National Travel & Tourism Strategy

2022

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Introduction

Few industries were hit as hard by the pandemic as travel and tourism, and its resurgence is essential to a robust and enduring economic recovery. As we rebuild the United States' travel and tourism sector, we have an opportunity not only to strengthen our nation's global competitiveness, but also to create a more equitable, more resilient, and more sustainable industry. That is what the National Travel and Tourism Strategy sets out to achieve.

From renowned urban centers to emerging wilderness and recreation hubs, supporting the United States' travel and tourism sector takes cooperation across the federal government and meaningful engagement with the private sector. By implementing this strategy, the Biden-Harris Administration is ensuring that the travel and tourism sector will come back stronger than ever by creating jobs and fostering growth in communities across the country for years to come.

Gina M. Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce

Travel and tourism is a critical driver of economic growth and employment in the United States and integral to the United States' unmatched cultural reach.[1] Supporting some 9.5 million American jobs through $1.9 trillion of economic activity, travel and tourism is an engine of prosperity and opportunity in communities across the country – from the bright lights and bustling streets of the nation's iconic cities to the placid wonder of its national parks to the dynamism and depth of its emerging destinations.[2]

Whether touring for pleasure, visiting friends and family, or conducting business, millions visit the United States, its territories, and the District of Columbia each year drawn by the promise of unrivaled destinations and experiences. Whether exploring natural wonders, discovering the United States' cultural heritage, or immersing themselves in what makes this nation unique, these visitors bring an immense economic benefit to the United States. Approximately 1 in every 20 jobs in the United States relies directly or indirectly on travel and tourism.[3] These jobs can be found in industries such as accommodations, food services, arts, entertainment, recreation, attractions, transportation, and education. But travel and tourism is so much more than the United States' top services export. What visitors take home with them when they leave is just as important as the jobs and growth their visits create.

2022 National Travel and Tourism Strategy

- **Focuses federal efforts to support travel and tourism in the United States.**
- **Establishes a five-year goal of attracting 90 million visitors, who will spend $279 billion annually.**
- **Envisions private and public sectors working together to increase the volume and value of tourism.**

The United States has long been a top destination for global travel and tourism. In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, 79.4 million international visitors came to the United States and contributed $239.4 billion to the U.S. economy, making the United States the global leader in revenue from international travel and tourism. As the top services export for the United States that year, travel and tourism generated a $53.4 billion trade surplus.

[1] The United States as used in this document includes all 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia.

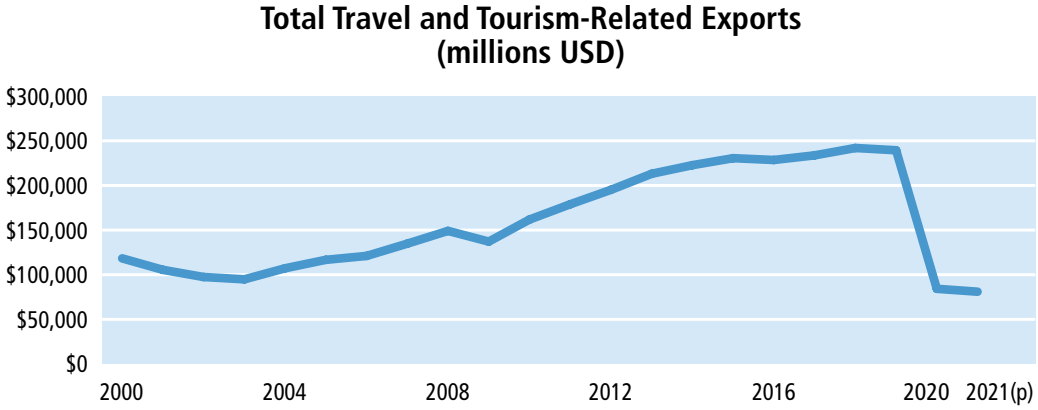
[2] Using 2019 data as a pre-COVID-19 pandemic baseline.

[3] Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), "U.S. Travel and Tourism Satellite Account for 1999-2020," *Survey of Current Business*, February 2022.

The travel and tourism industry, however, was one of the hardest hit sectors by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent health and travel restrictions. As a result, travel exports decreased nearly 65 percent from 2019 to 2020.[4] The decline in travel and tourism contributed heavily to unemployment. Leisure and hospitality lost 8.2 million jobs between February and April 2020 alone, accounting for 37.3 percent of the decline in overall nonfarm employment during this period.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce/International Trade Administration/Industry & Analysis/ National Travel and Tourism Office

The Biden-Harris Administration has taken important steps to support travel and tourism, as well as the families and communities that rely on the industry. By 2021, the rollout of vaccines and lifting of international and domestic restrictions allowed travel and tourism to begin its recovery. International arrivals to the United States grew to 22.1 million in 2021, up from 19.2 million in 2020. Spending by international visitors also grew, reaching $81 billion or 34 percent of the total in 2019.[5]



Source: U.S. Department of CommerceInternational Trade Administration/Industry & Analysis/ National Travel and Tourism Office

[4] International Trade Administration (ITA) National Travel and Tourism Office from BEA data, "Annual Visitor Spending 1960-2021," April 2022, available at *https://www.trade.gov/travel-and-tourism-research*.

[5] BEA, "U.S. International Transactions, Fourth Quarter and Year 2021," March 2022, available at *https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/trans421.pdf*.

The industry's nascent recovery is encouraging, but it is just the start. The federal government must do more to support the resurgence of travel and tourism to ensure the industry rebuilds to be more resilient, sustainable, and equitable, and to ensure the economic benefits of travel and tourism reach communities of all sizes and locations across the United States. **The Strategy establishes an overarching goal of increasing American jobs by attracting and welcoming 90 million international visitors, who we estimate will spend $279 billion annually by 2027.**[6]

The Strategy focuses U.S. government efforts to promote our nation as a premier destination grounded in the breadth and diversity of its communities, and to foster a travel and tourism sector that drives economic growth, creates good jobs, and bolsters conservation and sustainability. Drawing on engagement and capabilities from across the federal government, the Strategy aims to increase not only the volume but also the value of tourism.

In addition to increasing international visitation and spending, the Strategy advances other priorities for the travel and tourism sector, from investing in technology to reducing emissions and fostering an ethos of conservation across the industry, including in transportation infrastructure and traveler behavior. The Strategy also applies a holistic approach to tourism development, including incorporating sustainability- and community-based development and management strategies. This approach seeks to foster growth while addressing the challenges that accompany it, including limited destination carrying capacity and the impact on the United States' natural and cultural resources.

The Strategy is divided into four pillars, each with its own goal:

I. Promoting the United States as a Travel Destination

Goal: Leverage existing programs and assets to promote the United States to international visitors and broaden marketing efforts to encourage visitation to underserved communities.

II. Facilitating Travel To and Within the United States

Goal: Reduce barriers to trade in travel services and make it safer and more efficient for visitors to enter and travel within the United States.

[6] This goal was recommended by the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board in a November 5, 2021, letter to Secretary Raimondo (available at *https://www.trade.gov/sites/default/files/2021-12/TTAB%20National%20Goal%20Letter_%20Nov%205.pdf*) and adopted by the Tourism Policy Council on March 3, 2022.

