

Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau
2017/2018 Annual Report
Highlights



Welcome!

The TCVB, along with our partners, continues to increase tourism and economic growth for our community. Expanding marketing programs have been key to this growth.

Successful marketing initiatives continue to grow and new initiatives are showing a strong return on investment. International representation in the UK and Ireland has opened opportunities for public relations on a new scale for Tuolumne County. A new incentive program has been put in place to encourage off-peak and midweek business opportunities with the meetings industry.

The TCVB Team is a hard-working group, passionate about our community. We are appreciative to our Board of Directors for support of new ideas and faith in our abilities to carry them out. Thank you to our supportive members who jump on board with our programs. Thank you to the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors and Sonoma City Council for understanding the value of tourism and the positive impact it has on our community.

Respectfully,
Lisa Mayo, Executive Director
Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau



Community Outreach and Marketing Sponsorships

The program officially rolled out in January 2018 and nearly \$50,000 in sponsorships and/or marketing funds was awarded.

21
events &
programs
sponsored

Strategic Planning



DestinationNEXT: A Strategic Roadmap for the Next Generation of Global Destination Organizations.

- Survey – 95 respondents
- Results: Tuolumne County – Voyager Level
- Above industry average for destination strength including brand and attractions and entertainment opportunities
- Below industry average for communication/ internet infrastructure and mobility/access

Opportunities:

- Transportation
- International Hotel Brands

The TCVB will use findings from the DestinationNEXT program to build our Strategic Plan and Tourism Master Plan. The complete DestinationNEXT Survey along with Tuolumne County's results can be viewed online at VisitTuolumne.com/for-our-partners.

Tuolumne County Travel Impacts 2017



Lodging
\$75.3 Mil.



Food Service
\$72.9 Mil.



Retail Sales
\$23.3 Mil.



Arts,
Entertainment
& Recreation
\$35.6 Mil.



Fuel &
Transportation
\$25.8 Mil.



Food Stores
\$11.3 Mil.

Direct Travel Spending
\$253.3 Million*
= 10% increase over 2016

*projected

*These statistics are produced by Dean Runyan Associates for Visit California. They do not include spending or job generation by either Black Oak Casino Resort or by Chicken Ranch Casino as they fall under Government.



**Tourism Industry
Employment**
3,780

**Government Revenue
Generated by Tourism:**

Local Sales Tax Receipts
\$8.7 million

State Sales Tax Receipts
\$10.4 million

Transient Occupancy Tax
\$4.5 million

Visitor Services

Staff in three Tuolumne County Visitors Centers, in Sonora, Chinese Camp and Groveland (seasonal), offer maps, directions, area brochures, trip ideas, lodging referrals and local perspectives, providing personalized service to visitors to assist with a positive travel experience.

Top 5 International Visitors to Visitors Centers

1. Germany
2. United Kingdom
3. Australia/New Zealand
4. Canada
5. Netherlands and France

Top 5 US Visitors to Visitors Centers (other than California)

1. Central States
2. Northeastern Seaboard
3. Northwestern States
4. Midwestern States
5. Southeastern Seaboard

Top 5 California Visitors to Visitors Centers

1. Southern California
2. East Bay Area
3. North Bay Area
4. Sacramento Area
5. South Bay Area

New Visitor Center Partnership

The TCVB has partnered with the Yosemite Gateway Museum in Groveland to operate a seasonal visitor center within the museum location. The partnership commenced on Memorial Day weekend and will end on Columbus Day weekend. The month of June 2018 saw nearly double the visitors as June 2017 and a significant increase in donations to the museum. The TCVB also worked with Yosemite National Park to secure a ranger presence at the new location. This is a huge asset for all to have the rangers as part of this partnership.

See the full annual report, at VisitTuolumne.com/members

Media & Travel Trade Highlights

To increase Tuolumne County's media coverage to our regional market the TCVB attended media receptions, partner marketing briefs and meetings, hosted regional and domestic journalists, and participated in regional advertising opportunities.

20+ domestic and international stories published to highlight Tuolumne County as a premier travel destination

TCVB published **8** press releases

TCVB hosted **17** media and tour operator trips this past year

New *Meet Me in Tuolumne* incentive program for meeting planners to book in Tuolumne County



Social Media

By utilizing the successful combination of original based content and user generated testimonials, the TCVB has been able to increase an active following with credibility and premium content that is in tune with current travel trends. Social media has driven the Visitors Bureau's marketing efforts to continuously be a trustworthy source for visitors and potential visitors to get reliable real-time updates, view a variety of our inspiring members and to illustrate the beauty of Tuolumne County.

25,177+

15.5%



3,772+

40.6%



1,239+

16%



#MyTuolumneCounty



Marketing Highlights

Our destination marketing strategy is one rooted in amplifying our brand-Visit Tuolumne County: Yosemite, Gold Country and High Sierra, throughout California, the United States and in international markets. The marketing efforts stretch over strategic partnerships with consistent messaging over multi-channel platforms, print advertising in key travel-related magazines and newspapers sections, digital advertising in targeted markets, social media, promotions on radio and TV and more.

