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By James Feenan at 7:21 am, Oct 31, 2024

October 29, 2024

Lisa Davis
2155 Algonkin # A
Chico, CA 95926

To: Mendocino Planning Department.

Subject: Request to Not Restrict Low Impact Camping in Mendocino County

Honorable Sir and Madam,

I am writing today to share my support for Mendocino County's low intensity camping policy and ask you to include low intensity camping in the zoning code update. Tourism is a primary and necessary income source for the county. Adding camping on private property will allow more options for visitors while not taking away any local housing inventory. This allows more affordable housing for locals and an increase in tourism dollars. Per Mendocino Tourism Commission Report March 11, 2024, "The final report was delivered in February 2023 and the results show per-party trip spending of $1,666 per stay. " (See attached)

I understand that the county government is considering implementing regulations that may limit or prohibit low impact camping on private properties. I appreciate the need for regulations to ensure safety and protect the environment. But regulations that make it too expensive for a landowner to offer camping, will kill any chance of the visitor, landowner and county from benefiting from camping visitors who seek a unique or more private experience.

It is helpful to see what other agencies are doing for camping regulations. The intent of dispersed Camping is to allow " Many people (to) enjoy the solitude and primitive experience of camping away from developed campgrounds and other campers." The Attached US Forest Service regulations require:

- Large groups need to obtain a special use permit.
- You need to be self-contained. No amenities are provided; such as water, restrooms or trash cans.
- You may camp in a dispersed area for up to 16 days.
- Please place your campsite at least 100 feet from any stream or other water source.
- Keep a Pack-In Pack-Out camp. Follow Leave No Trace guidelines.
- Contact the local Forest Service office to see if any restrictions, especially fire restrictions are in place.
- Be Bear Aware. There are bears on the National Forest, so camp accordingly.

All local laws regarding noise, traffic, parking and waste disposal are in effect for camping sites. Regulations that mirror local campgrounds makes sense. No ground

fires is one rule that would keep safety first and calm concerns. The 2024 Mendocino Fire Safe Council report (See attached) states fires are caused by arson, lightning, accidental equipment use and by debris burning. The very thorough report does not mention any fires caused by private camping.

As a responsible landowner, I believe that allowing limited low impact camping can have numerous benefits for both the local community and the environment. By limited, I suggest 1 or 2 spots per acre parcel, so there is less impact. I encourage regulations that create a maximum number of sites per acre and number of campers per site.

Landowners are willing to work closely with the county government to develop guidelines and protocols that address any potential concerns. Most Hipcamp hosts allow 5-8 camper site, and they can only stay less than 2 weeks. Many campground agencies, such as California State Parks allow only 2 cars per campsite, thus reducing congestion along roadways. The small income received from Hipcamp only puts a dent in the costs of land ownership: property taxes, weed management, road maintenance and WIFI service.

Pets are part of a family and allowing no more than 2 dogs per site, with the dog owner required to keep their dog under control. For many solo travelers camping with their dog is a matter of safety. According to the 2023-24 AAPA National Pet Owners Survey, 66 percent of all US households—86.9 million homes—include a companion animal. In most cases, these companions are cherished members of the family. ……..Pets are often treasured sources of emotional support, unconditional love, and stability for partners and children. And " Travel plans accommodate and frequently include pets.

- While most dog owners (55%) and a growing number of cat owners (36%) tailor their travel plans to accommodate their pets, the desire to spend quality time with pets extends beyond the day-to-day and into travel. In the past year, 88% of dog owners and 90% of cat owners have traveled with their pets in the car, and 68% of dog owners and 80% of cat owners have traveled by plane. (See attached)

Low impact camping refers to a form of camping that minimizes environmental impact and promotes sustainable practices. By opening up property for low impact camping, we aim to provide individuals and families with the opportunity to reconnect with nature, enjoy the beauty of the land, and experience the benefits of outdoor recreation. This can have a positive impact on physical and mental well-being, and promote a deeper appreciation for the natural environment.

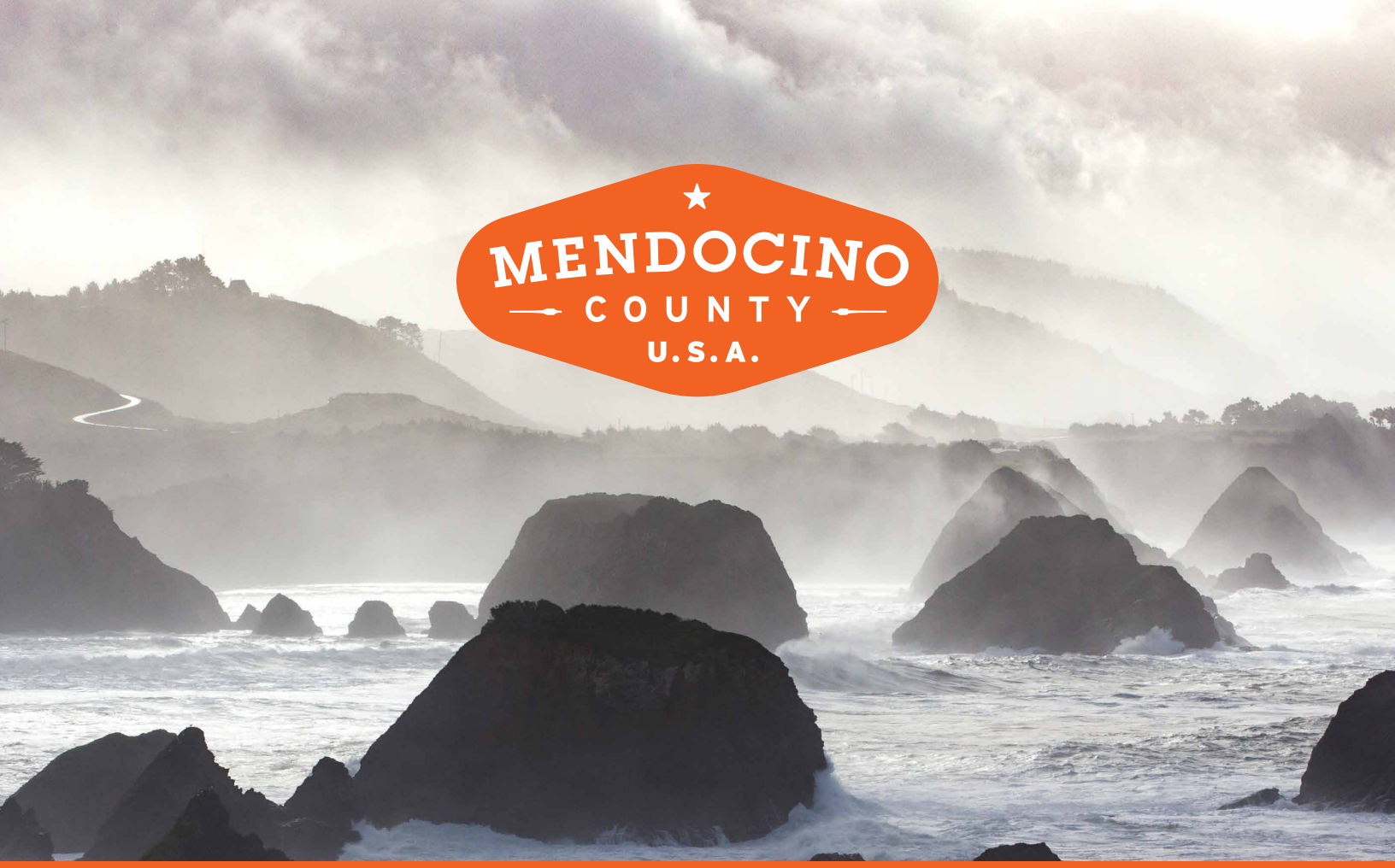
Moreover, low impact camping can contribute to the local economy by attracting tourists and outdoor enthusiasts to the area. Visitors who engage in low impact camping often spend money on local goods and services, supporting small businesses and creating additional revenue streams for the community. This can contribute to the growth and development of our region while preserving its natural heritage.

We are committed to responsible land stewardship and will take all necessary measures to ensure that low impact camping on the property is conducted in a safe and environmentally-friendly manner. I am fully aware of the importance of fire safety, waste management, and respecting the privacy and rights of neighboring properties.

Please prioritize the low intensity camping policy and support an ordinance that makes it easy for local landowners to welcome a small number of campers on their property.

By supporting low impact camping, we can foster a sense of community, promote sustainable tourism, and encourage a greater appreciation for our natural resources. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Lisa Davis



MENDOCINO COUNTY U.S.A.

Mendocino County Tourism Commission, Inc. DBA: Visit Mendocino County: Fiscal Year 2022–2023

SUBMITTED TO MENDOCINO COUNTY TOURISM COMMISSION & COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

MARCH 11, 2024

visitmendocino.com

VMC Annual Report Fiscal Year 2022-2023:

Executive Summary

The 2022-2023 fiscal year (FY) continued to be an incredibly strong year with further growth in tourism in Mendocino County (MC). The pent-up demand for travel continued to lead consumers to visit Mendocino County at greater than "normal" levels. The Visit Mendocino County (VMC) team continued to push forward with cross-platform Brand Awareness marketing to ensure that MC was top-of-mind for potential visitors as Northern California's premiere road-trip destination. This program was three pronged: first: focus on brand awareness, second: target A-list media who wrote for multiple publications to gain extra coverage from each press visit and third: redevelop the brand of VMC to cement the brand's placement in the marketplace as the top rural road trip destination on the California Coast. As part of the re-brand of the organization, the team took a deep dive into building a new website. The desire of the team was to create a cutting-edge destination website that is content driven. We noted financial growth in Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) and Business Improvement District (BID) assessment. However, due to budgetary restrictions at the County of Mendocino (CoM), the organization accepted a partnership arrangement with the CoM and our BID match was reduced to a flat rate of $150,000 total for FY 22/23. The BoD, CEO and steering committee continued to negotiate with the CoM staff to move forward in organizing and converting VMC to the BID law of 1994.

This report will outline the strong placement of Mendocino County as a tourism destination and other necessary highlights for the fiscal year.

- While the organization remains financially strong, the current state of Mendocino County's finances no longer provides the ability to continue to support tourism promotion in the long-term, putting VMC's annual contract and 50% match in jeopardy. This led the BoD to direct the ED to consult with Civitas Advisors as to potential avenues for long-term funding stability. However, in June 2022 the County BoS approved the annual contract. At the time of writing, the ED is exploring funding options under the advisement of Civitas Advisors. The BID Advisory Board will address this further in their 2023-2024 report.
- The organization undertook a complete rebrand initiative, including its website. The new brand is designed to elevate the presence and value of Mendocino County as a destination. This new generation of VMC is scheduled to launch in spring 2023.
- Continued engagement with Cultivar Strategies to further the initiative of bringing tourism-facing cannabis businesses into the marketing fold of VMC.
- Launched a video podcast series under production and using the talent of Bay Area TV Personality Roberta Gonzales. This series showed 9 episodes with an average per episode viewership of 4,389.
- The expansion of the "Room to Roam" campaign into the television and radio markets.
- Undertook the development of a festival and event funding program designed to assist local organization in launching new tourism-facing events geared to bringing visitors to MC.
- VMC welcomed Festival Coordinator (contractor) Janis MacDonald to the team.
- Continued its massively successful Public Relations program, reaching and exceeding its set goals just 5 months into the FY.
- The team attended Visit California's annual Outlook Forum in February with Visit California noting in several sessions the successes of VMC as leader in rural tourism marketing.

- As required by our county contract VMC engaged with JJACPA, Inc. for the organization's annual financial audit that, again, closed with no recommendations.
- The Executive Director (ED) working in collaboration with the Business Improvement District (BID) Advisory Board completed the annual BID report and submitted it to the Board of Supervisors (BoS) for acceptance and approval at their May 17, 2022 meeting.

Despite the financial challenges presented to the organization, the VMC future is bright! The team is dedicated to inspiring visitors to experience our miles of pristine coastline, the acres of old-growth redwoods and verdant inland valleys, the unique attractions, makers, and artists and of course our hospitable welcome.

By working together and with our larger community, we can raise visitation numbers, add to economic development, and improve the lives of our residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to promote our beautiful county.

Respectfully,

Travis Scott
Executive Consultant

Strategic Plan

The activities in this report relate to the initiatives set forth in the three-year Visit Mendocino County (VMC) Strategic Plan that was put into action in 2021. The purpose of the plan was to realign the core strategies of the organization. (The Strategic Plan may be viewed at https://www.mendocinotourism.org/wp-content/uploads/Final-VMC-2021-2023-Strategic-Plan.pdf). This report directly relates the VMC Marketing, PR, Sales and other VMC staff activities during the year to the Imperatives, Objectives and Initiatives contained in the Strategic Plan.

VISION:

A diversified and thriving economy supported by our community, offering enriching experiences for our guests.

MISSION:

Visit Mendocino County stewards and amplifies the total Mendocino County Experience

VALUES:

- **Transparency:** We foster trust through openness and integrity.
- **Accountability:** We are outcome oriented and professional.
- **Partnership:** We create alignment through inclusive and meaningful relationships.
- **Community:** We contribute to the fabric of Mendocino County.
- **Innovation:** Our creativity reflects the uniqueness of our culture and landscapes.

