



HUMBOLDT LODGING ALLIANCE  
**REPORT OF  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**  
2024-2025

*Humboldt*  
CALIFORNIA'S  
REDWOOD COAST



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## ABOUT THE HUMBOLDT LODGING ALLIANCE

In 2012, a group of Humboldt County lodging owners passionately committed to our County's future decided to proactively search for a way to strengthen the Humboldt County tourism industry without adding a new tax or financial burden in the cities or the county itself.

After working closely with local city and county officials, the group created one of California's first "Tourism Business Improvement Districts" (TBID), and the Humboldt Lodging Alliance (HLA) was born. The HLA TBID ultimately was renewed for 10 years from 2017–2027.

Unlike a traditional TOT assessment, the TBID acts as a self-imposed tax only on Humboldt County lodging property owners. It is important to note this TBID was established and voted on by Humboldt lodging owners county-wide, not through a public vote like a TOT assessment. The TBID calls for a 2% tax to be collected by local hotels with five or more units for three main funding priorities in Humboldt County:

1. Marketing outside Humboldt County.
2. Funding for events that can draw visitors from out of the county, especially in shoulder seasons.
3. Capital Projects that have the ability to draw visitors from outside the county (like the Redwood Sky Walk at Sequoia Park Zoo).

The HLA is comprised of eight jurisdictions within Humboldt County: Eureka, Arcata, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, and the unincorporated county divided into County South, County North, and County East. Each of the Humboldt County jurisdictions are represented by board members elected every two years to represent these areas of the county. The number of directors is based on the size of each jurisdiction's TBID revenues. View Bylaws, the management district plan and other agreements on [humboldtloodingalliance.org](http://humboldtloodingalliance.org).

**It is also important to note that the HLA Bylaws and the Management District Plan (MDP) through the State of California, similar to other TBID's throughout the state, offer stringent guidelines on how those funds can be used. In short, HLA funds are required to support mainly those activities that generate overnight stays to HLA member properties.**





### HLA MEETINGS AND PROCESS

The Humboldt Lodging Alliance board of directors meets quarterly to strategize, set policy, and approve major decisions of the Executive Committee. This committee is comprised of nine lodging professionals who meet monthly to guide the marketing program in detail and to assure fulfillment of the Humboldt Lodging Alliance mission: to put heads in beds. All meetings of the HLA are publicized and conducted in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and the Public Records Act. Board elections are held annually.

Over the past several years, much of the heavy lifting in terms of marketing programs has been handled by Misfit. This cutting-edge team of brand creators and marketers, chosen by the HLA board after a competitive review process lasting over a year, is the HLA's agency of record and receives daily oversight from a subcommittee of three board members.

The following report tracks the HCTBID collections and the funding efforts employed by the HLA Board of Directors and Executive Committee through fiscal year 2025. A previous report through 2024 was provided by the HLA to the County and its members.

This report will illustrate the work put forth by the HLA and its directors and the success the group has had in bringing overnight visitors to Humboldt County in fiscal year 2025.

### HLA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FY 2024 – 2025

**CHRIS AMBROSINI**  
Board Chairman  
Best Western Plus Humboldt Bay Inn (Eureka)

**MIKE CALDWELL**  
Inn of the Lost Coast (Shelter Cove)

**LOWELL DANIELS**  
Victorian Inn (Ferndale)

**DONNA HUFFORD**  
Roosevelt Base Camp (Orick)

**NIL PATEL**  
Holiday Inn Express and Suites (Eureka)

**SHAILESH PATEL**  
Hampton Inn & Suites (Arcata)

**JOHN PORTER**  
Benbow Historic Inn (Garberville)

**GARY STONE**  
Best Western Plus Humboldt Bay Inn (Eureka)

### HLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS FY 2024 – 2025

**HLA EUREKA**  
**Chris Ambrosini**, Best Western Plus Humboldt Bay Inn (Eureka)  
**Alpesh Natha**, Quality Inn (Eureka)  
**Jayshree Patel**, Comfort Inn (Eureka)  
**Troy Ritchie**, Carter House Inns (Eureka)  
**Gary Stone**, Best Western Plus Humboldt Bay Inn (Eureka)  
**Nil Patel**, Holiday Inn Express and Suites (Eureka)

**HLA NORTH**  
**Donna Hufford**, Roosevelt Base Camp (Orick)

**HLA EAST**  
**Noor Mubeen**, Coho Cottages (Willow Creek)

**HLA FERNDALE**  
**Lowell Daniels**, Victorian Inn & Redwood Suites (Ferndale)

**HLA FORTUNA**  
**Pritesh Patel**, Super 8 (Fortuna)  
**Einstein Parinbaraj**, Redwood Riverwalk Hotel (Fortuna)

**HLA SOUTH**  
**Mike Caldwell**, Inn of the Lost Coast (Shelter Cove)  
**John Porter**, Benbow Historic Inn (Garberville)



## TOURISM IMPACT IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

The Humboldt Lodging Alliance understands the critical role of the County's tourism industry in building and protecting a high quality of life for Humboldt residents. We take this mission very seriously, and personally, because nearly all of us live here. . .and have raised our families here.

Over the past decade, our commitment to this mission has helped drive record-setting increases in the number of visitors coming to our County. And while metrics like overnight hotel stays and occupancy percentages are valuable indicators of our success, it's even more important to measure the growing economic impact that our tourism industry is having on other sectors.

According to *The Economic Impact of Travel in California*, prepared by Dean Runyan Associates on behalf of Visit California in May 2025, total visitor spending in Humboldt County was over \$470 million in 2024 alone.

The report also found that, as in previous years, most of the economic benefit last year went to businesses outside the hotel or lodging industry.

For example:

- Over \$124 million spent by visitors with local food service (restaurant) businesses.
- Over \$61 million spent with local transportation and fuel businesses.
- Over \$54 million spent by visitors within Humboldt's arts, entertainment, and recreation community.
- Over \$45 million spent by visitors at Humboldt retail stores.

Additionally, the same report estimates that the travel industry provided over 5,800 jobs across our County in 2024.

Our work in driving new visitors, investing in new attractions, and supporting the efforts of our partner organizations across the County matters — now more than ever — to everyone who calls Humboldt home.



## BUILDING A BRAND

## TELLING A MAGICAL STORY

To amplify the impact of our marketing efforts over the years, we've built a cohesive and powerful brand strategy for Humboldt County — one that is relevant to potential visitors outside the county and authentic to the place we call home. The journey to our magical brand began in 2015. At that time, after interviewing several established marketing and advertising firms across California, the HLA hired the Sacramento-based creative agency, "Misfit," because of their unique ability to help destinations like ours develop an emotional connection with visitors.