III. Ensuring Diverse, Inclusive, and Accessible Tourism Experiences

Goal: Extend the benefits of travel and tourism by supporting the development of diverse tourism products, focusing on underserved communities and populations. Address the financial and workplace needs of travel and tourism businesses, supporting destination communities as they expand their tourism economies. Deliver world-class experiences and customer service on federal lands and waters that showcase U.S. assets while protecting them for future generations.

IV. Fostering Resilient and Sustainable Travel and Tourism

Goal: Reduce travel and tourism's contributions to climate change and build a travel and tourism sector that is resilient to natural disasters, public health threats, and the impacts of climate change. Build a sustainable sector that integrates protecting natural resources, supporting the tourism economy, and ensuring equitable development.

To achieve these goals, federal agencies must continue to make travel and tourism a priority and work closely with the private sector. Together we will advance economic opportunity and job creation in the travel and tourism industry.

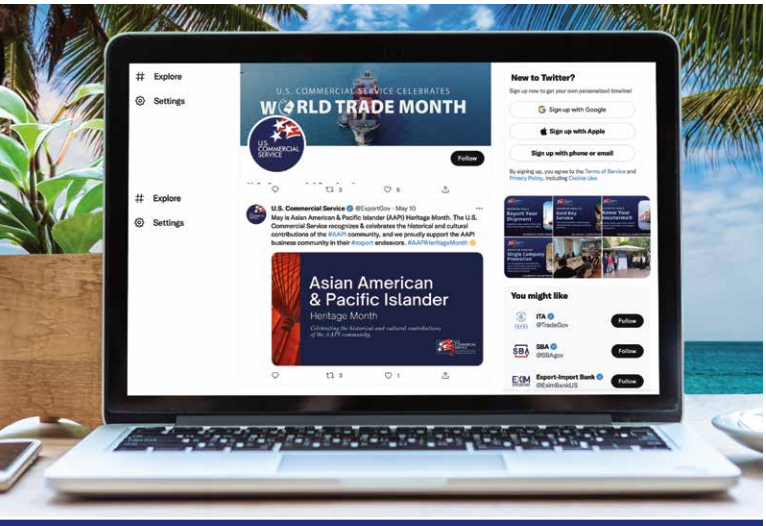
I. Promoting the United States as a Travel Destination

Goal: *Leverage existing programs and assets to promote the United States to international visitors and broaden marketing efforts to encourage visitation to underserved communities.*

To accelerate the recovery of the travel and tourism sector and restore U.S. competitiveness globally, the United States will undertake a robust effort to promote travel and tourism to the United States. Building on cooperation with the private sector and throughout the U.S. government, this effort will rely on delivering coordinated and consistent messaging to target audiences through innovative platforms and new technologies.

The constantly evolving public health environment during the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the challenges of developing and communicating consistent health and travel requirements for visitors. The pandemic likewise accelerated progress toward contactless travel, which the U.S. government actively supports. Such technological innovations can help promote the United States as a safe, welcoming, and accessible destination.

COVID-19 also increased demand for travel to outdoor, less-populated spaces, making the United States' recreational assets particularly attractive. However, this increased popularity also raised the risk of over-use and put pressure on gateway communities and destinations, many of



U.S. Commercial Service Promotes Rich and Diverse Culture through Social Media

To promote the United States as a travel destination, the U.S. Commercial Service (USCS) launched a social media campaign focused on "special recognition months" that feature unique U.S. destinations. Partnering with organizations that represent the equities of those destinations, the USCS leverages their content to distribute through the social media platforms of America's global embassy network. This effort helps to showcase the beauty, richness, and diversity of travel destinations across the United States, including in historically underrepresented and rural communities. This helps U.S. organizations connect with worldwide audiences that might otherwise be difficult to reach. Initiated in 2021, this campaign has included Native American Heritage Month; Black History Month; April Outdoors Month (featuring federally managed lands and waters), and Pride Month.

which have struggled to effectively manage the surge of visitors. To counteract these pressures, the Strategy supports travel promotion focused on sustainable and responsible travel. One recent example is the Recreate Responsibly Coalition and Campaign, launched in May 2020 and comprised of more than 1,000 businesses, government agencies, and nonprofit entities. By supporting such campaigns, the Strategy aims to ensure that future generations can enjoy the same natural beauty and wild places that attract so many visitors and keep them coming back.

The diversity of the United States is also a significant asset for attracting tourists, but it can be a challenge to effectively communicate so many disparate opportunities with a unified voice. Improving collaboration among key governmental and industry stakeholders will better showcase the diverse experiences available to visitors. For example, Recreation.gov is a great source for trip-planning and reservations for thousands of federal land and water destinations, but it cannot include all the travel and tourism experiences in the United States. To support the breadth of the U.S. travel experience, the U.S. government will partner with state, local, and tribal governments as well as the private sector to communicate more effectively the depth of authentic American experiences available to visitors.[7] This effort will include more frequent and concrete public engagement on tourism opportunities and priorities. It also will incorporate perspectives from locally affected communities, as well as links to existing websites and promotional efforts.

[7] For the purposes of this Strategy, "tribal" refers to American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander equities.

The role of the U.S. government is not to promote an exhaustive inventory of assets, but rather to work with state, local, and tribal governments and the private sector to support collaborative marketing, and share opportunities to showcase products and attract visitors. U.S. marketing to international visitors is led by the Corporation for Travel Promotion, doing business as Brand USA. Brand USA and destination management organizations promote the cultural diversity of the United States by offering unique and authentic products relating to foodways, music, and heritage. These tourism products celebrate the United States' multiple and interwoven cultural identities and histories and attract visitors interested in deepening their understanding about the communities they visit.

STRATEGY 1: Streamline the communication of U.S. travel policy to create a safer, more accessible, and welcoming experience for visitors.

Identified Actions

- **a** Coordinate with relevant federal agencies, Brand USA, and the private sector, including trade groups and media where appropriate, to uniformly communicate changes in health and safety requirements.
- **b** Inform and share messaging with travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation industry associations.
- **c** Improve U.S. government coordination by developing plans at U.S. embassies and consulates that support the growth of travel and tourism from international markets.
- **d** Increase relevant U.S. government participation in travel fora and events and coordinate messaging.
- **e** Communicate advances and innovations in secure, seamless, and contactless travel to the travel and tourism industry and the public.
- **f** Facilitate travel opportunities for people with disabilities.
- **g** Communicate changes in visitor access to U.S. tourism sites to facilitate travel planning.
- **h** Increase communication through digital media, including social media and the internet.
- **i** Encourage outreach to students and other long-term travelers who may have different requirements than leisure travelers.

STRATEGY 2: Effectively promote the diversity of the United States, including the depth of authentic American experiences, by engaging relevant communities and working with state, local, and tribal governments and the private sector to support marketing programs in collaboration with underserved communities.

Identified Actions

a Extend outreach to diverse communities, including efforts to ensure that messaging and imagery connect with audiences of all abilities and backgrounds so everyone can see themselves enjoying federal lands and waters and feel welcome and safe there.

b Expand U.S. government collaboration with the domestic travel trade to supplement existing promotional efforts at the state, local, and tribal levels.