IMPERATIVE: Optimize and demonstrate our impact through relationships and collaborations.

The PR team (Koli Communications, CEO, MM and PRCM and DM) communicate with partners and stakeholders on a monthly basis informing them of media stories. The team also requests partners and stakeholders to submit content and information to VMC for dissemination by Visit California. An example of pitches made during the year and published by Visit CA on their site features the Point Arena Lighthouse, Harbor House Inn and Pacific Star Winery.

The CEO continues as Administrator and Treasurer of the NCTC/NOO and attends quarterly meetings with Visit Redwoods (Humboldt), the Lake County Tourism Improvement District and Visit Del Norte County.

MCTC staff currently hold seats on the Destination Hopland, Anderson Valley Winegrowers, Visit Fort Bragg, Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, Visit Ukiah, and the Point Arena Merchants Association. At the request of CoM Supervisors Gjerde and Williams, the CEO worked in partnership with Marin and Sonoma counties and Leave No Trace to develop the Cleaner California Coast initiative. The initiative launched its website and social media marketing assets in early summer and Mendocino County (VMC) has been the greatest source of referrals to the program's website.

For the third year, CORO Mendocino approached the marketing team to partner with their organization on a campaign that would continue work into the 2023-2024 FY. Specific deliverables for that campaign would be placement of a billboard on HWY 101 in Hopland promoting all CORO participating producers county-wide, co-branded with VMC. The program will also include a press release focused on a CORO specific visit to Mendocino County, in Micro-Trip format.

The CEO continues to hold a seat on and work closely with the Visit California (VCA) Rural Regional Committee. The partnership with Visit California provides strong name recognition for VMC with Visit California, with VMC often being used in VCA presentations as following best DMO practices.

- **OBJECTIVE: Increase participation rate in VMC Programs**

  - VMC renewed its contract with Festival Coordinator (FC) Janis MacDonald to expand VMC's umbrella festivals: Harvest Festival Mendocino and Seafood & Sips Mendocino, Mendocino Sparkling Wine Celebration and develop new event offerings as partners express interest in growing local event offerings.
  - Partner Relations & Communications Manager (PRCM) worked with Mendocino County Lodging Association (MCLA) to host quarterly industry mixers to engage partners and stakeholders in the work of VMC.
  - Following a successful first year "event grant program" the PRCM and FC continued to identify and support new tourism-facing events ultimately granting $31,700 to support the growth of community events.
  - VMC team continued to meet with partners and stakeholders one-on-one as frequently as possible under the Hospitality Outreach Program allowing the team to introduce programs and initiatives directly to partners and stakeholders. These meetings are specifically helpful in attracting business participation in VMC sponsored festivals.
  - The PR team continued to highlight the outdoor wonders of Mendocino County, to appeal to a wider variety of consumers in our target markets.
  - The organization in its third year of engagement with Brian Applegarth continued to build the County's tourism-facing cannabis marketing program to integrate with existing campaigns and communication pillars. The focus was direct engagement with cannabis stakeholders to gain participation in VMC programs.

GOOGLE ANALYTICS: VMC SITE TOP TEN	
OUTBOUND REFERRALS 2022/2023	
July 2022 - June 2023	
Property	Opens
Total Page Views	34,205
Glass Beach	10,494
Skunk Train - Fort Bragg	4,844
Bowling Ball Beach	3,080
Little River Inn	2,619
SCP Mendocino Coast Lodge	2,420
Montgomery Woods State Reserve	2,314
Chandelier Drive-Thru Tree	2,295
Skunk Train - Willits	2,194
Vichy Springs Resort & Inn	2,069
Noyo Harbor	1,876

  - The website (Hit Report) continues to be a useful tool for both VMC and partners & stakeholders. The report is sent monthly to every stakeholder and partner for whom VMC has an email address associated with their online listing, and informs them of:
    - Total number of visitors to VMC website
    - Number of referrals from VMC website to stakeholder's website
    - Number of click-throughs from the VMC website to the stakeholder's website.

    This information provided monthly to both partners, stakeholders, and VMC staff allows deeper interaction between the organization and businesses. The team communicates this information regularly.

- **OBJECTIVE: Increase VMC Communication Engagement Rate**
  - To deepen engagement with VMC's extensive consumer email list of 34,168 (time of writing), the team expanded upon its email campaign program which previously engaged 2.25 times monthly, to an average frequency of 4.5 emails monthly.
  - The organization received the final Travel Analytics Group (TAG) visitor and resident perspective studies giving VMC a baseline to grow programs and communications based on the needs outlined in the survey. See the link for the full results of the study: www.mendocinotourism.org/wp-content/uploads/Visit-Mendocino_Res-Vis-Study_Summary-Presentation-1.pdf
  - With continued success, the team continued working in collaboration with Roberta Gonzales Productions (RoGoPro) to finish the first season (10 episodes) of the Visit Mendocino County Room to Roam podcast series. The program launched in February 2022 and was released monthly to an average of 5,361 views per episode during the season run (February 21/22 through December 22/23).

- **OBJECTIVE: Boost community's support of the tourism industry**
  - As mentioned above, under the contract with TAG the organization sought community input about the organization, its effectiveness, and shortcomings to understand the community's views and needs surrounding tourism in Mendocino County. The organization takes the input from the community very seriously and works to continually address community needs through each individual program: www.mendocinotourism.org/wp-content/uploads/Visit-Mendocino_Res-Vis-Study_Summary-Presentation-1.pdf

INITIATIVE: Create a campaign to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses

- To address this initiative, at the direction of the BoD, VMC contracted again with TAG to create a website influence return on investment study (ROI) in FY 21/22. The final report was delivered in February 2023 and the results show per-party trip spending of $1,666 per stay, annual direct visitor spend of $54,690,281 and an additional indirect (supply chain spending) of $11.3 million plus an induced (labor income spending) of $10.5 million for a total economic activity attributed to VMC of $77 million with a total annual tax impact of $9,444,000 for a total ROI of $86 per dollar spent. With the delivery of the final report from TAG in January 2023, the team shifted programming and took a whole new approach to building the new website. Leveraging this data with partners, stakeholders, and the community to maximize the benefit of the information gathered. To view the final results of the study view this link: www.mendocinotourism.org/wp-content/uploads/Mendocino-County-Influence-and-ROI-Presentation-ResultsPRELIM.pdf

INITIATIVE: Perform a needs assessment of our stakeholders and partners

- This initiative has been addressed by the team and with the results of the community and visitor perspective studies by TAG, the team addresses each "community" based on their respective needs. Currently the team is working with each incorporated city to develop their "voice" through VMC marketing.

INITIATIVE: Enhance VMC's portfolio of stakeholder offerings and resources

- As addressed above, the organization strives to continue to address this initiative as part of daily organizational development.

IMPERATIVE: Raise visitor awareness of Mendocino County and strengthen tourism's contribution to County vitality.

In 2017 TheorySF (TSF), then agency of record for Visit Mendocino County, conducted a brand awareness study. The results were that Mendocino County as a destination was virtually unknown to our target markets leading TSF to deliver a verbal report of no awareness. In FY 21/22, under the engagement of TAG for a website/program ROI study, the CEO requested that the completed ROI report include baseline awareness statistics of the use of www.visitmendocino.com. Results of the study place consumer awareness far above that of five years ago, 57.66% of respondents knew of and had already decided to visit Mendocino County. As work continues with Agency Xi further brand awareness baselines will be delivered in FY 23/24.

The organization continues its two-prong approach to direct marketing, the first being brand awareness, with the goal of placing Mendocino County top-of-mind with potential and returning visitors (see the next data set for additional information). The second, focuses on and promotes tourism-facing events designed to bolster shoulder season visitation and Business Improvement District (BID) collections.

Public relations (PR) is a major driver of visitor awareness. Our PR team strategically plans annual communication pillars that are designed to partner with our direct marketing efforts. During the fiscal year the team realized their goals early with an overwhelming amount of media attention.

One of the shifts made during COVID-19 that continues post-pandemic is to maximize media pitches and placements along with decreasing the number of press visits by pitching to media with a broader reach and access to multiple publications because the team realized this approach maximized VMC's public relations resources. By welcoming media to experience a broader view of Mendocino County they could use one trip for various works/publications. This direction allows staff and partners to host fewer in-person visits to the county while ensuring our goals were exceeded.

The PR team was pleased to introduce a string of A-list features that hit throughout the year in publications and on stations such as: Forbes, 7x7, The Wall Street Journal, MSN, Travel + Leisure, Yahoo!, Sunset, Wine Enthusiast, USA Today, Conde Nast Traveler, AARP, AMEX Departures, Thrillist, VIA, SF Chronicle, LA Times, Smart Meetings, AFAR, NBC Bay Area, Los Angeles, and San Diego. The data below shows the PR team's direct impressions, advertising equivalency, and familiarization program data for the year.

COVERAGE	2022/2023 GOAL	2022/23 TOTAL	2021/22 TOTAL
Placements	500	908	958
Impressions	250 Million	2.419 Billion	2.604 Billion
Advertising Equivalency	$10 Million	$422.5 Million	$717.065 Million

MEDIA RELEASES	GOAL	TOTAL
	11	13

DATE	NAME	OUTLET
8/12-8/13	Alexis Mills	Locale
8/21-8/23	Amber Turpin	7x7
9/8/23	James Stewart	Which Travel/UK
9/10-9/12	Eric Hiss	Marin Living
9/14-9/16	Neil Davey	Media Influencer/UK
10/15-10/17	Allison Tibaldi	USA Today
10/17-10/18	Steve LaRosa	KFBK AM
11/5-11/8	Clara Hogan	TimeOut!
11/4-11/5	Kathleen Messmer	IndieSpirit!
11/4-11/6	Kim Westerman	Forbes
11/10-11/12	Shoshi Parks	7x7
11/11-11/12	Tina Caputo	Sonoma Magazine
11/14/23	Amber Gibson	Chicago Tribune
2/2-2/4	Matt Villano	Freelance
2/2-2/4	Chelsea Davis	Forbes
3/2-3/4	Noah Lederman	Barrons
3/27-3/29	Julien Carpentier	La Voix du Nord/France
3/27-3/29	Michel Fonovich	A/R Magazine/France
3/27-3/29	Guillaume Soularue	Gala Magazine/France
3/30-3/31	Fiona Hardingham	Go Gently Televison/France
4/26-4/29	Sharon McConnell	Punch Magazine
4/28-5/1	Fiona Chandra	Los Angeles Times
5/26/23	John Bartell	ABC News/10
5/27-5/29	Brandon Schultz	Out There/UK
6/16-6/19	Jennifer Parker	Huge! Magazine
6/16-6/19	Fiona Chandra	PureWow

- **OBJECTIVE: Increase website traffic**

Analytics | http://www.VisitMendocino.com
www.VisitMendocino.com

Go to report

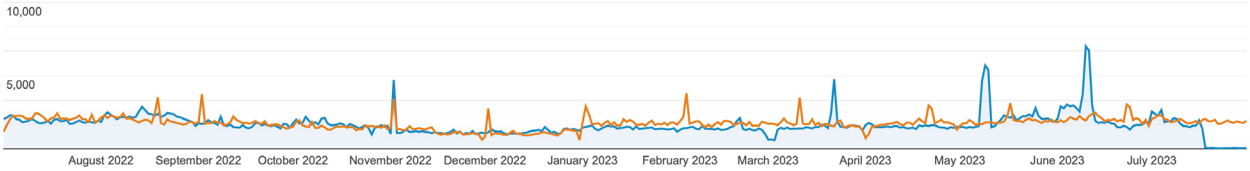
Audience Overview

All Users
+0.00% Users

Jul 1, 2022 - Jul 31, 2023
Compare to: Jul 1, 2021 - Jul 31, 2022

Overview

Jul 1, 2022 - Jul 31, 2023: Users
Jul 1, 2021 - Jul 31, 2022: Users

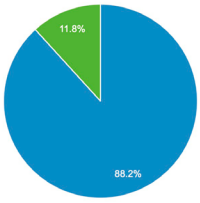


Users	New Users	Sessions	Number of Sessions per User
-4.39%	-4.49%	-6.33%	-2.02%
586,047 vs 612,966	580,647 vs 607,953	718,904 vs 767,461	1.23 vs 1.25

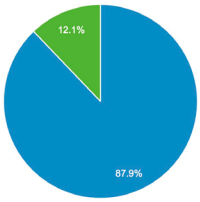
Pageviews	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Bounce Rate
2.99%	9.94%	-9.39%	-15.51%
1,370,495 vs 1,330,723	1.91 vs 1.73	00:01:01 vs 00:01:07	62.74% vs 74.25%

