual tourism revenue, which supports tourism throughout the county—need to continue to enhance and promote the trails opportunities balanced with managing and dispersing tourism effectively.





**PROMOTE AND SUPPORT EXPANSION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES:** Continue to support existing outdoor recreation draws while also expanding the diversity and volume of outdoor recreation activities and opportunities in the region. During the planning process, participants expressed interest in expanding and improving land trail and water trail systems, mountain biking/fat tire trails, trailheads, restrooms at needed locations, bicycle tours/bicycling events, skywatching, wildlife watching and birding, and other activities. There are so many great places with recreational activities and opportunities that should be promoted. Here are some activities and experiences that people mentioned most often in public workshops and the survey:

- ▶ Access to the North Cascades (national park), national forests, public lands, and wilderness areas (Pasayten)
- ▶ Methow Valley (scenic beauty, trails networks; cross country skiing trails, etc.)
- ▶ Mountain biking trails – Sun Mountain, Loup Loup, Pearrygin Lake State Park, and various places in the Methow Valley
- ▶ Proximity to Pacific Crest Trail and Pacific Northwest Trail
- ▶ Skiing and Bear Mountain Luge at Loup Loup
- ▶ Winthrop Ice and Sports Rink
- ▶ Fishing throughout the region; fishing derbies (salmon, bass)
- ▶ Hiking throughout the region
- ▶ Boating/water recreation/water sports
- ▶ Camping throughout the region including in National Forests
- ▶ The rivers (Methow, Chewuch, Twisp, Okanogan, Columbia, Sinlahekin, Similkameen, etc.) and recreation including

- river floats of the Methow and Okanogan; the ability to see free-flowing, wild river segments
- ▶ Wildlife watching/birding/bird watching
- ▶ Skywatching
- ▶ Horseback riding/equestrian trails, horse guest ranches and outfitter camping trips into wilderness and national forest areas
- ▶ Omak Lake
- ▶ Bear Creek
- ▶ Lloyd's Ranch
- ▶ Pearrygin Lake State Park
- ▶ Palmer Lake
- ▶ Lost Lake
- ▶ Rock climbing and mountaineering
- ▶ Road bicycling throughout the region
- ▶ Rails to trails Oroville
- ▶ Proximity to British Columbia/Canada outdoor recreation
- ▶ Osoyoos
- ▶ Okanogan Valley Golf Club

- ▶ Resorts and related recreation such as golf (Gamble Sands, Sun Mountain)—year-round experiences; shoulder season opportunities
- ▶ Indoor equine arena at Fairgrounds Park
- ▶ Hunting
- ▶ Snowmobiling
- ▶ Hot air ballooning-Winthrop
- ▶ Year-round, four-wheeler trails/ATV/UTV trails
- ▶ Rural adventure experiences (guest ranches such as Eden Valley Guest Ranch and various other farms)

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**Okanogan Country has many great places with recreational activities**





**PROMOTE AND SUPPORT HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCES:** As with outdoor recreation, Okanogan has extensive historical and cultural experiences as homelands to native peoples since time immemorial and a Late Frontier region. Here are some of those most mentioned places and experiences in the public workshops and the survey:

- ▶ Museums (Okanogan County Museum, Molson, Oroville Depot Museum, Shafer in Winthrop, Colville Tribal Museum in Coulee Dam)
- ▶ Native American history (Colville Confederated Tribes, Fort Okanogan, other museums and VICs, Pateros waterfront park, Homestream Park, Methow Valley Interpretive Center in Twisp, Winthrop, etc.)
- ▶ Historic small towns; ghost towns too (Conconully, Molson, Loomis, Republic/Stone Rose, Winthrop western town, Twisp/art, Pateros/art, Brewster/multi-cultural, Okanogan, Omak, Tonasket, Oroville, Grand Coulee Dam area towns, Nespelem, and others)
- ▶ Public artwork and murals throughout all towns (such as “How the Animals Got Their Names” sculpture and many other examples)
- ▶ Wineries/winery tours (Tonasket, Omak, Brewster, Lone Point Cellars); also new cidery coming to Tonasket
- ▶ Apple festivals; all festivals and events
- ▶ All arts and cultural experiences and events; some mentioned include the Merc Playhouse, Confluence Gallery, interpretive programs and displays, TwispWorks/Twisp arts culture, Glover Street, Methow Arts events, Pateros public art, etc.)
- ▶ Grand Coulee Dam



- ▶ Tribal activities open to the public (potential ideas mentioned include edible plants/ wildflower walks, basket making, drumming, dancing, beading, etc.)
- ▶ Omak Stampede and Suicide Race
- ▶ Frank Matsura Walking Tour
- ▶ Brewster/Bridgeport Mexican culture
- ▶ Agritourism; orchards/apple and fruit industry past and present; farm stands and u-pick experiences; farmers markets
- ▶ Proximity to British Columbia/Canada/ Okanogan Valley wine country



**Okanogan has extensive historical and cultural experiences.**



**SUPPORT AND PROMOTE NEW AND UP-AND-COMING VISITOR OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COUNTY:** Several participants in workshops and the survey suggested a variety of newly emerging up and coming visitor opportunities in the county that should be promoted, such as:

- ▶ Mountain biking at Loup Loup
- ▶ Better promote winter activities such as downhill skiing at Loup Loup
- ▶ Omak Lake is under-promoted, under-utilized, under-developed
- ▶ Develop climbing guides for McLaughlin Canyon and Whistler Canyon
- ▶ Children attractions, Children Museum
- ▶ Indoor Climbing Gym
- ▶ Public art/mural walks in each town
- ▶ Continue to enhance/expand the arts community and seasonal art walks in Twisp
- ▶ Astrotourism: night sky observatory/telescope
- ▶ Expanded ecotourism and voluntourism opportunities
- ▶ Sports and recreation tournaments (like Hoop Fest in Spokane); more fishing tournaments
- ▶ Grandpa's Home Place Orchard Tours
- ▶ Regularly scheduled hiking, biking, skiing, birding events for visitors
- ▶ More seasonal activities (holiday festivals and displays, pumpkin carving/u-pick, ice sculptures/sculpture build competitions)
- ▶ Pioneer Life on the Farm (Cheryl Curtis)
- ▶ Promote Sun Mountain walking trail
- ▶ More music events/concerts—all different types of music—country, bluegrass, classical, popular, etc.
- ▶ More agritourism and new cideries, distilleries, breweries, wineries, tasting rooms for local foods/farm to table cuisine (produce, meat, beverages, etc.)
- ▶ Fall festival tours along the Columbia and other corridors (similar to Green Bluff)
- ▶ More wine and culinary experiences/education events in October, November, December, March, and April
- ▶ Archery opportunities
- ▶ Tree houses and ziplines
- ▶ Ice and roller skating rinks in winter and summer
- ▶ Snowmobiling and back country skiing
- ▶ Frisbee golf, mini golf
- ▶ More sports courts
- ▶ New specialty shops
- ▶ Promote local getaway deals for those living or visiting nearby Chelan, Douglas, Ferry Counties
- ▶ Kayaking/floating river launch sites on the Okanogan River
- ▶ More hiking/biking/walking trails
- ▶ "Johnny Appleseed Land"
- ▶ Miniature golf course in Omak
- ▶ Cherry Pit Spit contest in Omak on Main (winner could qualify to go to national competition)
- ▶ Museum focused on agriculture
- ▶ Zipline down slopes near casino
- ▶ Fairgrounds equine facility
- ▶ Gebber Farms Cherry Processing Facility tours
- ▶ Okanogan art gallery and outdoor sculpture garden
- ▶ Cable car crossing Legion Park Sportsplex/ Okanogan River



**EXPAND ONLINE AND DIGITAL RESOURCES TO GUIDE TRAVEL:** Access to the internet as a travel resource will continue to improve (also see Wayshowing recommendations later in this chapter). Millennial travelers and younger generations rely on their smart phones for information all the time. Information provided over the internet is the most used resource for pre-trip planning in America. Although cellular access in the county may be limited in some areas, many visitors will research opportunities before their trip, as well as during their trip from their hotel/motel location, hotspots along highways and in communities, podcasts and downloads (QR codes), and other resources that they can access at times during their travel. Suggestions include:

- ▶ Okanogan Country travel app with a suite of pre-planned itineraries, activities, and interactive maps; could be organized by subregions.
  - ▶ Online guides and scavenger hunts (pre-planned itineraries themed and linked with local destinations and businesses that may stamp, provide badges and/or other rewards/ discounts as part of the challenge).
  - ▶ Online webinars/videos geared to and accessible to the tourism-based work force: Develop and provide online webinars and videos that locals working in hotels/lodging industry, restaurants, and other tourism destinations can watch and learn about activities and opportunities in the region to promote to visitors. Include outreach related to customer service best practices and hospitality.
  - ▶ Provide more online visitor education and outreach related to desired visitor culture: leave no trace, wildfire prevention, wildlife watching and wildlife protection, stewardship, no littering, leave no trace, stay on the trails, etc.
- In addition, participants in the planning process who attended public meetings or provided input in the survey had many great ideas for tourism marketing and promotions across the county:
- ▶ More emphasis on online/digital media and apps
  - ▶ More marketing, television and digital ads targeted to Spokane, Seattle/Puget Sound, Portland, OR/ Vancouver, WA, and Canadian viewers
  - ▶ More targeted advertising, digital marketing on social media channels/venues such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube/video options to Pacific Northwest US and British Columbia, Canada, #PNW
  - ▶ More radio ads on programs like Wende Meister and/or audio ads and tours via music-streaming apps
  - ▶ Look into promotional partnerships with outdoor equipment/clothing businesses and guiding/ adventure shops (mountain biking, fly fishing, adventure motorcycles, etc.)
  - ▶ Keep website fresh, with sophisticated graphics; update regularly
  - ▶ More use of QR codes that people can access with their phones
  - ▶ More SEM and SEO campaigns are needed to get more visitors to the OCTC website
  - ▶ Coordination with online booking engines like TripAdvisor, Expedia, etc. for ease of booking when on OCTC website (create more traffic to the OCTC website and have conversion paths for lodging opportunities)
  - ▶ Earned media outreach/pitches, familiarization (FAM) tours with travel press, etc.
  - ▶ Pay per click (PPC) and digital ads and campaigns
  - ▶ Promote subregions seasonally based on desired tourism patterns
  - ▶ Once visitors are in the region, use radio, CCTV and hotel guest channels, and other communications to convey information and promote tourism opportunities





Travelers go through four stages in the process of taking a trip, and the wayshowing process must engage them during each of these stages. Travelers rely on specific tools during each of these stages, and their successful completion of each stage will have a strong influence on their overall experience. The four stages of trip-making are:

## STAGE 1—Pre-Trip

*“How do we get there?”*

## STAGE 2—En-Route

*“Are we there yet?”*

## STAGE 3—On-Site/In Region

*“We’re here!”*

*Now what do we do?”*

## STAGE 4—Post Trip

*“That was a great trip!  
Here’s what I remember...”*

**WAYSHOWING—SUPPORT ALL STAGES OF VISITORS’ TRIP PLANNING:** “Wayshowing” is as important as “wayfinding” to direct visitors in all phases of their journeys. *Wayfinding* is the mental process travelers go through that turns their goals into decisions, actions, and behaviors. Wayfinding is the act of navigating the journey and being able to continuously solve problems under uncertainty. The focus is on the travelers/visitors and what they are doing. *Wayshowing* is the communication of information, intentionally implemented by tourism providers and hosts, to aid travelers in setting desired goals, making decisions, and taking appropriate actions as part of navigating their trip. The focus is on the hosts and what they are doing to help travelers.

WAYFINDING IS WHAT TRAVELERS DO:	WAYSHOWING IS WHAT TOURISM PROVIDERS AND HOSTS DO:
SEEING	Providing maps, signs, and graphics
READING	Providing online/digital and written instructions and maps
HEARING	Providing audio guidance or personal guides/ volunteers at visitor information centers
LEARNING	Providing educational and interpretive information





## STAGE 1—Pre-Trip

Visitors are choosing/selecting the places they want to visit. They are then making plans and preparing for their trip. Their tools in this stage may include the Internet, travel brochures, advertisements, maps, and/or information from others. Recent tourism research suggests that now most visitors plan their trips using primarily online resources.

## STAGE 2—En-Route

During this stage, visitors are finding their way to their destination. Their tools in this stage may include online navigation, GPS systems/navigation, signs, cell phones, radio programs, maps and brochures, and/or information from places or people along the way. Internet access via smart phones, tablets, and laptops are often the most important tools during this stage.

## STAGE 3—On-Site/In Region

Visitors are navigating their way while at their regional destination and finding special places and experiences. Their tools in this stage may include visitor centers, gateway signs, scenic byway logo signs, directional signing to sites, orientation kiosks/signs on sites, GPS systems/navigation, online resources when cellular service is available/smart phones, radio programs, maps and brochures, podcasts, wayside exhibits, and/or information from places or people along the journey. They may share their experiences in social media platforms that emphasize here and now experiences (Instagram, SnapChat, etc.).

## STAGE 4—Post Trip

Visitors have found their way back home, and once there, they are recalling and reflecting upon their visit. Based on their experience, they may:

- ▶ Return to the region again and visit the same places.
- ▶ Visit the region again to see places they didn't get to the first time.
- ▶ Go to another place entirely.
- ▶ Share their experiences with others and encourage them to visit the region through blogs and social media sites such as Facebook, Pinterest, Flickr, and other methods.

This stage is aided by remembrances from their trip such as maps, brochures, items they purchased, and photos they took.



Focusing on the en-route and on-site/in region stages of the trip, an effective visitor guidance system should include the following:

- ▶ Visitor information hubs at key entrances, exits, and gateways
- ▶ Orientation stops/visitor information centers
- ▶ Repetitive route markers
- ▶ Directions to planned stops and places within towns
- ▶ Portable guides and maps they can pick up along the way

In addition, online technologies (in automobiles or hand-held by visitors) are now commonly used as travel guides. These include Internet access to visitor information, GPS systems, Podcasts and other downloadable information, and other data disseminated through smart phones and cell phones, such as specific “apps” and navigation programs. Travelers are becoming more likely to carry pad-format computers and laptops on their journeys, where they can access travel information, podcasts and stories about places, and other tools.

However, it’s important to note that not all travelers have access to these tools, and until they are universally available, it will continue to be important to provide a basic level of guidance and information to them via signs



**RUN THE DAM** is a popular public event that would require proper planning and flexibility to continue.

along their journey, as well as portable guides, maps, and brochures.

OCTC and partners should continue to consider all stages of trip-making in marketing and promoting Okanogan County to visitors, offering effective tools and resources at each stage.

#### **DEVELOP AND PUBLISH SPECIFIC TRIP ITINERARIES FOR EACH**

**SEASON:** Promote desired patterns of tourism and visitation (seasonal, geographic, etc.) by developing and publishing specific trip itineraries for each season. Multiple itineraries should highlight recreational activities/locations, events and festivals, arts/cultural opportunities, and lodging and visitor services options associated with each.

**OCTC and partners should consider all stages of trip-making in marketing and promoting Okanogan County.**





## Community Education and Outreach and Policy Development

The following recommendations were developed based on input from the Tourism Advisory Group, as well as from the public in workshops and the online survey. These recommendations relate to the need for education and outreach to county residents as well as to visitors. There was extensive input on the need for resource protection, dark sky preservation, and other efforts that will protect the qualities and resources that are drawing visitors to Okanogan. As such, recommendations to support and develop regulatory policies that will preserve and enhance the qualities that support tourism throughout the county are included.



“

*What if we made Okanogan Country even greater for the people who live here? The word would get out about how spectacular our area is...with high quality restaurants, more activities, and safe places for families to go to and experience in this beautiful area.*”

—Survey Respondent



## **PROVIDE OUTREACH AND EDUCATION TO LOCAL BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS:**

Continually provide information to build and increase awareness about the value of tourism to support local businesses and the regional economy.

## **PROACTIVELY PLAN FOR AND SUPPORT EDUCATION, OUTREACH, AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT APPROACHES RELATED TO WILDFIRE AND NATURAL HAZARDS:**

Several participants noted how natural hazards such as wildfire has damaged resources and can greatly affect tourism patterns throughout the county. Participants in the planning process identified the need to build greater public awareness around wildfire prevention, as well as climate change mitigation. The importance of good media relations and communications was also noted, making sure that media sources from outside the area report information accurately and don't sensationalize fire and weather events, which can deter tourism.

## **SUPPORT COMMUNITY VALUES, LOCAL PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES:**

Recognize and support and preserve community values and work with Okanogan County and

City planners and local cities to support local planning initiatives related to affordable workforce housing; economic development; tourism based investments; downtown improvements and revitalization; public health and medical services; community diversity, equity, and inclusion; and other initiatives to support communities and the local quality of life. Supporting these initiatives will help local communities and increase community pride and also will help to sustain and grow the tourism-based economy of the region.

## **PRESERVE TOURISM ASSETS RELATED TO SCENIC QUALITIES, NATURAL AREAS, AND NIGHT SKIES:**

Considering that development over time may endanger scenic character and remote areas that draw visitors, work with Okanogan County and cities to protect areas—protect scenic areas, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and open spaces through conservation easements, prevent ridgeline development in scenic corridors, and protect dark skies through enforced ordinances (with dark sky compliant lighting standards). Protect water quality in all areas.





## Special Initiatives, Actions, and Projects

In addition to the strategies presented in this chapter, the Tourism Destination Master Plan includes recommendations for special initiatives, actions, and projects in the Action Plan in Chapter 7.

## Tourism and Recreation Infrastructure Needs and Improvement Concepts

Identifying needed tourism and recreation infrastructure and envisioning potential improvement concepts has been an important focus of this planning effort. The following strategies are recommended, along with lists of suggested locations for tourism and recreation infrastructure development based on work with the Tourism Advisory Group and public input received at workshops and via the online survey.

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**Strong interest in historical re-enactments was mentioned by several participants in workshops.**

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### IMPROVE TOURISM AND RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE:

Improve the tourism and recreation infrastructure necessary to accommodate visitation such as public restrooms/rest stops, wayside information hubs, visitor information centers, trailheads and trails, waterside/river access points, signing and wayfinding information, roadway maintenance, multi-modal transportation options for accessing destinations, and other actions.

**SUPPORT, PROMOTE, AND IMPROVE MULTIMODAL TRAVEL OPTIONS THROUGHOUT OKANOGAN COUNTRY:** Multimodal transportation

needs were frequently discussed in the planning process, and many participants in the public workshops and survey mentioned the need to expand land and water trails and trailheads; improve walkability and bikeability of downtowns and to/from key destinations; regional trails that connect towns throughout the county; provide more public transit services on weekends, evenings, and to/from events; welcome bicycling events bicycle touring; improve connectivity to airport/rail/bus serving the region (or just outside region); need more rideshare and taxi services; access to fuel at marinas; and small shuttles for hire and/or small tour bus companies strategically located to transport groups between events and venues throughout the county.

### SUPPORT IN-PERSON AND INTERACTIVE VISITOR OUTREACH:

Continue to retain and support visitor information centers. Consider opportunities to provide interactive information resources (online, web access kiosks, etc.) at visitor centers and in-town locations. Strong interest in historical re-enactments was mentioned by several participants in workshops and the survey (pioneer life, explorers, tribal activities, Old West, and other authentically themed activities).





**OKANOGAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE** is one of seventeen places in Okanogan County that is on the National Register of Historic Places.

a draw to visitors for their sense of community and stepping back in time. Many participants in the planning process emphasized the importance of preserving and enhancing the downtowns of all towns throughout Okanogan County, and this included creating more walkable and bikeable downtowns, along with more vibrant, interesting places that would encourage visitors to stay longer and explore. Refer to the University of Idaho Landscape Architecture Design Studios' work on Okanogan County's Small Towns and Main Streets, summarized later in this chapter.

