

For Immediate Release
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Tourism Industry in Kelowna Continues to Show Strength

It is no secret that tourism is a significant economic driver for the Kelowna Census Metropolitan Area – an industry that is responsible for a diversity of jobs, a robust tax base, a generator of consumer demand and dollars, motivator of private sector business investment, and the fuel for infrastructure upgrades and expansion for our city's overall quality of life. The numbers to prove it are being released by Tourism Kelowna as a result of a commissioned study completed by InterVISTAS Consulting in a 2011 report as an update to their original 2006 economic impact analysis. The extensive report also includes figures compiled by BC Stats, Statistics Canada and data collected in the 2011 Visitor Survey Spending Profile conducted by Kettle Valley Research.

In 2010, Statistics Canada estimates that Kelowna welcomed in excess of 1.5 million visitors vacationing in the area, representing an increase of 26.9% over figures from the 2006 study. While visitor spending has decreased by 3.1%, Nancy Cameron, President and CEO of Tourism Kelowna notes that "the overall performance of the industry has been strong when viewed over this 5 year window despite the recession and on-going economic instability. Declines in spending clearly demonstrate the continuing conservative approach that tourists take with their discretionary dollars, and the opportunity that Kelowna can offer them as a destination with a high degree of value and depth."

In terms of direct impacts of tourism, it was found that Kelowna's tourism industry accounts for approximately 7,100 direct tourism jobs, an increase of 5.8% within the 5-year study period. "The comprehensive evaluation of the tourism industry every 5 years is required for strong decision making not only for Tourism Kelowna but for potential industry investors and business start-ups" notes Cameron.

Executive Summary of Economic Impact of Tourism in Kelowna, BC:

- 1.5 million visitors annually – up 26.9%
- \$279,000,000 in visitor spending – down 3.1%
- 7,072 direct jobs – up 5.8%
- \$176,000,000 in wages – up 39.7%
- \$335,000,000 in GDP – up 50.2%
- \$653,000,000 in Economic Output – up 68.7%
- \$100,000,000 in Tax Revenues – up 12.4%

Tourism Kelowna is the official not-for-profit tourism industry association marketing Kelowna as a tourism destination. In partnership with 300 businesses, Tourism Kelowna generates tourism demand through strategic sales, marketing and visitor servicing to fulfill its mandate to increase overnight visitation and economic impact of tourism within Kelowna and area.