New Visitor Returning Visitor

Jul 1, 2022 - Jul 31, 2023



Jul 1, 2021 - Jul 31, 2022



	City	Users	% Users
1.	(not set)		
	Jul 1, 2022 - Jul 31, 2023	70,966	11.24%
	Jul 1, 2021 - Jul 31, 2022	25,803	4.06%
	% Change	**175.03%**	**177.19%**
2.	San Jose		
	Jul 1, 2022 - Jul 31, 2023	63,599	10.08%
	Jul 1, 2021 - Jul 31, 2022	43,463	6.83%
	% Change	**46.33%**	**47.48%**
3.	San Francisco		
	Jul 1, 2022 - Jul 31, 2023	46,782	7.41%
	Jul 1, 2021 - Jul 31, 2022	83,831	13.18%
	% Change	**-44.19%**	**-43.76%**
4.	Los Angeles		
	Jul 1, 2022 - Jul 31, 2023	28,304	4.48%
	Jul 1, 2021 - Jul 31, 2022	29,565	4.65%
	% Change	**-4.27%**	**-3.51%**
5.	Sacramento		
	Jul 1, 2022 - Jul 31, 2023	27,062	4.29%
	Jul 1, 2021 - Jul 31, 2022	39,359	6.19%
	% Change	**-31.24%**	**-30.70%**
6.	Ashburn		
	Jul 1, 2022 - Jul 31, 2023	18,260	2.89%
	Jul 1, 2021 - Jul 31, 2022	2,693	0.42%
	% Change	**578.05%**	**583.39%**
7.	Santa Rosa		

- The topline data for FY 22/23 website analytics reveal:
  - Most traffic is from Northern California: San Jose, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Sacramento are among the top 5.
  - Demographics are holding to the 25-54 age range
  - For the third year the Room to Roam campaign drove the most page views (123,361)

Social Media Results YOY FY 2021/2022 vs FY 2022/2023					
FACEBOOK			INSTAGRAM		
	FY 2021/2022	FY 2022/2023		FY 2021/2022	FY 2022/2023
Impressions	33,538,268 Total (32,691,066 Paid / 847,202 Organic+Viral)	24,879,903 Total (23,582,749 Paid / 1,297,154 Organic+Viral)	Impressions	4,944,443	4,915,705
Engagement	337,271	341,553	Likes Received	58,451	42,118
Link Clicks	266,207	285,636	Comments	763	411
Posts	106	95	Posts	110	134
Impressions/Post	316,398	261,893	Likes/Post	531	314
Engagement/Post	3,282	3,595	Comments/Post	6.9	3
Fan Base	61,008	62,051	Followers	25,353	33,037

- The role of social media in driving visitors to www.visitmendocino.com is fundamental in not only increasing website users, but in raising brand awareness. The above dataset shows the YoY metrics. The total number includes paid impressions and organic and viral impressions. Impressions/posts are based on the latter number to avoid skewing the figures

- **OBJECTIVE: Grow BID Fund 5% over 3 years**

TREASURER - TAX COLLECTOR
COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
(Data as of 1/30/2024)

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Collections by Calendar Quarter

Fiscal Year	1st Quarter (July-Sept.)	2nd Quarter (Oct.-Dec.)	3rd Quarter (Jan.-March)	4th Quarter (April-June)	Fiscal Year Collections
2015-16	$ 1,651,009.69	$ 1,074,781.45	$ 835,844.53	$ 1,299,992.81	$ 4,861,628.48
2016-17	$ 1,780,216.37	$ 1,167,144.03	$ 829,814.09	$ 1,468,462.17	$ 5,245,636.66
2017-18	$ 2,019,644.14	$ 1,227,713.38	$ 1,026,731.35	$ 1,463,623.39	$ 5,737,712.26
2018-19	$ 1,977,385.88	$ 1,280,880.02	$ 961,022.83	$ 1,575,991.66	$ 5,795,280.39
2019-20	$ 2,147,423.50	$ 1,384,005.43	$ 802,609.14	$ 316,554.17	$ 4,650,592.24
2020-21	$ 2,024,631.64	$ 1,665,875.86	$ 1,305,497.08	$ 2,265,156.69	$ 7,261,161.27
2021-22	$ 2,888,831.93	$ 1,925,364.42	$ 1,457,063.23	$ 2,175,686.89	$ 8,446,946.47
2022-23	$ 3,129,958.41	$ 1,804,616.58	$ 1,237,715.34	$ 2,190,545.22	$ 8,362,835.55

Business Improvement District (BID) Assessment Collections by Calendar Quarter

Fiscal Year	1st Quarter (July-Sept.)	2nd Quarter (Oct.-Dec.)	3rd Quarter (Jan.-March)	4th Quarter (April-June)	Fiscal Year Collections
2015-16	$ 273,600.95	$ 178,894.32	$ 147,456.87	$ 222,164.94	$ 822,117.08
2016-17	$ 306,111.45	$ 192,168.41	$ 149,161.15	$ 249,550.90	$ 896,991.91
2017-18	$ 336,333.39	$ 214,398.57	$ 172,188.75	$ 252,939.31	$ 975,860.02
2018-19	$ 345,414.74	$ 208,182.17	$ 169,013.36	$ 266,870.80	$ 989,481.07
2019-20	$ 356,681.19	$ 228,223.25	$ 151,009.41	$ 79,074.22	$ 814,988.07
2020-21	$ 345,912.88	$ 258,702.54	$ 215,421.63	$ 367,722.16	$ 1,187,759.21
2021-22	$ 455,894.60	$ 297,723.80	$ 228,586.87	$ 344,553.64	$ 1,326,758.91
2022-23	$ 716,817.62	$ 274,547.16	$ 217,310.82	$ 574,315.90	$ 1,782,991.50

PLEASE NOTE: The collections reflected above represent the actual quarters in which the lodging establishments collected the taxes and assessments. If applicable, penalties and interest collected by the County are also included in the above totals.

- In January 2024 the Mendocino County Treasurer-Tax Collector Office published their annual TOT/BID collections report. The report shows that revenue from lodging businesses increased 34.4% YoY with a total growth of 50.11% since the inception of this strategic plan in July 2021.

BookDirect Referrals	
OUTBOUND REFERRALS 2022/2023	
July 2022 - June 2023	
	Total
Month	10,038
July	1,961
August	1,510
September	1,390
October	916
November	715
December	600
January	783
February	764
March	686
April	713

- With the addition of the Simpleview lodging booking system on www.visitmendocino.com potential visitors book lodging reservations via the VMC website. While there is no exact way to know how many visitors booked through the platform, we can show that the widget pushed 10,038 potential visitors as far as the Book Now button on stakeholder web reservation systems. This information provides another point of contact between staff and partners.

Spending Category			Amount
Lodging (Room Night(s) Paid):			$24,734,298
Food and Beverage:			$12,641,975
Entertainment:			$2,583,360
Retail Shopping:			$5,496,511
Daily Transportation (Gas/Car Rental/Bus/Tax. Uber etc.):			$2,968,116
Other Recreation (lift tickets, admission fees, rental equipment or gear, tour guides):			$3,133,011
Other:			$3,133,011
Total:			$54,690,281

Efficiency and ROI Measures

Notes:

- Cost per Unique Visitor=Total Visit Mendocino County Total Budget $631,417/ Unique Visitors
- Cost per Trip Party = Total Visit Mendocino County Total Budget $631,417/visitors influenced to visit
- Program ROI= Total Economic Impact/ Visit Mendocino County budget $631,417

	Amount
Cost per user to the website	$1.17
Cost per trip party	$30.33
Program ROI	$86:$1

- As part of the TAG ROI Study conducted in FY 21/22, the organization received the above data showing direct annual visitor spending attributed to VMC programs. This information provides the BoD and staff with baseline consumer spending by category. This data assists in the development of spending growth strategies for the industry and business segments. The report also validates VMC's programming by reporting a return on investment of $86 per marketing dollar spent. Further scenario analysis offers the organization areas of improvement and growth that advance this objective. These areas of improvement are under advisement and programming will be set forth in FY 22/23.

- **OBJECTIVE: Increase shoulder season visitation rates**

  ↳ According to the Treasurer-Tax Collector TOT report above, we can see that Q2 and Q3 TOT collections have increased with a total growth of 3% since the inception of this strategic plan in July 2021.

  - **INITIATIVE: Evaluate and diversify visitor target market segment and competitive set**

    → In January 2023, the delivery of Travel Analytics Group Visitor and Resident Perspective Study outlined several key West Coast markets that are currently under-advertised by destinations. This research comes with other data that must be analyzed for the team to make market recommendations to the marketing committee. This data could allow VMC to retarget its marketing efforts to a new demographic, if necessary to capture the largest share of marketing attention.

  - **INITIATIVE: Refresh our brand identity to align with target segments and competitive advantage.**

    → The BoD and public were offered a preview of the new Visit Mendocino County brand sporting the tagline "Magic is Real". The new branding allows the organization to lean into the natural assets of Mendocino County in a more cohesive manner. This new brand will allow the VMC team to expand on the successful "Room to Roam" branding that the organization has been promoting. The focus groups presented with this brand concept found that this new generation of branding will resonate more with potential travelers to further capture the attention of the markets and demographics identified in our Visitor Study by TAG. The "Magic is Real" brand will include a newly crafted website that optimizes the user experience to extend the length of time spent on the site. This brand platform relies heavily on photo and video assets designed to engage the user from the moment VMC's website is displayed on their device. The new site is also optimized FIRST for mobile use, as the TAG data showed that 2/3 of our site users are viewing on a mobile device.

  - **INITIATIVE: Create process and framework for the evaluation and investment in event promotion with an emphasis on shoulder season.**

    → The VMC Team considers this initiative complete.

    - At the February 2022 meeting of the Festival Committee a discussion was held to look at current local events, identify their success and strategy and outline a "grading" system to assist in the identification of successful events (tourism drivers). This system will allow the committees and team to partner with the appropriate organizations to better market successful events, year-round.
    - The Festival Coordinator and PRM worked to create an "event grant" program framework. This framework was approved by the Marketing, Festival, and Visitor Services committees at their August and September 2022 meetings.
    - The "event grant" program officially launched on January 12, 2023. The program sponsored a total of $31,700 to 15 non-profit agencies hosting visitor-facing events during the shoulder seasons.

IMPERATIVE: Steward and advocate for the Mendocino County Experience

As a steward and advocate for the Mendocino County Experience, it is important for VMC to promote the natural beauty, cultural heritage, and unique character of the region. This means working to encourage protection of the environment and support sustainable practices that benefit the local community and economy. It also means showcasing the diverse array of activities, events, and attractions that Mendocino County has to offer visitors and residents alike. By emphasizing the county's natural assets, rich history, and welcoming community, we can create a memorable and authentic experience that encourages visitors to return and fosters a sense of pride among residents. Ultimately, by stewarding and advocating for the Mendocino County Experience, we can ensure that Mendocino County continues to thrive and evolve in a way that benefits everyone.

- **OBJECTIVE: Increase County investment in Tourism products and infrastructure**

  - The current state of Mendocino County's finances no longer provides the ability to continue to support tourism promotion in the long-term, putting VMC's annual contract and 50% match in jeopardy. This led the BoD to direct the CEO to consult with Civitas Advisors as to potential avenues for long-term funding stability. However, in June 2022 the County BoS approved the annual contract. At the time of writing, the CEO is exploring funding options under the advisement of Civitas Advisors.
  - Due to the fiscal state of the County of Mendocino (CoM), it was necessary for the county to remove its 50% match on funding toward tourism promotion. The CEO at the direction of the BID Advisory Board negotiated a flat rate of $150,000 with the CoM as their last contribution to tourism marketing and promotion. It should be noted in this report that top leadership at the CoM do not seem to understand the importance of the Lodging Business Improvement District and/or the efforts of Visit Mendocino County. The organization has been in contract with Civitas Advisors since August 2022 at a total of $96,300, spent as of writing this report. There is no direction from top county leadership directing county admin staff to move the process forward in an expeditious manner that respects the ROI of $86/$1 the organization has achieved. Due to the above circumstances this objective will not be addressed until the County of Mendocino has a firm grasp on their finances.

- **OBJECTIVE: Increase Mendocino County sales tax receipts over 3 years**

Mendocino County / Detail Trend

Direct Travel Impacts 2013-2022p

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2021-2022
Tax Receipts Generated by Travel Spending ($Millions)											
Local Tax Receipts	15.0	16.2	17.5	18.5	20.1	22.3	24.3	19.6	28.8	26.5	▼ -8.1%
State Tax Receipts	18.6	19.5	19.5	20.3	20.9	20.5	22.2	14.7	21.9	20.8	▼ -5.1%
TOTAL	33.6	35.7	37.0	38.8	41.0	42.7	46.4	34.3	50.7	47.3	▼ -6.8%
Local Tax Receipts Generated by Travel Spending ($Millions)											
Visitor	9.7	10.6	11.6	12.2	13.5	15.6	17.0	12.4	20.0	17.9	▼ -10.3%
Business or Employee	5.4	5.7	5.8	6.3	6.6	6.7	7.3	7.2	8.8	8.5	▼ -3.2%
TOTAL	15.0	16.2	17.5	18.5	20.1	22.3	24.3	19.6	28.8	26.5	▼ -8.1%
State Tax Receipts Generated by Travel Spending ($Millions)											
Visitor	13.2	13.7	13.6	14.0	14.6	15.2	16.4	9.1	14.9	13.9	▼ -6.7%
Business or Employee	5.4	5.8	5.9	6.3	6.3	5.3	5.8	5.5	7.0	6.9	▼ -1.9%
TOTAL	18.6	19.5	19.5	20.3	20.9	20.5	22.2	14.7	21.9	20.8	▼ -5.1%

The table above shows a side-by-side analysis of direct visitor spending and tax receipts generated by visitor spending for both California and Mendocino County. These figures are taken from the Economic Impact of Travel in California 2011-2021p report, commissioned by Visit California.