#### **LISTS OF TOURISM AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED:**

The lists on the following pages were developed based on work with the Tourism Advisory Group and public input at workshops and via the online survey.

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**Historic towns of Okanogan County are unique and interesting.**

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#### **STRENGTHEN AND BUILD “OKANOGAN COUNTRY” IDENTITY AND PROVIDE CONSISTENT WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE THROUGHOUT THE REGION:**

Enhance visitor knowledge of being within Okanogan Country as part of access to existing tourism assets/places. This can include wayfinding monuments, roadside signage, informational kiosks as an amenity that enhances the visitor experience, robust marketing strategies that employ both hardcopy and digital media and digital mapping tools, connectivity projects that enhance cell service and internet access in

the region allowing visitors to use web-based interactive maps and destination directories. Promote the region in a way that is recognizable as “Okanogan Country” while also celebrating the character that is unique to each destination within the region. Regional wayfinding kiosks with unifying Okanogan Country character that promote local destinations of that locale could be developed across the county.

#### **IMPROVE DOWNTOWNS AND THE SENSE OF ARRIVAL TO COMMUNITIES:**

The small, historic towns of Okanogan Country are unique and interesting—these places are



### More Camping and RV Parks

- ▶ Improved accessibility and amenities at existing campgrounds; more RV spaces (especially Omak/Okanogan core area)
- ▶ More camping needed near trailheads and activity areas
- ▶ More camping needed near Winthrop and Twisp
- ▶ Campground needed in McLaughlin Canyon
- ▶ Tonasket/North County
- ▶ Columbia River shoreline/along the Columbia River
- ▶ Along rivers
- ▶ More yurts, cabins, etc. in state parks, public lands, remote areas
- ▶ More camping complexes with upscale facilities (“glamping”)
- ▶ Omak Lake



### Hotel/Motel Lodging

- ▶ North Okanogan County
  - ▶ Tonasket
  - ▶ Central Okanogan County/Okanogan
  - ▶ Methow Valley – outside of Winthrop
  - ▶ Near sports complexes
  - ▶ Omak Lake (small scale, rustic)
  - ▶ County wide, more variety of lodging is needed
- .....

### Improving Downtowns and “Main Street/Highways”

- ▶ Pedestrian friendly and bicycle friendly downtowns: add improvements as needed; promote walking tours; provide trails/shared use paths from downtowns and lodging districts to riverfront areas along with supporting wayfinding and interpretive exhibits; increase connectivity in towns to/from neighborhoods and waterfronts, and between towns
- ▶ Pavement surfaces (sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.) that meet accessibility requirements and are barrier free to people with mobility challenges and accessible parking spaces (marked properly) are needed in all downtowns
- ▶ Corner bump outs/curb extensions to shorten crossing distances across main street/highways, improve visibility of pedestrians, and calm traffic
- ▶ Highly visible crosswalks (painted/marked/signed) with flashing signs so folks can easily cross main street/highways in towns; flag holders with highly visible flags for pedestrians to hold when crossing
- ▶ Building frontage revitalizations, painting of storefronts and replacing awnings, inviting attractive colors and places with outdoor seating that are welcoming to visitors
- ▶ Streetscape furnishings—benches, trash receptacles, pedestrian scale lighting



- ▶ Street trees and awnings for shade
- ▶ Provide clear wayfinding signing for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists; more orderly signing
- ▶ Find tenants and support business opportunities to fill empty buildings/spaces
- ▶ Building frontage improvements/storefronts need to be spruced up
- ▶ Safe and beautiful pathways in downtowns and between towns (Winthrop to Twisp, Pateros to Brewster, Okanogan to Omak, etc.)
- ▶ Public restrooms in downtowns
- ▶ Access to water in downtowns (drinking stations/drinking fountains)
- ▶ Slower speeds and traffic calming in downtowns



- ▶ Walkable downtowns with access to shops, farmers markets, festivals/events, activities, and parks (water parks, splash pads, skateboard parks, etc.)
- ▶ Allow sales on sidewalks but design sidewalks with ample space for strolling, shopping, outdoor cafes, art, etc.
- ▶ Remove center lanes and reduce lane widths (skinnier streets) to gain sidewalk space
- ▶ Omak-Okanogan-Fairgrounds-Sportsplex-Casino walking route improvements (build out sidewalks, provide shade)
- ▶ Safe paths (for walking and bicycling) are needed from Downtown Winthrop to bridges and destinations across river and connecting Winthrop and Twisp
- ▶ Streetscaping, landscaping, beautification, flower baskets, color, life
- ▶ Identify/develop parking areas open to public use in downtowns
- ▶ Recognize building owners and tenants who make improvements in quarterly program
- ▶ Leverage hotel/motel tax revenue to build out downtowns and draw people to town centers (Okanogan, Omak, all)
- ▶ General clean up, litter and junk removal (remove wrecked cars, graffiti, etc.)



- ▶ Better maintenance and improvement of existing parks and infrastructure in downtowns
- ▶ In Okanogan, turn the street in front of the Caribou Inn into a town square; improve the view of the approach coming over the bridge toward the courthouse
- ▶ Consistent design for streetscapes across downtown areas
- ▶ Create ample crosswalks and sidewalks in the high-traffic pedestrian areas of Twisp.
- ▶ Good sidewalks are needed on both sides of Riverside Avenue in Winthrop
- ▶ Shield lights/dark sky lighting ordinances for all downtowns (replacement of non-compliant lighting on Riverside Avenue in Winthrop and other streets throughout the county)



## University of Idaho Landscape Architecture Design Studios' Work on the Okanogan Valley: *Small Towns and Main Streets Project*

During the fall of 2019, graduate and undergraduate landscape architecture students at the University of Idaho partnered with Otak, an interdisciplinary planning and design firm, and the Okanogan Council of Governments/Regional Transportation Planning Organization (OCOG/ORTPO) to develop design concepts for places and street corridors throughout the small towns and main streets of Okanogan County. The work was guided by instructors, Daniel Cronan, Dr. Raffaella Sini, and Mandi Roberts. This service-learning project provided a rich learning experience for students that allowed them to activate their previous knowledge while assisting communities in Okanogan County. Undergraduate and graduate students focused on eleven towns and generated potential concepts for improving the sense of place, safety, multi-modal access, walkability, functionality, environmental conditions (water quality and water management), and aesthetics. The towns that were the focus of the project included:

- Winthrop
- Brewster
- Riverside
- Nespelem and Tribal Headquarters of the Colville Confederated Tribes
- Twisp
- Okanogan
- Tonasket
- Elmer City
- Pateros
- Omak
- Oroville

Many of these towns have historical, cultural, and socio-economic features that have contributed to a unique identity in the downtown core or setting. Some of these towns are well developed with several blocks and character-defining elements. A few are simply crossroads, where the highway passes through. The studio aimed to develop an action plan that could serve as a catalyst for developing main street-highway projects including pedestrian and bicycle enhancements to create complete streets, safety enhancements to improve school walk routes, other types of improvements. Student designs aimed to propose ideas for potential improvements including:

1. Placemaking
2. Creating vibrant, walkable, economically viable downtowns
3. Historical and cultural interpretation and commemoration
4. Public spaces/pocket parks/parklets
5. Trail connections and trailhead development
6. Festival streets/shared streets/event spaces
7. Streetscapes with appropriate furnishings, materials and identity building features
8. Appropriate street trees, plants and landscape materials for the region
9. Settings, ideas, and concepts for public art
10. Stormwater management features
11. Wayfinding and gateway treatment

The following students completed a wide variety of studio projects, a portion of which are highlighted below.

### Graduate Students

- Sharhonda Brown
- Yekaterina Zinovyeva
- Bradley Dunlap

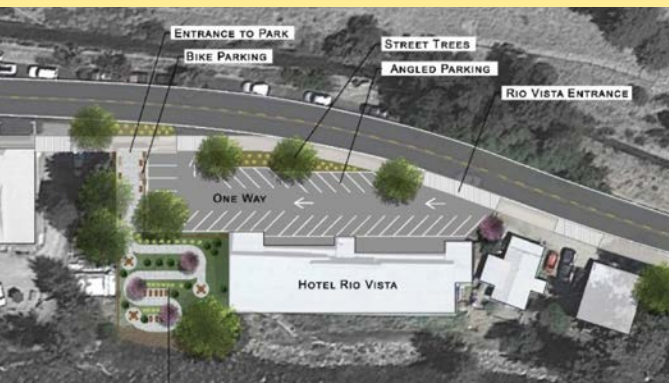
### Undergraduate Students

- Younis Al Bulushi
- Ashley Hicks
- Yuhao Du
- Ana Marcial
- Yao Feng
- Jialing Ni
- Zipeng Guo

The design concepts and illustrations presented on these pages represent only a small portion of the work completed by the students in their design studios.

The full outcomes of the students' work can be viewed at: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ex0ca1r04l2iq2j/AABtDxMNpKoz4o5a99yX54lta?dl=0>





### RIVERSIDE AVENUE IN WINTHROP

These works by students focused on revitalizing Riverside Avenue in order to create a downtown corridor that provides new opportunities for pedestrians while addressing safety concerns along the highway and improving pedestrian and bicycle access to the Spring Creek Bridge outside town. These redevelopments will create a more walkable and accessible downtown Winthrop that provides new opportunities for visitors and showcases the existing character of the town. The major goals of this design were to:

- ▷ Connect downtown Winthrop to the existing pedestrian trail and the Spring Creek Bridge.
- ▷ Adapt the existing Hotel Rio Vista parking lot to create community amenities including a new parklet, bike parking, and additional parking for the hotel, bakery, and City of Winthrop.
- ▷ Calm traffic using planting buffers, a multi-use path, and a redesigned Hotel Rio Vista parking lot that adds 10 additional spaces.



### ENHANCING THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN OKANOGAN

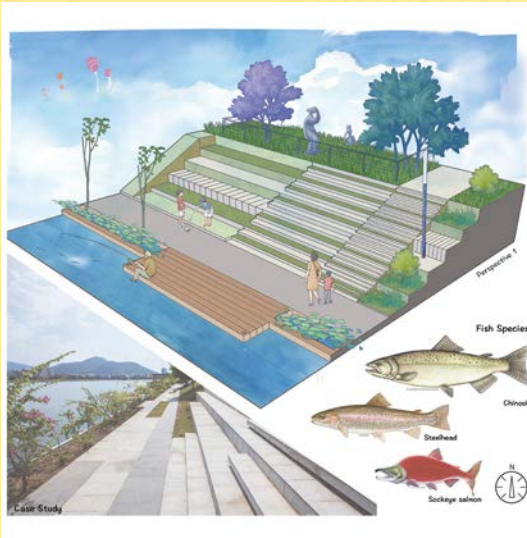
Students studied the “heart” of downtown Okanogan – specifically the 4 blocks on 2nd Avenue between Rose St and Norman St. As this area has the most businesses and continuous building frontage, a new streetscape design in this corridor would develop a visual character for the rest of the town to build upon. The goals of this design were to calm traffic, create a unique pedestrian experience and develop a more walkable downtown in Okanogan. This design used the following solutions to achieve these goals:

- ▷ The problem intersection at Oak Street and 2nd Avenue was changed to a traffic circle
- ▷ Angled crosswalks were added to direct the pedestrian’s attention towards oncoming traffic
- ▷ Planting buffers were added for both pedestrian and vehicle safety
- ▷ “Suicide lanes” (extensive turning lanes) were removed and replaced with planting medians
- ▷ Left hand turning lanes were preserved but are separated from oncoming traffic.
- ▷ Large shade trees were added in the middle of the street to combat the Urban Heat Island Effect and smaller trees were added in sidewalk planting beds to add greenery and beauty while still providing views of business fronts.



## TONASKET STREET CROSSINGS

This design provides bike and streetscape infrastructure to encourage pedestrian safety and connectivity. By using vibrant colors and eye-catching 3D patterns in the streetscape, drivers become more aware of their environment and will naturally decelerate in areas of pedestrian crossings and high foot traffic. High contrast colors and plantings will emphasize bike lanes, bulb outs, and walkways in order to slow vehicle traffic and draw attention to pedestrians. Planted safety islands will provide traffic calming and safer pedestrian crossings, while also providing stormwater collection opportunities.



## BREWSTER WATERFRONT

This project aimed to create public open space that would provide a strong connection between the residents of Brewster and the river. The park is located at the terminus of Main Avenue on the river and capitalizes on a view of the water from the street. The new park, which is located between the American Legion Building and the Brewster Public Library, would provide an access point for residents and visitors to reach the Columbia River while also creating pedestrian connections to downtown Brewster. The river access includes a large-scale staircase with seating areas and planted beds that transports visitors to the existing greenbelt. Docks and platforms provide a chance to interact with the water through fishing or admiring the view. The steps create an area for community gathering and interacting with the environment. At the top of the steps, a native plants pollinator garden attracts insects and wildlife while providing a beautiful visitor experience. Planters along the street capture stormwater for infiltration in order to protect the water quality of the river. The park provides a powerful community amenity that connects residents with the natural features of their ecosystem.



**Visitor Rest Stops with Public Restrooms, Drinking Water, Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, Visitor Information Displays, WiFi Access—Open 24/7 Year-Round**

- ▶ All Downtowns (mentioned multiple times: Mazama, Winthrop, Twisp, Methow, Pateros, Brewster, Okanogan, Omak, Tonasket, Oroville)
- ▶ Tonasket (Triangle Park; Little Learners Park)
- ▶ Between Grand Coulee and Omak
- ▶ Between Omak and Twisp
- ▶ Between Okanogan and Omak
- ▶ Between Omak and Tonasket
- ▶ Between Tonasket and Oroville
- ▶ On Desautel Pass
- ▶ On Loup Loup Pass
- ▶ Junction by Bridgeport
- ▶ Existing parks and visitor centers
- ▶ Multiple needed along SR 97 corridor
- ▶ Upon entries to the Methow valley
- ▶ Public restrooms should be available at least every 20 miles throughout the county

**Welcome/Information Kiosks/Gateway Waysides/Visitor Information Centers**

- ▶ Retain and support existing visitor centers
- ▶ Add new along SR 97, Hwy 20, Hwy 155 – near entrances into the county
- ▶ In Okanogan where SR 97 and Hwy 20 meet
- ▶ Pateros—where the Methow meets the Columbia
- ▶ Brewster
- ▶ Twisp, Winthrop, and Mazama
- ▶ At entries to towns
- ▶ Along highways/Cascade Loop
- ▶ All visitor information centers and visitor hubs should have WiFi/Internet access

- ▶ Provide picnicking facilities, trash receptacles, shade/shelter, and other visitor amenities
- ▶ Key locations—need to identify possible locations throughout the County and plan and design these visitor hubs; consider opportunities to integrate electronic information hubs/maps where feasible and maintainable
- ▶ Consider how to keep visitor centers open year-round, especially in areas of year-round recreation and activity; more volunteers? Longer hours (7 am to 7 pm) also would be helpful in peak seasons
- ▶ Need better signing to help visitors find existing and future visitor information centers and hubs







### Land Trails (Hiking/Biking/Walking)

- ▶ Between towns, such as between Omak and Okanogan along the river
- ▶ Okanogan-Omak-Fairgrounds-Sportsplex-Casino
- ▶ Central and North Okanogan County
- ▶ Twisp-to-Winthrop Trail (TWin Trail) from Twisp Park to Winthrop Barn
- ▶ Twisp to Carlton to Methow
- ▶ Trail Connecting Methow Valley with Okanogan Valley

- ▶ Along the Methow River/shorelines
- ▶ Along the Okanogan River/shorelines
- ▶ Along the Columbia River/shorelines
- ▶ Mountain bike trails (more needed)
- ▶ Pet-friendly/dog-friendly trails (for summer and winter use)
- ▶ Bicycle trails along all major highway and road corridors

### Water Trails (Kayaking/Canoeing/Floating/Boating)

- ▶ Methow Valley/Methow River; put in locations needed for access to Methow River in Winthrop (perhaps Winthrop Barn) and Twisp (perhaps Twisp River Park)
- ▶ Okanogan River
- ▶ Columbia River
- ▶ Sinlahekin River
- ▶ Wherever rivers are navigable

### Trailheads

- ▶ Trailheads need to have restrooms
- ▶ Trailheads need to be nicer/improved with information and interpretive signs/displays
- ▶ Trailhead improvements with restrooms, parking, and trail information at Chickadee Trailhead
- ▶ Needed throughout the county; North Okanogan; higher elevation trails in more remote areas; Sun Mountain
- ▶ Carter mountain
- ▶ McLaughlin Canyon
- ▶ Whitestone Mountain
- ▶ Conconully



- ▶ Omak Mountain
- ▶ Omak Lake
- ▶ Along rivers/on the rivers
- ▶ Twisp and surrounding area



## Signs and Wayfinding

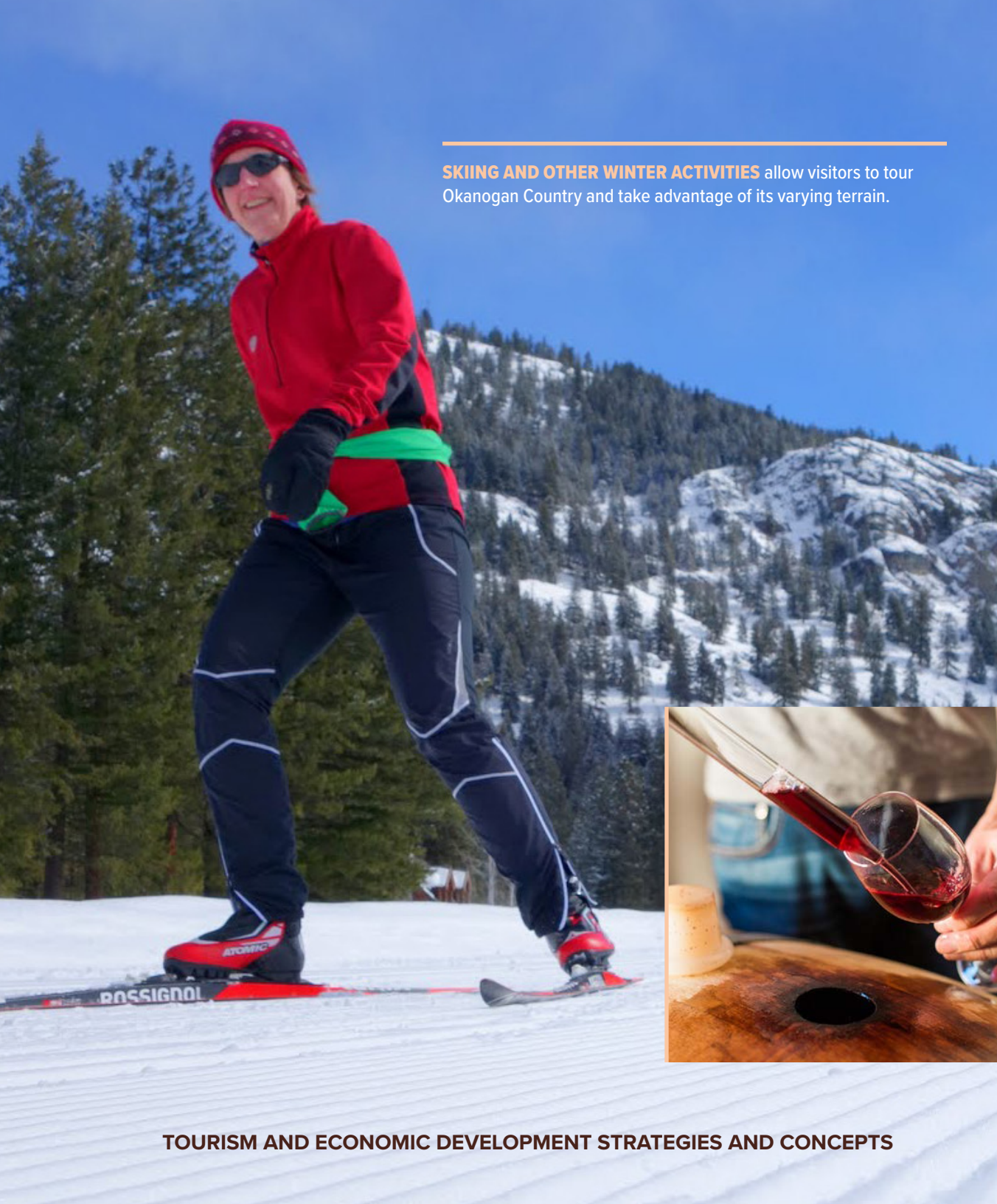
- ▶ Needed throughout the county and in particular at hubs along travel routes and in downtowns
- ▶ All downtown areas
- ▶ Exciting, attention getting signs at entrances to towns that promote tourism activities and attractions year-round
- ▶ South of Okanogan
- ▶ Between Brewster/Malott and Oroville
- ▶ Wayfinding signs to fun places/things to do in each town, such as sign for roller skating at the rink in summer; sign for walking north of Winthrop and across the bridge
- ▶ Downtown walking tours and related signs
- ▶ Provide visitor information and interpretive signs at all visitor information centers and hubs



## Other Tourism Infrastructure Needs Identified in the Planning Process

- ▶ More affordable housing for employees/seasonal housing, especially in the Methow Valley
- ▶ Affordable rental spaces for businesses and artists in towns
- ▶ Expanded cellular reception throughout Methow Valley and other areas of the county so visitors can navigate and find places, businesses
- ▶ Picnicking places along rivers with tables and trash receptacles and at rest stops/visitor hubs
- ▶ Loup Loup Lodge improvements
- ▶ More skating rinks—ice/roller
- ▶ More shopping opportunities
- ▶ Outdoor equipment and supplies
- ▶ Park development on Omak Lake
- ▶ Public recreation centers (with indoor and outdoor pools)
- ▶ Night sky park/interpretive area with information about constellations that can be seen seasonally (80 percent of Americans have never seen the Milky Way)
- ▶ Road and bridge infrastructure (Methow Valley needs)
- ▶ Bicycle rentals/bike share programs in downtowns; electric assist bicycle rentals
- ▶ Skateboard park
- ▶ Enforcement of nightly rental rules, particularly with vacation rentals
- ▶ Better maintenance and upkeep of existing hotels and motels





**SKIING AND OTHER WINTER ACTIVITIES** allow visitors to tour Okanogan Country and take advantage of its varying terrain.