Small Business Administration Offers Support for Tourism Businesses

The State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) from the Small Business Administration (SBA) provides funding through awards to U.S. states and territories that assists small businesses with export development and expansion into international markets. STEP could help tourism-related small businesses access funding to design international marketing products and campaigns; find foreign buyers, including through Department of Commerce's Commercial Service programs; or adapt their website to attract foreign clients. Additionally, SBA launched the Community Navigators Pilot Program to amplify and promote equity for all SBA programs, including STEP. The Community Navigator Pilot Program is an American Rescue Plan Act initiative designed to reduce barriers that underrepresented and underserved entrepreneurs often face in accessing the programs they need to recover, grow, or start their businesses.

STRATEGY 3: Promote responsible and sustainable tourism.

Identified Actions

- **a** Leverage Brand USA and other private sector outreach to shape messaging that promotes sustainable tourism practices.
- **b** Incorporate responsible travel messaging on federal agencies' websites.
- **c** Encourage dialogue with state, local, and tribal destination management organizations and state and local outdoor recreation offices on sustainable travel messaging.
- **d** Leverage geo-tourism and other programs of the federal land management agencies, such as Tread Lightly! and Leave No Trace, which are centerpieces of natural resource protection and sustainability in the federal government.

STRATEGY 4: Leverage large-scale events, such as the 2026 FIFA World Cup, EXPO 2027 (if awarded to the United States) and the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, as well as other milestones such as solar eclipses in 2023 and 2024, to promote the United States as a travel destination.

Identified Actions

- **a** Tie marketing of U.S. travel and tourism to large-scale events around the world, (e.g., EXPO 2027).
- **b** Collaborate with the private sector to add travel and tourism marketing to U.S.-hosted international events (e.g., the 2026 FIFA World Cup).
- **c** Collaborate with state, local, and tribal efforts to bid for large-scale international events.
- **d** Collaborate on international marketing efforts with professional sports leagues to the extent consistent with constraints on unofficial endorsements.

II. Facilitating Travel To and Within the United States

Goal: *Reduce barriers to trade in travel services and make it safer and more efficient for visitors to enter and travel within the United States.*

As the travel and tourism industry recovers and the United States welcomes back international visitors, there is an opportunity to further modernize the traveler experience, improve U.S. travel infrastructure, and position the United States to meet increasing demand. The federal government can positively affect the traveler experience – especially for air travel – well beyond areas the federal government directly controls or administers. Efforts by the U.S. Department of State (State) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – primarily U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) – to innovate and modernize their equipment and processes will collectively deliver increased efficiency for travelers that far exceeds what could be accomplished by any individual initiative. Establishing cross-cutting programs that integrate and standardize federal government and private sector interactions with travelers throughout their trips will ensure faster, more secure, and more enjoyable travel experiences and help develop a best-in-class U.S. travel system.

The 2012 National Travel and Tourism Strategy and the 2014 Presidential Memorandum, *Establishing a National Goal and Developing Airport Specific Action Plans to Enhance the Entry Process for International Travelers to the United States*, provided relevant recommendations for improvement in these areas. Given the pace of technological change in the last decade, new opportunities have emerged to facilitate travel and improve the traveler experience while maintaining and enhancing fulfillment of the federal government's national security mission.

Developing a best-in-class U.S. travel system requires strategic investment and time to implement. The federal government and private sector must continue collaborating and investing in new ways of doing business, improving infrastructure, and maximizing the use of personnel and other resources, all of which will provide considerable benefits over time.

One area of rapid change and opportunity is documentation. Travelers are accustomed to providing physical documents – such as a passport or driver's license – to verify their identity and eligibility to travel. Over time, governments have invested in enhanced security features and enforcement to counter fraudulent documentation. These types of documents are now undergoing a more fundamental shift, from physical to digital. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is developing specifications for a digital travel credential, such as a virtual passport. Similarly, some U.S. states issue virtual mobile driver's licenses (mDLs) that can be stored on a smartphone. Relatedly, TSA is developing an mDL reader that will be integrated into the existing Credential Authentication Technology machines at TSA airport security checkpoints. These changes will have enormous implications for governments and the private sector and provide new opportunities for travelers.

In the last few years, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic began, many businesses have made significant investments in remote processing. Instead of waiting in line to place a coffee or food order, customers can order through a mobile application for pickup immediately upon their arrival at the vendor's location. Ultimately, this application benefits both the vendor and the customer, reducing crowds and allowing the business to use staff and resources more effectively. This same concept could increase efficiencies in government services.

The United States also benefits from many international fora and relationships, including bilateral and multilateral frameworks, that assist federal entities in building evidence-based innovations and solutions. While the pandemic impeded new international efforts, strengthening cooperation is a priority moving forward, especially as the United States continues to manage COVID-19 and contemplate future crisis response. Likewise, the federal government should also seek to expand collaboration with the private sector, particularly where there are overlapping interests and complementary capabilities.

STRATEGY 1: Use improvements and new developments in technology to position the United States as a leader in verifying traveler identities.

Identified Actions

a Ensure federal agencies can produce, accept, and use digital documentation likely to be encountered as the ICAO guidelines are finalized.

- State should be prepared to pilot issuance and acceptance of digital travel credentials when the ICAO guidelines are finalized and to accept digital travel credentials for routine operations.
- DHS should prepare its traveler systems to accept such digital travel credentials.
- State and DHS should explore technologies to facilitate identity verification of travelers and streamline screening, including the use of mDLs and other digital identity documents, as well as biometric and facial comparison technology. For example, CBP uses facial comparison technology to verify travelers' identities, and TSA is piloting the acceptance of digital identity documents at TSA checkpoints. This exploration of possible technologies should include the protection of privacy rights, civil rights, and civil liberties.

b Explore technologies that allow travelers to use mDLs and other identity documents.

c Incorporate touchless technology.

- Incorporate touchless technology into DHS trusted traveler programs and State passport and visa processes.
- Collaborate with airlines and airports to implement a traveler experience in which a person can choose to allow use of facial biometrics in identity verification processes at air carrier check-in, TSA checkpoints, aircraft boarding gates, and CBP entry and exit points. (Facial recognition biometrics means travelers are not touching a device to be verified, but rather are having a photo taken instead, or preloading photos in advance so the traveler does not have to hand over physical documents to be identified.)

d Pursue the use of foil-less visas for digital visa processing that provide for verification of the traveler's identity.

e State should explore the direct capture of photographs for passports and visas to standardize image quality for improved comparisons against travel documents, reduce the probability of false rejections, and combat fraud.

STRATEGY 2: Expand remote processing opportunities to manage staff and other resources more effectively without compromising security.

Identified Actions

a Explore the expansion of online functions and services that allow processes, as appropriate, that previously were only available in person or by mail (e.g., when issuing or renewing travel documents such as U.S. passports).

- State has recently begun testing its process to allow U.S. passport holders to renew passports online if they meet certain conditions. This process allows qualifying individuals to initiate and pay for their passport renewal online, upload a photograph, and receive automatic notifications regarding status, enhancing customer service and ease of travel for U.S. citizens.

b Modernize the passport acceptance process.

