

TOURISM IN WISCONSIN TOPS \$20.6 BILLION IN 2017
St. Croix County Visitor Spending is up 4.11%

Hudson, Wis. (May 4, 2018) – For the travelers that helped Wisconsin achieve a \$631 million increase in tourism economic impact in 2017, it's all about the fun and memories. For the state's tourism industry, it's big business. And for taxpayers and residents, it's all about jobs and tax revenue those visitors generate. A study conducted by Tourism Economics shows the impact of tourism on the state's economy reached \$20.6 billion in 2017, an increase of 3.2 percent from the previous year and a nearly 40% increase since 2011.

Locally, travelers to St. Croix County spent \$100.6 million in 2017, a 4.11% increase. Visitor spending in Hudson continued to increase in 2017, growing \$1.6 million to \$47.7 million. Visitor activity sustained a total of 884 jobs, with income surpassing \$20.4 million. Tourism in Hudson generated \$6.3 million in state and local taxes last year.

"Tourism plays a critical role in our community and continues to grow, and from an economic standpoint, the numbers reflect that," said Mary Weller, Director of Tourism. "Last year's numbers are very encouraging and we hope to capitalize on this momentum in the coming summer season with our continued promotional campaign marketing this area as a year round destination."

Statewide, traveler spending generated \$1.5 billion in state and local revenue and \$1.2 billion in federal taxes.

"It's a tremendous credit to the tourism industry in all 72 counties and the work they do to create fun vacation experiences, market their destinations, and provide great customer service that makes travelers want to return to Wisconsin each year," Tourism Secretary Stephanie Klett said.

Research shows that tourism advertising goes beyond just promoting vacations; it also positively influences the state's overall image as a great place to live, find a job, open a business, attend college or retire.

Klett added, "We've found success in marketing Wisconsin under the brand of fun and our tourism industry is leveraging the brand in their own advertising efforts. These results let us know what we are doing is working and that investing in tourism not only benefits the economy, it also influences the way people think about Wisconsin."

The Department of Tourism works with international research firms Tourism Economics and Longwoods International.