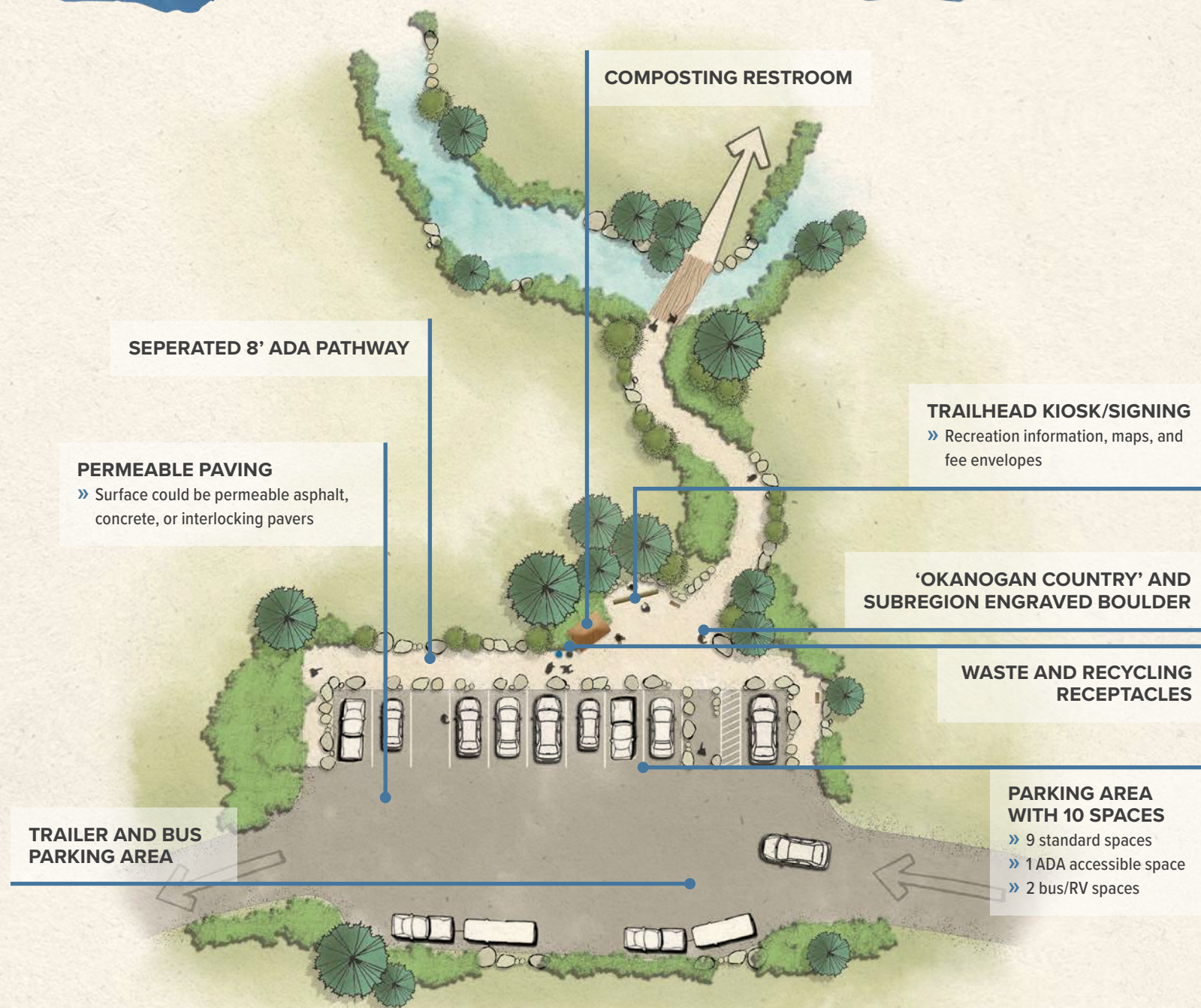
## TOURISM AND RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE CONCEPTS:

The illustrations on the following pages represent design concepts for needed tourism infrastructure. These concepts can be used with funding requests, grant applications, and other project promotional efforts to advance needed tourism infrastructure development.



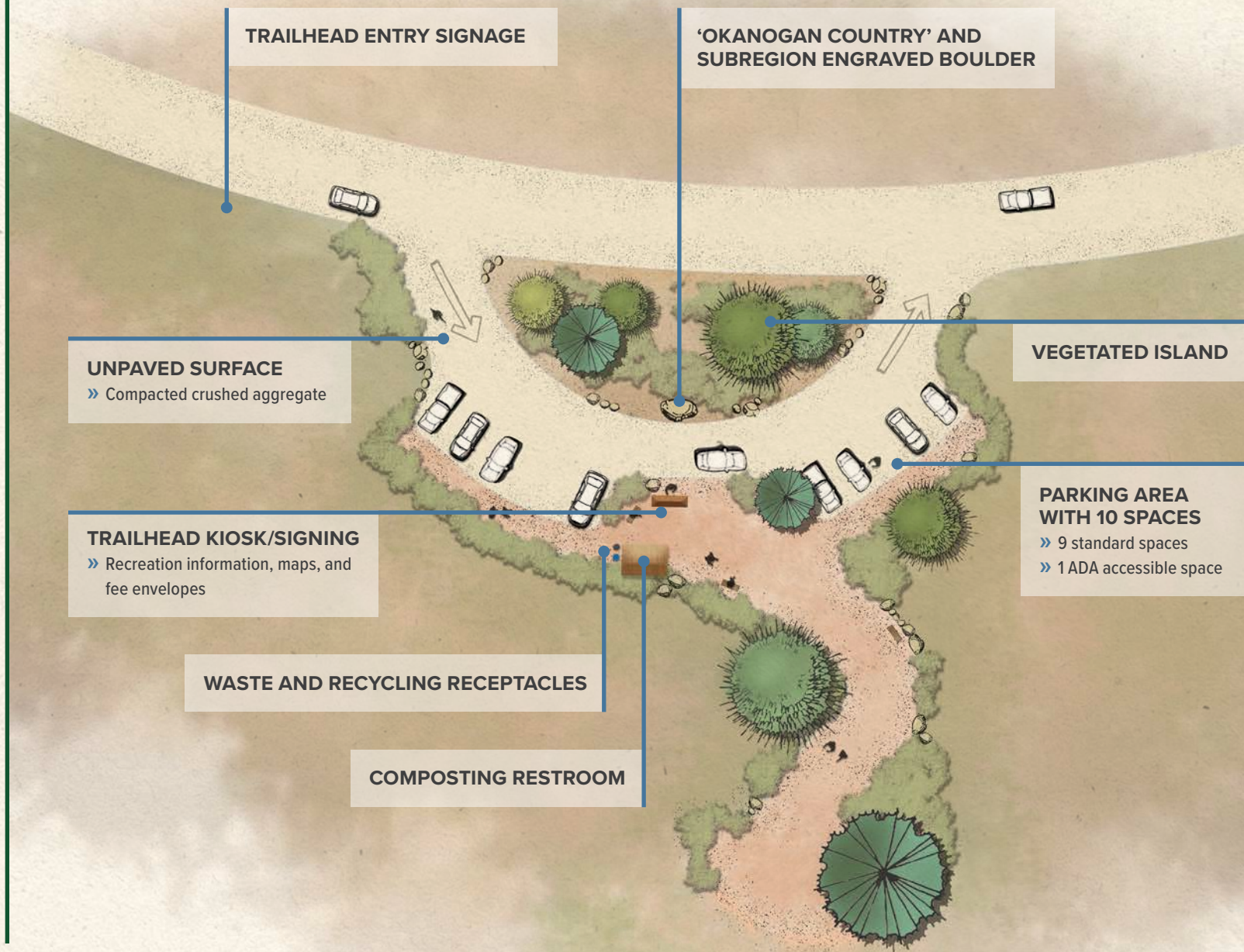


**FIGURE 30**  
**Trailhead with Paved Parking Area**



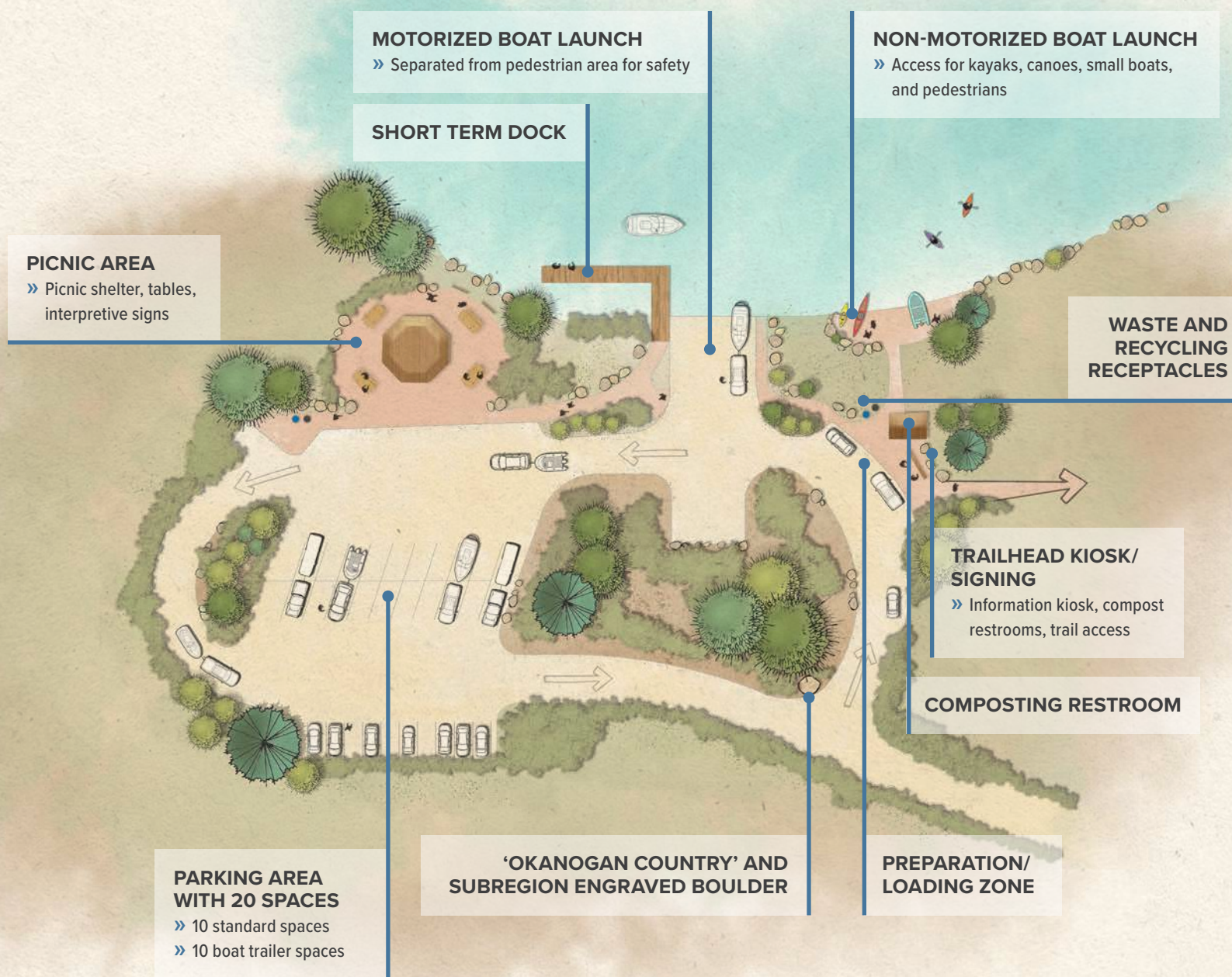


**FIGURE 31**  
**Trailhead with Non-Paved Parking Area**



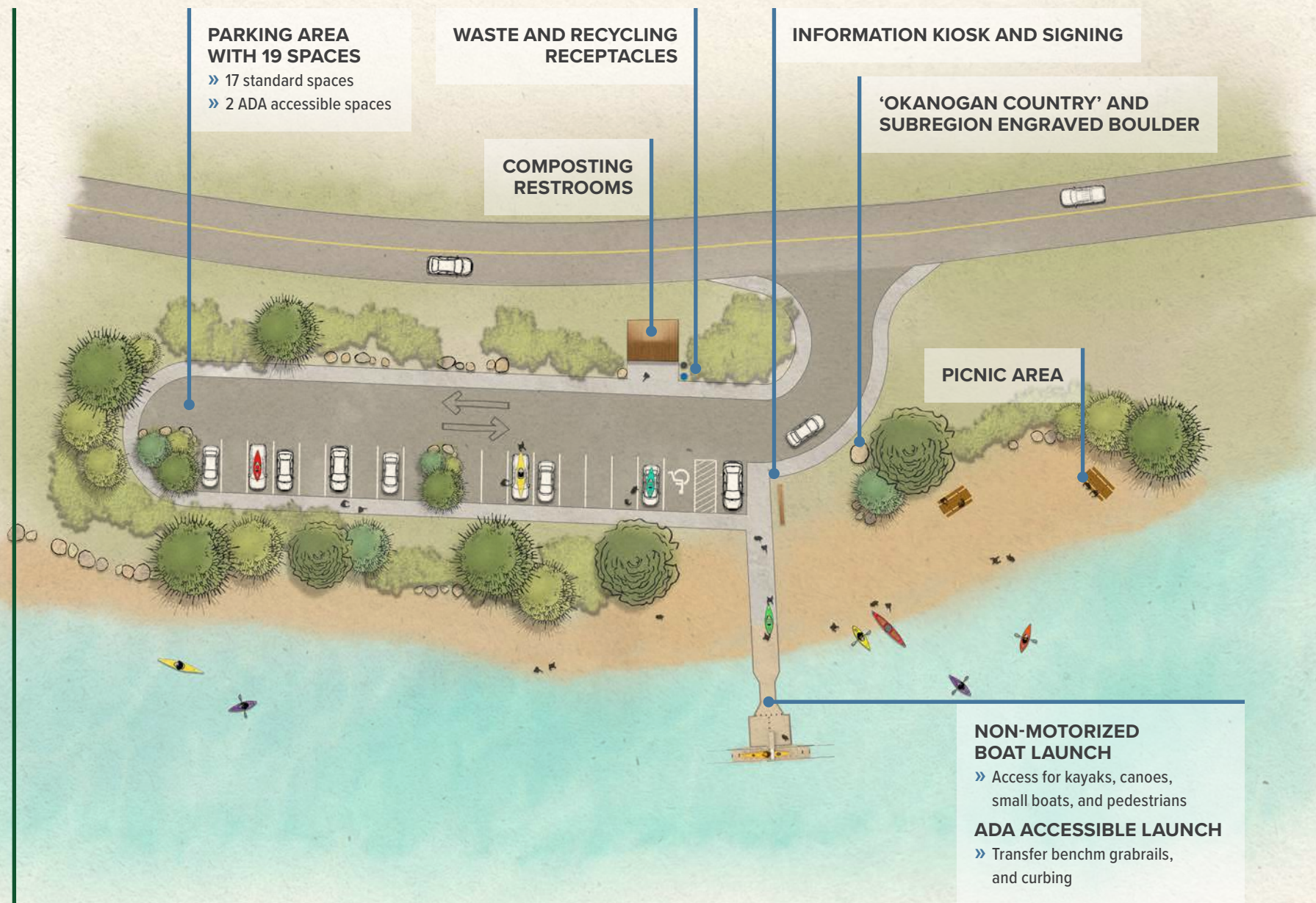


**FIGURE 32**  
**Waterfront Recreation Area**





**FIGURE 33**  
**Non-Motorized Boat—River Launch**

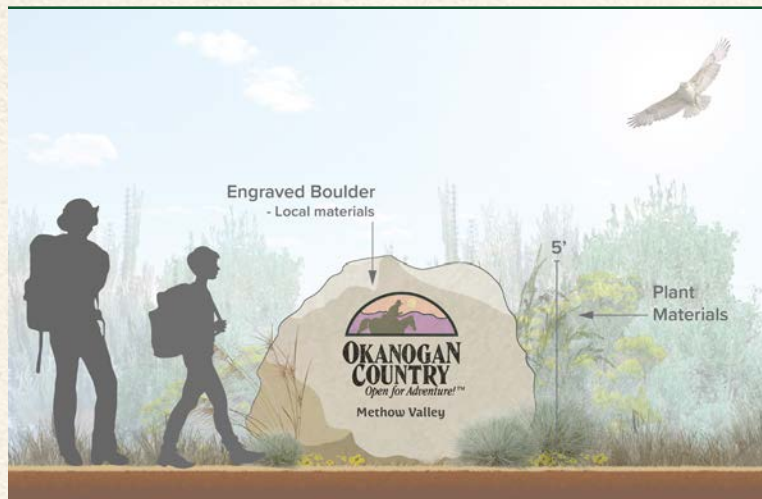




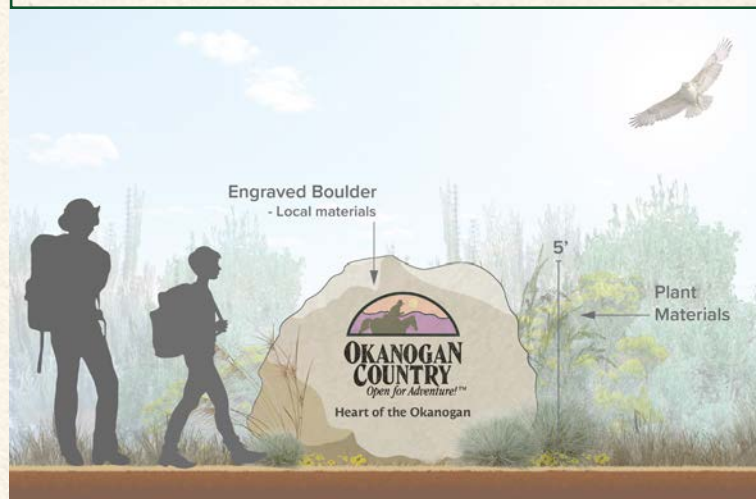
**FIGURE 34**  
**Gateway/Wayfinding Boulder Signage**

