



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR
2015-2016



MISSION STATEMENT

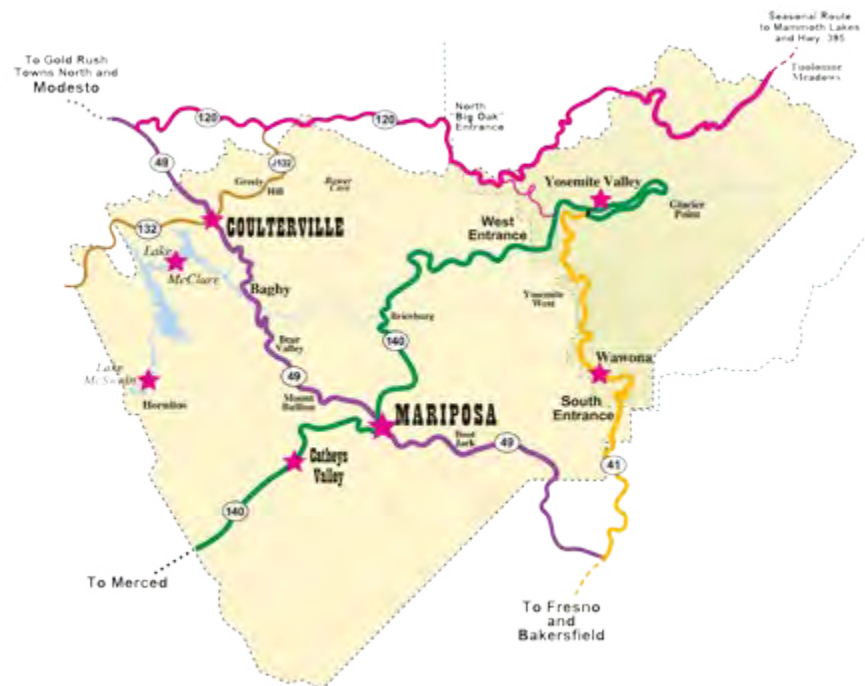
The Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau is the branding, sales, and marketing agency responsible for positioning Yosemite/Mariposa County as the destination of choice for leisure and group business for the economic benefit of the region.

Key Strategic Initiatives

- Stimulate economic impact for Mariposa County
- Promote off season overnight visitation
- Educate customers and constituents
- Operate a fiscally sound and effective business
- Foster positive relationships with key stakeholders and partners

TBID Statement

There are no proposed changes to the boundaries or assessed business. The district will continue to include lodging businesses, existing and in the future, available for public occupancy within the boundaries of the County of Mariposa, as shown below.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TERRY SELK

Dear Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Partners:

This past year was another exciting one for Mariposa County as Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) collections once again set a record, breaking the \$14 million mark for the first time in history. In the past two years, TOT has grown 18%. Since founding the Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau eight years ago the TOT has grown more than 40%. This growth is largely due to the consistent increase of TOT in the off season, which means more overnight guests are exploring the wonders of Yosemite and Mariposa County during the September–May time period. Growing off season visitation remains the core objective of our global advertising and marketing efforts.

Another exciting new development which will further fuel our ability to drive more business to the area is the addition of Yosemite.com as our new primary web domain. This high-performing url receives exceptionally high organic search rankings. With a new, dynamic design with faster upload speeds, a more user-friendly template, and greater relevant content, early indicators show that our partners can expect a big impact from this investment.

The number of travel media and trade visits (our most influential means of driving incremental off-season, overnight stays) nearly doubled this past year. In addition, we developed a colorful and informative mini-version of our travel planner for mass production and distribution to consumers all over the world, even having it translated into Chinese and German.

We launched aggressive consumer promotional campaigns in key feeder markets of Australia, China, France, Germany, Scandinavia and the United Kingdom, helping to feed the pipeline for travel in the mid and long term travel.

