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Snohomish County Tourism 3.0: Birth of the Alliance

Kick-off of the Snohomish County Tourism Alliance February 7 at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds

EVERETT, Wash., January 31, 2019 – Over the past several years, local tourism industry members, elected officials, and federally recognized tribes have been working together during guided events and discussions by Snohomish County Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SCPRT) to determine a path for sustained tourism and destination management. In 2018, the industry overwhelmingly determined that county-wide collaboration is the key to a preferred tourism future where communities and businesses thrive while maintaining the beauty and environmental health of the county.

“Snohomish County is one of the most beautiful places in the world, known for our world-renowned attractions,” said Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive. “By launching the Snohomish County Tourism Alliance, we will further develop sustainable tourism and grow jobs, leveraging support for both small businesses and our larger tourism attractions.”

“This level of collaboration in Snohomish County tourism is unprecedented,” said Terry Ryan, Snohomish County Council Chair and Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Chair. “The Alliance is the result of a county wide effort in tourism. It will allow us to make critical decisions together. All participants will be able to see the whole picture because everyone will have a seat at this table.”

In response to the industry-wide conclusion, the two organizations tasked with the County-led tourism efforts, SCPRT and the Snohomish County Tourism Bureau (SCTB), will kick off the new Snohomish County Tourism Alliance as a means to support this collaboration on February 7 at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds Gary D. Weikel Event Center (14405 179 Ave. S.E., Monroe, WA).

The Snohomish County Tourism Alliance isn’t a new non-profit; rather, it represents a new best-practice approach by the SCPRT and SCTB for collaborative destination management that will bring local stakeholders, communities and federally recognized tribes together in the four experiential visitor regions established last year: Skykomish - Snohomish River Valleys; Stillaguamish - Sauk River Valleys; Coastal Communities of the Salish Sea; and Urban - Basecamp Communities.

While Snohomish County launched their recent destination management and marketing tourism initiatives, Washington State also began outlining their course of action for a more sustainable future in

tourism. The Washington Tourism Marketing Authority Chair, SCTB Board Member and Executive Director of Schack Art Center, Judy Tuohy, contributed that Snohomish County, Washington State, and the tourism industry as a whole are aligned in their thinking that collaboration will be the key for everyone's success from the rural communities to the city centers while caring for and maintaining the wonderful assets our state and county offer. "This is the perfect time for a strong, county-wide alliance in tourism to form," Tuohy said. "It will take an 'all-hands on deck' approach to reach our concerted goals."

"Creating an alliance will give the industry a platform to organize efforts and participate collaboratively in marketing and development," said Amy Spain, SCTB Executive Director. "It's wonderful to see such passion for partnerships between and among our tourism industry stakeholders."

"We heard from across the industry in the county that collaboration is desired in order to reach this preferred future," said Annique Bennett, Tourism Development Specialist for SCPRT. "For us to collaborate, we need to come together and not silo our efforts. The approach is simple," added Bennett, "connect visitors and communities through love of place – our county."

The SCPRT and SCTB remain independent organizations. Together they will facilitate the Snohomish County Tourism Alliance and host a series of free conferences for county-wide regional and local tourism management planning, resource and information sharing of data, marketing, hotel/motel grant projects, and more.

The day-long February 7 kick-off event will offer topical sessions for participants and will begin at 8:30 a.m. with an overview of the Snohomish County Tourism Alliance and 2018 updates. County Executive Dave Somers will welcome attendees to the upcoming Tourism 3.0 Alliance kick-off event. The afternoon session will have interactive regional branding workshops led by the creative marketing firm Milltown Creative. Registration is required. Register and lunch options [HERE](#).

More information about the Regional Destination efforts of Snohomish County and the 2018 Building a Sustainable Tourism Industry Report can be found [HERE](#).

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