

# Travel Lane County

## Annual Report FY13





## President's Message

The program year marked two consecutive years of record lodging and room tax revenue for the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region, with the current growth rate of room demand triple the national average. We are very thankful for the current trend, driven by a combination of factors, and have been working to do our part in driving increased overnight visitors.

### Board of Directors

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Robert Canaga Studio

George Rogers, Vice Chair  
Valley River Inn

Maxine Walton, Past Chair  
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John Tamulonis  
Springfield Economic Development

Kim Godfrey  
Oregon Electric Station

Andy Vobora  
Lane Transit District

Renee Grube  
Library, Recreation and Cultural Services

Bob Zagorin  
Bob Zagorin SW Inc.

Strategically, we continued our focus on content development and management to maximize search engine optimization and attract niche categories of interest to our robust website. Featuring over 900 pages of content and 69 micro-sites, EugeneCascadesCoast.org is a powerful marketing platform and forms the base of our online work.

Online advertising, social media communication channels, traditional media advertising, and our strong positioning on search engines, drove a 50 percent increase in our website visits.

We also had success in convention and sports marketing, with national attention focused on our expertise in hosting sustainable sports events and locavore, farm-to-table meals for conventions and meetings, and increased confirmation numbers for projected room nights associated with events. The year began with the completion of TrackTown12, and we leveraged the success of that event to enhance our destination's reputation as we did with Eugene08. We are thrilled that TrackTown16 is confirmed.

We know the power of product development, and we experienced it again in the creation of Oregon's first GeoTour, launching McKenzie River and Florence editions, and attracting international attention and overnight visits. We continued to work on bikeway and byway designations that garnered national and international exposure. We worked with the regional food consortium and are hosting a regional culinary micro-site to increase awareness of our strong product from farm to farmers markets to value-added products to restaurants and retail. Currently, we are working on an Ale Trail to maximize travel demand around the craft beer industry throughout the destination.

We are so proud of the many outstanding attributes of the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region. It's an honor to communicate them to the broader marketplace and generate visitor spending for the local economy.

- Kari Westlund, President & CEO

**Return on Investment:** More than \$74,236,195 million was generated for local communities. For every dollar of room tax invested in Travel Lane County, \$49 in visitor spending returned or will return to the Lane County economy. In-kind contributions totaled \$144,135.34. Earned editorial media coverage totaled \$1,230,322.

ROOM TAX	FY13	FY12	FY11	FY10	FY09
<b>Eugene</b>	3.61%	1.71%	9.2%	-9.56%	-5.32%
<b>Springfield</b>	5.07%	15.16%	15.5%	-8.14%	-5.50%
<b>Florence</b>	-1.93%	2.13%	2.6%	4.34%	72.8%
<b>Cottage Grove</b>	0.92%	11.88%	-8.0%	-8.61%	-1.69%
<b>Other</b>	6.15%	1.30%	10.0%	-3.48%	-29.99%
<b>Total Tax</b>	3.83%	5.27%	9.7%	-7.33%	-6.37%

**Key Indicators:** Room tax rose 3.83 percent and occupancy rates averaged 59.3 percent, up 4.2 percent over FY12.

Cover: Goodpasture Covered Bridge spanning the McKenzie River by David Putzier, 2012 Eugene, Cascades & Coast Photo Contest Winner

Jody Hall  
Hilton Eugene & Conference Center

# Convention & Sports Marketing

Sales staff worked to attract conventions, meetings and events to the region, with special emphasis on the sports, faith-based, education and association markets.

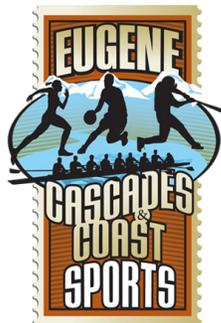
During FY13, sales and marketing efforts helped secure an economic impact of \$60.8 million for the local economy. Staff booked 99 conventions or events, representing 149,848 delegates and 87,559 room nights. Among the largest bookings were the 2016 U.S. Olympic Team Trials - Track & Field (17,000 participants), the USA Outdoor Track & Field Championships (12,000 participants), the OSAA 1A/2A/3A Track & Field Championships (12,000 participants) and the CEVA President's Day Volleyball Tournament (4,000 participants). Other confirmations included the Wordcrafters of Eugene Conference (250 delegates), Oregon Department of Education (200 delegates), and the Association of Bone and Joint Surgeons Annual Conference (175 delegates).