Tourism continues to provide Mariposa County with its primary revenue source and employment base, so it is critical that we maintain and grow our efforts. More and more competitive factors develop that can prohibit our momentum attracting overnight guests.

The Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau team embraces the opportunities and the challenges we face every day to fulfill our mission in driving off-season overnight stays and thank all of you for the continued support.

We thank you for the opportunity to serve our partners and look forward to an even more successful year to come.



Executive Director, Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau



TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING (PRINT & RADIO)

This year's combined campaigns garnered more than 85 million media impressions and drove more than 220,000 clicks to Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau's main website, YosemiteExperience.com. Messaging consistently highlighted off-peak travel and accessibility, a range of accommodation types, and activities to promote longer stays.

Highlights

The 2015/2016 campaign included publications such as Bay Area News Group, CBS, Pandora, *Sunset* and *Backpacker Magazine* and radio features on KFOG and KCBS.

The campaign also included co-operative advertising opportunities to bring affordable advertising options to our partners.

Strategy for the print media campaign included penetrating the San Francisco, Sacramento, and Los Angeles markets through some of the following publications:

Bay Area News Group (BANG) Eat, Drink, Play Sunday Feature
in the *Contra Costa Times*, *Oakland Tribune* and *San Jose Mercury News*

- Print Campaign reached of 10.8 Million
- Digital Marketing campaign served over 1,100,000 impressions & 6,511 clicks
- Eblasts received 27,397 opens
- Geographic coverage – South, East and West Bay Area
- Content focused heavily on town of Mariposa businesses and Coulterville

Adventure Sports Journal – Circulation of 138,600

Backpacker Magazine – Circulation 1.24 million

Sunset – Circulation of 320,000

Sactown – Circulation 210,000

Sac Mag – Circulation 197,000

Radio

Radio spots were read by well-known on-air personalities such as Tom Steinstra, Kate Scott, and Renee Richards, promoting travel to Yosemite and Mariposa County in the fall and winter.

Radio Outlets:

- KNBR
- KFOG
- KCBS

Total Traffic Radio – A total of 168 promotions for winter travel to our County were read on air!

[shift]
TO SILENT MODE

YOSEMITE
ADVENTURE
COUNTY
MARIPOSA COUNTY

EXPERIENCE YOSEMITE IN WINTER
Located only a short drive away and open year-round, Yosemite and Mariposa County invite you to book your winter getaway today.
YosemiteExperience.com/Sunset



Do The Unexpected! Stay INSIDE Yosemite! Over 120 vacation homes to choose from. Wedding and Event Center accommodates up to 100 guests. Group packages are available.

RedwoodsInYosemite.com
(855) 352-7941



Discover Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite. Your Yosemite Experience. Elevated. Where you rest, play and rediscover life's finest pleasures.

Breakfast • FREE Yosemite Park Pass!
Visit TenayaLodge.com or call (888) 514-2167.
promo code YOSEPASS

DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Digital advertising provides an unmatched opportunity to drive direct online bookings and target Mariposa County's core audience, as well as provides superior tracking compared to traditional print. This type of direct targeting allows for the message to be adjusted based on best user response and results in the most efficient spend.

Digital Highlights

- 41% (more than 220,000 clicks) of the traffic on YosemiteExperience.com was driven through paid digital advertising.
- Year-over-year (FY15-16/FY14-15) website sessions increased 75%, from 306,351 to 537,188 total site sessions, largely due to paid media efforts. Driving more traffic than ever before to Mariposa County lodging, dining and attractions.

