



Media Contact:
Mayla Lohnes, Public Relations Manager
805-541-8000
mayla@slocal.com

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VISIT SLO CAL SHOWCASES THE COEXISTING IMPACT TOURISM HAS ON SUSTAINABILITY TO FURTHER PROSPER THE SLO CAL REGION

Visit SLO CAL Highlights the Mutual Benefits of Tourism and Sustainability to Boost SLO CAL's Prosperity



(Image Courtesy of Visit SLO CAL)

San Luis Obispo County, California, April 02, 2024 – Visit SLO CAL (VSC), the official destination marketing and management organization (DMMO) for San Luis Obispo County (SLO CAL), continues to excel in environmental sustainability. The connection between tourism and the region's economic vitality has never been clearer, especially as residents continue to recognize the county's commitment to preserving its natural beauty while fostering growth. According to Visit SLO CAL's [Resident Sentiment Study](#), three in four SLO CAL residents believe their community does a good job of protecting its natural resources. This stewardship of the environment is not just a value, it's a driving force behind the region's economic health.

In SLO CAL, sustainable tourism isn't merely a buzzword, it's a key element of the local economy. The stunning landscapes and pristine natural resources are what attract visitors, and it's this very attraction that fuels a significant portion of the county's economic engine. In fact, in 2023, tourism contributed \$110 million in local tax revenue. Without the tax revenue generated by tourism, each local household would need to pay an additional \$21,415 to generate the same economic benefit for the community. Additionally, to create the same economic impact for local businesses, each household would need to spend an extra

\$1,914 in taxes. This means tourism isn't just benefiting visitors—it's actively supporting local jobs, businesses, and public services.

The impact of sustainable tourism reaches beyond the economic numbers, touching the lives of residents and business owners alike. By prioritizing sustainability, Visit SLO CAL helps ensure that the very qualities that make the region special—its beaches, wineries, parks, and vibrant communities—are protected for generations to come. Sustainable tourism practices mean that local businesses, from restaurants to outdoor adventure providers, are able to thrive while also preserving the area's appeal. These businesses are supported by a steady flow of eco-conscious tourists who value the county's commitment to sustainability. Moreover, jobs in the tourism industry—from hospitality to guiding outdoor tours—are rooted in the preservation of SLO CAL's unique environment.

“Tourism is a powerful engine for economic and community development,” said Cathy Cartier, CEO & President of Visit SLO CAL. “We're proud of the strides Visit SLO CAL has made toward becoming a leader in sustainable tourism,” said Cathy Cartier. “By balancing tourism growth with sustainability, we can ensure our region remains a vibrant destination, while preserving the natural resources that make it so special. It's a formula that not only benefits the environment but creates lasting economic opportunities for local families and businesses.”

Despite the successes, the connection between residents and tourism requires continued attention. According to Visit SLO CAL's Resident Sentiment Study, while 57.9% of residents feel that tourists are respectful of the local community, 38.3% believe tourism negatively impacts the county's natural areas. These concerns underscore the importance of integrating sustainable practices into every facet of tourism. Visit SLO CAL is committed to addressing these concerns by continuing to promote responsible tourism that protects the environment, enhances the local economy, and improves the well-being of residents.

Key facts include:

- Three in four people of SLO CAL residents agree that their community does a good job of protecting its natural resources.
- 35.2% percent of SLO CAL residents cite the area's landscape and natural features as strong reasons to move to the region..
- 57.9% of SLO CAL residents believe tourists are respectful of their local community

Visit SLO CAL's approach to sustainable tourism extends beyond environmental conservation. By working with local organizations, businesses, and government leaders, VSC is implementing initiatives that encourage responsible visitor behavior, protect natural areas, and support economic opportunities for residents.

For more information about Visit SLO CAL, visit slocal.com or email Mayla Lohnes, mayla@slocal.com.



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ABOUT VISIT SLO CAL:

Visit SLO CAL is the countywide non-profit destination marketing and management organization (DMMO) for San Luis Obispo County, known as SLO CAL. Positioned midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles, SLO CAL features more than 100 miles of breathtaking coastline, rolling vineyards covering over 40,000 acres, and some of California's most scenic open roads, including the iconic Highway 1. Visit SLO CAL promotes the region as a premier West Coast destination, celebrated for its signature slower pace of life and diverse, immersive experiences. By enhancing the area's reputation as a dynamic place to live, work, and visit, Visit SLO CAL strengthens the local economy and creates opportunities for the entire community. Built on research and a strategy of continuous improvement, the organization is committed to showcasing SLO CAL's unique charm to travelers from around the world. For more information, visit slocal.com.