Condensed Vacation Planner translated in *Spanish, French, French Canadian, German and Mandarin*

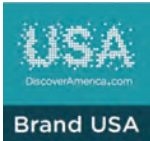
Bay Area Life: Get Outta Town
30-minute television show featuring Tuolumne County aired on San Francisco's ABC 7 on April 28th and June 17th

Ran **20+** print ads and digital ads in 11 periodicals including *Sunset*, *VIA*, *Where SF* and *NEW* for this year, *Southwest* inflight magazine



Strategic Partnerships

The TCVB partners with regional and international Destination Marketing Organizations to assist in capturing additional markets and increase Tuolumne County exposure to both domestic and international markets. By working with these partners, we are able to leverage funding and have a greater impact.



Brand USA and Visit California - The TCVB entered a second year partnership to participate in a one-of-a-kind custom global cooperative program designed to inspire international travelers to visit California. The 2017-2018 year had special focus on road trips, highlighting local culture and entertainment across California's many exciting destinations. National Geographic, Expedia and Thomas Cook USA Everywhere components were included.

Visit California - Our strategic partnership with Visit California gave Tuolumne County exposure at the LA Media Reception, increased online publications, and further opportunity to participate for FAM and media tours.

San Francisco Travel - The continued partnership with San Francisco Travel launched Tuolumne County further into the Chinese market with FAM trips and a Hylink partnership opportunity. San Francisco Travel has also exposed Tuolumne County to their market as an add-on destination to San Francisco.

Black Diamond - The TCVB initiated their first international partnership in the UK with the marketing and travel trade agency Black Diamond. The partnership launched in January 2018 and has proven to be largely successful with media trips, press coverage, and tour operator FAM trips.

Gold Country Visitors Association (GCVA) - In January 2018, the GCVA placed a new focus on the western Canadian market after Air Canada announced new direct lift from Vancouver to Sacramento making way for an easy getaway to the Gold Country. The GCVA engaged the help of Destination Counsellors International (DCI) in Toronto, and was able to secure two journalists on the inaugural direct flight. The GCVA hosted five media from Vancouver and is slated to continue to work with more media in the Vancouver market.



The GCVA hired DCI in January 2018 and the investment was \$25,000. As of June 30th, the total media impressions were 7.43 million (a majority of those on-line) and \$106,325 in value. The funding for the GCVA comes from a Visit California grant that is applied for each year. TCVB Executive Director is currently President of the GCVA and is the grant writer.

High Sierra Visitors Council (HSVC) - The HSVC has recently taken advantage of a new Visit California program called California STAR. California STAR is a training platform for the travel trade and gives them greater insight into destinations through interactive sales components ultimately creating expert brand ambassadors for the destination. The HSVC also continues to build its outreach to the French market, both on a travel trade and media level. Many destinations with High Sierra, including Tuolumne County, have cited an increase in French visitors since beginning this representation nearly four years ago.



Yosemite Gateways (not to be confused with Yosemite Gateway Partners) - The Yosemite Gateways is made up of the Destination Management/Marketing organizations from Madera, Mono, Mariposa and Tuolumne counties. Funding for marketing projects comes from Yosemite National Park. The group is charged with creating marketing to promote visiting Yosemite in off-peak times and using alternative transportation.



- Officially launched a website redesign which features a new locations tab, a permit page with information needed to film in the area and an events tab with an emphasis on film events happening in the area

- Total of 15 permitted filming days that occurred in various parts of the County, including filming from ABC and Travel Channel
- Film commission was represented at the California On Location Awards in Beverly Hills
- The Film Commission, alongside other film commissions met with the head of production at LucasFilm to encourage filming in California
- Bethany Wilkinson became the official film liaison to represent Tuolumne County in the Film Liaisons in California Statewide



FilmTuolumne.org

TCVB Leadership and Staff

2017-2018 Board of Directors:

Shirley Sarno, Chair Person, Sonora Chamber of Commerce
Margaret Davis – Vice-Chair Person, Junction Shopping Center
Mark Truppner - Treasurer, Clarke Broadcasting
Katie Fromm – Secretary, Dodge Ridge Ski Resort
Amelia Harrison –Tuolumne County Chamber of Commerce
Stephen Willey, The National Hotel & Restaurant
Ron Patel, Black Oak Casino Resort
Chris Link, Best Western Plus Sonora Oaks Hotel & Conference Center
Betsy Hurst Younger, Twain Harte Business Association
Teri Marshall, Rush Creek Lodge/Evergreen Lodge
Katie Dunn, The Carriage House on Barretta
Launa Valente, Lazy Z Resort
Stephanie McCaffrey, McCaffrey Bed & Breakfast

TCVB Team:

Full Time:

Lisa Mayo, Executive Director
Jennifer Lopez, Marketing Manager
Katie Kirkland, Communications and Tourism Manager
Debbe Pallante, Office and Membership Manager

Part Time:

Anna Davies, Special Programs Coordinator
Bethany Wilkinson, Film Liaison
Mackenzie Rodgers, Digital Content Coordinator
Ginger Malatesta, Bookkeeper

Visitor Services:

Diane Rock
Richard Haratani
Dave Grookin
Kate Greene
Jim O’Neal



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