  - Visit Mendocino County aims to increase Mendocino County sales tax receipts since the implementation of the current strategic plan. In 2019, the county generated $24.3 million in sales tax receipts, but this figure dropped to $19.6 million in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on businesses and consumer spending. However, in 2021, the sales tax receipts increased to $28.8 million, indicating that the county's economy recovered. This represents a 5.6% increase from 2019 to 2021. Visit Mendocino County played an active role in achieving this goal by utilizing digital, social, television, and radio marketing, as well as its website, to promote Mendocino County as a destination of choice for visitors. Through targeted marketing efforts, Visit Mendocino County aims to drive increased tourism, resulting in a boost in consumer spending and sales tax receipts in the county. However, in FY 22/23 Mendocino County realized a decrease in visitor spending over the previous fiscal year to $26.5 million. The CA tourism industry noted this trend and are calling this the post-pandemic plateau or market correction. With the world re-open and pent-up demand for travel dissipated we are back to 2019 marketing conditions leading us to compare FY 22/23 to pre-pandemic FY 19/20 leaving us at a total increase of 9.05% YOY.

- **INITIATIVE: Advocate for the development of pro-business county regulations**

  - As the needs assessment of partners and stakeholders is completed, it will become clearer to the BoD as to the direction of the organization under this initiative. Once we understand where the advocacy of the organization is best utilized with the county, the BoD will direct staff in its efforts toward accomplishing this goal.
  - Since the organization engaged with Civitas Advisors, it's seen little to no help from the top-level administration of the CoM in advancing MCTC/VMC's conversion from the '89 to '94 BID law along with an increase in the assessment rate from 1% to 2%. With the removal of the CoM's support for tourism marketing and promotion, this increase is necessary in continuing the work of generating tourism dollars for Mendocino County business partners and stakeholders and sales tax receipts to the CoM. The BoS speaks often from the dais as to its desire to be welcoming to businesses and become a business-friendly community. It is clear to MCTC and its BoD that a major disconnect exists between top-level county administration/department leads and the needs to the community as communicated by the Board of Supervisors.

- **INITIATIVE: Advocate for County investment and development of sustainable tourism infrastructure**

  - The organization will work together with the BID Advisory Board toward identification of infrastructure projects and place those recommendations in this report moving forward. This will allow the BoS to review and understand the long-term sustainability goals and needs of the tourism community and visitors to Mendocino County.

- **INITIATIVE: Align destination development activities to Visit California's Stewardship objectives**

  - As the organization moves forward with marketing the brand of Mendocino County, it remains top-of-mind with staff, committees, and the BoD through our strategic plan to embrace and practice Visit California's Destination Stewardship and Sustainable Travel Plan. This plan identifies 5 key points that should be addressed in all VMC programs. Those points are:
    - Expand: Sustainable Practices Through the Mendocino County Tourism Industry
    - Encourage: Responsible Tourism
    - Develop: Approaches to Shape Visitation Patterns
    - Infuse: the Mendocino County brand with Stewardship Ethics
    - Amplify: the sense of pride Mendocino County residents have in their county
  - In FY 21/22 The BoS directed the CEO to engage with Marin & Sonoma Counties along with the Leave No Trace organization to build out a first of its kind multi-jurisdictional program with an emphasis on keeping the California Coastline pristine for the generations of visitors and community members behind us. The CEO sat on the steering committee of the Cleaner California Coast initiative which activated programming in June 2023. The launch was widely successful and has generated the attention of coastal and inland communities across the state for participation. VMC carries the program forward through its social media and programmatic marketing channels.

APPENDIX 1

Visit Mendocino County

2021–2023 Strategic Plan

Vision

A diversified and thriving economy supported by our community, offering enriching experiences for our guests.

Mission

Visit Mendocino County stewards and amplifies the total Mendocino County experience

Position

In order to support our stakeholders, generate economic activity for county residents through tourism, and inspire our visitors, Visit Mendocino County:

- Markets the Mendocino County experience to key regional and domestic markets
- Creates, develops, and manages brand awareness for the county.
- Connects people and organizations to opportunities.
- Provides tourism resources and information to in-county partners.
- Optimizes return on investment through responsible fiscal management

Values

Transparency: We foster trust through openness and integrity.
Accountability: We are outcome-oriented and professional.
Partnership: We create alignment through inclusive and meaningful relationships.
Community: We contribute to the fabric of Mendocino County.
Innovation: Our creativity reflects the uniqueness of our cultures and landscapes.

Reputation

Leader: We motivate and facilitate the tourism community.
Accessible: We welcome—and are responsive to—input from community members and stakeholders
Collaborative: We actively seek engagement and collaboration with our stakeholders and partners.
Bold: We deliver on smart, effective, and forward- thinking ideas.

Imperatives	Objectives	Initiatives
Optimize and demonstrate our impact through relationships and collaborations	• Increase Participation Rate in VMC Programs • Increase VMC Communication Engagement Rate • Boost Community's Support of the Tourism Industry	• Create a campaign to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses • Perform a needs assessment of our stakeholders and partners • Enhance VMC's portfolio of stakeholder offerings and resources
Raise visitor awareness of Mendocino County and strengthen tourism's contribution to County vitality	• Increase Website Traffic • Grow the BID Fund 5% Over 3 Years • Increase Shoulder Season Visitation Rates	• Evaluate and diversify visitor target market segments and competitive set • Refresh our brand identity to align with target segments and competitive advantage • Create process and framework for the evaluation and investment in event promotion with an emphasis on shoulder seasons
Steward and Advocate for the Mendocino County Experience	• Increase County Investment in Tourism Products and Infrastructure • Increase Mendocino County Sales Tax Receipts Over 3 Years	• Advocate for the development of pro-business county regulations • Advocate for County investment and development of sustainable tourism infrastructure • Align destination development activities to Visit California's Stewardship Objectives

Visit Mendocino County

2021–2023 Strategic Plan

Part of Visit Mendocino's strategic plan calls for the alignment of VMC's destination development and stewardship activities to Visit California's Destination Stewardship and Sustainable Travel Plan. The five objectives outlined in this plan, listed below, focus on residents, visitors and industry partners via marketing, research, communication, education, public affairs, coalition building and destination management:

1	**EXPAND** **Sustainable Practices Throughout the Mendocino County Tourism Industry**
2	**ENCOURAGE** **Responsible Tourism**
3	**DEVELOP** **Approaches to Shape Visitation Patterns**
4	**INFUSE** **the Mendocino County Brand with Stewardship Ethics**
5	**AMPLIFY** **the Sense of Pride Mendocino County Residents Have in Their County**

Visit Mendocino County

Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2023

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1005 SBMC Checking	649,650.57
1010 SBMC Contingency/Savings	1,000,245.31
1030 Cash drawer	100.00
Total Bank Accounts	**$1,649,995.88**
Accounts Receivable	
1100 Accounts Receivable	94,868.52
Total Accounts Receivable	**$94,868.52**
Other Current Assets	$4,258.44
Total Current Assets	**$1,749,122.84**
Fixed Assets	$17,146.75
Other Assets	$0.00
TOTAL ASSETS	**$1,766,269.59**
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 Accounts Payable	80,035.70
Total Accounts Payable	**$80,035.70**
Credit Cards	
Ramp Card	24,300.64
Total Credit Cards	**$24,300.64**
Other Current Liabilities	$42,459.39
Total Current Liabilities	**$146,795.73**
Total Liabilities	**$146,795.73**
Equity	
3100 Contingency-Restricted	187,622.35
3900 Unrestricted Net Assets (RE)	2,042,725.51
Opening Bal Equity	0.00
Net Income	-610,874.00
Total Equity	**$1,619,473.86**
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	**$1,766,269.59**

APPENDIX 3

Mendocino County / Detail Trend

Direct Travel Impacts 2013-2022p

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2021-2022
Direct Travel Spending ($Million)											
Destination Spending	349.0	365.9	384.3	421.8	451.6	435.2	466.8	294.1	496.7	455.0	▼ -8.4%
Other Travel*	16.1	16.2	14.4	12.8	14.4	16.5	17.2	6.2	9.9	14.0	▲ 41.2%
TOTAL	365.1	382.1	398.7	434.6	465.9	451.7	484.0	300.2	506.5	468.9	▼ -7.4%
Visitor Spending by Type of Traveler Accommodation ($Million)											
Hotel, Motel, STVR	200.1	214.6	233.7	267.2	289.3	267.4	286.3	188.6	337.4	249.5	▼ -26.1%
Private Home	46.3	46.6	43.6	44.1	46.8	49.0	54.2	17.8	54.7	60.2	▲ 10.1%
Campground	40.0	40.8	41.5	41.9	44.0	46.2	49.8	41.8	52.1	66.8	▲ 28.1%
2nd Home	13.5	13.7	14.1	14.4	15.2	16.6	17.0	28.1	25.1	31.5	▲ 25.3%
Day Travel	49.1	50.2	51.4	54.1	56.2	56.1	59.5	17.7	27.3	47.0	▲ 72.3%
TOTAL	349.0	365.9	384.3	421.8	451.6	435.2	466.8	294.1	496.7	455.0	▼ -8.4%
Visitor Spending by Commodity Purchased ($Million)											
Accommodations	85.1	93.9	104.2	121.4	130.6	123.0	134.3	109.2	170.2	156.9	▼ -7.8%
Food Service	103.5	106.9	114.8	127.7	136.4	130.1	139.0	80.2	144.2	121.1	▼ -16.0%
Food Stores	20.8	21.4	22.4	23.0	23.3	22.8	24.1	16.2	27.9	32.2	▲ 15.4%
Local Tran. & Gas	45.4	46.8	43.8	42.2	47.1	50.0	53.4	25.0	44.3	48.2	▲ 8.8%
Arts, Ent. & Rec.	52.5	54.3	56.9	61.9	64.5	60.4	62.8	35.1	59.3	50.2	▼ -15.3%
Retail Sales	41.6	42.7	42.1	45.5	49.6	48.9	53.2	28.4	50.8	46.4	▼ -8.7%
TOTAL	349.0	365.9	384.3	421.8	451.6	435.2	466.8	294.1	496.7	455.0	▼ -8.4%
	2013	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2021-2022**
Travel Industry Earnings ($MIllion)											
Accom. & Food Serv.	111.8	120.7	129.0	149.2	162.1	161.8	177.8	136.6	169.5	187.5	▲ 10.6%
Arts, Ent. & Rec.	33.7	36.9	34.4	35.6	37.8	26.5	28.4	15.9	18.5	24.5	▲ 32.4%
Retail**	9.4	9.9	10.2	11.1	11.6	11.3	12.0	12.5	13.5	14.5	▲ 7.4%
Ground Tran.	4.0	4.2	4.6	5.4	6.4	8.4	9.3	3.6	3.7	2.9	▼ -23.6%
Other Travel*	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.5	▲ 48.8%
TOTAL	159.7	172.5	179.1	202.3	219.0	209.1	228.6	169.5	206.3	230.8	▲ 11.9%
Travel Industry Employment (Jobs)											
Accom. & Food Serv.	3,490	3,560	3,560	3,880	4,120	3,920	4,160	3,210	3,610	3,930	▲ 8.9%
Arts, Ent. & Rec.	2,430	2,670	2,480	2,680	2,590	1,740	1,700	860	970	1,290	▲ 33.5%
Retail**	300	310	310	320	330	310	320	310	320	330	▲ 3.4%
Ground Tran.	110	110	120	130	140	160	180	170	180	160	▼ -11.4%
Other Travel*	20	30	30	30	30	30	30	20	20	30	▲ 41.6%
TOTAL	6,360	6,690	6,490	7,040	7,200	6,170	6,400	4,570	5,100	5,740	▲ 12.6%
	2013	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2021-2022**
Tax Receipts Generated by Travel Spending ($Millions)											
Local Tax Receipts	15.0	16.2	17.5	18.5	20.1	22.3	24.3	19.6	28.8	26.5	▼ -8.1%
State Tax Receipts	18.6	19.5	19.5	20.3	20.9	20.5	22.2	14.7	21.9	20.8	▼ -5.1%
TOTAL	33.6	35.7	37.0	38.8	41.0	42.7	46.4	34.3	50.7	47.3	▼ -6.8%
Local Tax Receipts Generated by Travel Spending ($Millions)											
Visitor	9.7	10.6	11.6	12.2	13.5	15.6	17.0	12.4	20.0	17.9	▼ -10.3%
Business or Employee	5.4	5.7	5.8	6.3	6.6	6.7	7.3	7.2	8.8	8.5	▼ -3.2%
TOTAL	15.0	16.2	17.5	18.5	20.1	22.3	24.3	19.6	28.8	26.5	▼ -8.1%
State Tax Receipts Generated by Travel Spending ($Millions)											
Visitor	13.2	13.7	13.6	14.0	14.6	15.2	16.4	9.1	14.9	13.9	▼ -6.7%
Business or Employee	5.4	5.8	5.9	6.3	6.3	5.3	5.8	5.5	7.0	6.9	▼ -1.9%
TOTAL	18.6	19.5	19.5	20.3	20.9	20.5	22.2	14.7	21.9	20.8	▼ -5.1%

APPENDIX 4

Glossary of Terms

This glossary is included to explain terms used in this plan and in other reports and documents issued by Visit Mendocino County. While staff and contractors are familiar with the terminology, some of the terms need a brief explanation.