OPEN RANGE SETTING

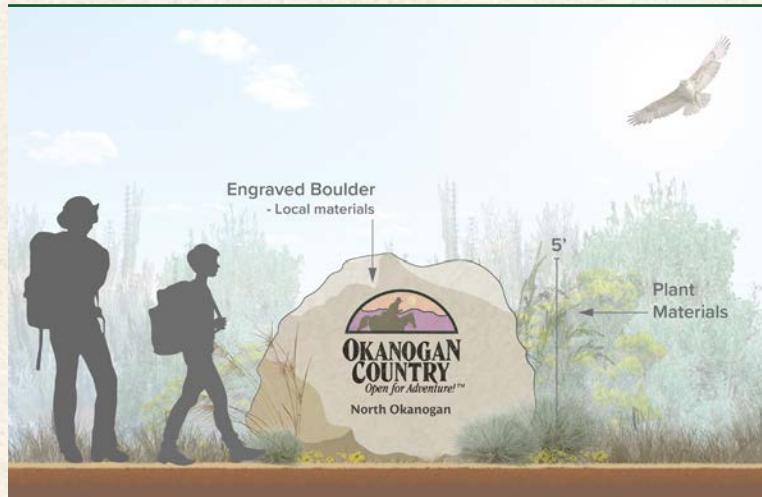
**Methow Valley**



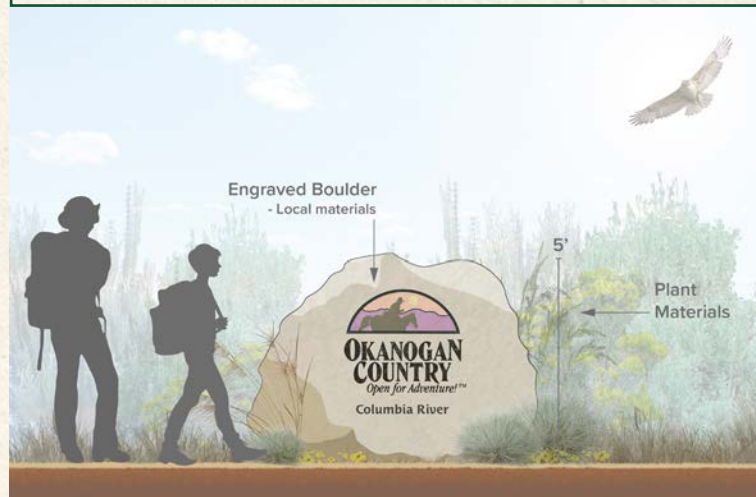
**Heart of the Okanogan**



**North Okanogan**



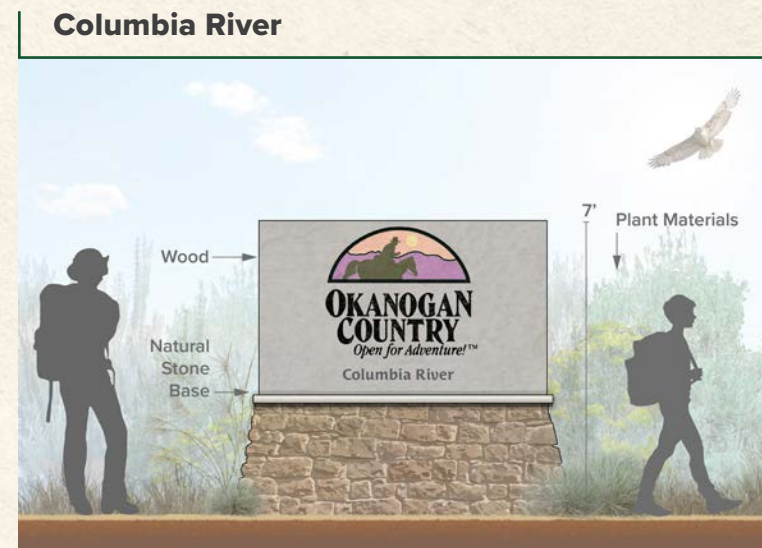
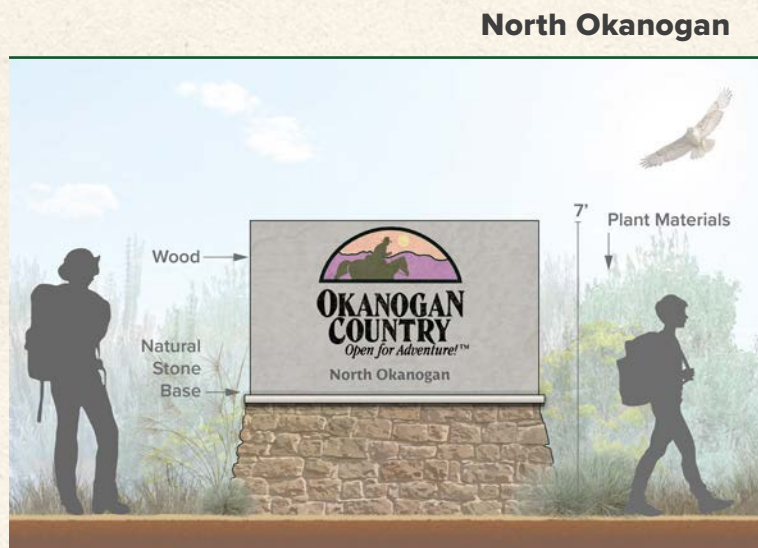
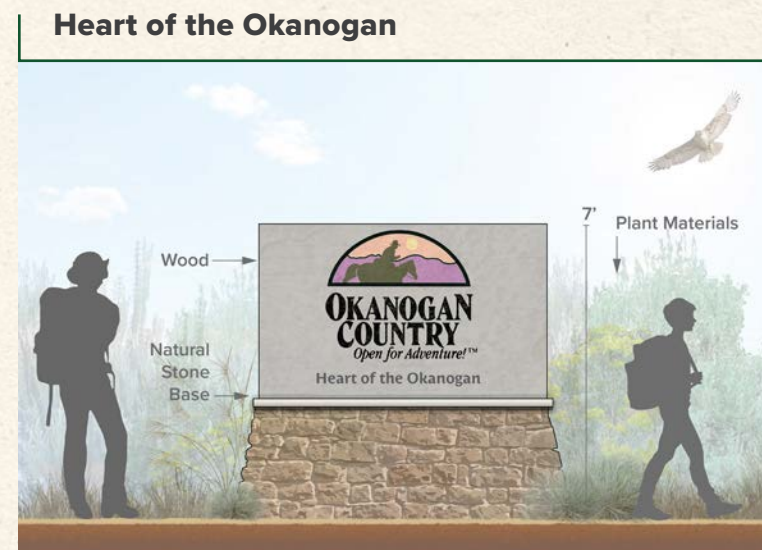
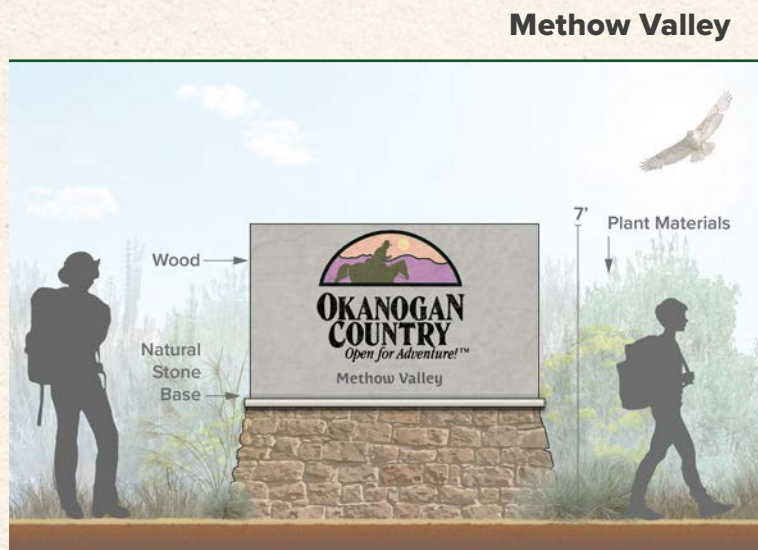
**Columbia River**





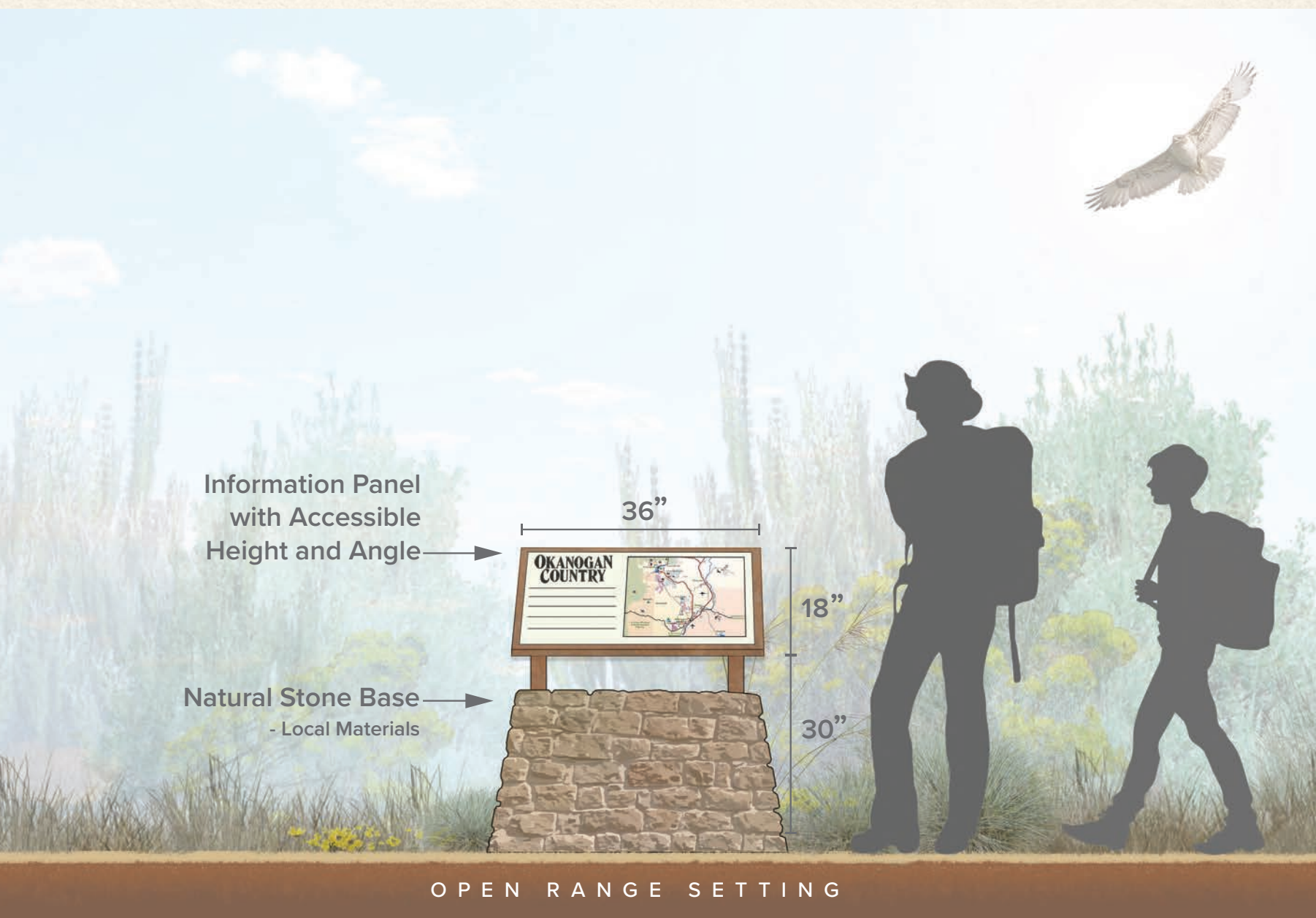
**FIGURE 35**  
**Gateway/Wayfinding Upright Sign**

OPEN RANGE SETTING





**FIGURE 36**  
**Interpretive Wayside/Informational Sign**





**FIGURE 37**  
**Informational Kiosk**





**FIGURE 38**  
**Gateway/Wayfinding Boulder Signage**  
 FOREST SETTING

**Methow Valley**



**Heart of the Okanogan**



**North Okanogan**



**Columbia River**





**FIGURE 39**  
**Gateway/Wayfinding Upright Sign**

FOREST SETTING

**Methow Valley**



**Heart of the Okanogan**



**North Okanogan**



**Columbia River**





**FIGURE 40**  
**Interpretive Wayside/Informational Sign**





**FIGURE 41**  
**Informational Kiosk**





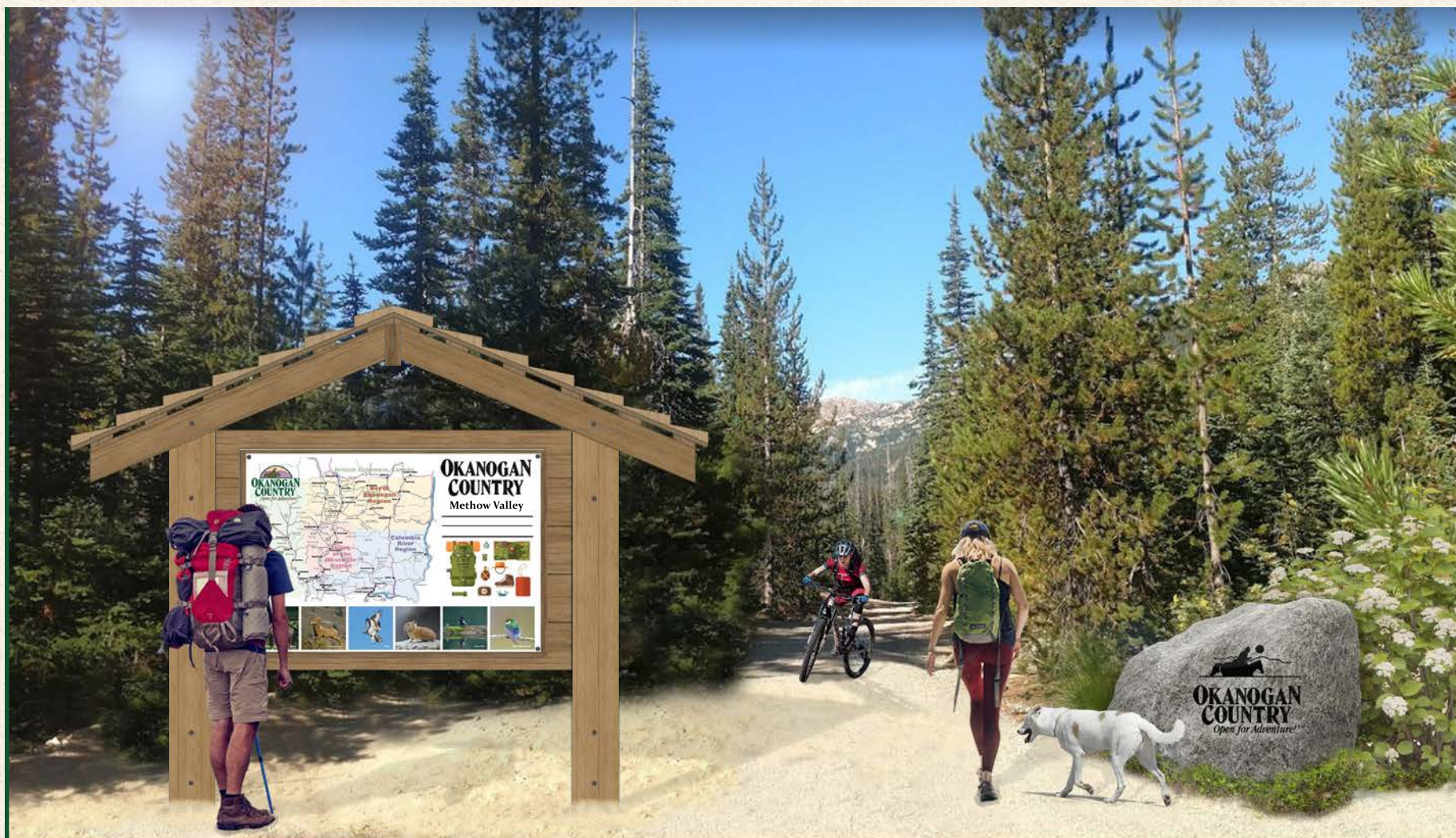
**FIGURE 42**  
**Visualization of Information Kiosk**



OPEN RANGE SETTING



**FIGURE 43**  
**Visualization of Information Kiosk**



O P E N   R A N G E   S E T T I N G





**FIGURE 44**  
**Visualization of Non-Motorized Boat Launch**



**FIGURE 45**  
**Visualization of Okanogan Country**  
**Wayfinding Boulder at Trailhead**





**FIGURE 46**  
**Visualization of Okanogan Country Wayfinding**  
**Boulder at Trailhead**





**FIGURE 47**  
**Visualization of Okanogan Country Gateway Boulder**





**FIGURE 48**  
**Visualization of Town Approach Gateway Boulder**





**FIGURE 49**  
**Visualization of Outskirts Gateway Boulder**





**FIGURE 50**  
**Old Tyme Roadside Signs—Example 1**





**FIGURE 51**  
**Old Tyme Roadside Signs—Example 2**





**FIGURE 52**  
**Old Tyme Roadside Signs—Example 3**





# 7

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## In this chapter:

- » INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTION PLAN
- » STRATEGIES, PROJECTS, AND ACTIONS IN MATRIX FORMAT



# ACTION PLAN— RECOMMENDED ACTIONS AND PROJECTS





**BIKING LAND TRAILS** With a plethora of options and open views of the spectacular scenery, mountain biking is top notch in Okanogan Country.





**Implementing this plan will strengthen tourism opportunities throughout the region.**

## OVERVIEW

*This chapter of the Tourism Destination Master Plan (TDMP) presents an action plan in a matrix format that includes recommended projects, programs, and other actions, developed based on analysis of gaps and needs identified in the planning process, as well as input from the Tourism Advisory Group and the public. These actions when implemented will help OCTC and its partners achieve the purpose, vision, and goals of the TDMP discussed in Chapter 2.*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTION PLAN

The action plan in matrix format on the following pages presents a list of recommended strategies, actions, and projects to be implemented as part of the Okanogan Country TDMP. This action plan includes proposed actions and projects that will enhance existing unique experiences throughout Okanogan Country and create new experiences. Recommendations to expand and enhance visitor facilities with information kiosks, interpretive waysides, wayfinding signs, and other amenities will enhance visitor experience and provide educational and interpretive opportunities for visitors and residents alike. Each action listed includes a recommended timeframe for implementation (near term—next 1-5 years; mid-term—next 6-10 years; and long term—beyond 10 years). Actions listed may be implemented by various entities—OCTC and/or partners, land management agencies, the county, cities, private corporations, property owners including farmers and ranchers, agriculture industry representation, recreation/outdoors organizations, and others. The matrix also lists relative costs of the actions—low (\$50,000 or less), medium (\$50,000 to \$150,000), and high (above \$150,000), as well as other pertinent considerations and recommendations related to implementation. Additional recommendations related to implementation and potential funding opportunities are included in Chapter 8.