- While State is piloting online renewals, more should be done to minimize paper-based passport applications. For most applicants, in-person interactions will still need to occur, but an accompanying digital application process will eliminate delays in shipping applications, reduce application throughput times, allow increased ability for credit card payments, and reduce delays from miscalculation of passport fees.
- Continue to pilot remote interviews for NEXUS renewals. The NEXUS program allows expedited processing for pre-screened travelers entering the United States and Canada. Program members use dedicated processing lanes at designated northern border ports of entry, NEXUS kiosks when entering Canada by air, and Global Entry kiosks when entering the United States via Canadian Preclearance airports.
- Increase online services for I-94s. The CBP One application allows travelers to apply and pay for provisional I-94s as well as access electronic I-94 forms, identify authorized length of stay, and provide CBP with the last five years of travel by the applicant.

c Harness efficiencies at TSA checkpoints.

- TSA is testing concepts for a remote screening system that would allow passengers and their property to be physically screened away from the checkpoint. This screening system would promote faster, more focused reviews of security images. Additionally, improvements to screening technology algorithms could mean greater efficiencies throughout the checkpoint process. These efforts collectively would decrease bottlenecks and crowding and enhance the passenger experience.

d Explore various Advance Passenger Information program options at land borders to enable travelers to provide advance notification of their intended travel. Advanced notification would enable advance screening and vetting and reduce the time travelers would need to be screened on arrival.

- Continue to leverage the capabilities of the CBP One application for predictable processing. New technologies such as the CBP One application increase the potential for travelers to provide advance notification of their travel, enabling advance screening and vetting.

e Support advance screening protocols.

- Individual airports are developing and piloting protocols and implementing technology for advance screening appointments for certain travelers, allowing them to develop a far more predictable, convenient, and less stressful travel experience. DHS and TSA will continue to support these industry initiatives and participate in the development of best practices for these protocols.

f Expand the ability within State, in collaboration with DHS, to process and approve securely and remotely certain nonimmigrant visa applications that do not require interviews, both domestically and overseas.

- For example, State currently assists personnel in Mexico with remote processing of Border Crossing Card renewals and in Central America and the Northern Triangle with visa applications for temporary agricultural workers. This capability can be used at additional posts around the world as needed.

STRATEGY 3: Strengthen partnerships to assist in travel facilitation, including with international and private sector partners.

Identified Actions

a Engage with state and local government, private sector, nonprofit, and academic and research institute stakeholders to share lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, develop ideas, and provide capacity for testing them.

b Develop and accelerate regional and border initiatives to increase information sharing.

c Increase efforts to develop cross-border interoperability and alignment to allow travelers to visit between bordering nations more seamlessly. The United States will continue to partner with Canada to implement President Biden's and Prime Minister Trudeau's February 2021 *Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership*, which built upon the successful 2012 *Beyond the Border* initiative.

d U.S. officials should continue to engage with foreign partners on lessons learned and best practices relating to foreign travel resulting from the response to the pandemic.

e Continue and expand data-sharing agreements between countries to enable more automated security processes and reduce traveler delays.

- Within appropriate legal frameworks and guidelines, secure passenger data-sharing agreements between countries, which can greatly enhance security and the traveler experience by reducing the need for redundant security checks between trusted partners and allowing for more flexible passenger processing at lower risk.
- Enhance current programs to expand data sharing with other countries, such as the new border security information sharing requirement for the Visa Waiver Program (VWP).
- Further study internally (and as necessary with Congress) TSA's One Stop security pilot program to determine whether remaining policy and operational challenges could be overcome. Such a change would allow international travelers arriving in the United States from certain countries to continue to other U.S. destinations from select international airports without TSA rescreening, thereby streamlining transfers.

f Develop strategies for incorporating health data as part of travel screening.

- Just as with identity documentation, proof of vaccination and other health-related documentation will likely become digital, as that format provides additional security and allows for faster processing. It is important that any digital health documentation systems are interoperable, mutually recognized, and for equity reasons, do not preclude continued acceptance of non-digital documentation such as CDC's white card for COVID-19 vaccinations.
- To ensure U.S. preparedness in the event of future health crises, the Department of Health and Human Services should partner with State and DHS to develop a report on how the federal government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic affected international travel.

g Provide quick and easy information to travelers.

- The rapid increase of information delivered via mobile applications has greatly increased the expectations of customers for a variety of digital products. The federal government should be open to exploring public-private partnerships that could pull together multiple travel-related information sources to enhance the passenger travel experience.

III. Ensuring Diverse, Inclusive, and Accessible Tourism Experiences

Goal: *Extend the benefits of travel and tourism by supporting the development of diverse tourism products, focusing on underserved communities and populations. Address the financial and workplace needs of travel and tourism businesses, supporting destination communities as they expand their tourism economies. Deliver world-class experiences and customer service on federal lands and waters that showcase U.S. assets while protecting them for future generations.*

The United States offers a full, diverse, and wide-ranging visitor experience through a wealth of destinations and attractions operated by federal, state, local, and tribal governments, as well as the private sector. This robust portfolio includes treasured federal waters and lands, such as national heritage areas and national trails established to protect unique natural, cultural, and historical resources that communities can leverage as visitor experiences.

Certain destinations attract more visitors than others, with a variety of factors – from accessibility to popularity – contributing to the disparity. Protecting, restoring, and developing a broader array of tourism assets, both recreational and cultural, will lead visitors to an expanded range of locales and experiences and relieve crowding and resource impacts at the most visited sites. This approach can also further support communities adjacent to those destinations by increasing growth and diversification in tourism-based economies and ensuring that those benefits are shared more broadly and equitably.

The Strategy leverages the broad global interest in American culture, which stems from a variety of sources: well-established diaspora communities, which generate significant tourism from visiting friends and family; growing interest in historical and cultural tourism focused on local foodways and musical traditions; and increased global awareness of the United States' diverse ethnic traditions and experiences. U.S. attractions should incorporate community perspectives to tell a collaborative story about the United States that will resonate with a wider, more diverse audience and eliminate barriers (both real and perceived) in public materials and interpretation.

As previously discussed, the pandemic increased demand for outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism in the United States, including on many federal lands and waters. Along with increasing business revenue and job growth in gateway communities, increased visitation raised challenges relating to resource conservation, public safety, community livability, economic equity, and the quality of the visitor experience. Federal agencies are encouraged to work with community partners to implement a destination management model that prioritizes stewardship, integrates resident sentiment, champions sustainability, and ensures equitable and resilient growth.

Federal agencies should serve as a critical resource and partner to local communities in their efforts to boost their travel and tourism economies. Some local communities already have well-developed tourism economies but need assistance balancing tourism opportunities with the need for affordable housing, living-wage jobs, and resource preservation. Other communities have experienced economic decline and seek help exploring tourism and outdoor recreation as tools to diversify and expand their economies.

Supporting local communities' planning and preparation for the future will help balance their needs and they will benefit from the growing interest in tourism. Involving underserved populations in local planning is essential to advancing equity and environmental justice, consistent with President Biden's Executive Order on *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government* (EO 13985). Also, as more communities embrace sustainable tourism, the federal government can help them connect those principles with broader community development goals. Together, federal, state, local, and tribal governments can collaborate with the private sector to address visitor use management in sensitive areas and support tourism strategies that divert visitors from overutilized areas and attract new visitors to local points of interest.