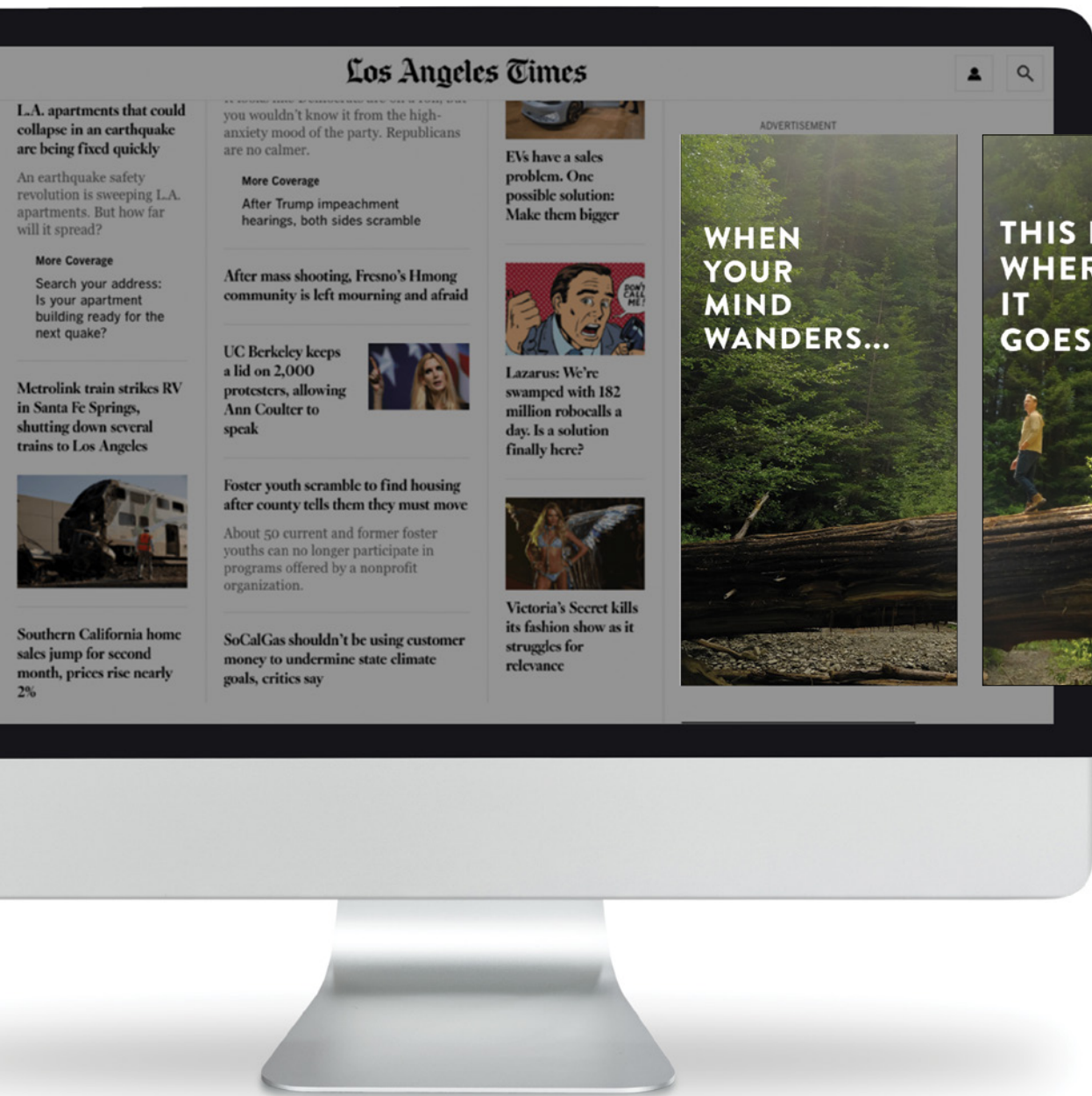
The Misfit team closely analyzed our destination attributes and the overarching personality they embodied. They studied in detail the brand positioning of Humboldt County's competing destinations, identifying open spaces in the marketplace that Humboldt County could occupy. Once the process had whittled the potential personality types down to just a few, the Misfit team presented the HLA with sample creative and positioning statements to review — to "try them on and see how they feel."

Following the determination of brand personality, the Misfit team developed several creative strategies and presented them to the HLA board for review. After careful consideration, the board agreed with the agency's proposal for a campaign using the "Follow the Magic" slogan and playing upon the well-beloved themes and

characters of Alice In Wonderland. This was the creative inspiration for all the advertising, social media, and marketing tools Misfit developed for the HLA during the initial campaign launch.

*Humboldt*  
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REDWOOD COAST

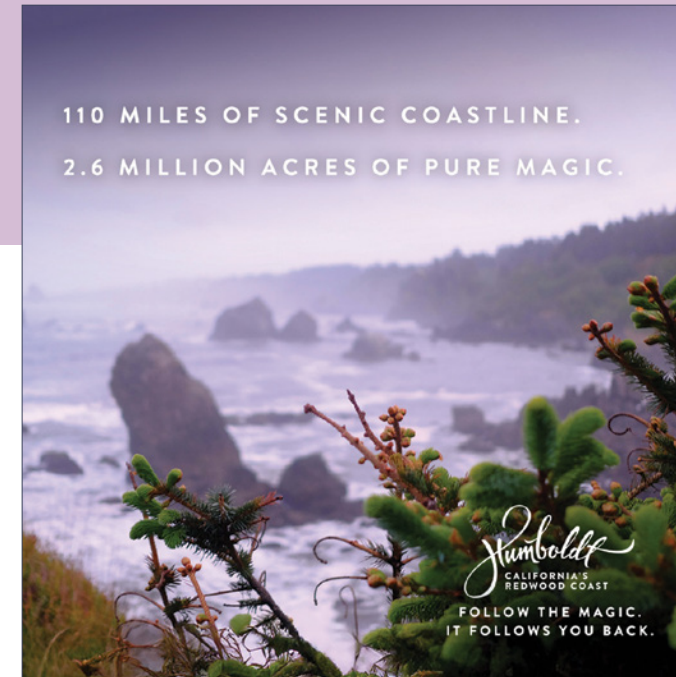
In the years since, the campaign has evolved into other iterations, including the "Tall Tales" campaign and the current "Follow the Magic. It Follows You Back." campaign that is featured on the following pages. This campaign follows the same magical roots that the original brand campaign was built upon and showcases the endless magical stories and experiences Humboldt County offers its visitors.