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

## RELATIVE COST

Low: Up to \$50,000

Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

High: Over \$150,000

## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
- 2 Strengthening the Brand Identity and Character of Okanogan Country
- 3 Diversifying and Expanding Tourism Opportunities Year-Round and Related Economic Returns
- 4 Preserving and Protecting Natural and Cultural Resources
- 5 Managing Tourism in Ways that Benefit the Entire Region and Improving Community Livability and Economic Vitality
- 6 Strengthening Partnerships and Collaboration across the Region

Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>OKANOGAN COUNTRY—COUNTYWIDE ACTIONS</b>			
<b>A</b> <b>GATEWAY WAYSIDES/INFORMATION KIOSKS, WAYSIDE MARKERS, AND TRAILHEAD/SITE IMPROVEMENTS:</b> Install a system of information kiosks and wayside/wayfinding markers across the county at gateway hubs and key sites in each of the four subregions. This project would be implemented in phases and the first phase would identify locations and obtain property owner support for implementation. Information and interpretation should address regional outdoor recreation opportunities, history, wildlife, stewardship messages and the importance of protecting sensitive resources. Wayside information hubs would include an information kiosk, small parking lot, interpretive displays, and posted information including maps, events, and nearby destinations. These locations also could include self-contained (not plumbed) composting restrooms. Kiosks and wayfinding markers should be designed to be recognizable as part of Okanogan Country—see illustrations at the end of Chapter 6. If the etched boulders are used to mark specific sites across Okanogan Country, they could include branding to identify specific subregions. However, project proponents should be judicious in placing the wayfinding boulders to the gateways, major trailheads, and major attractions/destinations across the County, to avoid a proliferation of these in too many locations.	First Phase = Near Term	Medium (cost per site for design and implementation to the project proponent; could be more with site improvements, restrooms, etc.)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>B</b> <b>WATER TRAILS, LAND TRAILS, AND TRAILHEADS:</b> Work with jurisdictions to support designation of water trails on navigable stretches of the Methow, Okanogan, Similkameen, Okanogan, and Columbia Rivers and various lakes (Palmer, Blue, Omak, etc.) encourage non-motorized (canoe, kayak, etc.) use by developing accessible launch areas at water trailheads. Implement improvements so that these designated	First Phase = Near Term	Low (cost to OCTC for support; planning)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

## RELATIVE COST

Low: Up to \$50,000

Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

High: Over \$150,000

## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
- 2 Strengthening the Brand Identity and Character of Okanogan Country
- 3 Diversifying and Expanding Tourism Opportunities Year-Round and Related Economic Returns
- 4 Preserving and Protecting Natural and Cultural Resources
- 5 Managing Tourism in Ways that Benefit the Entire Region and Improving Community Livability and Economic Vitality
- 6 Strengthening Partnerships and Collaboration across the Region

Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<p>access points would have parking, information kiosks, interpretation, stewardship messages and use instructions, composting restrooms, and accessible launch facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Winthrop Barn</li> <li>» Twisp River Park/Twisp Riverfront Trail</li> <li>» Okanogan</li> <li>» Omak/Fairgrounds Area</li> <li>» Conconully</li> <li>» Tonasket</li> <li>» Oroville</li> </ul>			
<p><b>C</b> <b>DIRECTIONAL AND WAYFINDING SIGNING:</b> Work with the County, WSDOT, and cities to provide enhanced signing for directions to towns and signing that leads visitors from the main highway to town centers and destinations within towns. Install "Share the Road signs" where relevant to emphasize bicyclists and motorists sharing corridors. A key objective is to install consistent roadway and wayfinding signage that leads visitors from the main highway to destinations within towns and to key recreation and tourism destinations throughout the region.</p>	Near Term and Ongoing	<p>Low (cost to OCTC for support and coordination)</p> <p>Medium (cost to project proponent for each phase)</p>	2, 5
<p><b>D</b> <b>OFF ROAD TRAILS SIGNING:</b> Work with USFS, DNR, BLM, and other land managers to provide signage for off-road trails.</p>	Near Term and Ongoing	<p>Low (cost for project proponents for each installation phase)</p>	2, 5
<p><b>E</b> <b>WORLD CLASS OUTDOOR RECREATION:</b> Continue to promote Okanogan Country as a premiere destination for world-class outdoor recreation and an active lifestyle destination and continue to support and develop a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities across the county.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Low (cost to OCTC for ongoing promotion)</p> <p>Medium (cost to OCTC for specific ad campaigns and promotional activities—costs vary widely)</p>	1, 2, 3, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

## RELATIVE COST

Low: Up to \$50,000

Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

High: Over \$150,000

## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
- 2 Strengthening the Brand Identity and Character of Okanogan Country
- 3 Diversifying and Expanding Tourism Opportunities Year-Round and Related Economic Returns
- 4 Preserving and Protecting Natural and Cultural Resources
- 5 Managing Tourism in Ways that Benefit the Entire Region and Improving Community Livability and Economic Vitality
- 6 Strengthening Partnerships and Collaboration across the Region

Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>F</b> <b>AGRITOURISM:</b> Continue to promote and support agritourism and culinary opportunities throughout the county. Attractions would include fruit stands, wineries, local/hand-crafted food and beverages, and farm-to-table experiences.	Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC for proving ongoing support and promotion)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>G</b> <b>STEWARDSHIP AND ECOTOURISM:</b> Continue to integrate stewardship messages into visitor promotional and educational materials (Leave No Trace, fire safety, etc.); continue to work with local tourism industry representatives to emphasize ecotourism and sustainable tourism opportunities.	Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC for proving ongoing support and promotion)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>H</b> <b>ARTS AND CULTURE:</b> Continue to promote Okanogan Country as an arts and culture tourism destination.	Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC for proving ongoing support and promotion)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>I</b> <b>DOWNTOWN MAIN STREETS AND STREETSCAPES:</b> Improve main streets where highways dominate the downtown areas. Improved streetscapes would support multiple modes of transportation, pedestrian safety, universal design, wayfinding and tourism signage, traffic control measures to help slow highway traffic through town. Each downtown has the potential to draw tourism for unique reasons and experiences and improvements could help to support increased visitation in downtowns. Also work with cities, county and WSDOT to address roadway noise and traffic issues, especially where highways serve as the town main street. Where relevant, explore potential to redirect logging traffic. Also work with roadway maintenance agencies (WSDOT, county, and cities) to address roadway surfacing and noise issues (chip seal causes issues for cyclists/bicyclists) as possible.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (cost for OCTC to sign letters of support for grants and advocate for improvements)  High (cost for planning, design, and implementation by various project proponents)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

## RELATIVE COST

Low: Up to \$50,000

Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

High: Over \$150,000

## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
- 2 Strengthening the Brand Identity and Character of Okanogan Country
- 3 Diversifying and Expanding Tourism Opportunities Year-Round and Related Economic Returns
- 4 Preserving and Protecting Natural and Cultural Resources
- 5 Managing Tourism in Ways that Benefit the Entire Region and Improving Community Livability and Economic Vitality
- 6 Strengthening Partnerships and Collaboration across the Region

Action		Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
J	<p><b>CONSISTENT REFERENCE MAPPING SYSTEM FOR VISITOR USE/ DISPLAY AND POTENTIAL OKANOGAN COUNTY ATLAS UPDATES:</b> Create a consistent and comprehensive mapping system available at different scales (county, region, subregion, valley, town) and in different media (print, digital/website accessible, app). Use the recently completed Tourism Assets Database as a launching point for this mapping. OCTC Could work with Okanogan County Planning to update the old County Road Atlas and make this available digitally for public use. The map segments could be published on the OCTC and Okanogan County websites. Maps updates would show not only roads, but also trails in different colors by use type (ATV, hiking only, horse only, etc.). Printed books could be sold for a fee to cover the cost of production. (Note: check with Robin Stice at Eden Valley Guest Ranch for more details about this potential action. Perhaps a portion of tourism generated funds could go to support this position.)</p>	Near Term and Ongoing (for Updates)	<p>Medium (for initial updates/ product development)</p> <p>High (for large print quantity; could be supported by charging a fee for map booklets; a lot of people will want access online though and then could print their own pages)</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
K	<p><b>COUNTY STAFFING TO SUPPORT TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:</b> Explore the possibility with Okanogan County of hiring an employee in the planning department who could support the atlas project mentioned above under "J" and could provide ongoing updates to the mapping, as well as ongoing support to tourism and economic development related efforts across the County. Given the importance of tourism to economic development across the county and region, this position could help to support a number of tourism-related initiatives, as well as implementation of projects listed in this action plan.</p>	Near Term and Ongoing	High (as a long term position at the County)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
L	<p><b>REGIONAL TRAILS AND GREENWAYS:</b> Support ongoing planning and implementation of the regional and greenway trail systems to connect nearby towns to each other and connect downtown areas to nearby trailheads.</p>	Near Term and Ongoing	<p>Low (cost to OCTC)</p> <p>Medium (planning costs)</p> <p>High (implementation costs to for project proponents)</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

## RELATIVE COST

Low: Up to \$50,000

Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

High: Over \$150,000

## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
- 2 Strengthening the Brand Identity and Character of Okanogan Country
- 3 Diversifying and Expanding Tourism Opportunities Year-Round and Related Economic Returns
- 4 Preserving and Protecting Natural and Cultural Resources
- 5 Managing Tourism in Ways that Benefit the Entire Region and Improving Community Livability and Economic Vitality
- 6 Strengthening Partnerships and Collaboration across the Region

Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>M</b> <b>PUBLIC RESTROOMS:</b> Explore opportunities and locations to add new or improve existing public restrooms. In areas where tourism is heavy, public restrooms are critical as tourism infrastructure to help protect resources. Public restrooms can be an amenity that encourages travelers on the highway to stop and explore. Composting restrooms would be welcome at various outdoor recreation locations and trailheads where no plumbing or electricity are available. Restrooms are needed, especially in Methow Valley, where high visitation is leading to more immediate management and resource protection needs.	Near Term	Medium (per site) High (multiple sites)	3, 4, 5, 6
<b>N</b> <b>PASSPORT AND STAMP PROGRAM/CARRYING CARDS AND SIGNS FOR VISITORS:</b> Develop an Okanogan Country specific passport and stamping/stickers program and stewardship cards/signs for visitors to put on their windshields. Such as: "I support leaving no trace in Okanogan Country" and/or "Enjoying wildlife and scenery in Okanogan Country while leaving no trace"—these signs could be designed with an Okanogan Country brand identity and could represent a badge of pride/honor for visitors to carry. "Identity" cards also could be designed and provided for visitors to carry so that when they are out on county roads, property owners and law enforcement will know who they are, such as: BIRDER, FLYFISHER, HIKER... etc..."Enjoying Beautiful Okanogan Country." The passport could be made available at various visitor centers across the region, and then visitors can stamp their passport upon visits to certain sites, museums, VICs, etc. listed across all subregions.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC for initial design and development of materials)  Medium to High (cost for printing first and subsequent rounds of materials; could charge a small fee for passport to defray production costs)	1, 2, 3, 6
<b>O</b> <b>PUBLICLY AVAILABLE TOURISM DATA:</b> Develop program that gathers and publishes Okanogan tourism data annually and that can be accessed by local communities and used to support project planning and funding. OCTC could work with the state and the Washington Tourism Alliance to leverage data that it collects	Near Term and Ongoing	Medium (cost to OCTC/or could be Low if state resources can be leveraged)	4, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

## RELATIVE COST

Low: Up to \$50,000

Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

High: Over \$150,000

## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
- 2 Strengthening the Brand Identity and Character of Okanogan Country
- 3 Diversifying and Expanding Tourism Opportunities Year-Round and Related Economic Returns
- 4 Preserving and Protecting Natural and Cultural Resources
- 5 Managing Tourism in Ways that Benefit the Entire Region and Improving Community Livability and Economic Vitality
- 6 Strengthening Partnerships and Collaboration across the Region

Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
and publishes. Many people expressed an interest in being able to access data on tourism, spending, visitation, etc. on an ongoing and annual basis.			
<b>P</b> <b>EMERGENCY SUPPORT/EMERGENCY ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE:</b> Continue to support and coordinate with emergency service providers and first responders across the County and in developing emergency response protocols that can include communications and outreach to visitors during emergency events (wildfires, floods, weather advisories, etc.) Explore potential for installing emergency roadside phones (satellite based) in remote areas where service is not possible or unreliable.	Near Term	Low (cost to OCTC for ongoing coordination)  Medium (cost to project proponents for specific outreach campaigns, activities).	5
<b>Q</b> <b>DARK SKIES:</b> Support Dark Sky Initiative in the region especially for areas currently dealing with a high level of tourism and more near-term development projects. Support policy making related to dark sky ordinances that could be adopted by various Cities and by the County.	Ongoing	Low (cost for OCTC to support policy making by various jurisdictions)	4, 5
<b>R</b> <b>ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS:</b> Support agencies and energy companies in finding opportunities and locations to provide additional EV charging stations throughout the region and guide visitors to different destinations.	Mid-Term	Low (OCTC cost to advocate for these)  High (cost to project proponents)	3, 5, 6
<b>S</b> <b>PROMOTIONAL/AD CAMPAIGNS, STRATEGIC PLANNING, AND OTHER CREATIVE ACTIVITIES:</b> OCTC will continue to support and fund various promotional and advertising campaigns related to tourism, carrying forward current successful efforts over time. Key stewardship messages can be integrated into these promotional efforts. OCTC will continue to focus on targeted marketing to encourage specific activities – such as promotional campaigns geared to key groups such as birders, water trail enthusiasts, flyfishers, bouldering recreationists, etc.	Ongoing	Varies; continuation of current OCTC budgeting into the future	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

## RELATIVE COST

Low: Up to \$50,000

Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

High: Over \$150,000

## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
- 2 Strengthening the Brand Identity and Character of Okanogan Country
- 3 Diversifying and Expanding Tourism Opportunities Year-Round and Related Economic Returns
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- 5 Managing Tourism in Ways that Benefit the Entire Region and Improving Community Livability and Economic Vitality
- 6 Strengthening Partnerships and Collaboration across the Region

Action		Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>T</b>	<b>SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE TOURISM PROMOTION AND AWARDS PROGRAM:</b> This idea is inspired by the World Responsible Tourism Awards program, which the Thompson Okanogan Region won an award from in 2020. OCTC will continue to expand emphasis on sustainable tourism ethics and activities and a specific awards program could help in recognizing member-specific efforts and progress. A variety of awards could be considered (most water-conscious, energy conservation, best outreach to the public, etc.) An annual awards program could be coupled with a silent auction supported by member donations to raise funds for special tourism initiatives.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (for OCTC to plan and set up program)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>U</b>	<b>SUPPORT TO REGIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS:</b> Partner with and support all the scenic byways of the region—Cascade Loop, Okanogan Trails, and Coulee Corridor, and support implementation of individual byway/corridor management plans.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (for OCTC to provide ongoing advocacy and support) Low to High (for specific project implementation by project proponents)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

## METHOW VALLEY SUBREGION

<b>V</b>	<b>LOUP LOUP:</b> Explore opportunities to partner with the Loup Loup Ski Bowl on events, amenities, or promotions that benefit multiple areas. The Loup Loup is a valuable existing asset that ties the county together.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for partnering on promotions) Medium (for amenities and improvements for the project proponent)	1, 3, 5, 6
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# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

## RELATIVE COST

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## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

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Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>W</b> <b>CASCADE LOOP SCENIC HIGHWAY TRAILHEAD IMPROVEMENTS, RESTROOMS, AND OTHER PROJECTS:</b> Work with the NPS, USFS, and other agencies to implement much needed trailhead improvements at key locations of the mountain passes (for example, the Washington Pass restroom needs to be operational and more user friendly restrooms are needed at all three passes. Additional parking and hostels are needed for hikers, climbers, and other visitors.) Evaluate and select locations to install Cascade Loop Scenic Highway interpretive/information kiosks in this subregion (potential locations to be determined) as part of implementing the Cascade Loop Scenic Byway Plan.	Near Term to Mid-Term	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/signing letters of support)  Low to High (for various needed improvements for the project proponents)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>X</b> <b>GATEWAY TO THE NORTH CASCADES:</b> Promote the valley as the eastern gateway to the North Cascades; provide links to outdoor recreation information in guide.	Ongoing	Low (OCTC promotional)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>Y</b> <b>TWISP RIVERFRONT TRAIL:</b> Support Twisp riverfront trail development.	Near Term	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/signing letters of support)  Medium to High (for project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>VALLEY SIGNING, WAYFINDING, ORIENTATION:</b> Enhance signing to provide information and orientation to visitors entering the most highly used hiking areas of the national forest and national park lands, including those up the Twisp River valley. This signing needs to match national park/national forest style and quality of the west side.		Low (to OCTC for advocacy/signing letters of support)  Medium to High (for project implementation by the project proponent)	4, 5



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

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Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

High: Over \$150,000

## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
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Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>BIKE LANES/SHARED USE PATHS:</b> Work with WSDOT to implement continuous bike lanes and/or separated shared use paths (paralleling the route) throughout this subregion of the Cascade Loop Scenic Highway. The first step of this action could be a nonmotorized transportation analysis/study for the Cascade Loop to identify missing gaps in bicycling facilities.	Near Term	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/signing letters of support) Medium to High (for project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 3, 5, 6
<b>WINTHROP DOWNTOWN MOBILITY:</b> Support Winthrop mobility planning to improve parking, pedestrian facilities, and connectivity throughout Winthrop.	Near Term	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/signing letters of support) Medium to High (for project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 3, 5, 6
<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING:</b> Support affordable housing options that would be accessible to seasonal or year-round employees of the service industry (potentially loans/grants for rural communities). Support development of a Methow Valley workforce housing analysis and plan to support strategies for affordable housing implementation and potential resources for development and funding. Key resources could include Methow Housing Trust (a non-profit community land trust located in Winthrop, WA, which intends to build 35-50 permanently affordable, resale restricted homes for eligible Methow Valley residents in Winthrop in the years 2021-2029), as well as the Methow Valley Housing Solutions Taskforce, which is currently researching additional rental, homeownership, and programmatic affordable housing solutions for implementation in Methow Valley (where wages are falling behind rapidly increasing real estate and rental costs). Eventually, a countywide affordable housing assessment may be needed.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (for OCTC to support ongoing efforts) Medium (for planning by project proponents) High (for implementation by project proponents)	3, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

Near Term: Next 5 Years

Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

Long Term: Beyond 10 Years

## RELATIVE COST

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Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

High: Over \$150,000

## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

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Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>METHOW VALLEY INFORMATION AND CULTURAL CENTER:</b> Support this project being spearheaded locally to move the interpretive center to the building at 90 Twisp Highway to create more of a gateway for tourists and locals to discover the history and culture of the Methow Valley and beyond. This will be a great place to promote other areas of the county and relieve some of the pressure and focus on the Methow Valley during peak seasons. The project proponent will be seeking funding and resources to provide signage, outdoor restrooms, adequate parking for all modes of transportation, an Internet hotspot, interpretive and visitor information (use of QR codes), etc.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (for OCTC advocacy, letter of support) Medium (for planning by project proponent) High (for design and implementation by project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>PROMOTE SHOULDER SEASONS:</b> Continue to promote shoulder seasons to get more visitors at different times of the year and alleviate some pressure on the busy season.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low to Medium (for OCTC driven promotions)	1, 3, 5, 6

## HEART OF THE OKANOGAN SUBREGION

<b>EXPAND/DIVERSIFY LODGING:</b> Support diversifying and expanding lodging opportunities in this subregion.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC to support/ advocate for opportunities) High (cost to developers/ project proponents)	3, 5, 6
<b>OKANOGAN RIVER TRAIL:</b> Evaluate and implement in phases a land and water trail system along the Okanogan River that connects Okanogan and Omak (Eastside Park in Omak to Island Park in Okanogan) Support system with neighborhood trailheads and water access points.	Phase I = Near Term	Low (for OCTC to support ongoing efforts) Medium (for planning by project proponents) High (for implementation by project proponents)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