CBS

- Social Media reached 154,031 followers
- Super Bowl campaign reached 52,441
- The CBS digital marketing campaign served over 3,313,838 impressions & resulted in 1,138 clicks

Pandora

- The Orange County ads alone resulted in more than 1.3 million impressions
- San Francisco reported the most unique visitors at 264,000

Trip Advisor

- Total website visits to YosemiteExperience.com were 200,949 netting a \$0.31 cost per visit. Users from Trip Advisor engaged with an average of 3.47 pages of content
- Banner CTR* - 0.18% (industry average of 0.04%)
- Trip Advisor Arrivalist tracking data confirmed a minimum of 1,500 arrivals between July-June 2016 from users who had viewed our ads on Trip Advisor

TripAdvisor China Campaign

- Through the TripAdvisor/BUSA match program Yosemite Mariposa was able to leverage a \$1.00 for \$1.00 match to target the Chinese traveler
- Netting \$20k in marketing on TripAdvisor with a \$10K investment
- Chinese consumers on the mobile campaign had a CTR of 0.62% (avg. 0.05%)

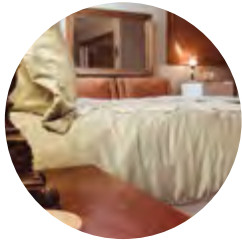
*CTR = Click Through Rate



CO-OP ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Every year Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau creates a marketing co-op program to enable lodging partners and merchants to leverage the buying power of the Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau to bring visibility to their business. The cost for partners ranged from \$300.00 to \$1,200.

- *BANC (Bay Area News Group)* – Print and Online
- *Sunset Magazine* – Print
- *CBS.com* – Online
- *Yosemite Journal* – Print
- *Trip Advisor* – Online



“Yosemite Plaisance Bed and Breakfast has a very fruitful experience with the Yosemite Mariposa Tourism Bureau. Thanks to the Bureau’s efforts our clientele is 74.2% from overseas, representing a huge variety of countries. Overseas guests, we notice, tend to be more spendy, staying several days as well as dining out and shopping in town. The Bureau is an integral part of our marketing strategy as a small lodging facility; it can reach a public that we cannot and supports our efforts to remain a solvent operation.”

The program attracted all levels of participants:

- Casto Oaks Winery
- CostaLivos Mountain Olive Oil
- Miners Inn Motel
- River Rock Inn
- Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite
- The Redwoods in Yosemite
- White Chief Lodge
- Yosemite Family Adventures
- Yosemite Resorts
- Yosemite West Reservations
- Yosemite Zipline and Adventure Ranch

ALWAYS OPEN FOR ADVENTURE!

Yosemite ADVENTURE COUNTY
MARIPOSA COUNTY

Adventure knows no limits in Yosemite. With year-round activities for travel enthusiasts and nature lovers alike, Yosemite and Mariposa County offer a wide range of accommodations to suit every lifestyle and budget. Explore exceptional cuisine, wines and local microbrews after a full day of enjoying the great outdoors! Perfect for every season, there is always a good time to venture out to Yosemite/Mariposa County.

Book your getaway at YosemiteExperience.com

BOWTOWN MARIPOSA

VERNAL FALLS

CUCKER MEADOW

CUBBY VILLAGE - ICE SKATING

Great central Yosemite location, between Yosemite Valley & Wawona, near Badger Pass/Glacier Point turn. Rooms, condos, cabins, cottages, vacation homes; each with complete kitchen, fireplace, TV/DVD.

YosemiteWestReservations.com
(559) 642-2211

Discover Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite, Your Yosemite Experience Elevated. Where you rest, play and rediscover life's finest pleasures from the comforts of 502 guestrooms, unique dining options and the world-class Ascent Spa.

TenayaLodge.com
(888) 514-2167

TRADE AND CONSUMER INITIATIVES

Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau maintains a strong presence in the travel industry by both working with trade professionals (commercial tour operators, travel agents and media) and by direct interaction with consumers. Whether it's staff attending a trade or consumer travel show or by hosting a group of travel professionals, these interactions help to educate our potential visitors on four season availability, property offerings, and attractions.

Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau hosted several trade familiarization tours (FAMS) for travel agents and tour operators to introduce them to the destination and educate them. This year we hosted a total of 165 clients representing more than nine countries.