A total of 202,648 meeting or sports delegates received personal convention services, which included on-site registration assistance and information booths, website and social media publicity, and delegate welcome signage. The "Show Your Badge" program continued, providing discounts for delegates and sales for area businesses. The member leads program also connected planners and delegates with local products and services.

Staff met with meeting and sports planners across the U.S. at the following shows: BRAVO! Willamette Valley Show in Salem, OR; TEAMS in Detroit, MI; BRAVO! Live Show in Portland, OR; Rejuvenate in Columbus, OH; Overseas Brats in Washington, D.C.; Nursing Organizations Alliance in Nashville, TN; National Association of Sports Commissions in Louisville, KY; Christian Meetings & Conventions Association in Vail, CO; NCAA Host Symposium in Indianapolis, IN; CMP Conclave in Spokane, WA; and SPINCon in Atlantic City, NJ and Telluride, CO.

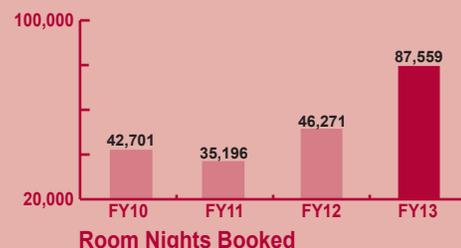
Advertising was placed in Sports Destination Management, Sports Travel Magazine, Smart Meetings, Small Market Meetings and SportsEvents Magazine, while editorial outreach generated \$43,175 in free media coverage within trade publications.

New meeting and sports blogs launched during the year targeted planners and industry representatives. Outreach through LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook continued, as well as e-newsletters directed at sports, military, faith-based, association, corporate, education and government meeting planners.



Eugene, Cascades & Coast Sports promoted facilities and services at trade shows, and remained active in the National Association of Sports Commissions and the Oregon Sports Authority. Plans are underway for a first-ever annual Sports Summit set for October 2013. Staff worked with Tracktown, USA on major events, particularly in the housing and hospitality arena.

A new service for citywide conventions and events was implemented, allowing delegates to make their reservations online through a real-time housing booking engine. The service allows members to up sell and offer deals to participants.



## 2013 Eugene, Cascades & Coast Convention & Sports Leadership Awards

Travel Lane County and the Lane County Lodging Association presented awards to groups and individuals responsible for the confirmation of a meeting or event generating significant overnight visits to the region.

**Eugene Figure Skating Club**  
Sports Leadership Award  
For the Northwest Pacific Regional  
Figure Skating Championships

**UO Office of Sustainability**  
Convention Leadership Award  
For the International Sustainable  
Campus Network

View award videos at:  
[EugeneCascadesCoast.org/award-videos](http://EugeneCascadesCoast.org/award-videos)





# Tourism Marketing & Sales

Marketing efforts to attract group tour and leisure travelers resulted in \$13,373,726 in economic returns.

Travel Lane County increased focus on online and social media, with specific campaigns that utilized Google and Facebook ads, targeting the Portland market and West Coast RV travelers. The two-month, Portland-based campaign generated 247,859 impressions with 844 visits and the

RV campaign garnered 4,372,781 Facebook impressions with clicks totaling 1,834 and 827 new page likes. Meanwhile, a Google Pay Per Click campaign generated 314,010 total impressions with 746 clicks. Ads highlighted geocaching, sandboarding, mountain biking, Heceta Head Lighthouse and Create! Eugene, a new cultural arts festival.



These campaigns provided the opportunity to remarket directly to new fans. A remarketing ad tested nationwide, focused on three events, resulted in 235,310 impressions and 280 clicks. Travel Lane County also participated in Travel Oregon's online Adventurecation campaign, which promoted overnight packages centered on mountain biking.



A new VisitEugeneCascadesCoast.org blog was launched to further promote

the region, create instant content to tie in with ads, and invite staff and guest writers to share travel experiences. New strategies using Pinterest and Instagram also were developed.

Travel Lane County participated in travel trade, consumer shows and sales missions, including the National Tour Association (NTA) in Orlando, the International Pow Wow Convention (IPW) in Las Vegas, a Travel



Oregon sales mission to Vancouver, B.C., and an invitation-only trip to the Travel Alliance Partners Convention (TAP Dance) in Norfolk, VA, hosted by key national and international tour operators.