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Medium: \$50,000 to \$150,000

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## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

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Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>SIGNING FROM MAIN ROAD TO ISLAND PARK TRAIL:</b> Improve signage/wayfinding from the main road to Island Park trail in Okanogan. Promote year-round recreation at Island Park, hiking and cross country skiing.	Near Term	Low to Medium (for project proponent)	1, 3, 5, 6
<b>HERITAGE TOURISM/MATSURA MURALS/PHOTOS:</b> Promote and preserve heritage tourism destinations. Matsura murals and photos, outdoor sculpture gardens, art galleries, county courthouse.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low to Medium (for OCTC support and work by project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>ARTS DISTRICT:</b> Explore potential to designate an Arts District in Okanogan/Omak.	Near Term	Low (cost to OCTC for promotion and support) Medium (cost to project proponent to plan and implement district designation)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>CONCONULLY OFF ROAD TRAILS:</b> Promote Conconully town center as a trailhead for off-road recreation and as a destination for off-road activities with 540 miles of high-quality trails.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC and local proponents for promotions)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>CONCONULLY WATER RECREATION:</b> Explore state partnerships and evaluate water quality improvement projects to enhance water recreation opportunities in Conconully.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC and local proponents for promotions) Medium to High (cost to project proponents for implementing recreation improvements)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>CONCONULLY INFORMATION KIOSK:</b> Install an informational kiosk in downtown Conconully that provides permanent and temporary information on town attractions.	Near Term	Low (cost to project proponent for implementation)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

## TIMEFRAME

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Mid Term: 6 to 10 Years

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## BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
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Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>NORTH OKANOGAN SUBREGION</b>			
<b>EXPAND/DIVERSIFY LODGING:</b> Support policies and efforts to diversify and expand lodging opportunities in this subregion.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC to support/ advocate for opportunities) High (cost to developers/ project proponents)	3, 5, 6
<b>HERITAGE TOURISM DESTINATION:</b> Promote North Okanogan as a heritage tourism destination. Use heritage tourism tool kits, resources, and case studies from the National Trust for Historic Preservation (as well as examples in Washington such as Historic Friday Harbor or Seattle Cultural Heritage) to improve and promote local preservation programs.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC for support/ promotion) Medium (for planning and specific promotional campaigns/ designations to project proponents)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>ACCESS TO WILDLIFE AND SCENERY:</b> Promote North Okanogan as an outdoor recreation destination focused on wildlife and scenic experiences (bird watching and other wildlife viewing opportunities, loop drives, fall colors).	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for promotional efforts)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION:</b> Support small businesses that would promote downtown revitalization, support a more diverse lodging inventory, and support recreation destinations and events.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/ signing letters of support) Medium to High (for project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

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Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>OROVILLE/PACIFIC NORTHWEST TRAIL:</b> Continue to promote Oroville as a major stop along the Pacific Northwest Trail.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/ signing letters of support) Medium to High (phased projects)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>OROVILLE DOWNTOWN PARK:</b> Improve and promote Oroville downtown park as a rest area where through travelers can stop and explore the town.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/ signing letters of support) Medium to High (for phased project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>EAST LAKE OSOYOOS LAKE TRAIL TO/FROM OROVILLE:</b> Support work by others related to project planning, design, implementation, and ongoing maintenance.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/ signing letters of support)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6

## COLUMBIA RIVER SUBREGION

<b>EXPAND/DIVERSIFY LODGING:</b> Support diversifying and expanding lodging opportunities in this subregion.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC to support/ advocate for opportunities) High (cost to developers/ project proponents)	3, 5, 6
<b>BREWSTER AND PATEROS CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES AND FESTIVALS:</b> Continue to promote and market the festivals and events in Pateros and Brewster such as the Apple Pie Jamboree. Along with cultural opportunities (Downtown Brewster). Expand marketing and promotion of events using regional and state tourism councils.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for promotions, support) Medium (for special events and activities by proponents)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



# Projects and Actions to Support Ongoing Tourism in Okanogan Country

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Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>PATEROS AS GATEWAY:</b> Promote Pateros as a gateway between the three valleys; Okanogan, Methow, and Chelan, as well as a less congested basecamp for winter recreation where visitors could stay and, during the day travel up the valley for recreation opportunities.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for promotions/support) Medium to High (for site improvements by project proponents)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>PATEROS CITY HALL MUSEUM:</b> Improve City Hall Museum in Pateros and promote as heritage destination.	Near Term to Mid-Term	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/signing letters of support) Medium to High (for phased project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>PATEROS WATER TRAIL:</b> Promote the open, still waters of Pateros as a destination for non-motorized water recreation. Look for local business opportunities that would support this amenity such as kayak and paddle board rentals.	Near Term to Mid-Term	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/signing letters of support) Medium to High (for phased project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>PATEROS DOWNTOWN:</b> Explore downtown redevelopment and/or infill opportunities for downtown Pateros to improve the variety of businesses as well as connectivity (both physical and perceived) between northwest Pateros, the highway, downtown Pateros, and the waterfront.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/signing letters of support) Medium to High (for phased project)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6



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Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
<b>PATEROS PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE BRIDGE:</b> Explore potential for a pedestrian/bicycle bridge across the highway in Pateros. This could be an iconic structure for the town and provide a safe, attractive connection.	Mid-Term to Long Term	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/ signing letters of support) Medium (for planning) High (for phased project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>PATEROS-BREWSTER SHARED USE PATH:</b> Develop a feasibility study for a trail connection between Pateros and Brewster that proposes different alternatives given constraints such as private property, railroad, etc.	Mid-Term	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/ signing letters of support)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>BASS FISHING:</b> Continue to promote the area as a bass fishing destination. Explore potential events and partnerships.	Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC and local proponents for marketing and promotions)	1, 3, 5, 6
<b>RIVER WALK TRAIL IN BREWSTER:</b> Support further development of River Walk Trail in Brewster.	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC for advocacy/ signing letters of support) Medium to High (for phased project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
<b>COULEE DAM AREA:</b> Work with federal land managers/agencies in Coulee Dam Area to identify recreation and cultural sites in need of rehabilitation (Old North Marina site, Model Dam area).	Near Term and Ongoing	Low (to OCTC and local proponents for advocacy/ signing letters of support, coordination, and planning)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



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Action	Timeframe	Relative Cost	Benefits of Implementation
		Medium to High (for phased project implementation by the project proponent)	
<b>CANDY POINT TRAILHEAD:</b> Improve Candy Point Trailhead in Coulee Dam with signage and clear public access.	Near Term	Low (to OCTC and local proponents for advocacy/ signing letters of support, coordination, and planning)  Medium to High (for project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6,
<b>CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM:</b> Promote and improve cultural heritage destinations on the reservation of the Colville Confederated Tribes and in the Coulee Dam area with signage. Work with tribal representatives to identify and support implementation of heritage tourism opportunities.	Ongoing	Low (cost to OCTC and others for promotion and support)  Medium (cost for specific initiatives and improvements by project proponents)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
<b>COULEE DAM INFORMATION FACILITIES:</b> Support Coulee Dam area visitor information facilities, including seeking funding and support for operational expenses.	Ongoing	Low (to OCTC and local proponents for advocacy/ signing letters of support, coordination, and planning)  Medium to High (for project implementation by the project proponent)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6



A photograph of two women and two dogs on a grassy hillside. The woman on the left has blonde hair in a ponytail and wears a light blue long-sleeved shirt. The woman on the right has curly brown hair and wears a blue tank top with a plaid shirt tied around her waist; she has a colorful tattoo on her left arm. They are both smiling and looking down at two dogs. One dog is white and the other is brown. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a cloudy sky.

**WIDE OPEN SPACES** of Okanogan County are enjoyed by humans and their furry friends alike.

In addition to the projects and actions listed in the previous pages, refer to Chapter 6 for recommended initiatives and strategies related to communications and outreach to be led by OCTC and its partners to support ongoing tourism promotion and economic development. Design concepts presented at the end of Chapter 6 illustrate how several of the actions above could be implemented at various sites.



# 8

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## In this chapter:

- » PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION
- » ONGOING OUTREACH AND COORDINATION
- » BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTING THIS PLAN
- » POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- » STEPS TO PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION
- » PLAN MONITORING AND UPDATING



# IMPLEMENTATION



**CONCONULLY JAMBOREE** is a popular annual festival that brings many visitors to the area.







**The success of this plan will be contingent upon collaboration among the region's tourism partners.**

## OVERVIEW

*This chapter of the Tourism Destination Master Plan (TDMP) presents recommendations related to strengthening and expanding partnerships to support plan implementation, as well as for ongoing outreach and coordination across Okanogan County. Benefits of implementing the TDMP are summarized. Various funding opportunities are described, along with a few successful examples of tourism development. This chapter also discusses how to monitor implementation and update this plan over time.*

## PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION



Successful implementation of this plan will be contingent upon the commitment of multiple partners and stakeholders throughout the region to take on actions and projects, pursue funding opportunities, and champion efforts through to completion. Collaboration between multiple partners will be advantageous in leveraging resources and funding for projects. For example, grant programs often award higher rankings to projects that have multiple partners and widespread support.

As the coordinating organization for regional tourism, the Okanogan County Tourism Council (OCTC) will take the lead in monitoring



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### Advice for Successful Plan Implementation...

*Publicize your efforts with an eye toward continuously expanding your base of support. Celebrate the progress as well as the completion of each action. Success breeds support and future success.”*

—Riverwork Book, National Park Service

implementation of this plan and working with partners to move strategies, actions, and projects forward. OCTC will inspire these partners and stakeholders to take specific projects and actions forward. OCTC can provide the leadership and guidance, but this plan will need to be implemented through the commitment and energy of many entities. There will need to be a focused effort to find resources and funding to move projects forward. Refer to the potential funding opportunities summarized later in this chapter. Various agencies, property owners, business representatives, and other groups will need to step up and take on projects, following them through to completion.





# ONGOING OUTREACH AND COORDINATION

## Broadening Interest—Bringing in More Stakeholders and Partners to Support Specific Needs of the Okanogan County Tourism Council

In addition to the representatives from throughout the region who have guided development of this plan, there are many other existing and potential partners who can help with ongoing tourism management and implementation. A variety of special interest groups may be able to provide support and resources for special projects and activities. As the baby boom generation reaches retirement age, more people with in-depth knowledge and experience are becoming available as a volunteer base. In addition, OCTC may be able to draw in more corporate and agency partners to support specific initiatives. Leveraging these resources can help stretch the organizational capacity of the OCTC.

In order to learn more about the stakeholders of the region and their particular interests and skills, it will be important to continue to involve a broad spectrum of interests in ongoing engagement activities as strategies, actions, and projects are implemented. It will also be important to consider who hasn't been involved to date that should be, and to engage them in future activities. There may be some valuable and important partners out there ready and waiting to help, such as:

- » Corporate and agricultural industry interests who have business enterprises and operations in the region
- » Public and private land owners and managers (can identify names from tax records) including agencies, farmers, and others who may be interested in promoting certain stewardship messages
- » Additional business, tourism, and recreation interest groups (such as chambers of commerce)
- » Local governments and community associations dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in each subregion
- » Representatives from the Colville Confederated Tribes
- » Organizations dedicated to specific intrinsic qualities of the corridor (such as historical societies, local museums, outdoor recreational organizations, local or regional festival organizers, garden clubs, scouting groups, etc.)





These stakeholders and others can play an important role in the future of Okanogan Country, becoming valuable, integral partners. They can be invited to help steer and/or to support specific projects. Working together with diverse interests to achieve commonly desired goals can be inspirational and motivational.

Specific task forces and/or subcommittees can

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**Working together to achieve commonly desired goals can be motivational.**

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be formed over time to support certain activities as directed under the “umbrella” organization of the OCTC. These groups could potentially focus on tasks such as:

- » Outreach and Engagement
- » Grant Writing/Fundraising
- » Project Implementation (with individual subcommittees for each project/activity)
- » Governmental/Political Liaisons
- » Business, Agricultural, Recreation and Tourism Liaison(s)—who could meet regularly with important industry representatives— including local business groups, agricultural interests, recreation and tourism representatives, and other important stakeholders
- » Membership Development
- » Historic and Cultural Resource Preservation
- » Scenic and Natural Resource Preservation
- » Special Events/Annual Event

## Engaging More Volunteers

The first step is asking for help. Research shows that being asked to volunteer makes a substantial difference in peoples’ willingness to give their time. If asked, 63 percent will volunteer, compared to 25 percent who volunteer without being asked.

When engaging volunteers in projects and activities, it is important to clearly define expectations and reach mutual agreement on these. Be prepared to encourage the prospective volunteers and answer their questions. Let them know how much their help is appreciated and what the end results will be from their dedicated efforts.

*Before making a commitment, volunteers may want to know:*

- » *What are the goals and desired outcomes of the assignment?*
- » *How long will they need to be involved and how many hours of their time will be needed?*
- » *Is the need for a one-time assignment or an ongoing assignment?*
- » *What skills are needed to support the assignment?*
- » *What are the benefits of their involvement?*



## Ongoing Public, Community, and Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach

Ongoing public participation and community involvement will be essential to the success of future tourism planning, management, and implementation. The OCTC will continue to guide efforts. However, at key decision-making points and important milestones in the future, there also will be a need for broader community input and involvement. Citizens and special interest groups throughout the region's communities can provide valuable information and input. They are the local experts who can describe in detail the existing conditions, problems, and potential solutions that are best suited to their specific situations.

## Tools and Activities for Successful Ongoing Public and Stakeholder Involvement

There are several effective tools and activities that can be used to engage and inform the public and key stakeholders as listed on the following pages. The recommendations about how and when to use these public and stakeholder involvement tools are guidelines only. The ongoing program for Okanogan County should be tailored to fit the preferences and needs of the partners and communities in each subregion. Keep in mind that summer vacation and holiday schedules may impact meeting attendance and participation levels.

With future project implementation, it may be necessary to hold multiple public meetings given that people live in different communities. Workshop announcements should be placed in local and regional newspapers, on multiple websites, and announced on social media venues (Facebook, Instagram, etc.). Workshops should be held at convenient and accessible locations within the communities and at convenient times. Inviting the general public to participate through workshops will help ensure that community members and stakeholders are not left out of the process.

Keep in mind that people lead busy lives, and it may be difficult for some to attend public meetings and workshops because family responsibilities and personal schedules take priority. Sometimes, public meetings and workshops are not well attended if the issues being discussed are not controversial. For these reasons, it may be necessary to reach out to the public in other ways besides meetings. Websites, social media, and email lists are a good way to reach out.



To find common ground and move forward with design of solutions, it may be necessary to help certain community groups see the points of view of other community groups or stakeholders. One of the best methods to accomplish this is bringing all interested groups together for workshops and charrettes to discuss issues and work together on resolutions. Workshops





may focus on planning or design for specific projects. Workshops can be conducted to tackle key issues or define priorities. In a “forum setting” people are able to better understand the concerns and perspectives of others. It is still important to understand and address the specific needs of each person or group, and it may be necessary to hold separate meetings with individuals and special interest groups, but the workshop setting can be very effective for broad and diverse community participation. With safe, social distancing practices during the pandemic, more online public workshops are being held effectively using a variety of web-based platforms. This could be a successful approach to support project implementation across a broad regional geography such as Okanogan Country.

Another successful way to ensure participation is to attend meetings that are already set-up in the communities, such as local chambers of commerce, tourism groups, service and environmental organizations, public agency boards and committees, etc. This method can be successful because information can be conveyed and obtained through meetings that are already attended by a group of devoted volunteers or community representatives, rather than adding another meeting to their busy schedules.

Presentations to elected officials and commissions can also provide opportunities for input and involvement in tourism activities, as well as for building awareness and gathering support for needed improvements. Work sessions with senior citizens and school groups provide additional opportunities for community outreach and obtaining insightful input. Projects can be incorporated into school projects for students or preservation projects can be a part of high school curriculum or after school activities. Also keep in mind that there may be a variety of resources in communities including volunteers, in-kind support, gifts of materials, printing, and other contributions that can be tapped into as part of a strong program of public and stakeholder involvement and outreach.

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**With safe, social distancing practices during the pandemic, more online workshops are being held.**

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## Recommended Public and Stakeholder Involvement Tools and Activities to Support Ongoing Tourism Management and Plan Implementation

TOOL/ACTIVITY	PURPOSE/MOST OFTEN USED FOR	SUGGESTED TIME INTERVAL
<b>NEWSLETTERS (ELECTRONIC)</b>	To provide updates and information on a regular basis to tourism interests (general membership) as well as key partners and stakeholders.	Quarterly
<b>NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	Press releases and articles are developed to promote and market places, activities, and events, as well as to announce recent accomplishments, publicize important meetings, and engage diverse interests. For Okanogan County, OCTC already acts as a media liaison and provides article suggestions and press releases related to organization activities.	Seasonally; as events and activities change and the need is warranted
<b>NEWS/RADIO/CLOSED CAPTION AND CABLE TV ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	Can be used to summarize events, and/or to promote tourism themes and key messages. Can be inexpensively made and posted to local online radio stations or internet sites such as Youtube.com, Facebook.com, twitter.com, or other social media sites.	As special events and activities warrant the need
<b>CORE TEAM/BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS</b>	Meetings held on a regular basis to conduct the business of OCTC, direct management and implementation efforts, appoint committees, check in on project progress, and provide updates from partners. Development of specific agendas and recording of notes are important to support these meetings. The OCTC Board meets monthly.	Monthly
<b>OVERALL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS/ANNUAL EVENT</b>	Meetings to inform and involve the entire membership, which can often take the form of an annual event or symposium. Membership may be invited to vote on important decisions or actions. These can also be correlated with fundraising activities, special events, educational programs, tours, etc. and often provide opportunities to solicit support and gain input. Again, development of specific agendas and itineraries is important, as well as documentation of input and comments received.	Annually or semi-annually



## Recommended Public and Stakeholder Involvement Tools and Activities to Support Ongoing Tourism Management and Plan Implementation, *Continued*

TOOL/ACTIVITY	PURPOSE/MOST OFTEN USED FOR	SUGGESTED TIME INTERVAL
<b>MEETINGS WITH SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS/FOCUS GROUPS/TRIBES/LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS AND OTHERS</b>	Focus group meetings are targeted to the interests of those participating. Most often these are scheduled in association with a specific action or project that the organization is implementing. The purpose can vary, but often these meetings focus on presenting information, gaining input and comments, and discussing and resolving particular concerns of focus groups or special interests. Thorough notes and recording of outcomes and assignments for follow up action items are important for these meetings.	As needed to support projects and activities
<b>OPEN HOUSES</b>	Usually informal meetings where the general public is invited to come and view displays and talk with project representatives during a specific timeframe. Comments are recorded (often on flip charts for participants to see), and the input is considered as the project evolves.	As needed to support projects and activities
<b>WORKSHOPS AND CHARRETTES</b>	Interactive meetings designed to fully engage participants in activities and exercises toward meaningful outcomes. These meetings can use a variety of tools and methods to gain input and engage communities and participants in project planning and design. Online workshops through programs such as Zoom, Teams, and other platforms have become more frequent.	As needed to support projects and activities
<b>SPECIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES OR STEERING COMMITTEES</b>	Committees or subcommittees formed for a specific purpose, such as to advise on development of policy or to steer the design direction on a project. These committees can be focused on technical considerations with agency staff or expert participation. They can be citizen-based groups with representatives from communities and diverse interests.	As needed to support projects and activities
<b>SPECIAL DISPLAYS/ TRAVELING DISPLAYS</b>	Static displays sometimes designed for portability to travel around communities and destinations. These can include visitor information, as well as interpretive exhibits. This is a good way to get the word out and illustrate ideas and options being considered to a broader spectrum of the public. These displays can travel to libraries, community centers, visitor centers, etc. These displays may also be prepared for special events, such as fairs and festivals. An online/virtual web space can also be designed to serve this function.	At key points in a planning or design process/at special events