Consumer Shows

In addition staff participated in two major consumer trade shows, the Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show in Santa Clara and the LA Travel and Adventure show in Long Beach. We also partnered with the surrounding regions: Madera, Mammoth, Mono, and DNC to create a "Yosemite Experience Pavilion" that consists of 10 booths and a rock wall attraction. The pavilion has won "Best in Show" five consecutive years.

Trade Shows

NTA Travel Exchange –Travel Exchange brings together NTA (National Tour Association) and FTA members on one floor to offer travel professionals from around the world the best business-building show in the industry.

GO West Summit – Go West Summit introduces the world's top international tour operators to specialty suppliers offering tourism-related products or services in the American West.

IPW – International POW WOW – U.S. Travel Association's IPW is the travel industry's premier international marketplace and the largest generator of travel to the U.S. In just three days of intensive pre-scheduled business appointments, more than 1,000 U.S. travel organizations from every region of the USA, and more than 1,300 international and domestic buyers from more than 70 countries conduct business negotiations that result in the generation of more than \$4.7 billion in future travel to the US.



INTERNATIONAL

The YMCTB retains representation services in the core markets of Australia, France, Germany, Scandinavia and the UK under the partnership umbrella of the Visit California Tourism office. Each agency serves as Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau's in-market voice to the media, travel trade and consumers.

Primary activities include pitching story ideas, facilitating media visits, conducting training sessions with frontline travel agents, presenting itinerary and product ideas to tour operators and supporting consumer-direct promotions with partners such as airlines, tour operators and consumer products.

Key consumer initiatives launched this year include:



China – dedicated travel trade and media education program along with two consumer campaigns with Air China and United Airlines.



France – partnership with the French Hiking Federation and in-country sellers of travel to promote dedicated itineraries in the fall.



Germany – partnership with MarduMont, one of the largest guidebook producers and online travel resources for consumers.



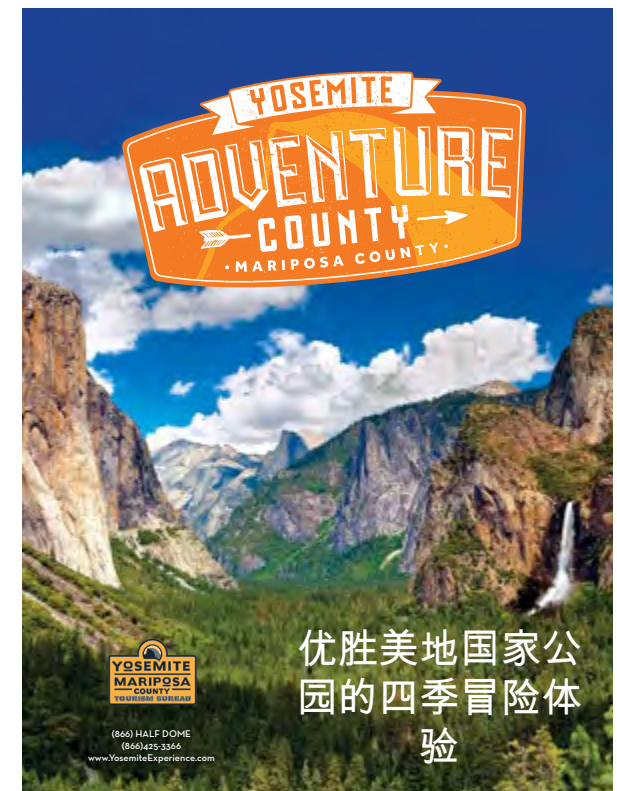
United Kingdom – rock climbing campaign in series of rock wall gyms to affluent young professionals promoting climbing in Yosemite in the fall.



Brand USA – placement of the Yosemite/Mariposa County information on the global multi-language magazine of Brand USA, the nation's tourism marketing agency.



High Sierra Visitors Council – as part of a regional marketing effort with tourism offices throughout the area, launched a French language website and Facebook page.



COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau utilizes many communication channels to target potential visitors. Visitors make their trip-planning decisions based on information from many sources – advertisements, trip portals, referrals from friends and family and more. In 2015/2016 we executed a robust communications plan to engage visitors across multiple communications channels.

Websites

YosemiteExperience.com was the primary website for Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau. It served all lodging partners by offering free listings and information about activities and events throughout the county. In addition, it served as a crucial tool in information sharing for visitors during crisis situations such as road closures. In June, YosemiteExperience.com and Yosemite.com were merged into a single website.

Highlights July 2015–June 2016

- 463,041 Total User Sessions (61% increase compared to last year)
- 1,039,931 Total Page Views (22% increase compared to last year)
- Top Ranked Page: Places to Stay (23% of all traffic)
- 34,000 Direct Booking Clicks to Lodging Partners
- More than 90% increase since 2013/2014

Yosemite.com remains one of the top ranked Google sites for Yosemite-related searches. The website was open to advertisers from the entire Yosemite region, and provided a valuable platform for Mariposa County constituents at a discounted rate.

Yosemite.com Highlights July 2015 – June 2016

- 780,128 Total User Sessions (57% increase compared to last year)
- 2,048,195 Page Views (53% increase compared to last year)
- Top ranked page: Where to Stay
- 66% of traffic from Google search
- Generated more than \$35,000 in advertising sales
- More than 270% increase in sessions since 2013/2014!



TOTAL COMBINED PAGE VIEWS WERE MORE THAN 3 MILLION

PUBLIC RELATIONS & MEDIA (CONT.)

Public Relations

From coordinating individual press trips to ongoing proactive media relations capitalizing on events and timely news hooks, Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau successfully executed an effective public relations campaign producing strong results for the year. Our team built a solid foundation of relationships with targeted media, supporting Yosemite/Mariposa County as a strong player in the travel industry. This strategic approach has enabled the team to meet goals in raising awareness about Yosemite/Mariposa County key messaging, such as off-season activities, lodging and Mariposa County as a whole.

Our team hosted 20 international and domestic travel journalists in 2015/2016 generating broad coverage in outlets including *The Daily Telegraph* (UK), *French Hiking Federation* (France), *NewCorps* (Australia) *The Times* (UK) and more.

Social Media

- Instagram – 10,785 Followers (245% increase)
- Pinterest – 1,427 Followers (43% increase)
- Facebook Total Fans – 84,418 (3.4% increase)
 - » Daily Total Reach: 3,027,910
 - » Daily Total Impressions: 4,800,602
- Twitter – 51,228 Followers

Enewsletter

The newsletter is sent every month to an organic subscriber list of more than 26,000 (30% increase compared to previous year). We promote county-wide events, deals and provide seasonal updates to encourage repeat visitation.

Highlights

- Open rate: 23% (industry average 15%)
- Click rate 3% (industry average 1.6%)

Partner Collateral

Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau creates and maintains a suite of collateral to inform visitors about the destination. Our marquee item is a 64-page travel planner that was requested by more than 8,000 potential visitors via our website and trip portals. New in 2015/2016 was a Chinese-translation version of our existing six-page brochure that was widely distributed at international trade and media events.



EVENTS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau is proud to support local events through a combination of cash donations, in-kind marketing support and advertising. We also support community groups with marketing support and cash donations.

We provided financial support for the following events and community groups:

- Art and Wine Festival
- Civil War Days
- Coyotefest
- KYZ Radio
- Made in Mariposa
- Mariposa County Fair
- Mariposa Farm and Ranch Tour
- Mariposa Yosemite Hot Rod and Custom Car Show
- Mariposa Butterfly Festival
- Mariposa County Arts Council
- TEDx Yosemite
- Upper Merced River Watershed Council



"The Tourism Bureau partnered with the Upper Merced River Watershed Council to educate hotel guests and visitors to the region about the importance of water conservation. With the Bureau's support, this important message reached of thousands of guests."