Advertising equivalency	This dollar figure represents the amount of money it would take to purchase the equivalent in advertising space in a print publication or digital equivalent. The VMC PR team uses a 1:1 ratio unlike many PR firms who use a multiplier to boost numbers.
Impressions	The number of views a print or digital article is estimated to reach based on circulation and subscription data.
Media Placement	A story (print or digital) about an aspect of Mendocino County that arises from PR efforts.
Media Mission	A trip by the PR team to a particular market, e.g., Vancouver BC, to meet local journalists and writers and inspire visitation to and coverage of Mendocino County.
Releases	This can either refer to a press release or a "hot sheet," which is distributed to the press and highlights new and upcoming businesses and openings in the county.
FAM	Familiarization tour or trip. Media FAMs involve members of the media who are vetted by the PR team prior to a visit. Sales FAMs apply to tour group operators who are visiting the county with the aim of including Mendocino in tour packages.
Millennials	The segment of the population born between the early and the mid-1990s to early 2000s. Also known as Generation Y, they are the children of baby boomers and older Gen Xers.
Gen-Xers	The population segment born between the early-to-mid 1960s and ending birth years ranging from the late 1970s to early 1980s. Children of the Baby Boomers.
Baby Boomers	Those born btween the early-to-mid 1940s up to about 1964.
Content marketing	Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.
Google Analytics	A reporting tool provided by Google that can be used to analyze traffic, ad words, digital marketing campaigns, demographics, etc. for VisitMendocino.com.
Facebook Insights	A reporting tool for analyzing traffic, advertising campaigns, and other activities on Facebook.
Activity Provider	A person located in a tourist destination who provides a unique, local activity for a visitor to do while on vacation. Examples of such activities include kayaking, bike riding or arts and crafts, among others.
Free Independent Traveler (FIT)	A person or a couple that is not traveling with a group; usually references foreign travelers out on their own (Foreign Independent Traveler).
Inbound Tour Operator	Someone specializing in providing tours to overseas travelers to a destination, either operating the tour themselves or working through established partnerships with local suppliers.
Receptives	In effect, "middle men" between tour operators and hotel/lodging owners, chiefly in overseas markets. Receptives obtain contracts with hotels for booking arrangements and offer these to tour operators looking to satisfy tourist demand.
Search Engine Marketing	A marketing tactic using paid advertising services so that interested clients and customers can reach a business quicker and easier while searching online.

Block	A number of rooms, seats, or spaces reserved in advance, usually by wholesalers, tour operators, or receptive operators who intend to sell them as components of tour packages.
Conversion	Getting “heads in beds” or otherwise closing the sale. Differs from “hospitality.” Hospitality is being warm, friendly and helpful. Conversion is active selling.
Demand generators	Strategies and programs developed by DMOs and suppliers to generate destination demand. Examples include festivals, events, cultural tours, and consumer promotion.
Engagement	On Facebook (and other social media platforms), engagement is when people perform actions on your Page. They may like a post, click on a link, or comment on an image for example. With Facebook Insights, engagement is measured as the number of times a post is clicked, liked, shared, or commented on.
Reach	A measure of the range of influence of any content; it is the measurement of how content is spread across various social media channels. Think of it as the number of eyeballs a piece of content is getting. On Facebook, for example, “total reach” is the number of people that have seen a particular post.
Selected Key Industry Associations	
DMA West	Destination Marketing Associations West, a membership organization of visitor bureaus throughout the western United States.
Visit California	The tourism marketing agency for the state.
California Travel Association	Membership organization offering education and advocacy for state tourism operators.
U.S. Travel Association	National, non-profit organization representing and advocating for all components of the travel industry.
Destination International	Global association of travel industry agencies and groups, offering education and advocacy for members. Visit Mendocino holds a certification from the globally recognized Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP); this serves as a visible industry distinction that defines quality and performance standards in destination marketing and management.
Brand USA	Agency chiefly responsible for marketing the USA as a destination to the rest of the world.

MCCWPP – Section V: Pre-Fire Management Tactics

DIVISION / BATTALION / PROGRAM PLANS

CAL FIRE BATTALION 1: COVELO

CAL FIRE's Mendocino Unit Battalion 1 is located in the northeast corner of Mendocino County. Within the Battalion is the town of Covelo, centered in Round Valley. The Round Valley floor is predominately Local Responsibility Area (LRA) and fire protection is the responsibility of the Covelo Fire Protection District (CFPD), although CAL FIRE responds to all calls in the District through an automatic mutual aid agreement.

The economy is mainly supported by cattle ranchers, small timber harvest projects, and a great deal of "medical" marijuana. The climate is Mediterranean in type, and vegetation is oak woodlands changing to conifer timberlands in the higher elevations.

CAL FIRE Covelo station, the Covelo Fire Protection District, and the U.S.D.A Forest Service (USFS) have joined forces for several public education activities at local schools and community events. CAL FIRE also works with the Round Valley Indian Tribe's Department of Natural Resources on vegetative fuel reduction in the SRA. CAL FIRE engine and dozer crews from Covelo have constructed a fuel break on the western ridge above the Round Valley Indian Housing tract, and CAL FIRE crews continue to maintain it. CAL FIRE has also taught several Incident Command Classes to the Round Valley Indian Tribe (RVIT) crews to assist them to qualify for fire line duty.

The USFS, CAL FIRE, CFPD, and the Fire Safe Council have determined that the entire Covelo battalion is an at-risk WUI area, with several specific areas having greater hazards. To address the fire problem in the Covelo Battalion without looking at the LRA fire causes would not produce a true evaluation. More than 70 percent of the fires in the Battalion occur within one square mile on the Round Valley Indian Housing tract within the LRA. Arson is the leading cause of fire in the Battalion. The County Sheriff's Office and CAL FIRE work cooperatively to investigate and incarcerate arsonists. Local, state, and federal fire cooperators as well as the Sheriff's Office continue to educate in the schools and community in hopes of reducing arson and accidentally caused fires.

The "Fire Defense Plan" prepared for the RVIT by CAL FIRE in May 1992 is intended to be an integral part of land management planning on the Indian Tribe lands. It identifies several fuel breaks and VIP projects that can mitigate hazards and risks impacting the Battalion and the Covelo community. With the increasing likelihood of wildfires on the west side of the valley, it is imperative that a maintained fuel break exist on the ridge west of the Round Valley Indian Housing Tract. As was noted above, CAL FIRE constructed and continues to maintain a fuel break there, known as the Little Valley fuel break. This break is an extension of one completed by the RVIT crews and provides direct protection to the 100 homes below it. Continuing northwest from Little Valley, another fuel break, known by the name "Pink," was developed in the plan. This break will minimize the risk of uncontrolled fires becoming large and damaging on both the west side of Round Valley and the east side of Poonkinney Ridge.

CAL FIRE BATTALION 2: WILLITS

State Highway 101 bisects CAL FIRE's Mendocino Unit Battalion 2, with predominately redwood and Douglas-fir forest to the west and mixed pine forest, brush, and grassland to the east. Highway 20 goes west from Willits to Fort Bragg for approximately 13 miles within the Battalion. The eastern border of the Battalion is the Mendocino National Forest's Covelo and Upper Lake Districts.

One CAL FIRE station, Howard Forest, co-located with the Mendocino Unit Headquarters, provides the initial ground attack fire protection for Battalion 2. Howard Forest Helitack Base is located at this facility and is administered by the Battalion Chief assigned to Howard Forest. One forest fire lookout facility, Two Rock, closed in 1994 and has been returned to private ownership.

Unit Headquarters facilities include the Unit's Administrative Headquarters, Training Center, Resource Management and Fire Prevention Bureau offices, Logistics Service Center, Automotive Fleet Maintenance shops, breathing apparatus maintenance facility, CAL FIRE's Emergency Command Center, and Howard Park, which is open to the public.

The Brooktrails Township is an unincorporated community located immediately northwest of the City of Willits and its subdivisions are some of the densest wildland/urban interface developments in Mendocino County. The limited access, steep slopes, and roads and dwellings interspersed with undeveloped, overgrown parcels surrounded by a natural greenbelt environment, offer the potential for expensive and large losses to wildland fire. The unincorporated community is subject to Public Resources Code 4290 requirements for new development. This steep and wooded area was noted as being the first community in the United States to blend a four square mile redwood and mixed growth forest Conservation Park with a fully improved residential subdivision. The conservation park is now called the Brooktrails Redwood Park and is locally referred to as the "Greenbelt." The park covers 2,300 acres that border a large portion of the lots in the subdivision. The Brooktrails Township is comprised of multiple subdivisions. Three main areas, Brooktrails, Sylvandale, and Spring Creek, are the most heavily populated.

In the event of a large fire in or threatening the Brooktrails subdivisions, the residents and responding agencies could face many problems. Residents evacuating down steep and narrow roads could impede responding fire apparatus, causing road blockage and long response times for fire personnel. Evacuation concerns are compounded by the fact that the narrow, winding Sherwood Road is the only paved major access road and escape route from Brooktrails, Sylvandale, and Spring Creek.

The Little Lake Valley is basically grassy oak woodlands that transition into brush towards the east, then to timber at the higher elevations. There are many structures intermixed in the area and especially in the Pine Mountain Subdivision. It has similar features outlined in the Brooktrails scenario, steep winding roads that provide adequate access during normal conditions but would be hard pressed to accommodate residents evacuating and fire resources entering the area, especially the transport/dozer units responding.

The Battalion overlays Willits, the only incorporated city, several unincorporated communities of various sizes, two high schools, and five grade schools. Miles of overhead power lines, a continuing source of vegetation fire starts, accompany ongoing building in the wildland.

Area logging is decreasing due to the economy, environmental concerns and changes in ownership/management goals and strategies. Current harvest plans are mixed between small and large acreage. With fewer logging operations the cumulative fire hazard from logging slash buildup increases only slightly annually in comparison to the buildup created during past boom logging eras. Additionally, the threat of fire starts in the remote backcountry from logging operations is reduced. However, a dramatic increase clandestine marijuana production does increase the fire potential in the remote areas.

The saving grace for the area inland of the California north coastal strip is the seasonal onshore marine push which usually keeps overnight relative humidity high during normal patterns.

Occasionally interior high pressure does develop in Mendocino County and over the Willits area and creates critical burning conditions. When interior high pressure conditions develop, producing hot, dry north/northeast offshore winds, there is abundant potential for severe fires in the Willits area. These critical weather patterns typically develop four to five times each fire season. Each pattern usually builds and dissipates within several days.

Fire is widely recognized as a natural part of the California environment. Ecologically, studies have demonstrated wildlife's dependence on, and rapid recovery from, vegetation fires without funds being expended for regeneration. Much of the Willits Battalion would benefit from prescribed burning. Prescribed fires are far less costly than an uncontrolled fire burning through a developed community that will be costly to rebuild. The efficient burning of wildland tracts would provide an effective reduction of fuel loading in high, very high, and extreme fire hazard severity zones.

MEU Battalion 2 has several active Fire Safe Councils; the Pine Mountain FSC, the Sylvandale FSC, and Brooktrails FSC have been active. There are several more beginning to operate. These councils operate under the umbrella of the Mendocino County Fire safe Council.

There have been several grant projects in the Battalion 2, the two major projects have been the Brooktrails Shaded Fuel Break and the Pine Mountain Brush Chipping Project. These operations were managed by the Mendocino Fire Safe Council and CAL FIRE.

CAL FIRE BATTALION 3: UKIAH

Battalion 3 is a very diverse portion of Mendocino County. It encompasses a wide variety of vegetative fuel types consisting primarily of oak woodlands, brush and mixed conifer stands. The Ukiah Valley, in Battalion 3, contains the densest population centers in Mendocino County, including the City of Ukiah and surrounding communities. A significant portion of the Battalion 3 population lives in the rural communities, considered in the urban-interface zone, outside of formal service districts.

Two state highways, Highway 101 traveling north and south and Highway 20 east and west, intersect in the center of the Battalion. The Battalion borders Sonoma County to the south and Lake County to the east. It extends west almost to the community of Comptche, and north past the community of Redwood Valley.

Fire protection for the SRA in Battalion 3 is provided by two Schedule B stations. Covering the southern half of the battalion is Hopland Station, located on Highway 101 approximately two miles north of Hopland. Ukiah Station located at the intersection of North State Street and Hensley Creek Road covers the northern half the battalion.

CAL FIRE provides cooperative emergency services through a variety of aid agreements to the majority of fire department or district in Battalion 3. Local and federal governments provide fire and medical services within Battalion 3: Ukiah City Fire Department, Ukiah Valley Fire District, Hopland Volunteer Fire Department, Potter Valley Volunteer Fire Department, Redwood Valley/Calpella Fire District, and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service.