Development of an available, qualified travel and tourism workforce is essential to the growth of the travel and tourism sector and will remain a priority in the years ahead. In December 2021, the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board (TTAB) advised the Secretary of Commerce that the pandemic had worsened long-standing barriers to workforce participation in travel and tourism and had created new hurdles to workplace satisfaction and safety. To support the ongoing demand for workers, the TTAB recommended that federal agencies direct funding to support access to family care, reliable worker transportation, housing for transient workers, and career pathway programs for people of color and women. The Strategy will continue to support the travel and tourism sector by promoting high-quality jobs and career pathways for workers in underserved communities.

STRATEGY 1: Assist communities in providing accessible travel and tourism experiences that allow travelers to immerse themselves in the culture of the communities.

Identified Actions

a Consistent with applicable law, ensure federal grant funds and planning resources are readily available, widely communicated and made available across the travel and tourism sector, especially for small-scale tourism providers.

b Meaningfully engage culturally diverse communities in travel and tourism initiatives.

c Provide technical assistance to ensure communities are fully aware of the unintended consequences of over-tourism and have the capacity to compete for and manage the resources necessary to foster a travel and tourism economy that promotes equity and environmental justice.

d Support research to identify untold stories and omitted perspectives at tourism destinations.

e Advocate for additional resources for federal agencies to translate and create public materials (e.g., websites, signage, visitor center exhibits, outreach and marketing products, mobile applications, and safety information) in multiple languages and Braille.

f Collaborate with communities and resource management agencies to reduce physical and social barriers to access, and ensure sites are safe and welcoming for diverse visitors.

g Consistent with applicable law and guidelines, improve digital accessibility on federal websites, in federal publications, and on federal digital platforms, as well as physical accessibility through investments in infrastructure, interpretation, and visitor services.

National Park Service Supports Community-Based Tourism Development

The National Park Service (NPS) and its community-based tourism programs play an important role in the U.S. tourism economy. Besides national parks, sites such as heritage areas, historic and natural landmarks and networks, trails, and wild and scenic rivers support conservation, recreation, and heritage preservation. As such, communities can leverage these special sites and receive assistance through NPS programs, such as the Historic Preservation Fund and other community assistance programs that can be used for sustainable tourism development.

STRATEGY 2: Identify and address infrastructure and environmental challenges from increased visitation associated with specific land and water destinations and adjacent communities, with an emphasis on opportunities for increasing visitor diversity.

Identified Actions

a Conduct data analysis to identify areas exceeding capacity and areas where visitation can be encouraged.

b Consult community stakeholders and partners to plan for the most desired improvements, identify cross-management or sustainability needs, and advocate for funding that supports capacity-building efforts.

c Encourage the public and private sector to prioritize investments in infrastructure projects to mitigate environmental challenges.

d Coordinate and collaborate on federal, state, local, and tribal planning efforts to advance infrastructure solutions, such as worker housing, water and sewer upgrades, clean transportation technologies, and broadband.

STRATEGY 3: Balance increasing demand for high quality experiences with local community needs and environmental constraints and highlight alternatives to vulnerable destinations.

Identified Actions

- **a** Invest in tribal communities through continued implementation of the NATIVE (Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience) Act.
- **b** Coordinate with recreation partners to highlight lesser visited locations.
- **c** Assist communities in creating tourism experiences in less-traveled areas by collaborating with organizations, such as the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable.
- **d** Promote sustainable tourism in coordination with regional, state, local, and tribal tourism and outdoor recreation offices.
- **e** Implement appropriate visitor use management methodologies to identify desired conditions for resources and the visitor experience and develop appropriate management actions to achieve them.

NATIVE Act Provides Funding for Heritage Tourism in Hawai'i

The Office of Native Hawaiian Relations' Heritage (Tourism) Opportunities in Hawai'i (HŌ'IHI) Program supports Native Hawaiian organizations with grant funding through the NATIVE (Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience) Act to develop visitor engagement programs that embrace the cultural value of hō'ihi (respect). With program support, visitors will be engaged as guests, learn Hawaiian history and culture, experience firsthand traditional cultural practices, and undertake related activities that convey respect and reaffirm the principle of reciprocation to the place, resources, and traditional knowledge holders.

NOAA's National Marine Sanctuaries Showcases Diversity, Richness, and Value of Nation's Waters

Throughout the National Marine Sanctuary System, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of National Marine Sanctuaries encourages sustainable tourism opportunities and authentic visitor experiences, in coordination with communities, through a destination stewardship approach. Ranging from the coral reefs of American Samoa to the historical shipwrecks of Thunder Bay, to the mangrove islands of the Florida Keys, the nationwide network of 15 national marine sanctuaries showcases the diversity, natural richness, and cultural value of our nation's waters. Moreover, NOAA is invested in the prosperity of communities adjacent to sanctuaries and works in partnership with them to support diverse, healthy, and sustainable economies. By leveraging the recreation, aesthetic, and other qualities of national marine sanctuaries that draw visitors from across the globe, NOAA builds strong local economies and highly engaged communities, while establishing a model for sustainable tourism to bolster conservation and stewardship.

STRATEGY 4: Cultivate and amplify an ethos of conservation, stewardship, and resilience with travel and tourism stakeholders, including visitors, affected industries, marketing agencies, and the destination community, that ensures the meaningful involvement and equitable treatment of underserved populations.

Identified Actions

a Collaborate with the Recreate Responsibly and Together Outdoors coalitions to develop educational and outreach materials, incorporating Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly! principles to share with the public and industry.

b Work closely with state, local, and tribal governments to understand their relationships to local natural resources, including those that are managed or at risk if not managed.

c Promote equity, environmental justice, inclusion, and resilience principles in projects that seek federal assistance for travel and tourism.

d Offer technical assistance to destination communities to support sustainable tourism planning in coordination with destination managers, prioritizing equity, environmental justice, inclusion, and resiliency principles.

e Incorporate responsible travel messaging at federal sites.

f Develop templates for sustainable travel pledges (similar to those of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Monuments Fund) that communities can tailor to their destinations.

STRATEGY 5: Increase access to technology for visitor management and interpretive services.

Identified Actions

a Support broadband expansion, digital inclusion, and internet assistance programs that support U.S. travel and tourism economies.

b Boost access to publicly available data to enable communities to determine which locations near them are most visited and from where visitors to those locations are coming.

c Consistent with applicable law, collaborate with the private sector to develop and promote mobile applications that show current visitation at federal sites.

d Improve access to digital interpretive services and encourage federal agencies to reach visitors through a variety of means, including social media, mobile applications, virtual field trips, web cameras, and 360-degree video.

STRATEGY 6: Identify and address barriers and opportunities for state, local, and tribal governments to access funding and technical assistance to sustainably plan, build, market, and manage tourism economies that promote equity and environmental justice.

Identified Actions

a Compile information on federal funding, training, and technical assistance for tourism planning (including outdoor recreation) and conduct periodic interagency meetings to share information about existing grant and technical assistance programs that support travel and tourism.

b Promote federal assistance for the development and marketing of local tourism that advances economic opportunities for diverse U.S. businesses, workers, and places, including programs from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), U.S. International Trade Administration, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, among others.

c Work with state, local, and tribal governments, higher education institutions, including minority-serving institutions (MSIs), and nonprofit entities to provide information on and links to grants and technical assistance.

