



## **Responsible Travel and Sustainability are Key to Monterey County's Tourism Growth**

### ***Earth Day marks the next steps for MCCVB's industry leadership in sustainability***

**Monterey, Calif., April 19, 2023** – World-renowned for its natural beauty and pristine environment, Monterey County has been a thought leader in sustainability for decades. In 2015, the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) launched "Sustainable Moments" to showcase sustainability and educate travelers, one of California's first strategic sustainable travel programs. This reputation led to MCCVB's president and CEO, Rob O'Keefe, leading CalTravel's Sustainability & Stewardship Committee, elevating responsible travel efforts statewide. With Earth Day approaching, both MCCVB and CalTravel are taking their sustainability programs to the next level.

"Our focus with the tourism economy is to drive economic vitality and quality of life for Monterey County communities and residents," says O'Keefe. "Our gorgeous destination is why visitors travel here and what our residents expect to be maintained – sustainability is central to both."

Prior to the summer travel season, MCCVB is enhancing its focus on encouraging travelers to behave responsibly before they arrive and reminding them to be respectful while visiting. A new billboard campaign will launch in early May with signage along the Highway 101 corridor leading from the Bay Area to the destination. This is accompanied by adding more marketing within the destination that includes digital marketing and boosting the out-of-home advertising on Monterey-Salinas Transit buses and shuttles.

"Preserving the natural beauty and ensuring visitors treat our destination responsibly and respectfully is imperative for our organization," says O'Keefe. "Providing resources and information to visitors before they visit and while they're in-market is crucial in furthering our goal of responsible travel."

In the coming fiscal year, MCCVB is planning to double down on its responsible travel program with a new "Sustainable Moments 2.0" program that will upgrade the ability to reach travelers before and during their visit.

MCCVB is collaborating with other destinations and businesses throughout California to protect and preserve the environment and the experiences both travelers and residents expect. In advance of Earth Day, CalTravel is launching its first-ever online Sustainability Toolkit to protect the Golden State and ensure it remains a viable place to visit, live and work—now and in the future.

“CalTravel is committed to helping members champion sustainability and stewardship practices that enhance the economy and maintain environmental health,” says Barb Newton, president and CEO of CalTravel. “We’ve gained so much from Rob’s experience and leadership with responsible travel and our Toolkit will broaden those practices throughout the state.”

To learn more about MCCVB’s sustainability efforts, visit [www.SeeMonterey.com/Sustainable](http://www.SeeMonterey.com/Sustainable). To learn more about CalTravel’s Sustainability Toolkit, visit [www.CalTravel.org/Sustainability-Stewardship-Toolkit](http://www.CalTravel.org/Sustainability-Stewardship-Toolkit).

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### **ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (Monterey County CVB) is a 501c6 non-profit organization that drives tourism for Monterey County. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and targeted sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to its guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was \$2.5 billion in 2021, supporting 21,600 jobs and generating \$264 million in state and local tax revenue that directly benefited the community. For more information, visit [www.SeeMonterey.com](http://www.SeeMonterey.com) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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