*William Fassett, Treasurer - Upper Merced River Watershed Council
Upper Merced River Watershed Council*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Board Partnerships

Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau staff provide guidance on several boards and committees to support a wide range of initiatives locally as well as regionally, to bring opportunity and visibility to Yosemite/Mariposa County.

- Citizens Advisory Committee for the Transit Feasibility Study (TAC)
- Gold County Visitors Association
- High Sierra Visitors Council
- Student & Youth Travel Association
- Made in Mariposa
- Visit CA Rural Tourism Marketing Committee
- Visit CA Branding/Content Committee
- Upper Merced River Watershed Council
- YARTS Advisory Committee
- Yosemite Gateway Partners
- Highway 140 Safety Committee Transportation Coordinating Team



National Tourism Week

Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau joined destinations nationwide in celebrating National Travel and Tourism Week. In observance of the event we brought Visit California representatives to make a presentation before the Board of Supervisors and presented the annual Tourism Champion Award to the Victoria and Bryan Imrie, owners of Yosemite Zipline and Adventure Ranch.



PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Townsend Public Affairs, Inc. (TPA) continues to work with the Tourism Bureau to implement a focused strategy on priority projects with the goal of improving tourism in the County, particularly in the off season, as well as promoting the Mariposa brand.

Current Activities and Priorities:

Vacation Rental Legislation

As part of efforts with other stakeholders, legislation was again stopped this year that would have severely impaired the ability to locally negotiate agreements with rental hosting platforms. We are expecting legislation on this topic next year and will work with the author and other stakeholders during the legislative break. Additionally, we are working with Townsend Public Affairs and the County to research agreements negotiated between other agencies and the respective hosting platforms as a reference for what could work in Mariposa County, as well as for consideration during legislative discussions.

Caltrans Transportation Planning Grant

Efforts continue to improve connectivity and mobility within the central historic district of Mariposa, with a current focus on funding for Phase 2 of the planning study.

Fairgrounds

Working with several legislators and stakeholders on legislation (AB 2678) to provide continuous appropriation of revenues to county fairs, as well as identifying grant funds for facility improvements (such as rubberized pavement for parking lot improvements).