Program Helps Small Towns Boost Their Tourism and Recreation Economies

The Recreation Economy for Rural Communities (RERC) planning assistance program helps rural communities and small towns leverage the power of the growing outdoor recreation economy. The RERC program has helped communities across the country build their tourism and recreation economies while also conserving natural resources, ensuring that all members of the community can benefit from and access outdoor recreation, and directing reinvestment in main streets to improve human health and the environment. The program serves as a model for how federal government can support local communities to develop and implement plans to build and manage their tourism economies, leading to positive change in rural communities and small towns across the country. The RERC program is a federal interagency partnership jointly funded and supported by EPA, the USDA Forest Service, and the Northern Border Regional Commission.

d Encourage interagency collaboration by awarding points in competition or otherwise prioritizing grant funding to applicants who can demonstrate cooperation with multiple federal land and water managers.

e Conduct training and share best practices across federal agencies that routinely work with communities on travel and tourism.

f Recruit AmeriCorps, Conservation Corps, and returned Peace Corps volunteers to support the development and promotion of tourism in underserved communities.

g Support inclusion of small-scale providers, indigenous tourism operators, sustainable or regenerative tourism operators, and other non-traditional travel and tourism providers on relevant federal advisory boards and committees.

STRATEGY 7: Attract and retain a diverse workforce, including in customer service positions on federal lands and waters. Support diversity in business development and entrepreneurship opportunities created by demand for outdoor recreation and tourism.

Identified Actions

a Provide interagency support and increased access to capital for local entrepreneurs and small businesses, particularly among diverse and underserved populations.

b Consistent with applicable law, support and fund local workforce development and entrepreneurship ventures that create and sustain well-paying, quality jobs and boost skills among residents to fill workforce gaps.

c Place higher emphasis on recruitment for federal natural resource positions from a variety of higher education institutions, including Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions; Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions; historically Black colleges and universities; Hispanic-serving institutions; Native American-serving non-tribal institutions; predominantly Black institutions; tribal colleges and universities; and MSI community colleges.

d Support federal agency hiring programs, internship and volunteer programs, employee health and wellness programs, investments in employee housing, and training programs that help recruit and retain a diverse workforce, with an emphasis on land management and other agencies interacting with state, local, and tribal governments in support of their tourism efforts.

e Increase awareness and understanding of registered apprenticeship programs for organizations seeking to build a workforce pipeline.

f Connect organizations interested in developing registered apprenticeship programs with intermediaries and provide technical assistance to organizations interested in registered apprenticeship programs.

g Connect travel and tourism organizations with workforce programs in their communities, such as state and local workforce boards and community colleges. Partner with American Job Centers and Job Corps Centers to recruit a diverse workforce.

IV. Fostering Resilient and Sustainable Travel and Tourism

Goal: *Reduce travel and tourism's contributions to climate change and build a travel and tourism sector that is resilient to natural disasters, public health threats, and the impacts of climate change. Build a sustainable sector that integrates protecting natural resources, supporting the tourism economy, and ensuring equitable development.*

Combating climate change and making the United States more resilient to its effects are key priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration. President Biden's Executive Order on *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad* (EO 14008) puts the climate crisis at the center of U.S. foreign policy and national security. Using a whole-of-government approach, EO 14008 seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in every sector of the economy; increase resilience to the impacts of climate change; protect public health; conserve federal lands, waters, and biodiversity; deliver environmental justice; and create well-paying jobs and economic growth, especially through innovation, commercialization, and deployment of clean energy technologies and infrastructure.

Travel and tourism is a key part of this agenda, from leisure and hospitality, to transportation, natural resources and wildlife, and infrastructure. As the industry recovers from the pandemic, the Strategy will seize a unique opportunity to rebuild a travel and tourism sector that is more resilient, sustainable, and equitable.

Climate change is already having a significant impact on tourism destinations, infrastructure, and recreation opportunities. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the frequency and intensity of weather events such as extreme heat, wildfires, droughts, flash floods, and storms are growing, costing hundreds of billions of dollars annually and threatening tourism economies across the United States. Climate change presents a growing risk to U.S. coastlines, which are vital to travel and tourism. Approximately 40 percent of the population – 127 million people – live in coastal counties, and travel and tourism significantly contributes to the marine economy along U.S. coasts.[8] Rising sea levels and extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, floods, and storm surges, threaten coastal assets and infrastructure, including roads, bridges, tunnels and railways. Climate change is also affecting seasonality. Longer summers and shorter winters have implications for outdoor recreation, public health (including from disease vectors and heat exposure), wildfire risk, biodiversity, and wildlife.

The federal government has an important role to play in supporting communities as they plan for and recover from natural disasters, climate events, and health crises. Federal agencies – especially those involved in the Economic Recovery Support Function under the Federal Emergency Management Agency – work closely with the travel and tourism sector while supporting communities with disaster response and recovery. Continued collaboration will include sharing strategies and best practices to help communities limit their exposure to climate-related disasters and events, as well as engaging destinations and adjacent communities around recovery efforts and resiliency planning.

Federal Lands and Waters – and Stewardship – Promoted Through Recreation.gov

The Federal lands and waters agencies work with Recreation.gov to provide services and amenities for all abilities and identities. Recreation.gov showcases web content and messaging (such as "Leave No Trace" and "Recreate Responsibly") to positively influence visitor behavior by encouraging responsible recreation, equitable experiences, and a stewardship ethic.

The Strategy seeks to strengthen federal capacity to support communities during and after a crisis. During the pandemic, Congress appropriated billions of dollars for direct economic assistance programs, such as funding from the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act and the American Rescue Plan Act, which have been a lifeline for businesses,

[8] NOAA, "Our Dynamic Marine Economy" Chart, 2019, available at *https://www.noaa.gov/stories/story-map-our-dynamic-marine-economy*.

but many of the programs did not do enough to reach underserved populations. The federal government has already begun to identify and address challenges to ensuring programs are implemented broadly and equitably, including through EO 13985, which provides for every federal agency to conduct an equity assessment.

Climate change and natural disasters disproportionately impact underserved communities, further exacerbating wealth and social inequality. Efforts to reach more underserved communities could include public and private sector programs to improve financial literacy and create better understanding about how to improve access to loans and lines of credit. These efforts include applying the lessons learned and best practices from the SBA's Community Navigator's Program, through which SBA is engaging with state and local governments, SBA resource partners, and other organizations in targeted outreach for small businesses in underserved communities. This work includes financial assistance, contracting and procurement, marketing, operations, business development, exporting and industry-specific training. Future programs should also seek to address risks of unemployment and job insecurity, especially for lower-paid workers in the travel and tourism sector.

Additionally, federal agencies should build on existing engagement with communities to help them further incorporate resiliency planning into overall sustainable tourism development. This resiliency planning could include economic or product diversification, especially for those communities dependent on a primary tourism source, such as cruise ships, or a single season, such as winter in skiing locales.

A successful, sustainable travel and tourism industry depends on the health of U.S. natural and cultural resources, communities, and the U.S. economy. Integrating sustainable practices that promote environmental conservation and stewardship and support of local and heritage communities is necessary to ensure long-term economic benefits that are resilient to shocks. Additionally, more vigorous conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems through a sustainable tourism policy could ensure these resources remain available for future generations.