### OUTSIDE MARKETING INITIATIVES

The HLA continued executing the “Tall Tales” branding and marketing campaign in fiscal year 2025, while also introducing “Follow the Magic. It Follows You Back.” The campaign once again targeted potential visitors to Humboldt County within a five- to six-hour drive.

The investment for this campaign was budgeted at \$525,000 for the fiscal year and covered all media and creative/production activities provided by Misfit. Similar to previous years, the primary focus of the FY 2025 marketing campaign was to promote travel and tourism during the off-peak shoulder seasons – September through November 2024 and February through April 2025.





## CAMPAIGN RESULTS

This year's campaigns have been remarkably successful. Throughout the year, Misfit provided quarterly campaign reports to the HLA Board and Executive Committees. As in years past, these reports always include detailed analyses of the performance of every creative asset included in the campaign — each measured against industry benchmarks for metrics such as click-thru rates, cost per page views, cost per clicks, and more. In addition, the team at Misfit continued to monitor all campaign activity and performance daily throughout the year, allowing them to continually adjust and optimize all campaign strategies.

During the 2025 Fiscal Year, the campaign delivered over **27 million impressions** across digital display, social media, digital video, connected TV, and search alone — driving **225,000 new visitors** to the campaign website. These impressions don't include over **3 million impressions** served via television on in-game broadcasts for the San Francisco Giants, Sacramento A's, Golden State Warriors, and Sacramento Kings.

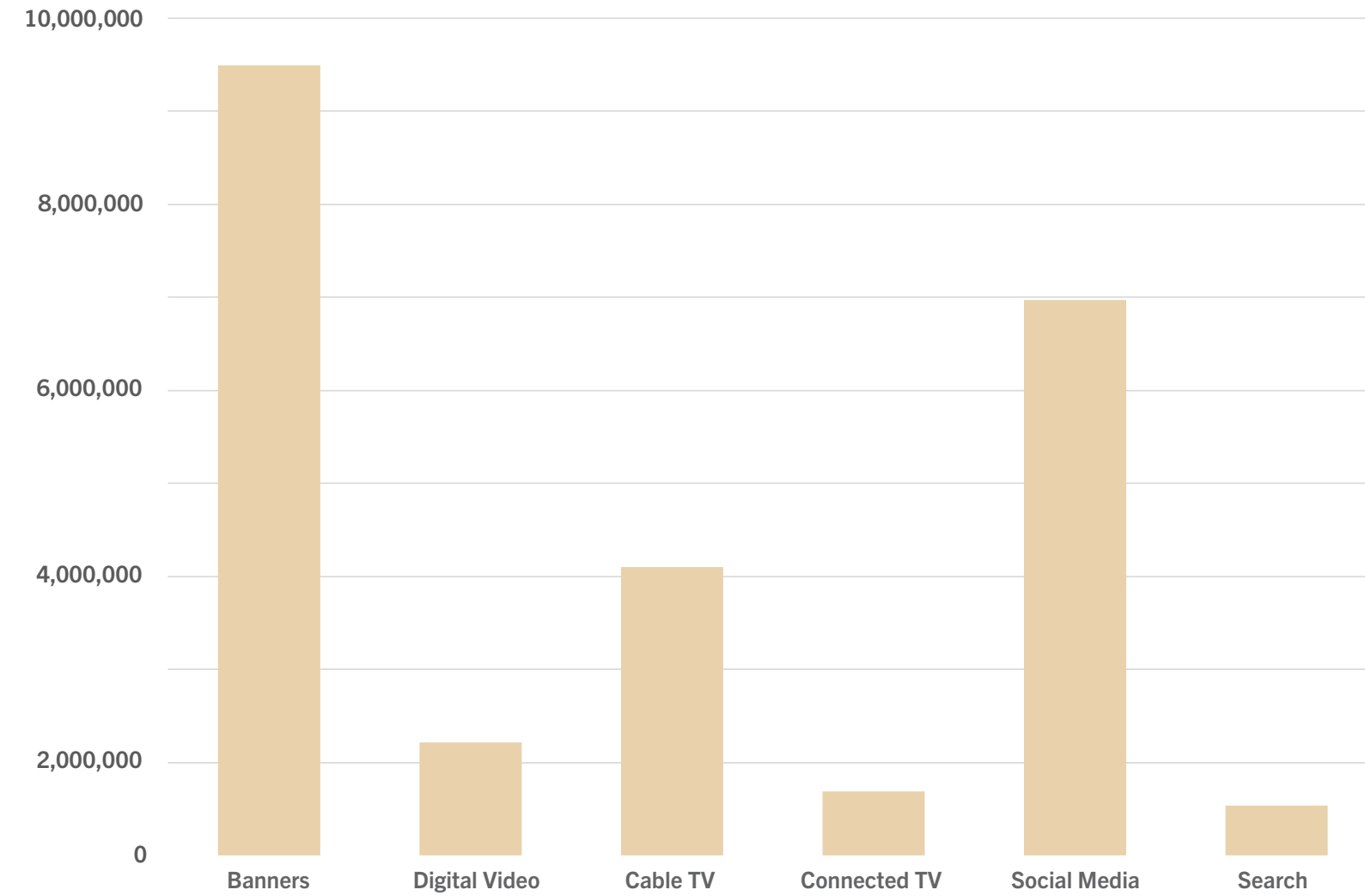
While a handful of campaign highlights are included here, a more detailed report of all campaign activity is available upon request.

## CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

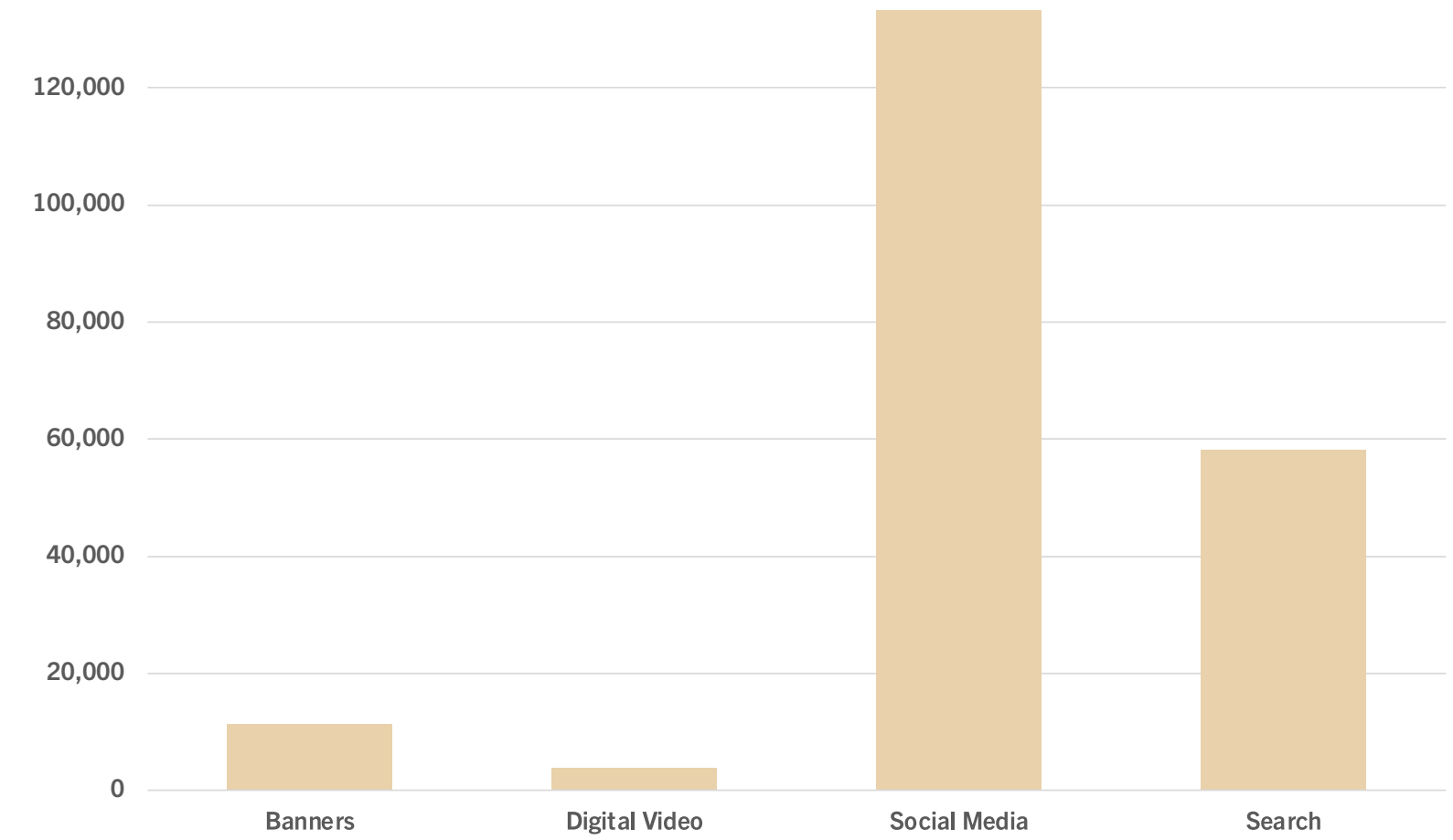
- Travel industry benchmark for digital display banner click-thru rate: .08%  
**HLA Campaign click-thru rate: 0.11%**
- Travel industry benchmark for paid search click-thru rate: 5.0%  
**HLA campaign click-thru rates: 5.5%**
- Travel industry benchmark for digital video completion rate: 60%  
**HLA campaign video completion rate: 76%**
- Travel industry benchmark for paid social media click-thru rate: 0.8%  
**HLA campaign click-thru rates: 1.6%**



## CAMPAIGN IMPRESSIONS



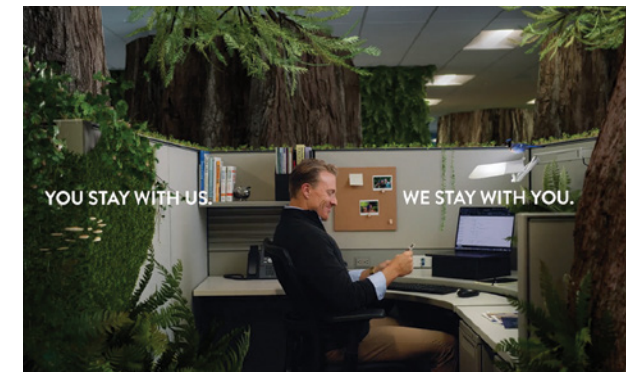
## CAMPAIGN CLICKS



**NOTE:** WHILE IT IS POSSIBLE FOR VIEWERS TO CLICK ON OUR DIGITAL VIDEOS, THE PRIMARY MEASURE OF SUCCESS FOR THIS ASSET IS "COMPLETED VIEWS" (NOT CLICKS).

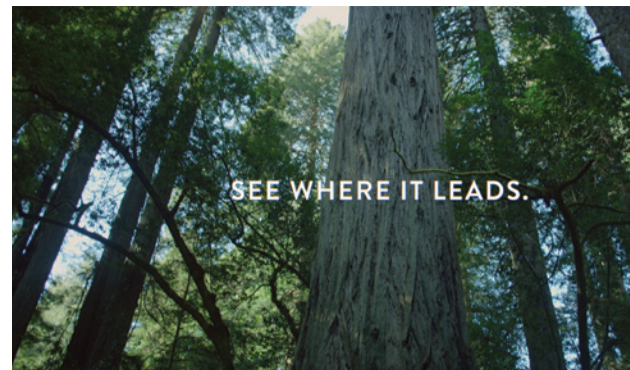
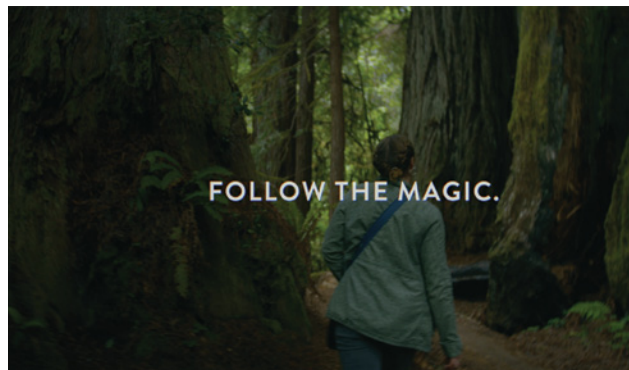


VIDEO SAMPLES - "FOLLOW THE MAGIC. IT FOLLOWS YOU BACK."



