

State Cohort RICA

VISIT CALIFORNIA COMMENTS - *Draft Comments and Context*

Visit California provided comments on the initial draft of the State Cohort RICA document, which was circulated for comment in July 2026 by the State Recreation and Tourism Cohort, a California Jobs First Catalyst Project initiative led by the MLTPA Foundation and Redwood Region RISE, regional Industry Sector Coordinators for California Jobs First.

What follows are the original draft recommendations for the Sierra Cohort RICA, as produced by the State Recreation and Tourism Cohort, followed by Visit California's original comments. The MLTPA and Redwood Region RISE team worked with Visit California to incorporate its suggestions into the final draft of the State Cohort RICA, including deleting some recommendations in their entirety, which was published on August 31, 2026.

For complete information on the State Recreation and Tourism Cohort and the State Cohort RICA, please visit the project web page here:

<https://mltpa.org/our-work/sierra-jobs-first-1/sierra-jobs-first/recreation-and-tourism-cohort>

ASSETS - RECOMMENDATIONS #1 & #4

1. RECREATION INTEGRATION WITH STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

The State of California, its agencies, and Visit California will collaborate with regional practitioners on state-funded infrastructure planning to integrate opportunities for sustainable outdoor recreation and tourism.

Visit CA Comment: *Infrastructure planning falls outside Visit California's statutory mandate under the California Tourism Marketing Act. As an industry-funded marketing organization, Visit California cannot participate in state infrastructure planning, though we commend state and local efforts to enhance visitor experiences.*

4. PLACE-BASED EDUCATION AND STEWARDSHIP

The State of California, through its funding agencies and their grant guidelines, and in collaboration with Visit California and local Destination Marketing Organizations, will fund place-based education and stewardship tools to connect visitors to the cultural, Indigenous, and ecological contexts of California's outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities and promote responsible use.

Visit CA Comment: *Visit California maintains a robust suite of destination stewardship resources and a dedicated Native American cultural heritage platform, developed in partnership with Tribal leaders and indigenous tourism organizations. While Visit California can provide feedback on similar efforts, the organization cannot allocate resources to fund or directly develop parallel assets that duplicate existing programs.*

POLICY AND REGULATION - RECOMMENDATIONS #3 & #5

3. OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

The State of California, through legislative or other means, will establish an office of outdoor recreation, or its equivalent, to provide statewide support and coordination for California's outdoor recreation sector.

Visit CA Comment: *The recommendation lacks a clear definition of 'statewide support and coordination.' Visit California is not opposed to state-level economic development for the outdoor recreation sector, provided these efforts do not duplicate Visit California's existing role in statewide tourism and outdoor recreation marketing.*

5. OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM ALIGNMENT

The State of California, its state agencies, and Visit California will work with tourism and recreation practitioners to develop practical geographies for regional outdoor recreation and tourism to align and integrate California's outdoor recreation and tourism sectors.

Visit CA Comment: *To effectively market California's geographic diversity to travelers, Visit California structures consumer messaging around 12 official tourism regions based on shared geography, culture, climate and travel appeal. While regional entities sometimes create sub-regional alignments for local purposes, Visit California will maintain focus on these 12 established regions to preserve clarity, efficiency and alignment in statewide marketing.*

DATA - RECOMMENDATIONS #1 & #2

1. VISIT CALIFORNIA DATA DEVELOPMENT

The State of California, its state agencies, and Visit California will work with tourism and recreation practitioners to develop practical geographies for regional outdoor recreation and tourism to align and integrate California's outdoor recreation and tourism sectors.

Visit CA Comment: *Visit California will convene and host regional roundtables focused on its data development programs to align its data collection and analysis with the needs of the outdoor recreation and tourism sector and rural regions.*

2. JOINT STATE-FEDERAL SOCIOECONOMIC DATA SHARING

The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) will establish a socio-economic data-sharing program for the outdoor recreation and tourism sectors between the state of California and federal partners, including the new U.S. Forest Service office in Placerville, to manage mutual data-sharing needs.

Visit CA Comment: *Visit California maintains robust travel-related economic impact research for the entirety of the state, by county and tourism region, which should be considered before pursuing or investing in new research that could be duplicative of reporting already being conducted.*

COLLABORATIVES - RECOMMENDATION #3

3. INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP ON TOURISM AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

The State of California, through its relevant state agencies, Visit California, and regional collaboratives, will establish a working group to document activities in the outdoor recreation and tourism sector that overlap with the program areas of Visit California and state agencies to make recommendations more efficient program delivery.

Visit CA Comment: Visit California is governed by an industry-led, public-private Board of Commissioners comprising state-appointed leaders, elected industry representatives and regional stakeholders. This statutory board oversees organization performance, program delivery and operational efficiency. While open to informal cross-agency communication, formal interagency working groups tasked with evaluating or dictating Visit California's program delivery fall outside our established governance structure.

BRANDING & MARKETING - RECOMMENDATIONS #1 & #2

1. REGIONAL BRANDING AND MARKETING

Local jurisdictions, with support from local, state, federal, and private funding, will invest in recreation and tourism collaboratives to facilitate regional branding and marketing among regional DMOs and between urban and rural regions.

Visit CA Comment: Regional marketing collaboratives already exist across California's DMO network, including several that connect urban and rural destinations within shared marketing regions. Rather than standing up new recreation and tourism collaboratives to perform branding and marketing functions, Visit California encourages outdoor recreation advocates to work within these existing DMO structures. Creating parallel entities to do overlapping marketing work risks diluting brand consistency, competing for the same local and private funding, and duplicating capacity that regional DMOs are already resourced and positioned to provide.

2. STATE TOURISM AND THE ARTS

Visit California and the California Arts Council will collaborate on new program initiatives to support greater inclusion of regional artistic and cultural voices in statewide tourism branding and marketing.

Visit CA Comment: Visit California actively integrates regional artistic, cultural and diverse creative voices across its global marketing campaigns and storytelling channels. Statewide branding strategy and marketing investments must remain data-driven and directed by our relevant committees and board to ensure maximum ROI for California's tourism economy.

For complete information and access to all
State Cohort RICA project materials, please visit:

mltpa.org/our-work/sierra-jobs-first-1/sierra-jobs-first/recreation-and-tourism-cohort