## Recommended Public and Stakeholder Involvement Tools and Activities to Support Ongoing Tourism Management and Plan Implementation, *Continued*

TOOL/ACTIVITY	PURPOSE/MOST OFTEN USED FOR	SUGGESTED TIME INTERVAL
<b>FAM TOURS</b>	Specially arranged familiarization tours to introduce relevant business owners, local officials, even local youth to the unique experiences offered. Tours can help expand the numbers of people that know about the region as well as introducing it to the key stakeholders who can bring new market segments to enjoy it.	As needed to support projects and activities
<b>CEREMONIES, CELEBRATIONS, AND SPECIAL EVENTS</b>	Special events can build community support and pride for regional tourism and provide opportunities to celebrate successes and take a break before moving on to the next milestone. OCTC promotes special events and festivals held in every subregion.	Celebrate as often as possible!
<b>WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA</b>	The Okanogan Country website serves a crucial role in letting people know about the tourism and recreation opportunities in the region, as well as providing information about lodging, dining, and other services. The website also provides a forum for posting regional updates, event and meeting announcements, providing contact information, inviting emails through comments or online questionnaires, and providing extensive information about Okanogan Country. Okanogan Country also leverages social media programs such as Instagram, Facebook, and others market and promote tourism in the region.	Ongoing
<b>TALKING TO PEOPLE</b>	Talking to people in person and keeping lines of communication open and flowing are important in effectively coordinating regional tourism activities and inspiring collaboration. OCTC serves as a coordinating entity to establish connections across the region and help foster positive cooperation. Individual tourism industry representatives have an important role too. Talk to people on the phone or meet them for coffee or lunch. Share your vision and enthusiasm about the opportunities and possibilities for the region. Let them know that their support is needed and they can make a difference in helping to support regional tourism.	Often, as much as possible, all the time



# BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTING THIS PLAN

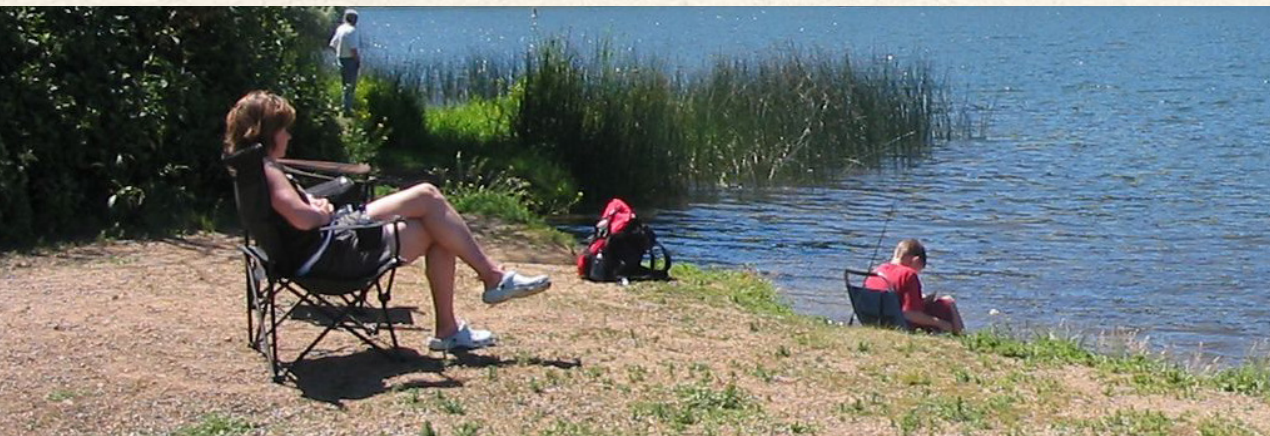
A variety of beneficial outcomes would occur with implementation of the strategies, actions, and projects recommended in this plan. Six categories of benefits are identified below, and these are cross referenced to each action presented in the action plan matrix in Chapter 7. All of these categories of benefits are important to the long-term success of Okanogan Country:

1. Enhancing Authentic Visitor Experiences Focused on the Region's Unique Assets
2. Strengthening the Brand Identity and Character of Okanogan Country
3. Diversifying and Expanding Tourism Opportunities Year-Round and Related Economic Returns
4. Preserving and Protecting Natural Resources
5. Managing Tourism in Ways that Benefit the Entire Region and Improving Community Livability and Economic Vitality
6. Strengthening Partnerships and Collaboration across the Region

## 1. ENHANCING AUTHENTIC VISITOR EXPERIENCES FOCUSED ON THE REGION'S UNIQUE ASSETS

Okanogan Country is unique—with unparalleled access to a wide variety of year-round outdoor recreation and visitor activities. There are many places across the region that provide wonderful, memorable experiences for visitors, as well for the people who live and work here. These experiences continue to draw visitors year after year, yet they also can be expanded to encourage even more tourism-based economic activity. The inventory presented in Chapter 5 catalogues and geo-locates Okanogan Country's tourism assets to support ongoing planning, management, and promotion. A key strategy for the region will involve focusing on those assets and experiences that are truly unique and exceptional in tourism marketing and promotions. Many of these involve authentic experiences that will continue to draw visitors for decades to come:

- » Immersion in nature and wide-open spaces year-round and interactions with diverse ecosystems and wildlife
- » A variety of outdoor activities, from those that appeal to the most extreme adventure seekers to those available to families with





children (this includes year-round land based and water based activities across the region)

- » Breath-taking scenery and views and relaxation under big skies—this is truly a place to get away and reflect
- » Opportunities to learn about the diverse history and culture of the region
- » A wide variety of arts and cultural experiences, from public art and murals to galleries, studios, performances, and festivals
- » Local agritourism opportunities that continue to emerge and blossom—local cuisine and farm to table meals, fruit industry activities, viticulture/wines, hand-crafted beverages, and other delights

## **2. STRENGTHENING THE BRAND IDENTITY AND CHARACTER OF OKANOGAN COUNTRY**

This plan recommends installing a system of wayfinding markers and identifiable elements of tourism infrastructure—unique to and representative of Okanogan Country across the region. New facilities and improvements should be designed and constructed with care to ensure they represent Okanogan Country’s brand identity and are visually compatible with the scenic character of each unique subregion and setting. Information kiosks and interpretive waysides

should be designed to express the brand identity of Okanogan Country, while also being cohesive with each setting in which they are placed. Refer to the concepts and illustrations presented at the end of Chapter 6 for examples. Importantly, installation of the etched boulders with branding of Okanogan Country and subregions should be limited to key tourism destinations.

## **3. DIVERSIFYING AND EXPANDING TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES YEAR-ROUND AND RELATED ECONOMIC RETURNS**

Okanogan Country is located within a half-day drive from a variety of larger population centers in the Pacific Northwest. Understanding these visitors' needs and interests will be important to expanding tourism and related economic returns. Continuing to expand year-round opportunities and diversify the types of recreational experiences available are key strategies to attracting more visitors throughout the year to bolster the tourism-based economy. Expanding recreational activities and tourism opportunities in areas of the county that are less-visited will help to disperse visitor use and relieve pressure from those areas that are most-visited. Expanding shoulder season recreation opportunities will help to increase economic activity year-round.

## **4. PRESERVING AND PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES**

Successful tourism in Okanogan Country is directly related to preservation and protection of the resources that contribute to this experience and draw visitors to the area. There are many resources that visitors come to experience—natural areas, wilderness, lakes, rivers, streams, wildlife, and scenic beauty. Responsible tourism, with a focus on eco-tourism principles that recognize the value of these resources and encourages stewardship, protection, and preservation will be important. Key opportunities within this category include:

- » Further analysis of visitor management needs at key sites and providing adequate facilities such as composting toilets, trash and recycling receptacles, and sufficient parking (or access via hiking/bicycling);
- » Encouraging visitors to leave no trace, not to litter, and to avoid impacts to wildlife and their habitat as part of marketing and promotion of outdoor recreation activities;
- » Placing a high priority on protecting and enhancing of parks and sites with natural and cultural resources;
- » Preserving, protecting, and enhancing scenic views and view corridors.



- » Encouraging energy and water conservation and recycling and reuse practices (by visitors as well as the hospitality industry as a whole);
- » Recognizing, preserving, and protecting historic sites and historic buildings and monuments, as well as special cultural districts (downtown Brewster as one example); and

In the case of Okanogan Country, there are extensive stretches of land that are managed by public agencies and land trust organizations. These land managers are working hard to protect and preserve important resources on an ongoing basis. Okanogan Country tourism interests should continue to support these entities in their land management responsibilities and provide a forum for land managers and stewards from throughout the region to come together, coordinate, and plan cooperatively for the future.

## 5. MANAGING TOURISM IN WAYS THAT BENEFIT THE ENTIRE REGION AND IMPROVING COMMUNITY LIVABILITY AND ECONOMIC VITALITY

Many hundreds of thousands of visitors come to experience at least some portion of Okanogan Country each year. These visitors from other states and nations, as well as people from the region, can gain an in-depth understanding of this unique

setting that provides the opportunity to step back in time and experience not only a slower pace, but also peace and tranquility. These qualities are also important to the people who live here. Another important part of the experience relates to being immersed in the every-day culture and small town friendliness of the communities.

Managing tourism in a way that recognizes and respects local values while also serving visitors' needs will be important. While tourism in the region critical to many businesses and the collective economic health of each community, it must be sustained in a way that protects the quality of life for local residents and the authentic experience of place and community that visitors are coming to enjoy. Actions and projects implemented should not only provide opportunities for visitors, but also enhance community livability, economic opportunities, and the quality of life in each subregion. In addition, the more public and community participation there is in implementing projects and actions, the more successful this plan will be.

## 6. STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION ACROSS THE REGION

As stated earlier in this chapter, successful implementation of this plan will be contingent

upon many partnerships and a strong commitment to collaboration across the region. Activities, events, and projects that involve multiple partners and multiple communities will help to strengthen collaboration. The OCTC's role as a regional coordinating entity that encourages tourism representatives from all across the region to communicate, cooperate, and work together will be critical for the future of Okanogan Country.



# POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Potential funding sources and other resources that may be available to support the projects and actions are diverse, with key opportunities summarized below. Projects/actions may be eligible for multiple sources of funding. Regional partners will need to further research these sources to determine applicability and then assign project leads to pursue various funding and implementation pathways.

## Hotel/Motel Lodging Tax

Already an active program in Okanogan County, the guiding principle for the use of lodging taxes is that proceeds must be used for activities, operations and expenditures designed to increase tourism. Under Washington state law, lodging tax can be levied by counties and cities. Specifically, lodging taxes can be used for:

- » Tourism marketing;
- » Marketing and operations of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists;
- » Operations and capital expenditures of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by a municipality or a public facilities district; or
- » Operations of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by nonprofit organizations

Amounts per year fluctuate with grants awarded through the LTAC Board process. The revenue generated in Okanogan County in 2019 was over \$1.3 million including all cities.

## Tourism Promotion Areas (TPAs)

A tourism promotion area (TPA), also allowed under Washington State law, is an established geographic boundary within which lodging establishments can self-impose an additional nightly fee on each room-night. Washington State passed a new senate bill (EESB 6592), effective June 11, 2020, that makes changes to tourism promotion area rules. Previously, the legislative body of any county with a population of more than 40,000,

or any city or town within such a county, could form a tourism promotion area (TPA) to generate revenue for tourism promotion. Counties (and cities or towns within that county) with a population of 40,000 or less previously were not eligible. This new 2020 legislation removed the 40,000+ population requirement, allowing cities, towns, and counties of any size to impose TPA fees. The bill also authorized jurisdictions to impose an additional fee up to \$3 per room per night through July 1, 2027. This is in addition to the \$2 charge authorized by RCW 35.101.050. The revenue is to be used to promote tourism that increases the number of tourists to the area. TPA jurisdictions would also be required to conduct a review of the additional TPA charge.

A TPA may include the entire jurisdiction or only a portion, and multiple jurisdictions may establish a joint TPA through interlocal agreement. However, a county TPA may only include unincorporated areas, unless the county has signed an interlocal agreement with one or more cities to form a joint TPA.

The revenue must be used for “tourism promotion,” which is defined as “activities and expenditures designed to increase tourism and convention business, including but not limited to advertising, publicizing, or otherwise



distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists and operating tourism destination marketing organizations” (RCW 35.101.010(4)).

The legislative body may appoint an existing advisory board or create a new advisory board to make recommendations on the use of the revenues, but the legislative body has sole discretion as to how the funds are used to promote tourism. The legislative authority may contract with tourism destination marketing organizations or other similar organizations to administer the operation of the area.

Formation of a tourism promotion area is initiated by a petition to the legislative body of the city or county. The petition must describe the proposed TPA boundaries, the total estimated revenues, and the proposed uses of the revenues, and it must contain the signatures of people who operate lodging businesses in the proposed TPA who would pay at least 60 percent of the proposed charges. The legislative body must hold a public hearing on the establishment of the TPA.

#### **EXAMPLES:**

- ▶ **Liberty Lake Ordinance No. 127A (2011)**  
Increasing TPA rates to \$2 per night for lodging businesses with room revenues over

\$500,000 during the previous year; rates remain at \$0.50 per room for businesses with \$500,000 or less in room revenues. Includes original ordinance establishing TPA in 2004.

#### ▶ **Pierce County**

- » Interlocal Agreement (2009) - Agreement between county and several cities to create TPA, with four different geographic zones and rates. Applies only to hotels, motels, and B&Bs; includes adopting resolution
- » Ordinance No. 2009-110s (2009) - Establishes TPA and advisory commission

#### ▶ **Prosser Tourism Promotion Area Grant Application (2018)**

#### ▶ **SeaTac, Tukwila, and Des Moines (Seattle Southside TPA)**

- » Interlocal Agreement (2014) - SeaTac city council acts as legislative body. Includes exemptions for long-term room occupants, private clubs, rooms provided free of charge, and rooms contracted with airline crews
- » SeaTac Resolution No. 14-014 (2014) - Notice of intent to establish TPA with rate of \$2 per night for hotels, motels, and B&Bs with 90 or more units.
- » SeaTac Ordinance No. 14-1013 (2014) - Establishes TPA

#### ▶ **Spokane County Tourism Promotion Area**

**Interlocal Agreement (2004)** – Three geographic zones with different rates, as well as fourth zone for all lodging businesses with room revenue under \$500,000 per year regardless of geographic location

#### ▶ **Wenatchee**

- » Ordinance No. 2010-11 (2010) - Reenacts TPA following expiration of original TPA, with rate of \$1 per room. Establishes advisory committee; ordinance must be reviewed every three years to determine continued efficacy and desirability among affected lodging businesses
- » TPA Funding Application Form (2017) - Form for businesses and organizations wishing to obtain tourism promotion funding for projects through the TPA

#### ▶ **Union Gap**

- » Ordinance No. 2707 (2011) - Establishes citywide TPA with flat rate of \$2 per night
- » Tourism Promotion Area Management Agreement (2011) - Agreement to manage operational and administrative activities for TPA

#### ▶ **Yakima County Tourism Promotion Area - Yakima, Selah, Union Gap, and unincorporated areas**

- » Yakima Municipal Code Ch. 5.99 - Establishes \$2 fee and advisory committee



## Recreation Economy at USDA: Economic Development Resources for Rural Communities

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (FS), Rural Development (RD), and the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) have developed a resource guide for rural communities to identify resources that develop the recreation economy. “Rural communities fortunate enough to have other amenities to complement their natural resource base are in the best position to reap new economic benefits from this booming industry” (USDA, 2020). RD has a loan portfolio of about \$225 billion that is financing infrastructure and business development projects. RD is an agency that aims to create job opportunities in rural America through investments in rural businesses and cooperatives. RD provides loans, grants, and loan guarantees to support reliable and necessary services such as water, energy, housing, broadband, schools, and hospitals. Services within USDA Rural Development include: Rural Housing Service (RHS), Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), Rural Utilities Service (RUS), and Rural Development Innovation Center (IC). Further information



on the USDA Rural Development resources including contact information for the local office for Okanogan County and a table of Highlighted Recreation Economy Resources that includes authorized purposes for funds and the typical funding amount are provided following this introduction to the program.

USDA Rural Development’s Innovation Center also offers numerous programs available to tribes, tribal families, children, and communities. These programs provide technical assistance and funding for projects such as housing, feasibility studies and planning, business development, local food, and community facilities. “Collaborating for Prosperity with American Indians and Alaska Natives: Rural Development Programs for Tribes, Tribal Families, Children, and Communities” is a guide for these programs (see table).

Resources: For the guide, “Collaborating for Prosperity with American Indians and Alaska

Natives” visit [https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/508\\_RD\\_TribalReport\\_2019.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/508_RD_TribalReport_2019.pdf).

For a list of Rural Development’s programs and services for tribes visit: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/programs-services-tribes>.

The local Rural Development Service office for Okanogan County is the Wenatchee Area Office – USDA Rural Development located at 301 Yakima St. Wenatchee, WA 98801-2966; Tel: (509) 663-4019 Ext 145; Contact: Eric Siebens [eric.siebens@usda.gov](mailto:eric.siebens@usda.gov).

Services within USDA Rural Development include: Rural Housing Service (RHS), Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), Rural Utilities Service (RUS), and Rural Development Innovation Center (IC). The following table includes Recreation Economy Resources. A full summary for RD’s major programs can be found here [https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/RD\\_ProgramMatrix.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/RD_ProgramMatrix.pdf).



