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ORGANIZATION / PROJECT INFORMATION

Organization name	Lewis County Parks & Recreation - Discover Lewis County
Project name	Discover Lewis County - Stewards of the Outdoors
Project coordinator	Connie Riker, Director
Amount requested from Lewis County	182000
Total project amount	184000

APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Connie Riker
Street address	1909 South Gold Street Centralia, WA 98531
Current home phone	(360) 740-2656
Current email address	connie.riker@lewiscountywa.gov
Agency Tax ID Number	916001351
Organization Unified Business Identifier (UBI)	212002978
UBI expiration date	July 31, 2022
Type of organization:	Government agency
Organization's mission statement or purpose (one or two sentences):	Discover Lewis County promotes tourism, events, recreation & adventure opportunities, historical sites, cultural institutions, scenic road trips, lodging, and eateries. It is our mission to grow the number of people exploring all facets of Lewis County.
Year the organization was founded:	2015
Has your organization received Lewis County lodging tax funding in the past?	Yes
When did your organization receive Lewis County lodging tax funding?	2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021
How much did your organization / project receive?	\$180,000 in 2021

REQUIRED INFORMATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project name	Marketing Lewis County with Good Stewardship Component
1. Describe how the project promotes tourism in all of Lewis County's unincorporated areas.	This project includes the backbone that supports all of DLC's efforts. We do this general program every year to support tourism generally in Lewis County. We have developed and are continually updating the DiscoverLewisCounty.com website, as well as providing support in the marketing and promotion for events and attractions in Lewis County (for those events/attractions that request it) to those inside and outside of Lewis County. Additionally, for this year we would like to provide an emphasis on Good Stewardship when visiting the county. Outdoor adventure is a primary motivator for visitors to the county and one of our greatest assets. Our recent marketing has provided great success of increasing tourism and attendance at local events. But in an increased use over the 2020 & 2021 seasons have brought an increase in a lack of care at best, and abuse at worst. While we will continue to promote the use of our outdoors, DLC would like to focus including in our promotions some educational information and encourage stewardship of the lands we are so blessed to live in. This project builds on the success of the 2018 DLC Trail guide, as well as the new Paddle guide and OHV guide.
2. Describe how the project will enhance tourism and result in "heads in beds."	DLC creates professional marketing content that enhances tourism in Lewis County resulting in "heads in beds". Focused advertising for stewardship of the Lewis County outdoors areas enhances tourism and results in more travelers learning about our outdoor adventures. When there is an increase in awareness, there is an increase in attendance, when there is an increase in attendance there are those who choose to stay the night. What is great about this project is that while we are attracting travelers to come enjoy our outdoor activities while giving them tools to preserve and take care of Lewis County so that it endures future years of more travelers and heads in beds visitors.
3. List the responsible party / parties.	DLC is responsible for content creation and promotion. Where possible we will partner with organizations for education and stewardship opportunities. We partner with other tourism organizations on special projects, such as rack cards and video campaign content.

4. Describe the area the project will serve, as well as the project's expected impact.

DLC serves all of Lewis County by providing consistency in our tourism efforts as a recognizable and trustworthy brand. DLC is Lewis County's hub for finding much of what there is to do and see in the county. Our goal is to give people with a curiosity the desire to explore and the tools to plan their trip.

Additionally, this project expects to impact the number of visitors coming to Lewis County specifically for outdoor adventure. We plan to educate them on the myriad of outdoor activities there are, and how to enjoy them responsibly as a good steward preserving them for future travelers.

5. Describe how the project will specifically promote tourism.

This project promotes tourism specifically by focusing on the broad marketing to the public through various online and offline marketing venues. DLC will focus on marketing the Lewis County area, events, outdoor activities, and destinations through our website, social media, online advertising, print campaigns, radio and podcast promotion.

Part of our project will promote the outdoor adventure opportunities in Lewis County. Highlighting specific options and best practices for enjoying them responsibly. DLC will work with relevant parties in determining the best features and best uses for our outdoor adventure opportunities. When featuring a trail, road, river, campsite, etc we will include the best practices on how to use and preserve the area.

6. Describe how you have collaborated with other entities throughout Lewis County to promote tourism.

DLC collaborates both directly and indirectly with most tourism entities throughout Lewis County. We promote the fellow LTAC recipients as well as tourism related groups and events on our website and in marketing campaigns. We partner with other groups for special projects, such as rack card content and video campaigns. DLC provides visitor kiosks, sandwich boards, and rack cards, and in a few cases technology to visitor organizations across the county.