If sustainably managed, travel and tourism can create revenue and incentives for conserving and preserving biodiversity and can serve as a reliable source of jobs and income for local communities. For example, local economies receive billions of dollars from visitors to coral reefs through diving tours, recreational fishing trips, hotels, restaurants, and other businesses based near coral reef ecosystems. In Southeast Florida alone, NOAA estimates that coral reef-related diving and snorkeling generate about $902 million and recreational fishing generates $384 million in total economic output annually.[9] Nature-based tourism also generates positive social impacts by creating incentives to protect and preserve natural resources and educating the public on the importance of sustainability.

Additionally, there is significant overlap in strategies for disaster mitigation, conservation, and sustainable tourism. Implementation of nature-based solutions acts as a first line of defense against sea level rise, extreme weather events, and storm surges. Restoring and protecting wetlands can improve water quality and reduce flooding, and waterfront parks can also absorb storm and flooding impacts and improve water quality. Nature-based solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change can also provide opportunities for tourism development. For example, coastal habitats, such as coral reefs and mangroves, provide protection for hundreds of millions of people, preserve biodiversity, act as carbon sinks, and provide nursery areas for fisheries, all of which increases the food supply and creates jobs. Understanding the relationship among tourism, conservation, and climate change provides a roadmap for a more resilient tourism economy that supports natural resources and local communities.

A necessary step in creating long-term tourism sustainability is reducing its negative environmental impacts and contributions to climate change. The aviation, car transport, cruise, and accommodations sectors all contribute to carbon emissions, along with truck and rail transportation of food and materials on which the travel and tourism sector depends. The United States has committed to the goal of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions to 50-52 percent below 2005 levels by 2030.[10] For the travel and tourism industry to contribute to this goal, it is imperative to measure and report baseline emissions levels, establish emissions reduction or net-zero targets, and develop effective strategies to meet those targets throughout the travel and tourism supply chain. Sourcing alternative energy and adopting sustainable practices and programs, including supporting and promoting green technology, can accelerate the sector's transition to environmental sustainability.

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[9] "Economic Impact Analysis of Recreational Fishing, SCUBA Diving, and Snorkeling on Florida's Coral Reefs," available at *https://www.coris.noaa.gov/activities/florida_economics/welcome.html*.

[10] The White House, "The Long-Term Strategy of the United States: Pathways to Net-Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2050," November 2021, available at *https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/US-Long-Term-Strategy.pdf*, and U.S. Department of State, "The United States' Nationally Determined Contribution: Reducing Greenhouse Gases in the United States: A 2030 Emissions Target," Washington, DC, 2021, available at *https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/22/fact-sheet-president-biden-sets-2030-greenhouse-gas-pollution-reduction-target-aimed-at-creating-good-paying-union-jobs-and-securing-u-s-leadership-on-clean-energy-technologies/*.

A sustainable travel and tourism economy also requires travel and tourism businesses and destinations to reduce waste and pollution and prevent degradation of land, water, and natural resources during development and business operations. Sustainable tourism cannot exist without sustainable communities. Increasing the use and implementation of sustainable and resilient infrastructure and investing in clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, and pollution reduction create communities that are not only resilient to shocks but attractive tourism destinations. Transit-oriented development and infrastructure like high-speed rail also create more connected, accessible, and healthier communities.

In addition to the use of national data and emissions targets, an integral part of creating a sustainable travel and tourism sector is the availability to communities of timely, localized data. The COVID-19 pandemic increased demands for such data, as policies were being developed to quickly respond to employment and other economic impacts in the travel and tourism sector. More can be done to provide climate data to travel and tourism communities, including their exposure to climate-related risks and disasters and timely data ahead of extreme weather events. The federal government also needs data at the state, local, and tribal levels on travel and tourism (e.g., on economic output, composition of demand, contribution to gross domestic product, and employment), which the federal government produces only at a national level and only on an annual basis. Federal agencies should continue to innovate how they collect economic information, including decreasing reliance on paper surveys. Federal agencies could also look at using other data sources as a proxy for survey data.

STRATEGY 1: Ensure members of underserved communities in the travel and tourism sector are aware of and can easily access federal assistance before, during, and immediately following disasters and health crises. Develop greater institutional capacity in federal agencies to provide funding and grant assistance in connection with disasters and health crises, including preparedness, mitigation, recovery, and resilience.

Identified Actions

- **a** Provide a mechanism for ongoing communication between federal agencies and tourism destinations about their needs following a disaster.
- **b** Leverage community-focused programs to improve access for underserved populations to government resources in the travel and tourism sector.
- **c** Improve communication with the private sector as part of the federal assistance process.
- **d** Align capacity-building, environmental, conservation, and climate resilience priorities.

STRATEGY 2: Support communities in resiliency planning, including diversification by industry and sector.

Identified Actions

- **a** Leverage funding for agency planning in alignment with federal, state, local, and tribal priorities and broader sustainability efforts.
- **b** Incorporate resiliency planning into programs across the federal government, as applicable.
- **c** Work with the private sector and state, local and tribal governments to share best practices with small businesses and communities on reducing their exposure to climate-related risks and incorporating sustainable tourism practices.
- **d** Incorporate climate change resilience and adaptation strategies into infrastructure investment and management and visitor use management on federal lands and waters.
- **e** Collaborate with destination management organizations and the private sector on regional tourism planning and diversification to increase the ability of the travel and tourism industry to adapt to changing demand for services.
- **f** Provide NOAA data and tools to communities to inform and build resilience to extreme events and climate-related hazards, including through nature-based solutions.

STRATEGY 3: Reduce the travel and tourism sector's carbon emissions.

Identified Actions

- **a** Support and encourage baseline and ongoing measurement of emissions and the setting of science-based emissions reduction or net-zero targets throughout the travel and tourism sector.
- **b** Implement measures to reduce travel and tourism emissions consistent with the United States' Nationally Determined Contribution to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 50-52 percent by 2030.
- **c** Invest in electrical equipment and infrastructure, including electric vehicles, public transit, bike paths, and walkways, including at visitor centers, and in renewable electricity generation to serve these uses.
- **d** Support the use of sustainable fuels for transportation, including aviation, cruise ships, buses, other modes of public transportation, and taxis and ride-share services.
- **e** Support the integration of climate impacts into financial markets, including enhanced climate risk disclosure for tourism businesses and projects.

STRATEGY 4: Support nature-based solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation.

Identified Actions

- **a** Continue collaboration with state, local, and tribal governments to invest in nature-based solutions and green and blue infrastructure as a first line of defense against extreme weather events and natural disasters.
- **b** Invest in projects to protect, conserve, and restore existing ecosystems such as coral reefs, kelp forests, seagrass meadows, mangroves, coastlines, and forests.
- **c** Provide information and resources on nature-based solutions for communities to incorporate into their tourism planning and strategies.

STRATEGY 5: Support and protect the nation's natural assets to ensure travel and tourism resources for the future.

