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**MAY 7-15 DECLARED TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK
IN VANCOUVER USA**

VANCOUVER, Wash. – Vancouver and Clark County will join hundreds of cities, states and travel-related businesses nationwide in recognition of the 28th annual National Travel and Tourism Week, to be held May 7-15. To coincide with the national tourism awareness campaign, Vancouver Mayor Tim Leavitt will formally proclaim May 7-15 as “National Tourism Week” at the May 9, 2011 Vancouver City Council meeting. The Mayor’s proclamation signals the start of Clark County’s peak tourism and event season and serves to recognize the important contributions of Clark County’s tourism industry on the lives of its citizens.

“This week serves as a reminder of all the local businesses affected and people supported by the tourism industry in our community,” said Kim Bennett, President and CEO of the Vancouver USA Regional Tourism Office. “The industry employs almost 4,000 people locally, generates \$5.3 million in local tax revenue for our area and affects our community in countless other ways. It is important to recognize that tourism is a vital economic resource for our community.”

Tourism related expenditures for 2009 in Clark County totaled \$364 million (the most recent data available). The money that visitors spend on various goods and services while they are here produces business receipts at the local businesses, which in turn employs local residents and pays their wages and salaries. Tourism related job earnings for 2009 in Clark County totaled \$99.3 million.

“This week celebrates tourism, the people who visit here, the workforce that provides services for them and the development created as a result,” said Bennett. “As the busy tourism months of summer approach, this proclamation is a great reminder of such an important industry.”

Statewide, the tourism industry directly employs 143,800 people and generates a payroll of \$4.3 billion and tax revenues of \$828 million. Visitors to Washington spent a total of \$15.2 billion in 2010, a 7.4 percent increase from 2009.

Designated by Congress and established by presidential proclamation in 1983, National Tourism Week celebrates the value and scope of the nation's \$1.8 trillion travel and tourism industry, and the economic and social contributions it brings to the nation's communities.

About the Tourism Office:

The Vancouver USA Regional Tourism Office is an economic development organization responsible for competitively marketing Vancouver and the surrounding area as a destination for meetings, conventions, and group and leisure travelers. They are located at 101 E 8th Street, Suite 240, Vancouver, Washington 98660. You can reach the Tourism Office at 360-750-1553, or via e-mail at info@VisitVancouverUSA.com. You can also visit them on their web site at www.VisitVancouverUSA.com.

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