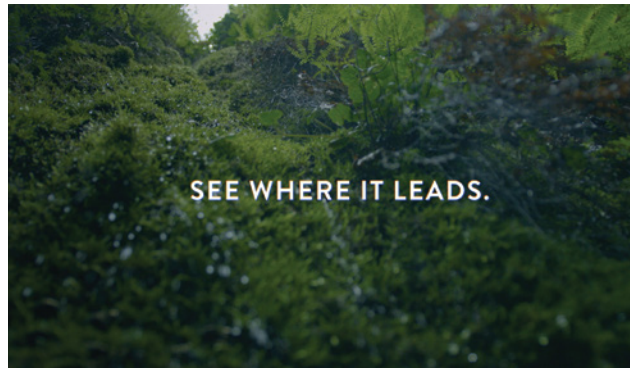
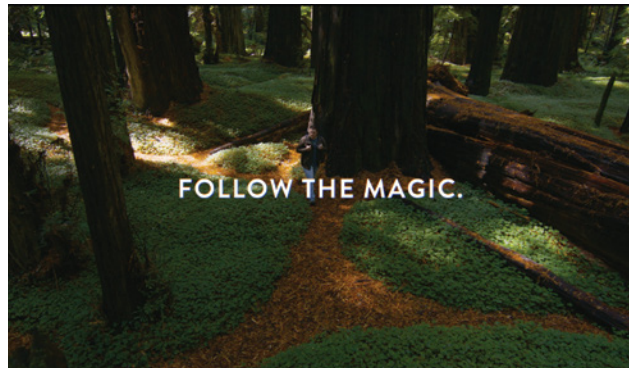


## VIDEO SAMPLES - "TALL TALES"

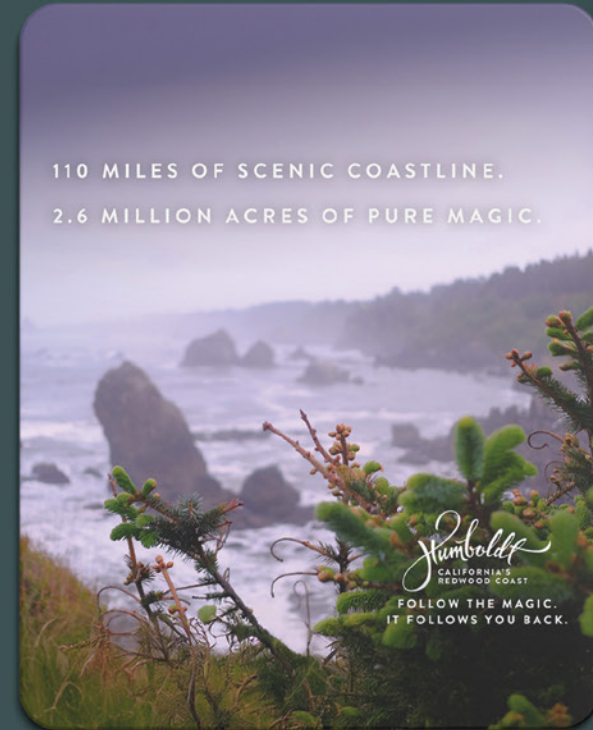




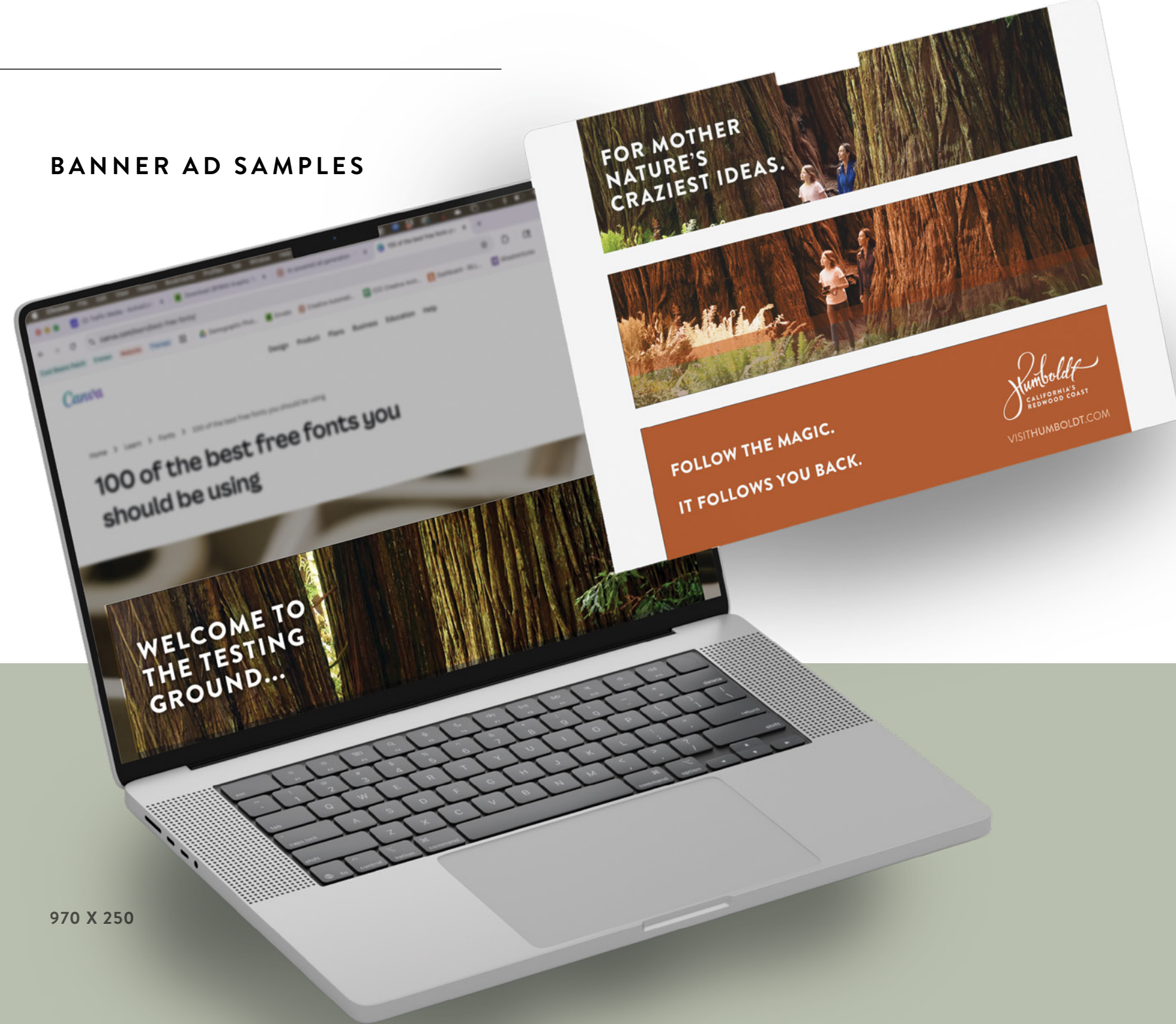
VIDEO SAMPLES - "TALL TALES"