Battalion 3 works cooperatively with other public service agencies, to include California Highway Patrol, Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, Ukiah Police Department, Ukiah Ambulance Service, Redwood Empire Hazardous Incident Team (REHIT), Tribal police agencies, CalTrans, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Several popular recreation and tourist locations within Battalion 3 attract visitors to the Ukiah valley. These include Lake Mendocino, Cow Mountain Recreation Area, Montgomery Woods State Park, the Russian River, Eel River, numerous wineries, and the Mendocino National Forest. CAL FIRE provides direct protection to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Lake Mendocino Recreation Area and BLM's Cow Mountain and Red Mountain Recreation Areas.

Battalion 3 places very strong emphasis on fire prevention education and activities. The full scope of prevention activities in Battalion 3 includes; participation in school programs emphasizing home and fire safety, actively working with the Local Fire Safe Councils, public education and safety programs, and defensible space compliance inspections.

CAL FIRE BATTALION 4: LAYTONVILLE

CAL FIRE's Mendocino Unit Battalion 4 encompasses the northwest portion of Mendocino County. The Battalion has two major highway corridors: State Highway 1 runs through the northwest corner of the Battalion, where it intersects U.S. Highway 101; and Highway 101 runs the entire length of the Battalion, a distance of 42 miles.

CAL FIRE operates two fire stations within the Battalion, at Laytonville and Leggett. Year- round fire protection in the Battalion is provided by four volunteer departments: Long Valley (Laytonville), Leggett Valley, Piercy, and Whale Gulch. The Whale Gulch Fire Department is located within Mendocino County but is dispatched by the CAL FIRE Humboldt-Del Norte Unit because the road to its location is in Humboldt County.

The Battalion includes eight communities of various sizes. Several private camps are occupied primarily during the summer months. The State Parks System operates two campground facilities, one of which is classified as a wilderness park, plus three other day use areas. The Nature Conservancy has a large holding known as the Coast Range Preserve in the Branscomb area. There are several BLM holdings in the Battalion, most of which require modified suppression action plans.

The western portion of the battalion consists of some large timber company holdings that encompass approximately 75,000 acres. With the reduction of active logging and the decline of broadcast burning, the fuel loading has increased in the area due to the natural forest succession. Roads on the timber company lands have been abandoned and/or decommissioned which can lead to access difficulties. Although logging is decreasing, the fire threat relative to logging remains, due to the buildup of logging slash and the lack of access to the slash-covered areas due to road closures. In 2008 there were approximately 22 lightning caused fires in Battalion 4, the road closures on logging company properties created access issues for fire suppression resources.

Causes of the fires within Battalion 4 range from accidental equipment use to arson. Fires caused by debris burning are a significant problem in Battalion 4. An increased effort by Battalion personnel to inform the public of debris burning regulations will be used to reduce these fires.

Fires caused by equipment use are also a problem. Battalion personnel conduct public education on this subject, but such fires will probably continue due to the large amount of outdoor equipment use in the Battalion. Fires caused by the railroad have ceased because the railroad is not operating due to winter storm damage several years ago. If the railroad is again put in service, a fire prevention and inspection program will need to be implemented. An additional concern in the battalion is the increased number of marijuana growing operations which are accounting for a large number of the fires in the battalion.

The future outlook for Battalion 4 is for increased tourist traffic and more rural subdivisions. As these subdivisions expand, they bring with them the increased population in the rural areas creating an increase in wildland, structure, vehicle and debris fires, requiring greater public awareness of fire hazards.

The larger WUI areas within the Battalion include Bear Pen subdivision, Cooks Valley, Pepperwood Springs subdivision, Ebert Lane, Camp Saint Michael, Bell Springs Road, Cherry Creek subdivision, Twin Pines Ranch, Black Oak Ranch, Spy Rock Road area, Wilderness Lodge, Ten Mile Creek, Fox Rock Road, and Mulligan Lane.

Currently each Local Fire Department and CAL FIRE station's personnel conduct separate and joint fire prevention education programs at local schools, road association meetings, and community events. During these education programs, strong emphasis will now be placed on the identified target areas. Funding is needed for local and state fire departments to provide up-to- date educational materials to the public.

In cooperation with the Mendocino Fire Safe Council, several WUI areas have identified the need for fire road access clearance and fuel reduction/shaded fuel breaks. In each of these locations, overgrown brush and young saplings cause a safety hazard for both fire crews trying to enter the area and residents trying to leave in a wildfire emergency. For each evacuation route listed here, projects need to be instituted to create shaded fuel breaks extending 50 feet on both sides of the roads, by removing understory brush and trimming up trees to remove ladder fuels.

- Spy Rock Road (including Registered Guest Road, Iron Peak Road, and Blue Rock Road) is inhabited by approximately 2,000 people living in various types of homes.
- Ten Mile Creek has approximately 200 residents.
- Bear Pen subdivision contains 18 homes.
- Ebert Lane is a narrow road accessing 11 homes; its vegetation includes not only brush and saplings but also timber.
- Pepperwood Springs subdivision has approximately 20 homes.
- Cherry Creek subdivision, which currently contains about 30 homes, is becoming a very popular area for new construction.
- Mulligan Lane contains areas of brush that need to be removed.
- Bell Springs Road, a major artery, has many heavily overgrown areas.

The lack of home addresses and road signage is a huge problem throughout Battalion 4. This is due in part to the vast amount of marijuana cultivation by persons who wish their addresses to be unknown. During public education programs, the benefits of proper addressing and road signage for both fire and medical emergencies will be strongly emphasized. Battalion personnel conducted an extensive PRC 4291 inspection campaign to try to gain compliance and acceptance to fire safe planning.

Two sets of fire prevention signs remind the general public of their fire prevention obligation and burning regulations. Each time a burn permit is issued, a fire prevention message is presented.

Battalion personnel will continue Public Resources Code section 4291 and 4492 inspections of structures and power lines in each community.

CAL FIRE BATTALION 5: BOONVILLE

Battalion 5 is the 10th largest Battalion statewide, according to 1964 Fire Plan data. Two major highways within the Battalion bring tourist traffic from the Bay Area to the north coast: State Highway 128 forms the northern boundary of the Battalion, and State Highway 1 defines the western boundary. Vegetation within the Battalion varies from dense redwood/Douglas-fir forests to grassy oak woodlands. The Battalion includes one city, Point Arena, and nine communities of various sizes: Gualala, Anchor Bay, Irish Beach, Manchester, Elk, Yorkville, Boonville, Philo, and Navarro.

Battalion 5 fire protection for the Battalion is provided by two Stations: Boonville and Point Arena. Additionally, four local government departments — South Coast Fire Protection District, Redwood Coast Fire Department, Anderson Valley Fire Department, and Elk Volunteer Fire Department — provide structure protection for their communities, as well as mutual aid to CAL FIRE for wildland fire protection. Redwood Coast Fire Department provides protection for the City of Point Arena and the communities of Manchester and Irish Beach.

The Battalion has one lookout, Cold Springs, which was closed in 1994 but has been intermittently reopened during periods of high fire danger and lightning storms. Cold Springs Lookout is listed in the National Historic Lookout Registry and has been identified in CAL FIRE's Management Plan for Historic Preservation.

The outlook is for increased tourist traffic and rural housing in single increments and small subdivisions. As the minor subdivisions expand, an increasing fire problem will exist in both the prevention and suppression of fires. Logging, which formerly provided the area's major economic resource, has been decreasing. However, future fire control problems remain a concern, as areas that are logged have an increase in logging slash and possibly a lack of access due to road closures. Areas where logging is not occurring may have a higher density of live and/or dead vegetation as well as an increase in poor or limited access. The Battalion's overall fire hazard potential will likely increase due to increases in tourism, traffic, off-road recreation, camping, and rural subdivision development in the Wildland Urban Interface. Vineyard conversions are still occurring, primarily within the oak woodlands. These conversions create greenbelts (fire fuelbreaks) on the valley floor, along the lower slopes surrounding the valley, and now reaching the upper ridges.

Battalion 5 fire prevention activities include:

- Display and information booth at the Mendocino County Fair and Apple Show
- Firefighters as Role Models (FARM), utilizing trained canine with 4th grade class.
- Participate in the Mendocino County Fair parade
- Participate in school programs with Smokey Bear emphasizing fire and home safety
- Fire Prevention and Safety at the Boy Scouts of America camp in Navarro
- LE-100 inspections of residences and inspections of power lines
- Roadside Fire Prevention signs
- Burn permits issued in person with awareness and safety training given to permittees
- Joint educational outreach efforts with Fire Safe Council

CAL FIRE BATTALION 6: FORT BRAGG

Battalion 6 has two major highways which bring tourist traffic to the north coast. State Highway 1 spans the entire west section of the battalion along the coast and intersects with State Highway 20, then continues north and intersects with US Highway 101 at Leggett. Highway 20 connects Highway 1 to Highway 101 and links the cities of Fort Bragg and Willits.

Geographically, the battalion boundaries are as follows: starting at the northwest corner from the Pacific Ocean near the town of Rockport, it runs south along the coast to the Navarro River at Highway 1 and Highway 128. It then runs east along the river and Highway 128 about 10 miles to Flynn Creek Road, then northeast to State Highway 20, then north to Sherwood Peak. It follows Sherwood Ridge about six miles continuing northwest, following mostly along ridge lines to the Pacific Ocean. It finally intersects at a point just south of the town of Rockport, a distance of about 25 miles, forming the northeastern boundary.

Battalion 6 includes two CAL FIRE Stations: the Fort Bragg Station (Jackson Demonstration State Forest (JDSF) and Battalion Headquarters) and the Woodlands Station east of the town of Mendocino. Mendocino Coast Hospital provides ground ambulance service, and CALSTAR (Ukiah) and REACH (Lakeport and Santa Rosa) provide helicopter emergency medical services (EMS). The U.S. Coast Guard provides EMS and water rescue from Noyo Harbor in Fort Bragg and can provide additional helicopter support to local agencies apparatus from Eureka.

Included in the battalion is JDSF, purchased in 1947 from the Caspar Lumber Company and the largest State Forest. JDSF is a public use area excluding motorized vehicles and includes campsites and day use areas. The forest is a popular area for hiking, biking, hunting, horseback riding, swimming, and picnicking, and is visited by over 40,000 people annually.

The California State Parks and Recreation Department's Mendocino District is headquartered within the battalion at Russian Gulch State Park. Seven campground facilities and numerous state beaches and recreation areas are in the battalion. This includes the Mendocino Woodlands Campground which is contracted to private management with occupancies of up to 500 per day.

The future outlook for the Battalion is for increased tourist traffic and more residents in additional rural homes and subdivisions. Logging continues to decline with more timber harvest plans on smaller acres. Projected fire hazards and at-risk assets will continue to grow due to the changing demographics of the area. As rural development continues and subdivisions expand, an increasing fire problem will exist in both preventing and suppressing fires. The points below identify some issues that will increase the complexity of the future fire environment.

Response times outside developed communities can be quite extended, and resources are limited. The topography of the battalion, in conjunction with the winding, slow, and limited road system, is a contributing factor to response times.

Developed water resources are sparse with limited availability and accessibility in outlying areas. The increased population in rural areas will have an impact on, and strain the already limited resources in the area. This will potentially result in increased fire starts as well as medical aid and rescue response requests.

Increased public land use including off-road recreation and camping will result in additional potential for fire as well as medical aids. Property addressing and access continue to be marginaland inconsistent throughout Mendocino County, resulting in increased dispatch and response times. Population growth will increase equipment use and debris burns, increasing the potential for fire starts and control burn escapes. Lack of awareness and education regarding fire safe planning by persons moving from city to rural environments regarding fire safe planning manifests itself through poor preparation and ultimately increased risks.

Battalion personnel continue to participate and interact with the local schools to promote fire prevention and education program. This focuses on youth education and prevention as well as providing a conduit to parents for prevention information and fire safe planning. The program has been successful to date and has been well received by the community.

Battalion personnel regularly participate in community events including parades, fairs, and barbeques utilizing Smokey Bear, fire apparatus, and booths to distribute prevention and education materials including fire safe pamphlets. The events also provide opportunities for personal public "one on one" contact for adults and youth alike relating to prevention, education, career, and general CAL FIRE information.

Fire Safe inspections continue in the various communities with LE–100 inspections of residences and power lines. The annual issuance of Burn Permits including LE-63 (campfire), LE-5 (dooryard), and LE-7 (project burn) are used as opportunities to increase public awareness and conduct training in the proper and safe use of fire.

The battalion continues to participate in public outreach meetings sponsored by the Fire Safe Council, to assist in education, and to identify public concerns regarding prevention or future community projects. CAL FIRE Battalion 6 is committed to working cooperatively with the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council, communities, and local government fire jurisdictions to assist in addressing specific concerns, by technical assistance or facilitation through administrative services.

The battalion co-sponsors, with timber stakeholders, the annual timber "industry meeting" to update and exchange contact information, identify available resources, and identify logging operations or major projects occurring within timber holdings.

CAL FIRE TRAINING BATTALION

Mission Statements

The Mendocino Unit Training Battalion responsibility is to provide on-going training, education and certification to fire service personnel. All training is focused on providing and maintaining the highest quality emergency service at both fire and medical responses to the citizens of California. Instructional programs target operational efficiency with emphasis on safe operating procedures for our personnel in all aspects of fire and emergency operations.