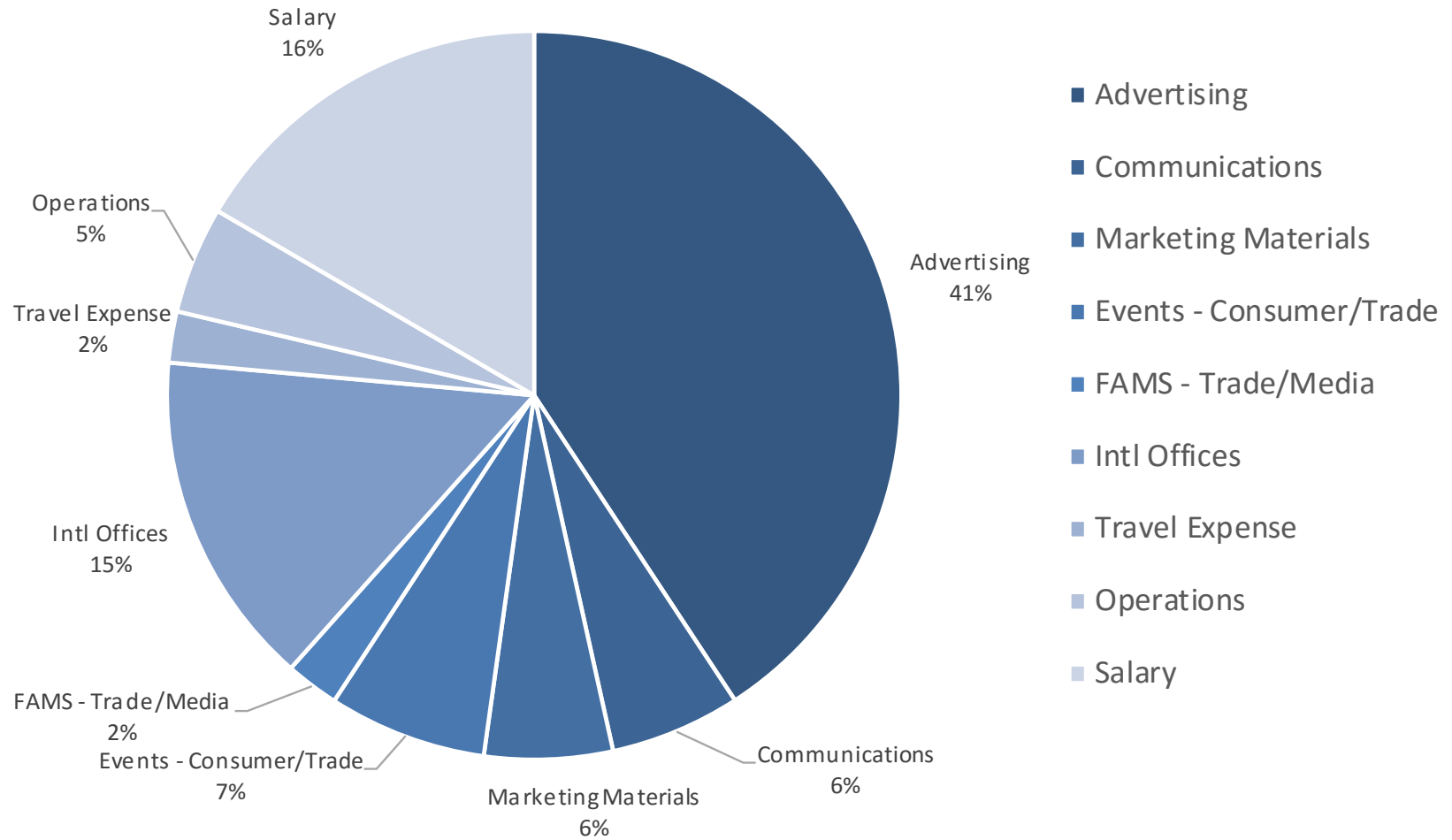
Ferguson Slide

In order to assist with the efficient delivery of the Ferguson Slide Permanent Restoration Project, coordinating with Caltrans and the State Legislature to ensure compliance with the provision of legislation for the project (AB 1973).

Made in Mariposa

Working with Mariposa County and other stakeholders, continuing our efforts to promote and market products and services from Mariposa and creating opportunities for additional visitors and activities.

FINANCIALS



2015/2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board

Kevin Shelton, Board Chair – Yosemite Resorts

Donna Davis, Board Vice Chair – The Redwoods at Yosemite

Barbara Robinson, Board Secretary – Indian Peak Ranch MountainTop Hideaway

Douglas Shaw, Board Treasurer – Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort

Dane Carlson, Board Member – Mariposa County Chamber of Commerce

MaryAnn Huff, Board Member – North Mariposa County Representative

Donna Nassar, Board Member – Mariposa County B&B Association Representative

Paul Ratchford, Board Member – Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite

Sara Zahn, Board Member – Hotel Jeffery and Coulterville Visitors Center

Advisory Council

Roger Biery – Economic Development Corporation of Mariposa County

Candy O’Donel-Browne – Community Member

Kevin Cann – Mariposa County District IV Supervisor

Scott Cediman – Yosemite National Park

Merlin Jones – Mariposa County District II Supervisor

Staff

Terry Selk – Executive Director

Noel Morrison – Communications Manager

Julie Hadzega – Sales & Marketing Coordinator

Windy Howell-Gonzalez – Administrative Assistant

Damian Riley – Communications Coordinator

Contact

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