Direct meetings and/or sales presentations about Lane County's travel product were held with more than 96 national and international tour operators. So far, travel trade outreach in FY13 resulted in 15 group bookings and 87 leads/partner or referrals/service requests. Canadian Grand Holidays alone booked over 1,000 room nights in the metro area. Representatives from Sports Leisure Vacations came to tour and confirm a new itinerary of Lane County's coast and covered bridges. During the visit, owner and founder Mark Hoffman, current chair of NTA, came to speak to Travel Lane County members and industry travel leaders.

Staff conducted 24 familiarization tours in the region with travel and food writers, tour operators and journalists from Taiwan, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, Canada, France, Denmark, New Zealand and the U.S.

Travel Lane County partnered with Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast Visitors Associations, taking on lead PR, travel tour and board positions.

**Print Ads** Craft brew, event and adventure-themed advertisements reflected the travel experiences visitors are seeking countywide. QR codes strategically connected to videos and special offers.

**Visitor Inquiries** A total of 34,313 inquiries for visitor information were tracked as a direct result of ad placements and leads, as well as 6,167 visits to EugeneCascadesCoast.org. Overall website visits totaled 333,772 (up 51%).

**Media Relations/Editorial/Film** Lane County tracked \$1,136,964 in positive destination coverage during FY13. Press releases, press trips and media assistance resulted in coverage in regional, national and international newspapers, guidebooks, travel/lifestyle/adventure-related publications, and online blogs and magazines.

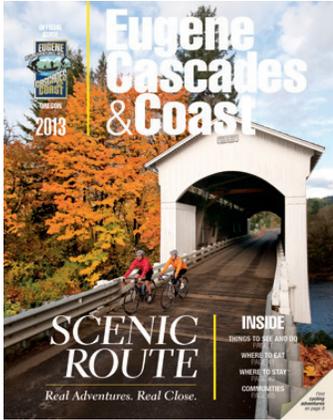
With the Oregon Film and Video Office, Travel Lane County helped production companies and film makers with location scouting, permits and other services for six movies, commercials, and/or documentaries being produced or researched in Lane County.

**Oregon Fall Foliage Campaign** Travel Lane County's Oregon Fall Foliage blog received 37,721 views (August - November) and blog followers rose 63%. The Foliage Twitter followers jumped 11%. NBC News ranked the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region among the top two places to see the Northwest's fall foliage. Northwest Travel Magazine, Oregon Lakes & Rivers Magazine, Ride Oregon Ride, The Statesman Journal, and Grant's Getaways all placed the region on their best fall tours list, which increased blog and Twitter traffic.

**Oregon Bounty Campaign** Participation in this statewide campaign provided exposure for Lane County's food and beverage industry in Travel Oregon's culinary newsletter and on Food.TravelOregon.com.

# Visitor Services

Travel Lane County's visitor services staff personally assisted 16,063 visitors and residents during FY13. Walk-in visits at the Adventure Center and downtown Visitor Information Center totaled 9,057 visits, while the mobile visitor van staff served 7,006 people at various attractions and events across the region.



The Official Eugene, Cascades & Coast Visitor Guide (140,000 printed) content was revamped and produced with four cover shots. An updated visitor map was inserted in the guide and available in pads for further distribution at visitor venues. More than 62,176 guides were tracked and distributed through Certified



Display Folder sites, at Travel Lane County member venues, statewide information and welcome centers, the Eugene and Portland Airports, and through local convention, meeting, sports and community relations outreach. Distributions accounted for an estimated

economic impact of \$6,230,102.



The Adventure Center saw visits from out-of-area travelers and from locals looking for information, retail gifts and tickets. New visitors were surprised by the quality of the center and level of service. Ads

enticing guests into the center throughout the year were placed in all Travel Lane County publications, The Register-Guard Discovery Magazine and in an "All in a Day's Drive" winter campaign that appeared on KMTR-TV and its website. A variety of events were held at the center, including Kids' Adventure Club events, Tuesday Tastings, Mid-Oregon Production Arts Network meetings, and receptions for the Western Association of Convention and Visitors Bureau and Springfield Chamber Business After Hours.

During FY13, combined sales in the center totaled \$37,032, (up 56%) over last year. Retail sales accounted for \$13,808 (up 22%) and sales of tickets and passes total \$20,805 (up 97%). New Adventure Center offerings and promotions, including adding the sale of National Forest Service Christmas tree permits and Oregon State Park annual day pass permits, helped drive sales during the period.

As a TicketsWest outlet, the Adventure Center continued to draw visitors who purchased tickets for entertainment events at the Matthew Knight Arena, Cuthbert Amphitheater, McDonald Theatre and the Oregon Country Fair. The center also sold sno-park permits and parking passes for parks, forests and recreation areas.

