Washington State languished at or near the bottom of all state budgets for several years.

On June 30, 2011, the state tourism office was closed by the legislature.

The tourism industry came together and founded the Washington Tourism Alliance.

Seven years of tourism advocacy followed.
2016-17 State Tourism Budgets

*No state funding, no tourism office. The nonprofit Washington Tourism Alliance contributed $400,000 to distribute visitor guides, maintain a website, and provided limited marketing activities.*
March 27th, 2018
Governor Inslee Signs Tourism Marketing Bill
Funding – No New Taxes

• Total of $3 million - $3 million from state to dedicated account and a $6 million private match over a biennium

• 0.2 percent of existing general sales taxes collected on retail sales of lodging, restaurants and rental cars will be deposited into the Statewide Tourism Marketing Account

• Deposits are limited to $3 million per biennium

• Release of funds contingent upon 2:1 industry match

• Example: $20,000 investment to WTA for an international trade show would release $10,000 from state.

• Industry match may include some forms of in-kind contributions
Tourism Marketing Bill Calls For:

• A contract with a non-profit statewide tourism marketing organization in existence on the date of enactments whose sole purpose is to increase tourism visitation and expenditures.

• Focus on (but not limited to):
  - Rural tourism-dependent counties
  - Natural wonders
  - Outdoor recreation
  - Attraction of international tourists
  - Assistance for tourism areas adversely impacted by natural disasters
  - Cooperation with local tourism organizations
Washington Tourism Marketing Authority

- Comprised of a diverse selection of tourism professionals from around the state, appointed by the Governor
- Contracts with an entity to market Washington as a tourist destination
- Defines what can be used for match funding
- Measure the return on investment of the marketing program
Let the Marketing Begin!

- December 2018: WTA signs contract with the WTMA and the Department of Commerce to market Washington State as a tourism destination
The sole purpose of the Washington Tourism Alliance is marketing Washington to tourists. In order to accomplish this, the activities of the Corporation will include, but not be limited to advocating, promoting, developing and sustaining destination tourism marketing for Washington State.
Increasing Tourism Returns... Requires Tourism Investment

• By mission and by legislation, WTA is industry-led and funded
• Activities from the industry required to unlock state general funds (2:1)
• Job #1: foster marketing investment and partnership opportunities
• Goal: procure $4 million in industry investment/general funds throughout 2019
The WTA is the Tourism Industry

- Destination marketing organizations
- Economic development organizations
- Attractions
- Arts/culture
- Lodging
- Resorts
- Wine/beer/spirits
- Retail
- Restaurants
- Transportation
- Tribes
- Adventure/recreation
- Education
WTA Regional Representation

- **Northwest**: San Juan, Island, Whatcom and Skagit Counties
- **Olympic Peninsula**: Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor and Mason Counties
- **Southwest**: Pacific, Lewis, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Clark and Skamania Counties
- **North Puget Sound**: Snohomish and King Counties
- **South Puget Sound**: Pierce, Kitsap and Thurston Counties
- **Northeast**: Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln and Spokane Counties
- **Southeast**: Adams, Whitman, Garfield, Asotin, Columbia and Walla Walla Counties
- **North Central**: Douglas, Chelan, Kittitas Counties
- **South Central**: Yakima, Klickitat, Grant, Franklin and Benton Counties
Past Visitation to Washington:

33% (total)
- Oregon: 52%
- BC: 47%
- Arizona: 17%
- California: 16%
- Colorado: 16%
- Texas: 15%

Future Visitation to Washington:

49% (total)
- Oregon: 30% 54%
- BC: 29% 51%
- California: 30% 49%
- Arizona: 31% 44%
- Colorado: 27% 43%
- Texas: 26% 42%

S15. In the past 24 months, which of the following states and/or provinces have you visited for a personal trip where you stayed for at least one night? Please include your own state if you have traveled overnight for a personal trip in the past 24 months. S16. And in the next 24 months, how interested are you in an overnight personal trip to the following states and/or provinces? Please use a scale where 1 is not at all interested and 7 is very interested. Base varies = 200-253n.
### VISITATION INTEREST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Awareness</th>
<th>Showing top 2 box %</th>
<th>7 - Very interested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metro Seattle</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Volcanoes</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Islands</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peninsulas and Coast</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gorge</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Cascades</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine Country</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B6. And how interested would you be to visit the following areas of Washington State for an overnight personal trip? Please use a scale where “1” is not at all interested and “7” is very interested. Among those who rated their interest in visiting Washington State a 5, 6 or 7 = 948n. B4. Which of the following areas in Washington State have you seen, read, heard or experienced before today? Total = 1,404n.

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Adventures and indulgences. It all comes naturally in Washington State.
WTA Priorities for 2019

• Destination brand re-development and stakeholder engagement exercise
• Retain marketing/advertising agency
• Re-build destination web site (ExperienceWA.com)
• International/domestic travel trade program
• Destination publicity program
• Develop a destination publicity plan
• Draft crisis communications plan
• Operational/organizational transition
Thank you!

For more information, please visit our industry website: www.watourismalliance.com and the official State Tourism website: www.experiencewa.com

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