SOCIAL MEDIA AD SAMPLES



BANNER AD SAMPLES

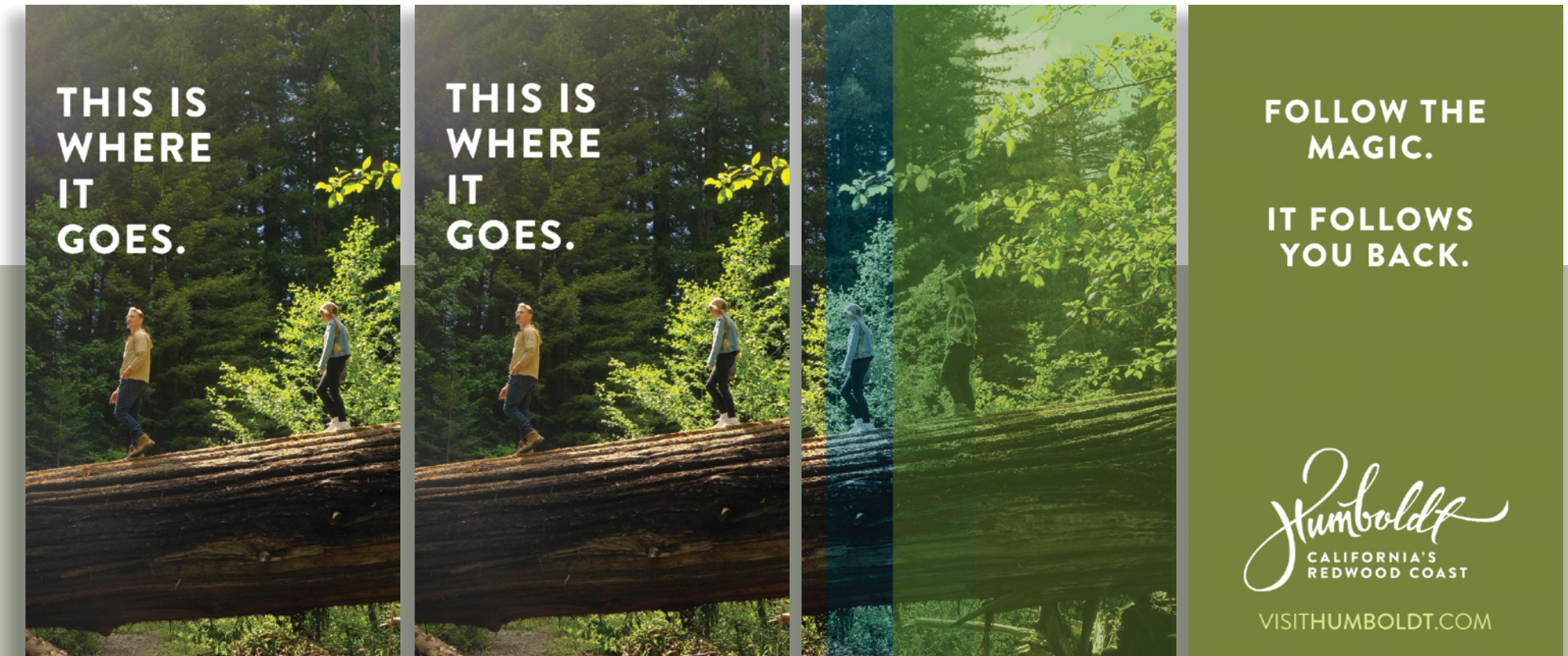


970 X 250

300 X 250

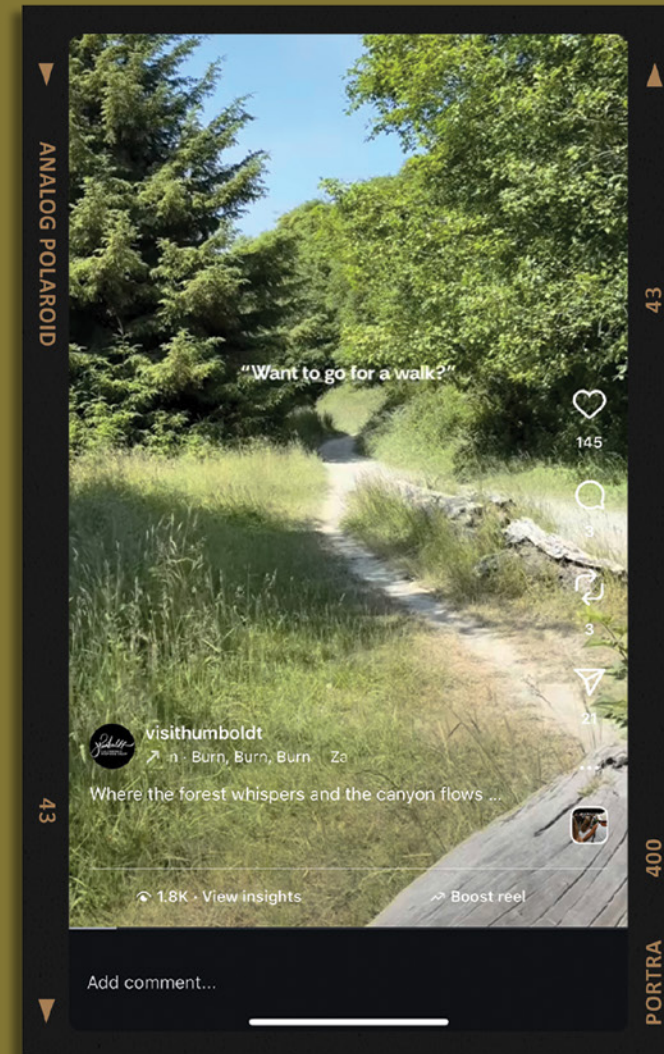
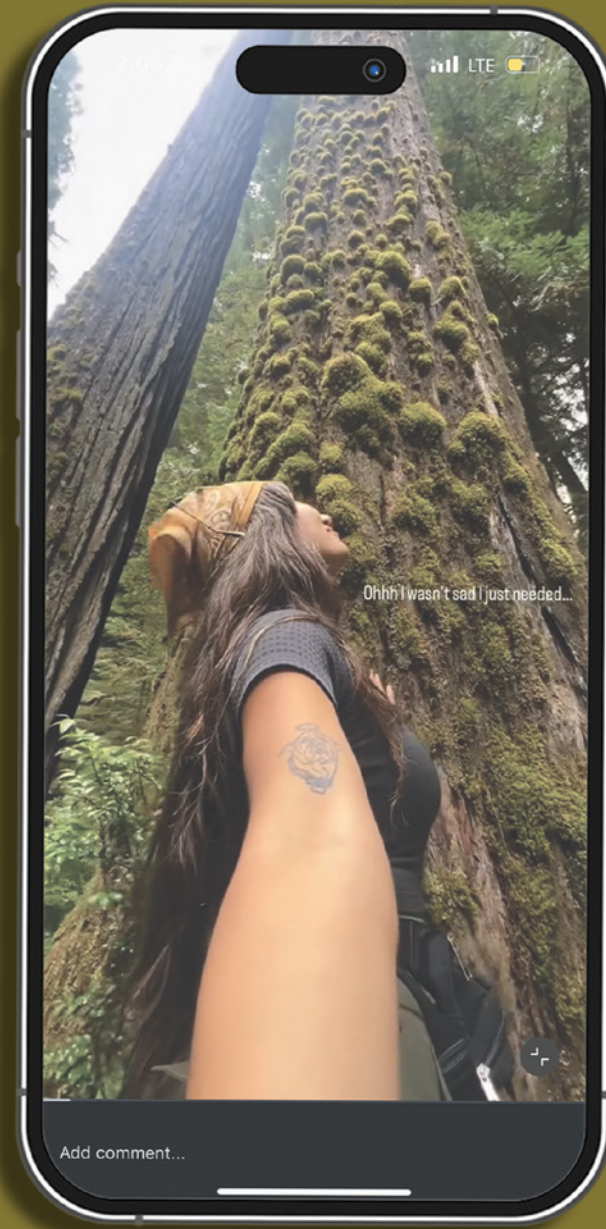


300 X 600





REEL VIDEOS



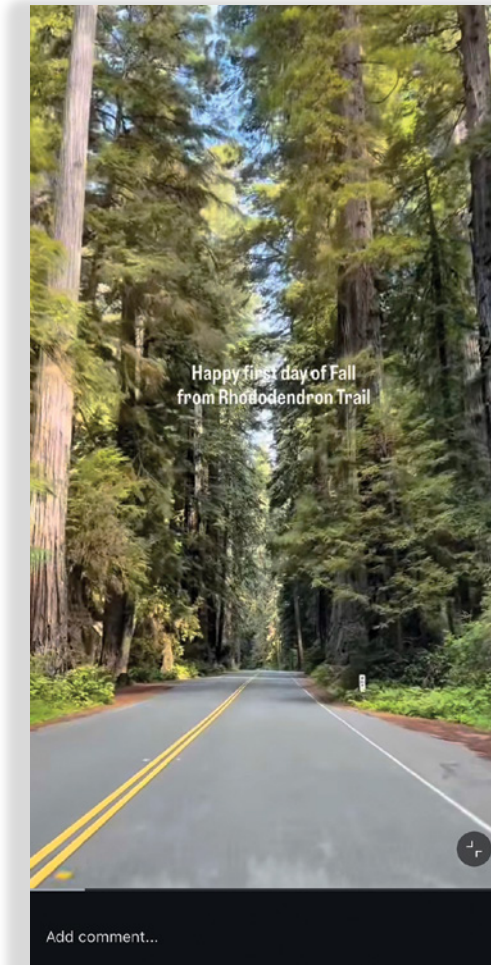
ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

@VisitHumboldt:

- Followers: 7.4k
- New Content Posts: 37
- Overall Performance: Average Views Increased 77%

Best Performing Social Posts in 2025:

- Fern Canyon Walk
- Rhododendron Trail
- Redwoods





## HUMBOLDT LODGING ALLIANCE COMMUNITY FUNDING PROGRAM

For events and marketing efforts that include the entire eight regions in the county, funding comes from the Central Marketing Fund which represents 30% of all TBID Collections. Any decision on funding is voted on by the HLA Executive Committee on amounts of \$75,000 or less. Any amount over \$75,000 is voted on by the HLA Board of Directors.

For events and marketing investments in individual HLA regions, the Board members in those regions decide. Each HLA region receives 60% of TBID collections in their region.

HLA's commitment to supporting local and regional marketing opportunities across the county has never been stronger. Here are a few funding highlights from fiscal year 2024–2025.