The first priority of the Mendocino Training Staff is to provide for the overall safety of Unit permanent personnel and seasonal employees through instructional programs that target operational efficiency with emphasis on safe operating procedures in all aspects of fire and emergency operations. The Training Battalion's responsibility is to also facilitate and to ensure coordination for the unit-wide training plan, match training courses with approved personnel training requests, maintain a central location for updated training records for all employees.

The Battalion staff comprises of one Battalion Chief and two field Captains that work in training in during non-peak staffing. The staff continually strives to provide creative, cost effective, innovative training, and always providing the highest commitment to safety. The state-funded training operations, which are divided into 16 separate program areas, are a seven-day a week operation, and listed below are:

- Administrative and Office staff
- Battalion Chiefs
- Company Officers
- Firefighters
- Training
- Emergency Command Center
- Howard Forest Helitack
- Fire Prevention
- Automotive Fleet Maintenance
- Pre-fire Engineering
- Joint Apprenticeship Program
- Vegetation Management
- Emergency Medical Services
- Hazardous Materials Responses
- Fire Safe Counsels
- Joint-Agency Operations

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

In addition to the Pre-Fire Management Strategies listed in Section IV, MEU's Fire Prevention Bureau staffs active law enforcement personnel to enforce state fire and forest laws.

CAL FIRE Law Enforcement officers are trained and certified in accordance with the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). MEU's officers are busy year round investigating fire causes, interviewing witnesses, issuing citations and setting up surveillance operations. Additionally, law enforcement staff provides assistance when requested by Local Fire and Law Enforcement Agencies in arson, bomb, fireworks, and fire extinguisher investigations, as well as disposal of explosives. The Mendocino Unit's investigators have a very successful conviction rate.

HOWARD FOREST EMERGENCY COMMAND CENTER

Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) dispatch services are provided to those Local Fire Service Agencies and Ambulance providers of Mendocino County who are signatory to the Operational Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of November 1994. Coastal Valley Emergency Medical Services has designated the ECC as Mendocino County's air ambulance coordination center. The CAL FIRE Howard Forest ECC is the secondary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for Mendocino County. The CAL FIRE Expanded Dispatch is the OES Fire Rescue Coordination Center for Mendocino County.

CAL FIRE provides Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD) for medical dispatching. EMD provides for a caller to respond to a standardized questioning format to help determine the type of resources required to appropriately assist the caller. EMD also directs the dispatcher to provide pre-arrival instructions to assist the patient once the emergency response has been dispatched.

Generally, all emergency calls will be dispatched within sixty (60) seconds of the call. This time frame is a general target; it is recognized that verification of location information and directions to the location of the emergency, as well as completion of the EMD process will sometimes require more than the 60-second time frame. Priority is placed on clear and reliable dispatch information for responding resources.

All emergency, non-emergency and administrative calls for service are logged into the Altaris Computer Aided Dispatch program (CAD). All key entries are automatically time stamped by the CAD program for accuracy. All entries that require a field response of any type are logged as incidents and administrative functions (such as Fire Department announcements) are logged in as events and do not generate an incident number.

All CAD data is available on a web based program that is accessible by a password protected program available to any agency or cooperator who does business with the dispatch center. The program used to retrieve this data is Crystal reports, an industry standard program for data retrieval. All users of this service will be restricted to access records that originate in the Mendocino Unit. This program has pre-built reports that the user can access. Any new reports must be requested through the Dispatch Center Manager with specifics of the information requested.

Staffing

CAL FIRE provides a wide awake dispatch center 24 hours per day, seven days a week. Staffing levels for the Dispatch Center are a minimum of 1 fully qualified Fire Captain and 1 fully qualified Communications Operator. During Fire Season, when the CAL FIRE fixed wing aircraft are on Contract (normally, 6/15 through 10/15), the Dispatch Center is staffed with a minimum of 1 qualified Fire Captain and 2 qualified Communications Operator during the day. The ECC Manager is a CAL FIRE Battalion Chief. This person is responsible for all ECC operations and personnel and coordination with Mendocino County Dispatch contract. He/She is the primary contact for the Coastal Valley EMS coordinator for any changes in EMS dispatch policy or procedures.

Facilities

The CAL FIRE MEU ECC infrastructure consists of two buildings that house the Dispatch Center and Expanded Dispatch along with all of the radio and telephone equipment. These two buildings together allow handling all of the normal daily activities and, if necessary, open an expanded dispatch to handle larger incidents. A 100 KW generator is also on site to automatically provide emergency power if necessary.

The Dispatch Center is capable providing all dispatching services on multiple frequencies. Fire and EMS are being dispatched at the same time using the Mendocino County Dispatching frequencies. CAL FIRE has Altaris Computer Aided Dispatch program (CAD) in a laptop and CAL FIRE can use another location's phone service along with a Mobile radio for a short duration. If this is not possible CAL FIRE has the ability to use a mobile location with Cell phone service. CAL FIRE has access to a Mobile Communications Center for a backup Emergency Command Center, if needed for a long duration event, which is usually available within four hours.

Local Agencies Dispatched Pursuant to this Contract

• Albion Fire	• Anderson Valley Fire
• Brooktrails Fire	• Comptche Fire
• Covelo Fire and Ambulance	• Elk Fire and Ambulance
• Fort Bragg Fire	• Hopland Fire
• Laytonville Fire and Ambulance	• Leggett Valley Fire
• Little Lake Fire Protection District	• Mendocino Fire
• Piercy Fire	• Potter Valley Fire
• Redwood Coast Fire	• Redwood Valley Fire
• Ridgewood Ranch Fire	• South Coast Fire
• Ukiah Valley Fire	• Westport Fire

Additionally, the following agencies are dispatched by Howard Forest:

- Anderson Valley Ambulance
- Fort Bragg Ambulance
- Ukiah Ambulance
- Redwood Empire Hazardous Materials Response Team (REHIT).

JACKSON DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST

Jackson Demonstration State Forest (JDSF) is an approximately 48,652 acre redwood/Douglas- fir forest which straddles Highway 20 between Fort Bragg and Willits. The City of Fort Bragg, where the JDSF headquarters facility is located, is 2 miles north of the western property boundary. The town of Mendocino is located 2 miles west of the southwest corner of JDSF. The town of Willits and the community of Brooktrails are located approximately 7 miles to the east. The western edge of JDSF is an urban interface.

JDSF is managed by the CAL FIRE for the purpose of demonstrating sustainable forest management, as directed by statute and Board of Forestry policy, which includes production of forest products and protection of values related to recreation, watershed, wildlife, range and forage, fisheries, and aesthetic values. JDSF is open to the public for recreation including but not limited to: camping, hunting, bicycling, hiking, and horseback riding.

Conservation camp crews are routinely working on JDSF projects. In addition to the fire station and conservation crew camps, there are three residences, a historic school house, and a barracks/learning center located along Highway 20 on JDSF.

JDSF has a Mediterranean climate, characterized by a pattern of low-intensity rainfall in the winter and cool, dry summers. Fog is a dominant climatic feature, generally occurring frequently during the summer months, and less frequently during the rest of the year. Air temperature is strongly influenced by the extent of the coastal fog belt, which extends inland up to 20 miles or more during summer nights, generally burning off back towards the coast by afternoon.

In general, the landscape is characterized by moderate to high relief. Slopes are less steep in the western watersheds within the Forest, and are steeper to the east in the watersheds nearer the crest of the Mendocino Coast Range. Elevations range from less than 100 feet within stream valleys along the western edge of JDSF, to a maximum of 2,092 feet in the southeast corner.

The dominant vegetation is redwood/Douglas-fir, which covers over half of the Forest. Other vegetation types are hardwood, pygmy forest, closed-cone (Bishop) pine/cypress, and alder. Grassland/bare ground and brush vegetation types together make up less than 1 percent of JDSF.

JDSF experiences periodic lightning caused fires. The primary risk of fire starts comes from the urban interface on the west and human caused fires resulting from public use of the Forest including Highway 20 traffic. Other potential ignition sources include logging and a 60KV PG&E transmission line roughly paralleling Highway 20 from Willits to Fort Bragg.

The conservation camp crews conduct road brushing on JDSF roads to maintain administrative, public, and emergency access throughout the forest. The projects include vegetation removal to reduce fuel loading adjacent to high use and strategically located roads and around the structures mentioned above.

MEU Resource Management

Environmental Review

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires public agencies to consider actions on projects that may directly or indirectly result in a physical change in the environment. When CAL FIRE funds, approves, permits, facilitates or carries out a project as lead agency it is obligated to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken to comply with CEQA by preparing a thorough environmental review. This review is conducted by a Resource Management representative in the Forester classification assigned as the Unit Environmental Coordinator.

Review conducted by the Environmental Coordinator ensures that the statutory responsibilities of MEU are addressed in the project planning phase. Examples of CAL FIRE projects in MEU include building & structure construction, repairs, replacement, acquisition, maintenance & fire hazard clearance, fuel reduction projects such as shaded fuel breaks, prescribed burns & timber felling for the purpose of firefighter training.

The unit level review may include but is not necessarily limited to:

- Prepare a project description for project size/extent, magnitude, treatment type, equipment use, & impact potential.
- Review the environmental setting and identify sensitive areas such as wetlands, watercourses, riparian zones, old growth wildlife trees, public use & aesthetics.
- Conduct database searches of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), Archaeological Information Centers, unit & statewide fire plans, applicable Timber Harvest Plans (THPs) and VMPs.
- Contact & review project with CAL FIRE specialists who may include an archaeologist, hydrologist, geologist, soil specialist, and/or forest pathologist as necessary.
- Inspect project site (to include appropriate surveys).
- Discuss project proposals with landowners, neighbors, Native Americans, & private/agency professionals familiar with the site, resource or treatment.

Once the review is completed, the necessary documents are filed with Sacramento Environmental Protection staff. The minimum unit review includes a CNDDB run, archaeological review with a CAL FIRE archaeologist, and on-site evaluation of landscape-level impacts. For projects that fall into a CEQA exempt category, a Notice of Exemption (NOE) and Environmental Review Report Form (ERRF) are submitted for review, approval and filing at the State Clearing house for a 35-day notice period.

For projects that do not fall into a CEQA exempt category, a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration and Notice of Completion are submitted if there are no significant impacts or if potential impacts are mitigated to a level of less than significant. An initial study/environmental checklist is added to the review process. These projects are submitted for review & filing at the State Clearinghouse for a 30-day comment period. Following the end of the comment period, public comment is reviewed and appropriate additional mitigation measures may be incorporated into the project. A Notice of Determination is filed with the State Clearinghouse along with appropriate fees.

Public Resources Code 4290 & 4291

Forest Practice personnel, working under the direction of the Fire Prevention Bureau, conduct compliance monitoring inspections of defensible space clearance requirements around buildings & structures on SRA lands. Concurrent with Fire Prevention inspections, Forest Practice personnel also conduct compliance inspections of projects which are exempt from Timber Harvesting Plan preparation, if applicable. Examples of such projects include fire hazard exemptions and/or less than three-acre timberland conversions which involve fuel treatment.

Fire Suppression Repair (FSR)

CAL FIRE has authority to conduct fire suppression repairs during emergency incidents on State Responsibility Areas (SRA) under the Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 4675 & 4676.

Repair work may be necessary in locations where fire suppression damage has occurred. Fire suppression damage includes impacts to resources and property caused by fire fighting efforts, including but not limited to potential erosion from dozer & hand-constructed lines, road opening and watercourse crossings. The primary objective of fire suppression repair is to mitigate fire suppression-caused damage to as close to pre-fire conditions as is reasonably possible. This is done by minimizing sediment delivery to watercourses, mitigating slope conditions to pre-fire drainage patterns, removing fire suppression-related debris, restoring berms, barriers, repairing gates & fence lines removed for fire control access, & implementing appropriate mitigation measures (in consultation with a CAL FIRE archaeologist) to protect cultural and/or historic resource sites.

MEU personnel, including Forestry Assistant & Forester classifications, serve as Fire Suppression Repair Technical Specialists (RESP) assigned to wildfire incidents. They assess FSR needs through field identification, mapping & site description, developing a task list that includes equipment needs & equipment time commitments keyed to a map. FSR needs are reported to the Plans Section for inclusion in the Incident Action Plan. For complex repairs, the RESP will request assistance from cooperators, including property owners & timberland company representatives. For additional input, they may also consult with environmental specialists, such as the California Geological Survey (CGS) engineering geologists.

Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)

EWP is a cost-share system for the rehabilitation of burned-over land performed in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). It differs from FSR in that mitigation is designed/applied to treatment of significant wildfire impacts such as areas burned with high intensity fire causing destruction of most organic ground cover or those areas along watercourses and major canyons where flooding can be anticipated. For implementation of a EWP plan, personnel may be tasked to develop an interdisciplinary team with expertise in soil stability, erosion & wildlife to analyze the burned area. The team's analysis will include fire location, acreage burned, topography, vegetative cover, watercourse description(s), erosion hazard and/or the, presence of rare, threatened or endangered species. Mitigation measures prepared will specify appropriate treatment areas & methodology. A copy of the report & findings will be supplied to Region & Sacramento Headquarters.

California Geological Survey Participation in Post-Fire Assessment

At the request and with the funding from emergency response agencies (CAL FIRE and CALEMA), the California Geological Survey (CGS) can perform site-specific post-fire assessment of geologic conditions and slope stability that may affect public safety and high- value features (for example homes, roads, public buildings, transmission lines). CGS can also provide support as directed to post-fire watershed rehabilitation where geologic expertise is needed.