Regarding the stewardship aspect of our plan, we expect to collaborate with groups like the US Forest Service, Packwood Improvement Club, Backcountry Horsemen, and others to organize and promote good stewardship in tourism and outdoor recreation for Lewis County.

7. Describe why your project should receive funding.

DLC is a year-round effort to promote Lewis County, increasing income by promoting tourism. We focus on serving our unincorporated areas resulting in "heads-in-beds". DLC has created a unified and recognizable brand that successfully drives traffic to our website where visitors can find out what there is to see and do in Lewis County. In order to continue our successes, a strong online and print marketing budget is critical.

Stewards of the outdoors should receive funding because it begins to address one of the primary concerns with use of our outdoors which is abuse and neglect. Along the Willapa Hills trail, down the Cowlitz River, and east to the Packwood Lake Trail the problems are similar: vandalism, trash, misuse, and overall misunderstanding of how to responsibly enjoy our outdoors.

8. Describe how your organization would respond to potential cancellations or closures, such as those caused by COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021.

DLC is aimed at promoting Lewis County as a whole, promoting tourism activities which at times are events but can also be scenic drives, hikes, biking, ORV trails, farm to table restaurants and more. DLC promotes discovering what Lewis County has to offer and enticing guests to come play and stay. In 2020 we were able to roll-back and re-direct our advertising until it was acceptable to be promoting broader activities and events.

Outdoor activities grew during the 2020 and 2021 COVID-19 shutdowns, which is why this project is necessary. The use of our outdoors was only regulated, but not shut down, for a short time. An overwhelming amount of the public turned to the outdoors for their recreation, showing the need for this project to lead people towards being "Stewards of the Outdoors"

USE OF HOTEL / MOTEL TAX

Please indicate below the types of activities for which the lodging tax monies would be used:

TOURISM PROMOTION
DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE
OPERATION OF TOURISM-RELATED FACILITY
FESTIVAL OR EVENT DESIGNED TO ATTRACT TOURISTS

Describe the expected results (measurable outcomes) of your project, with the dollar amount for each outcome.

DLC expects an increase in year over year on the number of visitors to our website and social media. Our ad response is expected to be at or above industry standard. We also expect to contribute to an overall increase on LTAC numbers for 2022. We expect a notable improvement in outdoor stewardship resulting in cleaner and healthier outdoors for more to enjoy.

Total number of attendees predicted to attend:

n/a

Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number	The new DiscoverLewisCounty.com is on pace to match the 120,000 page views as 2020. The 2021 makeup of 68.34% of its visitors from across Washington state. 30.73% from Seattle and another 8.14% from the Lacey/Olympia area. Our largest number of out of state visitors are 12.68% from Oregon, 6.5% from California, 1.89% from New York and 1.2% from Colorado. Lodging tax dollars would go towards increasing the traffic to the website via ad campaigns for events, attractions, camping, restaurants, trails, historical features, etc.
a. Projected number of attendees who will travel fifty (50) miles or more one way from their home or business to attend:	n/a - this is impossible for us to answer because of the number of events that we will promote.
b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number	94.5% of all DLC.com traffic is from outside of Lewis County. An increase in website, social media, and ad campaigns will lead to more travelers making their way to Lewis County which helps to generate more lodging tax dollars.
a. Projected number of participants who will travel from another country or state to attend:	94.5% of all DLC.com traffic is from out of Lewis County
b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number	Lodging tax dollars will allow us to increase the interactions on our ads, social media and website leading to more out of county visitors coming to Lewis County.
a. Projected number of participants who will stay overnight in paid accommodations:	n/a - this is impossible for us to answer because of the number of events we promote
b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number	Lodging tax dollars will allow us to increase the interactions on our ads, social media and website leading to more out of county visitors coming to Lewis County, some of which will stay in Lewis County lodging.
a. Projected number of participants who will stay overnight in unpaid accommodations:	n/a - this is impossible for us to answer because of the number of events we promote
b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number	n/a - this is impossible for us to answer because of the number of events we promote. I would add, however, that staying in paid accommodations is part of our goal and therefore increases the amount of lodging tax dollars paid.