### **HUMBOLDT-DEL NORTE FILM COMMISSION: \$40,000**

In 2025, HLA provided \$40,000 in funding for the film commission's efforts to bring more film projects to the county. The Forest Moon Festival was held in 2025.





**ARCATA PROJECTS FUNDED**

**35TH ANNUAL ARCATA BAY OYSTERFEST: 40,000**

The 35th Annual Arcata Bay Oyster Festival occurred on Saturday, June 14, 2025, from 10 AM to 5 PM on the Arcata Plaza. This beloved community tradition celebrates local flavors, music, aquaculture, and art, drawing thousands to the heart of Humboldt County.

**KINETIC GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP: \$10,000**



**EUREKA PROJECTS FUNDED**

**CITY OF EUREKA: \$60,000**

This is an annual payment to the city of Eureka supporting the SkyWalk at Sequoia Park Zoo.

**LARGEST LIVING LIGHTED CHRISTMAS TREE IN THE WORLD AT SEQUOIA PARK ZOO: \$100,000**

**HUMBOLDT MARBLE WEEKEND: \$35,000**

**KINETIC GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP: \$3,500**



**REDWOOD COAST MUSIC FESTIVAL: \$25,000**

The Redwood Coast Music Festival is a fun-filled, four-day event featuring great music from many diverse genres, including Traditional Jazz, New Orleans Jazz, Swing, Blues, Soul, Zydeco, Rockabilly, Boogie, American Roots, Country, and Western Swing.