Wildfires adversely impact slope stability by removing the mechanical support of hillslope materials provided by vegetation and increase the potential for runoff by removing vegetation that would otherwise intercept rainfall. Structures down slope of burned watersheds may be in positions affected by significant in-channel floods, hyperconcentrated floods, debris torrents, and debris flows initiated by rain events following wildfires.

The California Geological Survey inspections can be used to assist in identifying high-value sites within and down slope from burn areas that may be at risk from post-fire debris flows and other geologic hazards. Sites determined to have a potential risk to lives or property are ranked as high, moderate, or low, and possible mitigation measures are identified where appropriate. The resultant information is tabulated, keyed to a base map, and provided to Federal, State, and local emergency response agencies to be used to develop post-fire emergency response plans.

CAL FIRE Archaeology

Archaeological sites in Mendocino County include prehistoric Indian village sites, petroglyphs, midden deposits, human burial grounds, hunting blinds, and bedrock milling sites. Historic sites include buildings and structures of historical significance as well as wagon roads, trails and cemeteries. CAL FIRE archaeologists are assigned to fires primarily when Incident Command Teams are assigned, but also on smaller fires on, or adjacent to, tribal lands, on fires where archaeological sites may be impacted, or when the Unit requires archaeological expertise in dealing with cultural resource issues. They identify and mitigate the protection of fragile, non- renewable archaeological, historical, and other types of cultural resources whenever feasible.

Having an archaeologist assigned to a fire enables CAL FIRE to get site information disseminated to those in the Plans Section and out on the lines in order to protect sites. This may include providing detailed site information to fire protection personnel or flagging areas on the ground for equipment exclusion. In this manner, site protection measures may be incorporated into the incident action plan without hindering or delaying emergency response operations.

MENDOCINO UNIT CAMP PROGRAM

Both Chamberlain Creek and Parlin Fork Conservation Camps are located along Highway 20 between Fort Bragg and Willits in Mendocino County. The Camps are operated by the CAL FIRE and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Each camp maintains six
1. fire crews that are capable of responding to a variety of "all-risk" emergencies; ranging from wildland fires, floods, rescues and other natural and man-caused disasters. In addition to responding to emergencies, the fire crews work on grade projects which include many fuel reduction projects for Fire Safe Councils, municipalities, schools, county government, state government agencies and federal government agencies. Acres treated vary by project and stakeholder needs and desires. As recognized by the fire plan, inmate labor for fuel reduction projects provides good training for fire-fighting crews and defensible space around valuable assets and infrastructure at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer.

MENDOCINO COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

The mission of the MCFSC is to inform, empower and mobilize county residents to survive and thrive in a wildfire-prone environment.

Mendocino County Fire Safe Council
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APPA Aug 06, 2024

The American Pet Products Association (APPA) Releases 2024 Dog and Cat Owner Insight Report

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Get in Touch

Despite economic pressures, pet owners increase spending, with health and quality time their top priorities.

STAMFORD, CONN (August 6, 2024) – The American Pet Products Association (APPA) has released the 2024 *Dog and Cat Report: Strategic Insights from the National Pet Owners Survey*, its second pet owner insights report this year. The report by the leading trade association for the pet industry features the latest research and insights on the two largest segments of the pet industry, dog and cat owners.

APPA's *2024 Dog and Cat Report* provides more than 200 pages of comprehensive analysis and visuals on owner shopping trends, sentiment, demographics and behaviors with dedicated modules for dog and cat owners. Trends from the report show a demonstrated shift in how pet owners choose to interact with and care for their pets, emphasizing health care concerns and quality time as top priorities.

"As the leading voice for the pet products industry, our findings both confirm evolving trends and reveal surprising shifts in how pet owners bond with and care for their pets," said APPA President and CEO Peter Scott. "The data shows us that despite economic pressures, the majority of pet owners continue to spend on their pets."

Five key findings from the report include:

- **The use of calming products has grown by 168% for dogs and 174% for cats since 2018, indicating significant growth in pet owners seeking various solutions to alleviate their pet's anxiety.**
  - Fifty-nine percent of dog owners and 52% of cat owners use some type of calming product, up from 22% and 19%, respectively.
  - Among dog owners, anxiety/calming supplement use has seen significant growth, with 15% of dog owners who give their dog supplements using an anxiety/calming supplement compared to 4% in 2018.
- **There is an upward trend of veterinarian-diagnosed dog and cat obesity and prescribed weight-loss diets.**
  - Twelve percent of dog owners and 17% of cat owners say that their veterinarian considers their pet obese (up from 9% and 15% in 2022), while prescribed weight loss diets are reported by 11% of dog owners and 13% of cat owners (up from 9% and 12% in 2022).
- **Vitamin and supplement use has grown by nearly 50% for dogs and 60% for cats since 2018.**
  - Fifty percent of dog owners and 32% of cat owners give their pets a vitamin or supplement, up from 34% and 20%, respectively. In particular, prebiotic and probiotic supplements have been on the uptrend, with 21% of dog owners and 28% of cat owners giving their pets prebiotic/probiotic supplements, compared to 17% of dog owners and 21% of cat owners in 2022.
- **Pet owners are prioritizing quality time with their pets.**
  - Dog owners are taking their dogs to parks (58%) and bringing them on daily routines and errands more often. Fifteen percent of dog owners take their dogs along daily on errands in a car, a significant increase from 10% in 2018. At least once a week, 50% take their dogs with them on foot, and 53% take them with them in the car for errands/routines.
  - Cat owners are training and spending more time outdoors with their cats, demonstrated by the growing use of training aids (46% in 2024, up from 34% in 2018). Thirty-one percent own leashes (up from 21% in 2018), and 23% own harnesses (up from 13% in 2018).
  - Dog and cat owners are buying more gifts and hosting more parties for their pets. Forty-four percent of dog owners and 32% of cat owners purchase a gift for their pet's birthday, up from 36% and 24% in 2022, respectively.
  - Pet birthday parties are increasingly popular, with 27% of dog owners and 20% of cat owners hosting a holiday/birthday party for their pets, compared to 20% of dog owners and 16% of cat owners in 2022.
- **Travel plans accommodate and frequently include pets.**
  - While most dog owners (55%) and a growing number of cat owners (36%) tailor their travel plans to accommodate their pets, the desire to spend quality time with pets extends beyond the day-to-day and into travel. In the past year, 88% of dog owners and 90% of cat owners have traveled with their pets in the car, and 68% of dog owners and 80% of cat owners have traveled by plane.
  - Most significant is the number of dog and cat owners who have taken their pets on three or more trips in the last year. Among dog owners, 34% have taken their dogs on three or more trips in the car, up from 26% in 2022. Twenty-two percent have taken their dogs on three or more trips with them by plane, up from 13% in 2022. Among cat owners, 30% have taken their cats on three or more trips in the car, up from 21% in 2022. Twenty-two percent have taken their cats on three or more trips with them by plane, up from 14% in 2022.

"The enduring emotional connection between humans and their pets remains deep. With that said, we were surprised and eager to see the increased pet owner prioritization and concern over the health of their pets, whether that be obesity, anxiety or overall wellness. It indicates that pets' quality of life has become a top priority for owners," added Scott. "As an overwhelming majority believe that their pets bring them happiness and emotional support, increased quality time spent and travel with pets follow suit."

The American Pet Products Association is a membership organization serving the pet industry through services and programs designed to help its members prosper. Since 1988, APPA has published the *APPA National Pet Owners Survey*, the premier resource of its kind, providing in-depth data on consumer behavior. Now conducted annually, the *APPA National Pet Owners Survey* will monitor consumer habits, identify short- and long-term trends and discover new opportunities in pet ownership, pet product and service consumption across four APPA *Research Insights Reports* produced quarterly, including *State of the Industry*, *Dog & Cat*, *Fish & Reptiles and Horse*, *Birds & Small Animals*.

For more information about APPA's available market research, visit **https://americanpetproducts.org/research-insights**. Complementary media access is available upon request.

Follow us on social media

Dispersed Camping Guidelines

What is Dispersed Camping?

Many people enjoy the solitude and primitive experience of camping away from developed campgrounds and other campers. Dispersed camping is the term used for camping anywhere in the National Forest OUTSIDE of a designated campground. Dispersed camping means no services; such as trash removal, and little or no facilities; such as tables and fire pits, are provided. Some popular dispersed camping areas may have toilets.

There are extra responsibilities and skills that are necessary for dispersed camping. It is your responsibility to know these before you try this new experience. Camping rules and regulations apply to make your experience safe, and to keep the natural resources scenic and unspoiled for other campers.

Rules for Dispersed Camping

- Groups of over 75 people who wish to use the forest, need to obtain a special use permit. There is no fee and permits can be obtained at the nearest District Office.
- You need to be self-contained. No amenities are provided; such as water, restrooms or trash cans.
- You may camp in a dispersed area for up to 16 days. After 16 days, you must move at least 5 road miles for camping in another dispersed area. Campers may not spend more than 16 days of any 30 day period at the same dispersed area.
- Please place your campsite at least 100 feet from any stream or other water source.
- Keep a Pack-In Pack-Out camp. Follow Leave No Trace guidelines.
- Contact the local Forest Service office to see if any restrictions, especially fire restrictions are in place.
- Be Bear Aware. There are bears on the National Forest, so camp accordingly.

Where Can I Disperse Camp?

The best way to find out what areas are open to dispersed camping is to contact the nearest Forest Service office to the area you wish to visit. Typically, **dispersed camping is NOT allowed in the vicinity of developed recreation areas** such as campgrounds, picnic areas, or trailheads. Many people drive out on Forest Service roads into the woods and find a clearing or a spot near a stream or with a view of the mountains. Do not drive on meadows to access your camping site. Drive on existing roads to prevent resource damage. Dispersed camping is allowed in a one-mile perimeter away from campgrounds and 100 feet from any stream. To prevent resource damage please keep your campsite within 150 feet from a roadway.

How to Pick a Campsite

If you are going to an area where others have camped before, pick a site that has been used before. Plants, soil and wildlife are impacted by new campsites so using existing ones will minimize your impact in the forest. If there is no existing campsite, then follow these Leave No Trace guidelines.

- Camp on bare soil if possible, to avoid damage or killing plants and grass.
- Do NOT camp within 100 feet of any water source, plants near water are especially fragile.
- Do not camp in the middle of a clearing or meadow; try to make your campsite less visible so that other visitors will see a "wild" setting
- Do not try to level or dig trenches in the ground at your campsite. Pick a tent site that is already level with good drainage.

Can I have a campfire?

Please use existing sites and fire rings. Wood permits are not needed for usage on the forest. If wood is transported home for personal use, pick up a permit at the nearest District Office.

The National Forest has wildfires each year. Many of these are caused by human activity, typically escaped campfires from dispersed campers. Campfires are allowed when you are dispersed camping unless there are fire restrictions in effect due to high fire danger conditions. It is your responsibility to know if fire restrictions are in effect before you go camping. You can learn about any fire restrictions by contacting the nearest Forest Service office.

Tips for Safe, Low Impact Campfires

Use existing fire rings if they exist. Minimize the scarring of new rocks, soil, and plants by using existing fire rings.

Select a site that is not in a meadow or clearing, that is not next to a tree with low overhanging branches, that is at least 100 feet from any water source to protect fragile vegetation.

Clean an area and make a ring of rocks about two feet in diameter.

If you don't bring your own firewood collect only dead wood that is on the ground. You should not cut branches off of live trees. If a popular camping area does not have dead wood on the ground, please bring your own firewood. The animals, insects, and micro-organisms in the soil need rotting wood on the ground to survive.

Before you leave your campfire make sure is it completely out. You should be able to put your whole hand into the ashes without being burned, it should be cool to the touch. Stir the ashes to make sure all embers have cooled. This is very important! Many forest fires are caused by abandoned campfires that were not completely out.

Water and Toiletting

Water gets contaminated by visitors who do not take care of their human waste or their garbage and food properly.

Going to the Bathroom in the Woods

Dispersed camping means no bathrooms and no outhouses. That means extra care has to be taken in disposing of human waste. To dispose of feces, dig a hole six (6) inches deep at least 100 feet away from any water source. When you are done, fill the hole with the dirt you dug up and take your toilet paper with you to dispose of in a proper waste container. Never defecate or leave toilet paper on top of the ground. It could easily get into the local water source and contaminate it.

Treating Your Water

We used to be able to take a cup and drink directly out of the sparkling creek, a rushing waterfall, or a clear, deep lake. There is NO safe water source anymore. With an increasing population and visitation to our National Forest, water sources have been contaminated with invisible micro-organisms that can make people very ill and even kill them in some cases. Giardia is a common contamination that has been spread through improper toileting and wild animals to many water sources. It will cause diarrhea, cramping, and other physical problems.

The only way to ensure that water from any undeveloped source is safe is to treat it. That means heating it until it comes to a rolling boil, using water purification tablets or a water purification filter. Water from faucets in developed recreation areas has been tested and treated and is safe to use without treating.

Have Fun!

If you follow these tips you can save a safe, low impact, primitive camping experience. Thank you for helping care for YOUR National Forest.

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