

Rural Tourism Program

Ongoing

Program Description

CTTC's Rural Tourism Development Program is responsible for bringing together the many rural constituencies under the California umbrella and unifying efforts to promote natural, cultural and heritage tourism. It is also responsible for managing all aspects of the rural cooperative marketing programs, including planning, development, implementing and budgeting for the programs.

California's rural tourism program has been operating for over 15 years to brand and increase awareness of the eight established California rural tourism regions. Original and enhanced marketing programs have been developed that anchor and synergize California's rural areas with CTTC advertising and marketing programs.

Target Audience

DMOs, Chambers of Commerce, rural regional associations, cultural heritage groups, California Welcome Centers (CWCs), cities and counties.

Objectives & Reach

To move forward with the promotion of rural tourism in California, CTTC established a series of goals, objectives and measures in the 2008-2009 Annual Work Plan and 2007-2013 Strategic Marketing Plan. With limited resources to promote individual rural communities and assets, CTTC encourages regional associations to provide leadership and destination knowledge to market together as regional partners, attracting a greater reach and more desirable visibility. Goals of the Rural Tourism Program are to:

- Promote rural California.
- Promote and facilitate local partnerships.
- Develop a viable public-private rural tourism collaboration.
- Integrate public and commercial Web sites to optimize collaboration.

- Encourage increased visitation and length of stay in rural markets.
- Develop and sustain programs for participation by the smallest stakeholders.
- Support and synchronize with all Welcome Centers.

Results & Accomplishments

- Continued branded Airstream trailer manned by rural representatives and covered with images of rural California. Developed to market rural California to in-state and vacationing visitors, this program included state and national partners, with \$20,000 coming from CTTC. The Airstream was present at Sunset Celebration Weekend, Arroyo Grande Strawberry Festival, Stockton Asparagus Festival, Gilroy Garlic Festival, and the Mountain View Art & Wine Festival.
- Created panel led by Caroline Beteta at the September 18 California League of Cities Annual Conference in San Jose to discuss rural and sustainable tourism in front of key city officials and leaders.
- Seeking and applying for rural tourism grant opportunities as a way to assist regions in developing and hosting their workshops and conference.
- Creating relationships with state agencies to further promote rural tourism and provide regions with information regarding benefits available to them through these agencies. Agencies and organizations include Watchable Wildlife, California Recreation and Parks Roundtable, California Museum, CALED, League of Cities, National Main Street, Preserve America, National Trust, Historic Roads, Cultural Heritage Tourism Alliance and the U.S. Cultural and Heritage Tourism Marketing Council.
- Assisting rural regions in the promotion of their workshops and educational conferences by offering CTTC e-blast service to all industry partners in our database.
- Established new and strengthened coalitions between rural regional partners, CWCs, Amgen Tour of California, California Cultural & Heritage Tourism Corps (CCHTC), and governmental and nongovernmental organizations.



- Increased presence at consumer trade shows promoting the rural product, distributing regional information and guides, and encouraging visitation and adding to length of stay. Booths at both the National Tour Association (NTA) Annual Convention in November and Go West Summit in February will focus on the rural/cultural heritage theme.
- Continued relationship between the California State University and University of California systems, utilizing internships in CTTC office and for CWC surveys, offering symposium and workshops to college students, and attracting professors on CTTC committees.
- Increased Web traffic to visitcalifornia.com through reciprocal links and contributing current and relevant content from regional associations' Web sites, and CCHTC and CWC partners.
- Conducted Business Improvement District (BID) research to gain knowledge in special district funding mechanism for cities and areas whose funding has been affected by the new economy.
- Preparing CTTC "how to" around new marketing initiatives session for CalTIA Beyond the Gateways Conference on September 21-23.
- Request for proposal went out for 2009-2010 Rural Tourism Regional Marketing Partnership contracts. \$50,000 in partnership money will be awarded by the end of 2009.
- Encouraged regions to hold regional cultural heritage workshops by offering CTTC assistance including e-blasts, securing speakers, programming, etc.
- Continued to work alongside the California Welcome Center program.
- Attended National Scenic Byways Conference to work on bringing byways together to market on CTTC Web site (see Scenic Byways Program).
- There have been 11 regional collaborative workshops held throughout the state so far in 2009 and coordinated through CTTC. Missing and due before the end of the year are North Coast and Inland Empire.

Regional Workshops	City	Date
Central Coast	Ventura	January 2009
Central Valley	Clovis	March 2009
Central Valley	Visalia	April 2009
Gold Country	Loomis	April 2009
High Sierra	South Lake Tahoe	April 2009
High Sierra	Lee Vining	April 2009
Central Valley	Vacaville	May 2009
Desert Region	Yucca Valley	May 2009
Shasta Cascade	Redding	May 2009
Gold Country	Tuolumne	Aug 2009
Central Valley	Stockton	Sept. 2009

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