## Other Funding Sources

PROGRAM	AGENCY	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	AUTHORIZED PURPOSES	TYP. AMOUNT
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAM</b>	RHS	LENDERS: Banks and credit unions  BORROWERS: Public bodies, community-based nonprofit corporations, Federally recognized Tribes.	Improve, develop, or finance essential community facilities for rural communities in rural areas and cities and towns of fewer than 50,000.  EXAMPLE: This program can be used to develop museums, public restrooms, and multi-use trails in recreation areas.	\$100,000 - \$5 million
<b>WATER AND WASTE LOANS AND GRANTS</b>	RUS	State and local government entities, private nonprofits, Federally recognized Tribes.	Build, repair and improve public water systems and waste collection and treatment systems in rural areas and cities and towns of fewer than 10,000.  EXAMPLE: This program has been used in a historic mining town and tourist destination to build a wastewater treatment plan and new water systems.	Long-term, low-interest loans.  Grants may be available to keep user costs reasonable.
<b>RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANTS</b>	RBS	Towns, state agencies, nonprofit corporations, authorities, Federally recognized Tribes, rural cooperatives.	Targeted technical assistance, training and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas. Feasibility studies or economic impact studies for a recreation activity may be eligible.  EXAMPLE: This program can help small towns develop an economic impact analysis to evaluate the area's capacity to become a recreational destination.	\$10,000 - \$500,000
<b>RURAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT GRANT</b>	RBS	Nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher learning.	Provide support to centers for cooperatives. Eligible work plans can include trail development/maintenance, feasibility studies, marketing, lodging development, business development, strategic planning.  EXAMPLE: Nonprofit organizations can use this program to develop a business plan for a cooperative focused on recreational activities such as rock climbing, guided tours, mountain biking, skiing, and hiking.	Maximum - \$200,000



## Other Funding Sources, *Continued*

PROGRAM	AGENCY	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	AUTHORIZED PURPOSES	TYP. AMOUNT
<b>COMMUNITY CONNECT GRANTS</b>	RUS	Most state and local governments, Federally recognized Tribes, nonprofits, for-profit corporations.	Helps fund broadband deployment into rural communities as anchor sites for rural communities.  EXAMPLE: Rural libraries and tribal computing centers can use this program to provide internet service and computer access to their residents.	Minimum: \$50,000 Maximum: \$1 million Amounts are published in Notices of Funding Availability and may vary.
<b>TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES</b>	RUS	State and local government entities, Federally recognized Tribes, nonprofits, for-profit businesses	Financing to construct, maintain, improve and expand telephone service and broadband in rural areas.  EXAMPLE: Rural broadband providers can use this program to expand services into remote and underserved areas.	Refer to the rules for loan and terms and conditions.
<b>RECONNECT PROGRAM GRANTS AND LOANS</b>	RUS	State and local government entities, Federally recognized Tribes, nonprofits, for-profit businesses.	Financing to construct, maintain, improve and expand telephone service and broadband in rural areas.  EXAMPLE: Broadband e-Connectivity can help individuals access wireless internet while participating in outdoor activities like hiking a trail or touring a rural community.	Availability may vary for 100 percent loan, 50 percent loan / 50 percent grant, or 100 percent grant. Given the varying closing dates for each funding type, applicants will be limited to ONE application for this Funding Opportunity Announcement
<b>BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY GUARANTEED LOANS</b>	RBS	LENDERS: Banks and credit unions  BORROWERS: For-profit businesses, nonprofits, cooperatives, Federally recognized Tribes, public bodies, individuals.	Business conversion, enlargement, repair, modernization or development; purchase and development of land, easements, rights-of-way, buildings, or facilities.  EXAMPLE: Lodges and hotels can use this program to upgrade facilities and improve visitor experience.	\$1 million - \$25 million



## Other Funding Sources, *Continued*

PROGRAM	AGENCY	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	AUTHORIZED PURPOSES	TYP. AMOUNT
<b>RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LOANS AND GRANTS</b>	RBS	Former RUS borrowers, nonprofit utilities, current RUS borrowers.	Funds business incubators, community development assistance to nonprofits and public bodies, start-up venture costs and business expansion.  Example: This program can provide zero percent loans to utility companies that can be relented to businesses to support creating and retaining employment.	GRANTS: Up to \$300,000 LOANS: Up to \$1 million
<b>RURAL MICROENTREPRENEUR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM</b>	RBS	Organizations eligible to become Microenterprise Development Organizations including nonprofits, Federally recognized Tribes, higher education institutions	Microloans for microenterprise startups and growth through rural microloan revolving funds.  Example: This program can provide loans to small rural businesses, such as restaurants, dry cleaners, or automotive repair shops.	\$50,000 - \$500,000
<b>INTERMEDIARY RELENDING PROGRAM</b>	RBS	Nonprofits, cooperatives, Federally recognized Tribes, public agencies	Provides 1 percent low-interest loans to local intermediaries that re-lend to businesses and for community development projects in rural communities.  Example: This program can provide funding to intermediary providers who relend the	Up to \$2 million for the first financing; \$1 million at a time thereafter; total aggregate debt may not exceed \$15 million.



## Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Recreation Economy for Rural Communities

The EPA's Environmental Projects for Rural Economies Grant is a planning assistance program to help communities develop strategies and an action plan to revitalize their Main Streets through outdoor recreation. This program promotes environmentally friendly community development and Main Street revitalization through conservation and sustainable use of public or private natural resources including:

- » Ensuring local residents, including young people, have connections and opportunities related to nearby outdoor assets to foster community pride, good stewardship, and local economic benefits.
- » Developing or expanding trail networks to attract overnight visitors and new businesses and foster use by local residents.
- » Developing in-town amenities, such as broadband service; housing; or shops, restaurants, or breweries, to serve residents and attract new visitors and residents with an interest in nearby outdoor assets.

- » Marketing Main Street as a gateway to nearby natural lands to capture and amplify outdoor recreation dollars.
- » Developing a community consensus on the management of outdoor assets to reduce potential conflicts and ensure sustainable use of resources.

For more information on the EPA Recreation Economy for Rural Communities program, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/recreation-economy-rural-communities>.

## EPA Local Food, Local Places

This program helps cities and towns across the country protect the environment and human health by engaging with local partners to reinvest in existing neighborhoods as they develop local food systems. Through Local Food, Local Places, partner communities have worked on projects such as:

- » Opening year-round, downtown markets featuring foods from local farmers.
- » Planning cooperative grocery stores to help revitalize small-town main streets.
- » Creating centrally located community kitchens or food hubs to aggregate and market local foods.
- » Starting business incubators to help entrepreneurs launch food-related businesses on main streets.
- » Making it easier for people to walk or bicycle to farmers markets and local restaurants.

- » Helping schoolchildren to grow their own food, and making healthy local food accessible to families, including via SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits.
- » Developing community gardens in walkable, transit-accessible places

In selecting Local Foods, Local Places partner communities, special consideration is given to communities in the early stages of developing local food enterprises and creating economically vibrant communities. In 2020, the program was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and EPA. For further information visit: <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places>.

The EPA also developed the “Local Foods, Local Places Tool Kit: A Guide to Help Communities Revitalize Using Local Food Systems”. The PDFs of the guide, community assessment form, and other planning templates can be downloaded here: <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places-toolkit>.



## Opportunity Zones

There are 139 “opportunity zones” designated in Washington state, and there are 4 in Okanogan County. The Opportunity Zones program is a relatively a new federal economic-development program designed to entice investment in low-income areas by offering tax incentives to investors. Agencies within opportunity zones have the authority to issue tax-exempt revenue bonds to help finance development projects.

**Successful Example—Proposed Tri-Cities Project:** Private developer Eaty Gourmet LLC is planning a phased culinary and entertainment development on a 52-acre site along the Columbia River in Pasco, Washington, with phase one of the project expected to break ground next year with a projected price tag of \$52 million. The greater Pasco area, including the site of the planned development, called Osprey Pointe, have been designated one of the state’s opportunity zones. The Osprey Pointe project will include a food and wine hall, a boutique hotel and a culinary-education center tied together with a waterfront courtyard plaza that will feature festivals, events and amphitheater concerts – all with the goal of making the facility a destination entertainment venue. The site of the planned development is owned by the Port of Pasco, a municipal economic development corporation, which has signed an exclusive letter of intent with Eaty Gourmet, which expects to complete phase one of the project in 2022. The Port of Pasco oversees six development sites that include some 2 million square feet of

office, industrial and warehouse space as well as property along the Colombia River, near the Paco airport or at industrial sites in the Pasco area.

Eaty Gourmet also has inked a memorandum of understanding with Washington State University Tri-Cities “to explore options for offering training and learning opportunities for businesses and the community at large,” the company announced. Eaty Gourmet was launched by Mitch Gilbert in 2016 with the goal of developing the 52-acre Osprey Pointe site. He has more than 25 years of sales, marketing and business-development experience with companies such as GE Capital, InfoSpace and Vanstar and also has been involved with his own startups previously – Northern Professional and Grinders Hot Stands. “The Port Commission has always believed that Osprey Pointe is a special place to create investment and opportunity in Pasco. The Eaty Gourmet group gets that,” Port Commission President Jean Ryckman says. “The vision they presented will accelerate revitalization and create national interest and prestige.”

## Great American Outdoors Act Funding

Federal legislation authorized in August of 2020 will provide ongoing funding for two funds: the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF supports projects in Washington through the states Recreation and Conservation Office (see more information below). This funding will address improvement needs and overdue maintenance totaling \$20 billion across national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and other public lands, and likely will include funding for projects in Okanogan County and nearby areas. The bill for the National Park Service alone is roughly triple the agency’s annual budget. Trail and trailhead improvements, campgrounds, visitor facilities, roadways, parking areas, bridges, and other types of park infrastructure will be updated. The potential \$9.5 billion deposited into the fund over the next five years will help cover about half of the current deferred maintenance backlog. The money will be distributed to public land management agencies proportionally to the amount of backlog faced by each agency (70 percent for the National Park Service, 15 percent for the U.S. Forest Service, 5 percent for the



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5 percent for the Bureau of Land Management, and 5 percent for the Bureau of Indian Education).

The Land and Water Conservation Fund has been one of the most popular public lands funds for more than 50 years. Since its inception in 1965, the program has purchased federal lands and funded recreation projects such as local parks in every county in the nation. Similar to the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund, the LWCF is funded by energy royalties that would otherwise flow to the general treasury. The fund is authorized at up to \$900 million per year, subject to the annual appropriations process. Historically, it has been used for three purposes: land acquisition by federal land management agencies for outdoor recreation, grants made to states for outdoor recreation purposes, and “other purposes,” which include special requests for funding made by presidents since 1998.

## **Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Grants**

The Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) funds a variety of parks and recreation projects throughout Washington, as well as projects that improve salmon habitat and water quality, waterfront access improvements, management of invasive species, and land conservation for public use. RCO administers 20 separate grant programs. Several of the grant programs are supported by the federal LWCF. For more information, visit: <https://rco.wa.gov/recreation-and-conservation-office-grants/find-a-grant/>

## **Various Other Grants for Transportation, Economic Development, Business Support, Community Development, Historic Preservation, and Other Projects**

There are a wide variety of other grant programs available to fund projects and improvements that can enhance tourism. In additional capital improvement budgets of the county and cities can help to support some project implementation, although these funds are limited and highly competitive (in high demand across the county). Example types of projects and improvements that may be eligible for federal grants and public capital improvement funds include:

- » Main Street enhancements/improvements (complete streets funds)
- » Street improvements/multimodal (sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.)
- » Wayfinding/signing
- » Trails/shared use paths
- » Waterfront improvements in Port districts
- » Parks and recreation funding/public space enhancement programs

Federal transportation funding programs can support street and roadway improvements, as well as enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access. These types of grants, often administered through regional planning organizations can help to improve downtown streets and encourage more walking and bicycling as part of enhancing communities for residents and visitors. A list of funding sources for transportation projects is available here: <http://www.infracfunding.wa.gov/downloads/Transportation-Funding-Sources-WA.pdf>.



The Community Development Block Grant program through federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) also can support a variety of community improvements: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/>.

Main Street America is an example of one of several non-profit organizations that offers specific funding for main street projects through its Main Street Forward program: <https://www.mainstreet.org/howwecanhelp/resourcecenter/mainstreetforward/fundingopportunities>.

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6592—Information can be found on the MRCS website <http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Economic-Development/Special-Topics/Tourism-Industry-and-Local-Governments.aspx>. The senate bill can be found here <http://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/Senate/6592-S.SL.pdf?q=20200518170931>.

Cultural and Heritage Tourism—the National Trust for Historic Preservation has multiple resources and programs. Learn more at: <https://savingplaces.org/>. There are also resources and Tool Kits from Cultural Heritage Tourism <https://culturalheritagetourism.org/>. Washington Example: Historic Downtown Chelan Association <https://historicchelan.org/>.

## Corporate Funding Programs and Public/Private Partnerships

Pursuing sponsorships, partnerships, and other supportive types of funding relationships with major corporations could help to support tourism throughout the county. Pacific Northwest entities such as Eddie Bauer, REI, Microsoft, Amazon, and others may have special interests and programs that could help support tourism. Local agricultural industry representatives may also be potential partners. It would be helpful to learn about any existing partnerships or sponsorships that the TAG knows of in the county.

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**Pursuing supportive types of funding relationships could help support tourism.**

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## STEPS TO PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Once a project is funded, it is ready to move forward to completion. Many agencies and organizations have experience implementing projects, and they may already follow specific procedures for their projects. Project leaders should work closely with the agency that has regulatory jurisdiction over the project to confirm the specific process for implementation. This could be Okanogan County, or one of the cities or another agency. The steps listed on the following pages provide some general guidance for project implementation. This process applies primarily to projects that would implement physical improvements at sites.

Steps 1, 2 and 3 can often be accomplished prior to obtaining funding for the project and may be submitted as part of the application for grants or funding. As mentioned above, for more specific requirements, including regulatory and code provisions that may be applicable depending on the location of the project, project leaders should refer to the local jurisdiction (city and county) where the project is located.



## Steps to Successful Project Implementation

<b>1</b>	<b>ASSIGN PROJECT MANAGER/DIRECTOR</b>	Confirm the lead agency or organization responsible for the project and assign a specific project manager or director who will be responsible for implementation.
<b>2</b>	<b>SET UP AN ADVISORY, PROJECT TASK FORCE, AND/OR STEERING COMMITTEE</b>	Assemble and organize a small project task force, advisory, or steering committee to work with your project director and provide ongoing guidance and input during project implementation. The purpose of this committee is to “advise.” They may or may not be the final decision makers, but they will provide input and guidance to help the process as it moves along. The committee may include citizen representatives, as well as technical representatives from affected agencies or interest groups involved in the project. The maximum size of the committee ideally should be no more than twelve to fifteen people. For small projects, a group of three to five people may be sufficient.
<b>3</b>	<b>PREPARE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE PROJECT AND REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS/ PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES (IF NEEDED)</b>	<p>Work with the steering committee and lead agency/organization to develop a detailed scope of work for the project, along with a request for qualifications/proposals (RFQ or RFP) if needed to retain consultant services for planning, design, or other support. Even if the project will be implemented without outside consultant or design support, development of a clear scope of work will be important. The scope of work should specify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Work efforts/tasks to be accomplished</li> <li>» Expected products/deliverables for each task</li> <li>» Expected timeline/schedule for completion of each task and provision of deliverables, as well as a schedule for completion of the project overall; if the project is to be phased, the work plan should address how the phasing will occur</li> <li>» Assigned responsibilities for each task (task leader and team member responsibilities)</li> <li>» Description of any special considerations that may affect project implementation (such as permitting, special review processes, environmental conditions, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT SELECTION PROCESS</b>	For selection of a professional consultant for federally funded projects, a competitive selection project is typically required. Consultants respond to the RFQ/RFP with a submittal of their qualifications and a specific proposal for the project. The project steering committee (or selection panel) may review proposals and select the preferred consultant on the basis of their qualifications and alignment with selection criteria. For federally funded projects, qualifications-based selection is required, which means the preferred consultant is selected based on their qualifications first and then the agency/ organization proceeds to negotiate the price for the work to be completed. Professional consultants should not be selected on the basis of cost proposals, but rather their experience and capability to perform the work. Even if a project will be implemented solely through volunteer services, volunteers should be selected based on a clear understanding of the work involved and their capability to provide the services.



## Steps to Successful Project Implementation, *Continued*

<b>5</b>	<b>FINALIZE THE PROJECT WORK PLAN AND GET STARTED</b>	Once all the technical expertise is onboard to accomplish the project, the project director and core project team should work together to finalize the work plan (scope of work, schedule, deliverables, and assigned hours/costs to each task). The work plan, including the project schedule, should be monitored closely and updated regularly as the project moves forward.
<b>6</b>	<b>SITE ANALYSIS, CONCEPTUAL PLANNING, ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCES, AND LAND USE PERMITS</b>	<p>For projects that involve physical improvements to sites, an important initial step is to evaluate existing conditions at the site and determine if there are sensitivities that might influence the design (such as the presence of cultural resources or historic structures). This step also involves identifying specific environmental clearances and land use permits/approvals that will be required to implement the project. This step often involves preparation of a conceptual site plan or preliminary designs showing the project in the context of existing conditions. Other specific activities may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Meeting/coordinating with tribal representatives and ongoing involvement of tribal representatives in the project; inviting review and input at key milestones (check with the county/local agency to confirm tribes of interest to the project)</li> <li>» Completing cultural and historic resource inventories</li> <li>» Meeting with the local permitting jurisdiction (county or city) to confirm environmental review and land use permitting requirements</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	<b>PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT</b>	Public, community, and stakeholder involvement and outreach opportunities are an important aspect of every project. Activities should be designed to fit the scope and scale of the project. Some activities should occur at key milestones—such as to present and gain input on design alternatives. Other activities may be ongoing, such as project updates through email or on the Okanogan County website.
<b>8</b>	<b>DESIGN PROCESS AND DESIGN REVIEWS</b>	<p>The project design phase typically includes multiple stages of work, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» 30 percent design completion or preliminary design (may also be called “design development”); this stage of work is typically followed by client review and input</li> <li>» 60 percent design completion, which includes development of draft construction drawings and specifications; this stage of work is typically followed by client review and input; local permit packages for building approvals or sign installation may also be developed at this stage (or at the 90 percent stage)</li> <li>» 90 percent design completion, which includes further development of draft construction drawings and specifications based on review</li> <li>» 100 percent design, which involves finalizing the construction drawings and specifications and preparing the project to go out to bid for construction (as most public projects do)</li> </ul>



## Steps to Successful Project Implementation, *Continued*

<b>9</b>	<b>BUILDING PERMITS/ CONSTRUCTION PERMITS</b>	Before taking a project out to bid, obtainment of local and state building permits and construction permits will be important (some construction permits may be obtained by the construction contractor before they start the work on site). Required permits should be confirmed as part of earlier meeting with the county or city under Step 6.
<b>10</b>	<b>BIDDING PROCESS</b>	Depending on the size of the project, and local and federal requirements, the bidding process may include gathering proposals from a select list of potential contractors or advertising the project (with an Invitation to Bid) through a public notice in the local newspaper. Bids are submitted and contractors may be selected based on a variety of factors, including costs and qualifications (check with the county/local agency to confirm bidding process requirements).
<b>11</b>	<b>CONSTRUCTION/ CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION</b>	The project then moves on to construction and often a third party entity or the design consultant will be retained to manage construction and provide construction administration. Seasonal conditions and wildlife patterns (such as fish spawning and bird nesting) may affect construction periods. These requirements are confirmed during the process of obtaining environmental clearances and permits for the project.
<b>12</b>	<b>GROUNDBREAKING AND RIBBON CUTTING CELEBRATIONS</b>	Don't forget to bring regional partners and project interests together to celebrate milestones in the process—particularly groundbreaking and ribbon-cutting ceremonies. Local, state, and federal elected officials should be invited to participate in these events, along with tribal elders and leaders.
<b>13</b>	<b>MONITOR AND DOCUMENT PROJECT SUCCESS/ EFFECTIVENESS</b>	After the project is completed, it will be important for the responsible agency/organization to continue to monitor use and document how the project has enhanced visitor experience, cultural and natural resources, and/or the quality of life for residents. It is always important to document and measure successes to encourage ongoing participation and involvement.
<b>14</b>	<b>ONGOING MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS</b>	Project implementation doesn't end once a project is constructed and under use. The responsible agency or organization must continue to provide maintenance and care of the improvements and facilities. For this reason, it is always important to consider the best ways to minimize maintenance costs and resources, and maximize life cycle of public investments as part of the planning and design process.



# PLAN MONITORING AND UPDATING

Identifying potential projects and strategies is only the first step—The action plan presented in Chapter 7 is intended to be a guide for ongoing and future planning, management, and implementation efforts. The recommended actions are based on community input, review of existing conditions, and a conceptual level of planning. Action items listed are suggestions, not mandates or requirements. If pursued, each action item will need further consideration and analysis as part of the implementation process. Further coordination with applicable regulatory agencies and other stakeholders, as well as ongoing public participation, will be necessary.

Project implementation will be contingent on available funding sources and other factors. Projects potentially considered for funding through capital investment programs will need to be further prioritized as part of town, county, state, or federal capital improvements programming and budgeting. Individual project sites will need to be analyzed in more detail as part of future design efforts to identify land use approval requirements, determine potential sensitive areas and required mitigation, and identify environmental and land use permitting requirements.



Projects will need to be designed and implemented in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal standards and guidelines. Geotechnical analysis, biological assessments, wetland delineations, wildlife habitat analysis, and other types of studies and environmental clearances (NEPA, SEPA) may be required as part of project implementation.

**UPDATING THE THIS PLAN**—It is recognized that the priorities of the region and communities may change over time. This TDMP, including the action plan in Chapter 7, should be reviewed periodically, updated, and amended as necessary, adding new strategies and projects, and removing those that have become reality. It may also be necessary to assign new timeframe goals to the recommendations. It is recommended that the OCTC review the status of the plan at least annually and prepare an updated list of initiatives to focus on in the coming year.

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**Project implementation will be contingent on available funding and the commitment of the project director.**

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