Identified Actions

a Implement and support initiatives and legislation, such as the *Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful Report* and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, that prioritize increasing access to outdoor recreation opportunities and expanding collaborative conservation of fish and wildlife populations, habitats, and corridors.

b Support locally led and designed conservation efforts and visitor use management strategies and encourage incorporating conservation into community tourism planning.

c Pursue a collaborative and inclusive approach to conservation and disaster recovery that includes state, local, and tribal governments, conservation organizations, fishing and hunting organizations, and the private sector.

d Identify links between tourism and existing conservation tools, such as grant programs for local parks and coastal restoration projects, preservation of natural infrastructure, and management strategies for marine fisheries, coral reef conservation programs, mangrove protection and restoration programs, and national marine sanctuaries.

e Consistent with applicable law, work with the private sector and Brand USA, as well as state, local, and tribal governments, to promote the development of programs and experiences that engage visitors in activities that support conservation and stewardship.

f Support implementation of laws that promote outdoor recreation on federal lands and waters to provide needed maintenance and improved resilience for critical facilities and infrastructure in national marine sanctuaries, national parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges, and other public lands and waters.

g Identify and address gaps that impede equitable visitor experiences on federal lands and waters.

STRATEGY 6: Build a sustainable tourism ecosystem in the United States and position the United States as a sustainable destination in the international travel and tourism market.

Identified Actions

a Provide grants and funding for sustainable tourism businesses, especially for small businesses in the travel and tourism sector, in alignment with federal conservation priorities. Examples of current programs that help communities improve their development practices are the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) 2021 Climate Action Plan to incorporate resiliency uniformly across DOT programs, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Smart Growth Program in the Office of Community Revitalization.

b Prioritize the use of green and blue and climate-resilient infrastructure.

c Collaborate with destination management organizations, state, local, and tribal governments, and the private sector, including the outdoor recreation industry, to share information on and best practices for economic opportunities related to resilient and sustainable tourism.

d Identify opportunities for ecotourism to support existing conservation and restoration efforts.

e Support the creation and use of common standards of sustainability for tourism businesses and a system of standardized labeling to identify sustainable and green and blue operators.

f Collaborate with local, state, and tribal governments and the private sector to create more parks, green and blue spaces, and safe outdoor opportunities in nature-deprived communities and urban areas.

NOAA Programs Support Climate Resiliency Through Data and Technical Assistance

NOAA's Climate Resilience Toolkit (Climate.gov) provides tools to counties and communities that help municipal planners, resource and facility managers, utilities, and businesses find and use scientific data and information to build their resilience to extreme events and climate-related hazards. NOAA also provides investments in nature-based solutions, which include the conservation of islands, dunes, marshes, and coral reefs. Coastal nature-based solutions can reduce flood risk and mitigate impacts from sea-level rise or other climate change induced conditions. Through the data, tools, and services provided by NOAA, tourism-based economies can employ nature-based solutions to not only increase their resilience to climate change but also provide expanded recreational and visitor experiences for travelers in healthy coastal ecosystems.

STRATEGY 7: Pursue innovations to provide timely data on climate-related events, natural disasters, and other crises.

Identified Actions

- **a** Communicate data on climate-related events and risks to travel and tourism communities in a way that is more easily understood, relevant, and actionable.
- **b** Encourage linkages among data-producing programs to avoid data silos and facilitate a more holistic approach to data-based resiliency.
- **c** Increase access to regional and localized data related to climate change and natural disasters.
- **d** Increase the data available in connection with natural disasters and health events.
- **e** Collaborate with the private sector to enhance metrics for evaluating travel and tourism's environmental impact.
- **f** Produce national travel and tourism statistics more frequently and provide additional travel and tourism data at the state level.

Conclusion

The allure of traveling to and within the United States is unmatched and universal. A global desire to visit, explore, learn, taste, and understand all the diverse components that comprise our nation keeps visitors coming back time and again. When visitors return home from the United States, the stories they share about our nation and its gifts and values are worth more than any messaging campaign could be. This unrivaled enthusiasm is an immense asset to our nation, one that makes travel and tourism essential to U.S. public diplomacy and foreign policy, and it underscores the importance of growing the sector and ensuring that visitors have positive experiences.

Together with the private sector and other partners, the federal government will support the U.S. travel and tourism industry in reasserting its global competitiveness and rebuilding a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable sector. Building on Secretary of Commerce Gina M. Raimondo's leadership, the Tourism Policy Council will coordinate implementation of the Strategy across the U.S. government, delivering results for American businesses, workers, and communities.

By executing the Strategy, the federal government can support the resurgence of travel and tourism in the United States and meet the ambitious goal of attracting 90 million visitors, who will spend $279 billion annually by 2027. Further, the federal government will drive growth, create jobs, and support economic opportunity in communities across the United States while celebrating and protecting the natural and cultural treasures that make the United States unique.

Appendix: Summary of Goals and Strategies

GOALS AND STRATEGIES OF THE NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM STRATEGY
Attract and welcome 90 million international arrivals with $279 billion in spending annually by 2027.
I. Promoting the United States as a Travel Destination
Goal: Leverage existing programs and assets to promote the United States to international visitors and broaden marketing efforts to encourage visitation to underserved communities.
Strategy 1: Streamline the communication of U.S. travel policy.
Strategy 2: Promote ethnic and geographic diversity of destinations.
Strategy 3: Promote responsible and sustainable tourism.
Strategy 4: Leverage large-scale international events to increase visitation.
II. Facilitating Travel To and Within the United States
Goal: Reduce barriers to trade in travel services and make it safer and more efficient for visitors to enter and travel within the United States.
Strategy 1: Position the United States as a leader in verifying traveler identities.
Strategy 2: Expand remote processing opportunities.
Strategy 3: Strengthen partnerships for traveler facilitation.

III. Ensuring Diverse, Inclusive, and Accessible Tourism Experiences

Goal: Extend the benefits of travel and tourism by supporting the development of diverse tourism products, focusing on underserved communities and populations. Address the financial and workplace needs of travel and tourism businesses, supporting destination communities as they expand their tourism economies. Deliver world-class experiences and customer service on federal lands and waters that showcase U.S. assets while protecting them for future generations.

Strategy 1: Assist communities in providing accessible and authentic travel and tourism experiences.

Strategy 2: Address challenges related to increased visitation at land and water communities.

Strategy 3: Balance demand for high quality experiences with community needs.

Strategy 4: Cultivate and amplify an ethos of conservation, stewardship, and resilience.

Strategy 5: Increase access to technology for visitor management and interpretive services.

Strategy 6: Address community barriers to creating equitable and just tourism economies.

Strategy 7: Attract and retain a diverse workforce.

IV. Fostering Resilient and Sustainable Travel and Tourism

Goal: Reduce travel and tourism's contributions to climate change and build a travel and tourism sector that is resilient to natural disasters, public health threats, and the impacts of climate change. Build a sustainable sector that integrates protecting natural resources, supporting the tourism economy, and ensuring equitable development.

Strategy 1: Ensure underserved communities can receive disaster assistance and develop greater institutional capacity.

Strategy 2: Support communities in resiliency planning.

Strategy 3: Reduce travel and tourism's carbon emissions.

Strategy 4: Support nature-based solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation.

Strategy 5: Protect natural assets to ensure travel and tourism resources for the future.

Strategy 6: Build a sustainable tourism ecosystem in the United States.

Strategy 7: Provide timely data on climate-related events and natural disasters.

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