## Top Geographic Markets

U.S.	International
Oregon	Canada
California	Australia
Washington	Germany
Arizona	United Kingdom
Texas	The Netherlands
Colorado	France
Florida	Japan
Alaska	China
Illinois	New Zealand
Nevada	Israel

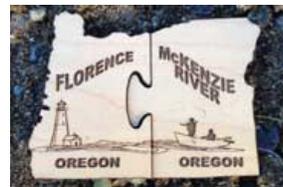
## Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTour

Travel Lane County developed a two-part Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTour, making it the first in Oregon and the eleventh worldwide.

The McKenzie edition launched in October 2012, and the Florence edition in March 2013, attracted more than 250 cachers who picked up GeoTour passports and headed out in search of hidden caches.

Cachers finding a minimum number of required sites were eligible to earn a locally-produced, collectible coin. Based on surveys, cachers earning geocoins came from seven states, Guam and Canada, and generated 311 overnight stays. A total 215 travel parties visited more than 24 caches in one edition and 100 travel parties visited more than 24 in each edition.

Geocachers logged their finds on Geocaching.com, making their visits and experiences trackable and measurable as well as inspirational to prospective visitors. A group from Portland declared the McKenzie River Edition the best tour they've ever experienced. The Florence launch drew visitors from Washington and British Columbia. In the first 10 months of the project, more than 680 unique cachers logged their found caches on the GeoTour. This equals more than 2,000 participants based on Geocaching.com's formula for estimating the number of participants. Editorial on our GeoTour has appeared in RV West, Outdoors NW and The Oregonian for a value of more than \$6,000 in earned media to date.



# Membership

Travel Lane County partnered with 543 member businesses, organizations and individuals who provide visitors with quality products and services, and contribute to the overall success of Lane County's visitor industry.

Annual membership dues accounted for \$133,984 in revenue and various marketing opportunities generated a total of \$51,610 in additional revenues. Members also purchased ads in the Eugene, Cascades & Coast Visitor Guide and Dining Guide, which generated \$122,617 to cover production costs.

Member Orientations and Member Spotlights provided industry partners with networking and educational opportunities. Travel Lane County's Member Updates and Tourism Industry News e-newsletters kept members informed of marketing opportunities and industry news. Leads were also available to members via Travel Lane County's work with conventions, tour operators and media.



**Eugene, Cascades & Coast Member Update** June 2013

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- >> 2013 Visitor Celebration
- >> Dining Guide Advertising
- >> Special Convention Marketing Meeting
- >> Deadlines & Opportunities
- >> Convention Calendar
- >> Sports Calendar

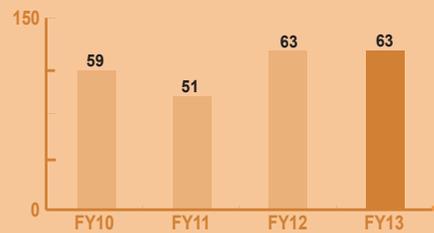
**Upcoming Member Events**  
Mark your calendar!

**Visitor Industry Celebration**  
Tuesday, June 11  
5:30 - 9 p.m.  
[Valley River Inn](#)

**Convention Marketing Meeting**  
NTA Guest Speaker  
Wednesday, June 19  
8 - 9 a.m.  
[Holiday Inn Eugene - Springfield](#)

**2013 Visitor Industry Celebration**  
It's not too late to save a seat at Travel Lane County's annual **Visitor Industry Celebration**. Join us next Tuesday at the Valley River Inn for a three-course dinner, ballet preview and tourism award presentations. Book your table or individual reservation [online](#). Event sponsors are Home Federal Bank and InSight Hotel Management Group.

**Visitor Industry Celebration 2013**  
Bringing the Pieces Together  
Tuesday, June 11, 2013  
5:30 - 9 p.m.  
[Valley River Inn](#)



**Annual Visitor Industry Celebration**  
Travel Lane County recognized businesses, organizations and individuals for their outstanding dedication and contributions to the region's visitor industry at the 2013 Eugene, Cascades & Coast Visitor Industry Celebration.

