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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**TOURISM SPENDING: MAJOR DRIVER OF MONTEREY COUNTY'S ECONOMY IN 2018**  
***New Report Finds Significant Levels of Growth in Spending and Local Tax Revenue***

**MONTEREY, Calif., May 7, 2019** – From the verdant fields of the Salinas Valley to the awe-inspiring coastline, Monterey County's natural wonder continues to inspire visitors to travel the region. In 2018, the iconic destination benefited from California's robust and dynamic tourism industry, welcoming travelers who injected \$2.98 billion into the local economy, an increase of 5.8% from 2017, and the eighth consecutive year of growth.

In celebration of National Travel and Tourism Week, the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) released the "Monterey County Travel Impacts" report, highlighting the economic benefit created by visitors to the destination. Tourism is the number one industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest industry in Monterey County. The new report shows visitor spending in the destination supported over 25,000 jobs and generated \$135 million in local tax revenue, an increase of 8% over last year. This revenue provides communities with the vital tax resources needed to invest in infrastructure improvements, programs and projects that benefit residents of the community.

"Tourism is an essential aspect of Monterey County's economy, but we have to grow it responsibly," said Tammy Blount-Canavan, President and CEO of the MCCVB. "We have a managed growth strategy that seeks to grow visitation in the off-season. Equally important is targeting the right traveler who will spend more. So, we're very happy to see significant increases in visitor spending that result in significant increases in local tax revenue."

Growing the tourism economy responsibly also means encouraging respectful travel. MCCVB's "Sustainable Moments" initiative includes a marketing campaign to domestic and international visitors encouraging responsible behavior while visiting Monterey County. "Balance between what our visitors want in a place to visit and what our residents need as a place to live is imperative," said Blount-Canavan. "That is what our Sustainable Moments initiative is designed to do and we're working with a variety of community partners to make it happen."

Tourism growth does not happen by accident. It is a very competitive industry with many other destinations seeking to attract travelers away from Monterey County. According to a report prepared by Tourism Economics, a company that studies the financial aspects of the tourism industry, for every \$1 of MCCVB's spending, competitive destinations are collectively spending \$36. "Our competition is very tough and very aggressive," said Rob O'Keefe, MCCVB's Chief Marketing Officer, adding, "Travelers have

many choices and our competitors are spending a lot to attract them. Just considering Sonoma and Napa—Monterey County has nearly the same number of lodging rooms as both of those destinations combined, yet each Destination Marketing Organization spends significantly more than our destination.”

The “Monterey County Travel Impacts” report was compiled by Dean Runyan Associates, the foremost company in tourism research and analytics, and demonstrates economic value to stakeholders and leaders throughout the county. To access the complete report, please visit [www.seemonterey.com/members/tools/reports](http://www.seemonterey.com/members/tools/reports).

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

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is a 501c6 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 our guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was \$2.98 billion in 2018, representing a 5.8 percent increase from 2017. This \$2.98 billion in visitor spending supported 25,190 jobs, contributed \$271 million in total taxes and generated \$135 million local tax dollars that directly benefited the community.