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Editor's note:

WORD document attached titled: Tourism Week 2010 REV final.doc

Photo attached titled: WRVC Home page 2010.jpg

Note: Higher resolution image available upon request.

Photo Caption: *The Wind River Visitors Council markets its website to attract vacation inquiries from around the world, and to support our tourism economy.*

Photo Credit: Wyoming's Wind River Country

National Tourism Week: Fremont County Contributes Millions to State Tourism Economy

The 27th National Tourism Week is this week and the Wind River Visitors Council, (Fremont County's Lodging Tax board), is providing economic information on Fremont County's tourism industry. Tourism is Wyoming's second largest industry after energy.

According to Wyoming Travel and Tourism, it's a \$2.57 billion industry that supported 30,250 jobs statewide in 2009. Without the revenue generated by tourists, each household in Wyoming would have to pay an additional \$527 in taxes to maintain the equivalent in current state and local tax revenues. In fact, in 2009 for every \$1.00 of tax money spent to fund the state Tourism Office, \$8.46 was returned in local and state tax revenue, which is a great return on investment for Wyoming taxpayers.



Tourism in Fremont County has grown rapidly since the late 1990s. In 1997, Fremont County was receiving \$66 million in spending from leisure travelers. In 2008, travelers spent \$138.2 million in Fremont County, which shows traveler spending has doubled in the past decade. Overall, Fremont County ranked 8th out of 23 counties in total travel spending dollars in Wyoming.

The total travel-generated sales tax distributed to Fremont County in 2008 was \$2.5 million, which is 8.4% of Fremont County's total state sales tax distribution. In 2008, our tourism industry in Fremont County employed 1650 jobs directly related to travel and hospitality, and these employees earned \$42.5 million dollars in wages that flowed into our county's economy.

Lander:

According to Scott Goetz, Executive Director, Lander Area Chamber of Commerce, "Over the last 10 years, tourism has steadily grown in Lander and has become one of the most important factors in economic development in this community. The retail segment has continued to expand providing more options not only for tourists but also for residents. The lodging industry has continued to develop and the Holiday Inn Express has provided much needed additional lodging space and lodging tax dollars for continued tourism development. The new Lander Pioneer Museum and the Museum of the American West have created cultural options for our visitors, as have the development of great annual events like the Fremont Toyota Lander Brew Festival that attracted 1000 out of town visitors, and the Heart of the West Invitational Art Show and Sale that brings in artists and patrons from throughout the Western U.S."

Dubois:

June Bonasera, Director, Dubois Main Street, Inc., said, "Dubois welcomes cultural heritage travelers to experience and share our history and authentic western culture. Whether it's staying at a dude ranch, attending a rodeo, experiencing a pack trip, shopping in the towns' shops and galleries, or dining in our restaurants and cafés, Dubois offers a multitude of top-notch travel options. Visitors can soak up the local history and learn about the ancient indigenous peoples, homesteaders, outlaws and Scandinavian tie hacks. All this in a town of less than 1000 residents."

In 2010 Dubois was nominated for [True West Magazine's](#) annual Top Ten True Western Towns Award and garnered the Number 4 position. True West editors determine winners for this annual award based on criteria demonstrating how each town has preserved its history through its buildings, museums and other institutions, events, and promotions of historic resources. According to True West's senior editor Robert Boze Bell, "The word is getting around. For a True Western town surrounded by wildlife and one that embraces its heritage, look no further than Dubois".

Bonasera adds, "The press coverage Dubois has received calling us "An Authentic Western Town, Where the Old West Lives On, and one of the 20 Best Places to Live in the West" speaks to Dubois truly being a Destination Community. With the perfect combination of proximity to Yellowstone, western culture, and abundant wildlife, Dubois is unique. We pride ourselves on our hospitality and encourage travelers to come and linger".

According to Norma Williamson, director, Dubois Museum/Wind River Historical Center, "Tourism is the main source of income for most Dubois businesses, and the

museum has become one of the tourist attractions in our community. We help all Dubois businesses if we attract more tourists through advertising. We are county-funded, though, and have a limited advertising budget, but lodging tax revenue and cooperative advertising allowed us to expand our advertising to new markets. Between 2003 and 2008, we tripled our advertising budget, and we saw our visitor numbers increase from 3,000 to over 10,000. Despite the economic downturn last year, lodging tax income and cooperative advertising allowed us to maintain our advertising program and our growth in attendance. We must continue to advertise if Dubois' economy is to thrive.

Riverton:

Jim Davis, Executive Director, Riverton Chamber of Commerce, commented, "Even with the economic slow down, the number of requests for vacation packets at the Riverton Chamber of Commerce from people who wish to visit the Riverton area has continued to increase daily. Since the first of the year, the Chamber has sent out nearly 700 visitation packets and the number increases daily. Almost a third of these requests asked for both vacation and relocation guides. It seems that the requests are from people that live closer and don't have as far to travel. People are still planning vacations and wanting to visit Wind River Country, but just not going to travel as far."

Wind River Indian Reservation:

In a Wyoming Travel and Tourism survey of the most popular destinations and marketable trips in Wyoming, the Wind River Indian Reservation received 5% identification, which ranks the highest of all Fremont County destinations surveyed. Tourism infrastructure is being created on the Reservation through casinos, private tourism businesses, and tribally supported organizations like the Northern Arapaho Tourism and Information Committee. Special events like the Eastern Shoshone Indian Days Powwow and the Northern Arapaho Experience continue to draw visitors looking for an authentic Native American cultural experience.

Wind River Visitors Council:

Statewide, the popularity of scenic drives, wildlife viewing and backpacking are ranked high by visitors. Fremont County is well represented in what tourists like to do including visiting a state or national park, scenic drives, wildlife watching, hiking or backpacking, or visiting Native American sites. These activities ranked in the top 20% for Fremont County.

Paula McCormick, Marketing Director for the Wind River Visitors Council Lodging Tax Board, stated, "Fremont County's overall economy is very dependent on tourism, and early indicators show that 2010 is looking better than 2009. And, we as residents would not have nearly as many amenities like good restaurants and well-maintained state parks if it weren't for the economic support of the tourism industry. The Wind River Visitors Council continues to see increases in requests for information, and more visitors to our website. While the economy may be slow to recover, we are still part of many people's dream vacation, and we continue to see travelers who are passionate about their trip to Wyoming's Wind River Country."

For a complete economic impact report, visit www.wyomingbusiness.org. To learn more about what Wind River Country has to offer, or to request a vacation packet, please visit us at <http://www.wind-river.org> and **fan us on Facebook at [Wyoming's Wind River Country](#)** and **follow us on Twitter** under [WindRiverWY](#).

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