## 2013 Award Winners:

**Ninkasi Brewing Company**  
Destination Award

**Geocaching Team & Groundspeak**  
Partnership Award

**Cuthbert Amphitheater & Kesey Enterprises**  
Enrichment Award

**Richard Boyles, Insight Management Group**  
Appreciation Award

**Marriott Residence Inn Front Desk Associates; Karen Rodgers, Wayfarer Resort; Cedric Rudd, formerly Red Lion Inn**  
Hospitality Awards

View award videos at:  
[EugeneCascadesCoast.org/award-videos](http://EugeneCascadesCoast.org/award-videos)

# Integrated Marketing

Travel Lane County's ongoing work on its website focused on keeping the site fresh with new content and relevant for search engine optimization. Particular emphasis was placed on the generation of 10 micro-sites, including sites highlighting RV travel, cycling, running, culinary and geocaching.

**Recreational Vehicles**

**Oregon RVing**

Eugene Oregon is central to miles of scenic roads and national and state forests. Drive through a diversity of landscapes, all easily accessible from the leading RVs. [RV Deals](#)

Eugene is an ideal RV destination.

Come to Oregon! Use the resources in Oregon means big savings for your Eugene is a great place to buy electronics, art, jewelry, antiques, furniture, bicycles, books, clothes, cars, and, yes, even recreational vehicles! Our Eugene retail, wholesale districts and markets attract many destination shoppers. Visit a directory of shops, stores and outlets here.

Specialty: located on 10000 your RV!

Eugene - Springfield is central to the RV service with many highly rated RV technicians who can get you back on the road again - in style. While your RV is in the shop, there is plenty to see and do around town from shopping to sight seeing. Connect with the local RV community and its success.

With 333,772 website visits (up 51%) and 9,291 mobile visits (up 60%) during the year, the top visited sections, besides the home page, included the

following pages: Event Calendar, Things to Do, Places to Stay and Where to Eat.

The majority of domestic website visits originated from Oregon, Washington, California, Texas and Hawaii, while international visits came from Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany and Australia.

In addition to exposure on Travel Lane County's website, members were promoted in key visitor publications, including the Eugene, Cascades & Coast Official Visitor Guide, Dining Guide and map.

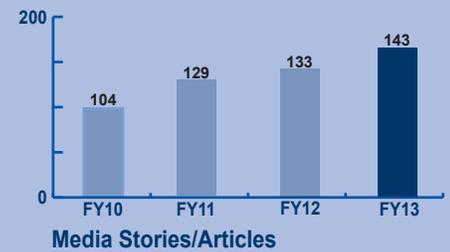
During FY13, the Visitor Guide was updated with new content and reorganized with an emphasis on key adventure experiences countywide, while maintaining community identities and featured attractions. The Dining Guide expanded content to accommodate visitor demands for specific dietary options, such as gluten-free and vegan meals. Key content also highlighted venues offering local food sources and sustainable practices.



# Community Relations

Community Relations programs provided opportunities to expand awareness about Travel Lane County, the local visitor industry and regional travel opportunities, as well as strengthen local partnerships.

Media outreach via news releases, e-newsletters, interviews and editorial assistance generated earned coverage valued at \$50,183 and a record 143 story/article placements. Topics included tourism impacts, conferences, sporting events, geocaching, wineries, festivals, regional adventures, and news about Travel Lane County members, staff and board. A KUGN radio partnership continued providing weekly opportunities to promote community events, members and Travel Lane County's website, calendar and resources. A local press conference was organized for Springfield's inaugural Biggest Loser Run/Walk featuring two former contestants.



A new underwriting campaign with public radio station KLCC promoted messages to a weekly audience of 80,000 listeners over four months. Three themed messages focused on tourism's economic impacts, sustainable travel and Travel Lane County/Adventure Center travel resources.



Travel Lane County participated in KMTR-TV's "All in a Day's Drive" winter television advertising campaign, which featured the Adventure Center as a resource for seasonal travel, as well as a site for Sno-park and Christmas tree permits. Advertising partnerships were renewed with the Eugene Weekly and Eugene Magazine, facilitating discounted advertising options for members.

## Kids' Adventure Club

In its third year, the Kids' Adventure Club continued to provide opportunities to connect with local families and encourage countywide travel, recreational pursuits and overnight getaways.

Quarterly events, newsletters and monthly calendars promoted seasonal activities, deals and kid-friendly member events. Fall focused on agri-tourism, hiking and foliage leaf viewing in connection with the Oregon Fall Foliage blog; winter showcased skiing, snowboarding and snow tubing; and spring provided geocaching opportunities in connection with the new Eugene, Cascades & Coast GeoTours.

FY13 partners included the Willamette National Forest, Northern Lights Christmas Tree Farm, Hoodoo Ski & Recreation Area, Willamette Pass, Berg's Ski and Snowboard Shop and Geocaching.com.