**FERNDALE PROJECTS FUNDED**

**FERNDALE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE / VISIT FERNDALE SOCIAL MEDIA SPECIALIST/ WEBMASTER: \$12,000**

**FERNDALE, FRIGHTFULLY FUN: \$2,000**

With an array of spooky events planned each year — not to mention family-friendly offerings and our popular year-round dining, shopping, lodging, and outdoor activities — we have something for everyone.

**CAGES PUBLISHING INC. FULL PAGE COLOR AD SOUVENIR EDITION: \$3,000**



**FORTUNA PROJECTS FUNDED**

**NORTH COAST JOURNAL, INC.:** \$1,513  
Ad in Humboldt Insider Magazine

**COUNTY NORTH PROJECTS FUNDED**

**GREATER TRINIDAD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE/ CLAM BEACH RUN:** \$12,000  
59th Annual Trinidad to Clam Beach Run

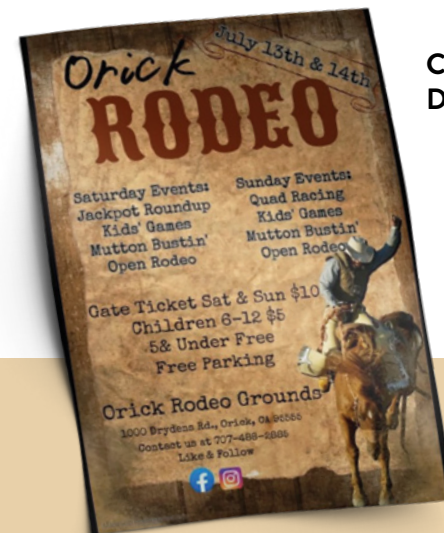
**REDWOOD PARKS CONSERVANCY ANNUAL CANDLELIGHT WALK :** \$5,000

**HUMBOLDT CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU:** \$19,500

The Bureau is the authorized Destination Marketing & Management Organization (DMMO) for Humboldt County, whose mission is to ensure and enhance the positive economic impact of tourism by keeping Humboldt front and center for state, national, and international visitors.

**ORICK RODEO:** \$4,000

**HUMBOLDT DEL NORTE FILM COMMISSION:** \$5,000  
Forest Moon Festival



**REDWOOD PARKS ASSOCIATION:** \$5,000  
Run in the Redwoods + May the Forest be With You

**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION:** \$10,000



**COUNTY SOUTH PROJECTS FUNDED**

**JENNY EARLY SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONTENT CREATION:** \$8,400



**MARKETING / ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN SUPPORT IN FISCAL YEAR 2025:** \$153,052  
Misfit/Push Marketing

**MATEEL COMMUNITY CENTER:** \$74,000  
Reggae on the River Aug 1–3, 2025

**SOUTHERN HUMBOLDT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:** \$25,000  
4th of July Fireworks Benbow Recreation Area

**NYE-ZIK CREATIVE:** \$4,432  
Maintain website, SEO and quarterly reports for discoversouthernhumboldt.com

**GATEWAY TO THE REDWOODS SKATING RINK:** \$68,000

**HELP IS ON THE WAY:** \$37,000  
David Nelson Band November 1–2, 2024  
Jerry Garcia Band & the Mateel Community

**SOUTHERN HUMBOLDT CLASSIC CRUISE & CAR SHOW:** \$5,800

**PARADISE ROYALE MOUNTAIN BIKE RACE:** \$12,500  
The Paradise Royale Mountain Bike Race is a one-of-a-kind event that combines the thrill of mountain biking with the stunning beauty of the King Range National Conservation Area. Known for its challenging trails and breathtaking views of the Lost Coast, this race attracts adventurers seeking a true test of skill, endurance, and passion.

**VISIT SHELTER COVE:** \$10,000  
Wellness Weekend Jan 24–26, 2025







**2025 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT**

July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

**ASSESSMENT REVENUES**

The HLA funds many marketing efforts and events in Humboldt County. TBID revenues collected are applied as follows:

30% of collected revenues go into a “central marketing fund”. Distribution of these funds is determined by the HLA Board of Directors, or the HLA Executive Committee on funds up to \$75,000.

60% of TBID funds goes to each region based on revenue generated from hotel stays in those regions. Distribution of these funds is determined by the HLA board member representatives in those regions.

10% of TBID revenues are applied to administration.

Jurisdiction	Estimated TOTALS
Arcata	242,551.86
Eureka	597,596.46
Ferndale	25,100.01
Fortuna	133,009.06
Rio Dell	1,000.27
County North	172,855.36
County East	16,590.55
County South	142,677.36

**HLA EXPENSES**

Category	Estimated TOTALS
Outside Marketing	637,274.56
Administration	65,210.66
Community Tourism	658,398.59

**HLA FUND BALANCES (As of June 30, 2025)**

Balances	Estimated TOTALS
Marketing Programs	516,607.42
Administrative Funds	243,716.38
Arcata Community Fund	1,001,508.48
Eureka Community Fund	1,410,084.10
Ferndale Community Fund	39,942.24
Fortuna Community Fund	351,591.13
Trinidad Community Fund	31,247.00
Rio Dell Fund	8,991.10
County Community Fund—North	504,187.73
County Community Fund—East	79,829.41
County Community Fund—South	44,367.12

*\*Many of the funds above are committed to promotions, special events and other marketing activities.*



LOOKING AHEAD  
**FISCAL YEAR 2026**  
AND BEYOND  
JULY 2025 – JUNE 2026

Since 2012, the Humboldt Lodging Alliance has invested in projects and partnerships that elevate Humboldt County as a premier destination. Our marketing efforts have expanded Humboldt’s presence far beyond the county line, supported destination-defining events, and helped bring forward attractions like the Redwood Sky Walk — now enjoyed by thousands of visitors each year.

As we look ahead, HLA is preparing for a new era of vision and growth. We are exploring new attractions, deepening partnerships, and strengthening our marketing strategies to welcome more overnight visitors and ensure a thriving tourism economy. We also honor the contributions of consultant Chuck Leishman, whose guidance helped shape this foundation.

In August 2025, HLA will begin an exciting new chapter with the hiring of Executive Director Meredith Matthews, whose background in economic development, public service, and tourism strategy positions the organization for its next phase of impact. Together, we are ready to build on more than a decade of success and continue inspiring travelers to discover Humboldt’s unmatched beauty.

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