10. Describe how the project provides short-term or long-term economic benefit for Lewis County	Operation of DiscoverLewisCounty.com its social media and ad campaigns will result in an increasing number of people outside of Lewis County learning more about the Lewis County area, its location, events, adventures, etc. Over the long term, funding of this project will lead to increased efficiencies in the overall tourism efforts of Lewis County by refining the new website, our ad composition and targeting, as well as our social media efficiencies.
11. Explain what plans exist to allow this project to become self-sustaining. Include any plans for ticket sales, event sponsors, and other cost-recovery models.	Because this project assists events, organizations, and tourism throughout Lewis County, it is not likely to become self-sustaining and will likely continue to rely on lodging tax dollars in the future.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Website address	discoverlewiscounty.com
Facebook user name	discoverlewiscounty
Instagram	discoverlewiscounty
Twitter account name	discoverlewiscounty
Any other social media platforms your organization uses to promote tourism	Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXBsr-299wuWrfzViSo4uUw/featured

BUDGET

Amount	2000
Source	County Budget
Confirmed	Yes
Date available	01/01/2022

Income 2

Income 3

Income 4

Income 5

Income 6

What percentage of your project does your request for Tourism Promotion Dollars represent?	100%
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Expense - Personnel

County	Lewis
Other Funds	0
Total	\$120,000

Expense - Administration

County	Lewis
Other Funds	0
Total	\$12,000

Expense - Marketing/promotion

County	Lewis
Other Funds	0
Total	30,000

Expense - Direct sales activities

County	Lewis
Other Funds	0
Total	0

Expense - Minor equipment

County	Lewis
Other Funds	0
Total	\$1000

Expense - Travel

County	Lewis
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Other Funds	\$2000
Total	\$2000
Expense - Contract services	
County	Lewis
Other Funds	None
Total	15000
Expense - Other activities	
County	Lewis
Other Funds	0
Total	\$4000
Total Cost	
County	Lewis
Other Funds	\$2000
Total	\$184,000
Priority 1	Personnel & Marketing
Full Funding Request	\$150,000
Priority 2	Minor Equipt / Administration / Other Activities/Contract Svcs
Minimum Funding Request	\$110,000
Applicant will / can accept no less than this amount	We will be forced to make tough decisions as below depending on the amount of funding provided.

If partial funding is received, how will that affect the project / activity? Please describe:

It will depend on the level of partial funding. The amount of reduction will result in a reduction of services we are able to provide to promote tourism and events in Lewis County. If we don't fund the contract services, then we will not likely be able to produce any written material; if we don't fund the minor equipment, then the software subscriptions we use to produce much of the marketing and promotional material will not be available to use. If we don't fund or underfund the marketing/promotion then the online marketing and advertising would not be able to be conducted. If we don't fund Administration then the interfund transfers would come out of the general Parks & Rec budget which would reduce our ability to support the other parts of the county parks & rec needs. If we underfund personnel then we would not have the staffing to plan, develop, and implement the marketing to support tourism in Lewis County and would likely lose the staff member that serves in this role.

PROJECT TIMELINE / TOURISM SEASON

What is your anticipated timeline for accomplishing this activity?

Throughout 2022

Year-round

Yes

Year-round Explanation

Our marketing related to tourism and events is a year round activity.

Off-season

Yes

Off-season Explanation

Our marketing related to tourism and events is a year round activity.

Shoulder season

Yes

Shoulder season Explanation

Our marketing related to tourism and events is a year round activity.

High season

Yes

High season Explanation

Our marketing related to tourism and events is a year round activity.

Is it a seasonal activity appropriate to its location? Explain

Yes.

Financial Review

Balance sheet

<https://lewiscounty.formstack.com/admin/download/file/11486458392>

Income statement

<https://lewiscounty.formstack.com/admin/download/file/11486458393>

Operating budget for 2021

<https://lewiscounty.formstack.com/admin/download/file/11486458394>

Projected budget for 2022

<https://lewiscounty.formstack.com/admin/download/file/11486458395>

Financial review

Financial review

<https://lewiscounty.formstack.com/admin/download/file/11486458396>

Nonprofit determination

Nonprofit determination

<https://lewiscounty.formstack.com/admin/download/file/11486458397>

Personnel list

Personnel list

<https://lewiscounty.formstack.com/admin/download/file/11486458398>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Signature



(Print or type applicant's name)

Connie Riker

Date

Oct 07, 2021