Since its launch, Club membership has grown by 58% and the average attendance at events has increased by 31%. Visit [EugeneCascadesCoast.org/kids-club](http://EugeneCascadesCoast.org/kids-club) for more info.

## Adventure MOM

End of summer family getaways

by Lisa Lovton

If you're like our family, you'll want to make the most of summer before it slips away. Thankfully, we live in a place where a mountain or coastal escape is only a short road trip—with limited "See us there and" excuses from the kids. Here are some getaways that will fly by like a breeze.

**Coast:** Florence is one of the family-friendly spots. Take a dune buggy tour or try sandboarding on the Oregon Dunes. Local vendors also offer go-karts, bumper boats, train rides and mini-golf. Haverly State Park, an ideal recreation site, offers swimming and picnic areas, bike and nature trails, paddle-boat and canoe rentals, and campsites and yurts. Or, stay at Dillwood Shores, complete with a kids aquatic center.

**Cascades:** Enjoy a Cascades adventure. On the way, visit the Lowell Covered Bridge, Willamette Falls Parkway and Salt Creek Falls before arriving at Willamette Pass for an Oregon "Dayway" gondola ride. The kids will feel on top of the world after reaching the 6,000-foot summit.

Sponsored by Eugene, Cascades & Coast Adventure Center  
Open daily 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
3312 Gateway St., Springfield  
541.484.4307



### Meet Adventure MOM

Lisa Lovton and her husband Jeff enjoy exploring the region with their two children Ryan and Hannah. For more information about family getaways, visit [www.EugeneCascadesCoast.org/kids-club](http://www.EugeneCascadesCoast.org/kids-club) or contact Lisa at [ljlo@EugeneCascadesCoast.org](mailto:ljlo@EugeneCascadesCoast.org).

Adventure-themed activities and resources were promoted through an advertising partnership with Mom Magazine directed at families throughout Lane and Linn counties. During the period, Travel Lane County provided articles through the voice of 'Adventure Mom' focused on cycling, sandboarding, hiking, snow tubing and

geocaching. Online promotions and Kids' Adventure Club ads were also featured, increasing the mailing list of Club members.

The annual Eugene, Cascades & Coast Photo Contest expanded categories and partnerships with the City of Eugene, the Springfield Chamber of Commerce, the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce and OBEC Consulting Engineers.

Members provided \$1,800 in prizes in exchange for publicity. More than 65 images, valued at an estimated \$6,500, were secured for Travel Lane County's free editorial and marketing use. The 2013 contest got under way with further expansions of sponsorships and contest categories.



## Listening Tour & Staff Outreach

The first Travel Oregon/Oregon Tourism & Hospitality Consortium Listening Tour kicked off in Eugene, facilitating vital feedback for statewide marketing efforts from local industry stakeholders.

Staff attended 316 local meetings and events, strengthening local connections and partnerships, and made 40 community presentations about Travel Lane County and the visitor industry to business and community groups.

# Travel Lane County Mission

To increase the number of overnight visitors to the Eugene, Cascades & Coast region for the benefit of its members and all businesses and citizens who depend on a strong Lane County economy.

## Eugene, Cascades & Coast Travel Impacts

Visitors spent an estimated  
**\$555.2 million in 2012, supporting a  
variety of businesses and jobs in  
Lane County.**

### Food Service

\$159.4 million

### Accommodations

\$95.4 million

### Retail Sales

\$88.1 million

### Arts, Entertainment & Recreation

\$76.9 million

### Local Transportation & Fuel

\$75.9 million

### Food Stores

\$59.5 million

### State & Local Tax Revenues

\$26.9 million

### Jobs

8,240

### Direct Earnings

\$165.9 million

### Source:

Oregon Travel Impacts 1991-2012p Report,  
Dean Runyan Associates, April 2013

### Eugene Airport

FY13 Arrivals: 424,363

Up 5% over FY12

Staff directory available at:

[EugeneCascadesCoast.org/staff](http://EugeneCascadesCoast.org/staff)

*Back: Heceta Head Lighthouse by  
Stephanie Ames, 2012 Eugene, Cascades  
& Coast Photo Contest Winner.*



## Travel Lane County

541.484.5307 | 800.547.5445

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

Eugene, Cascades & Coast  
Adventure Center  
3312 Gateway St | Springfield

Downtown Eugene  
Visitor Center  
754 Olive St | Eugene