

Community Tourism Proj... ▾

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Organization Name

Southern Humboldt Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center

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[Map It](#)

Project Overview

Project/Event Title

Fourth Of July Fireworks Event

Dates or Duration

Date: Saturday, July 4th, 2026

Amount of Funding Requested

\$27,000.00

Entry ^ v ▲

Entry Id: 2535

Submitted on: 2026/05/05 at 6:31 pm

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What is the Return on Investment?

The Southern Humboldt Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center's Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration in Benbow Valley generates measurable tourism activity by encouraging overnight stays, extended visits, and increased spending at local businesses in Benbow, Garberville, and Redway.

A key lodging partner is the historic Benbow Inn, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2026. The Inn serves as a destination property for travelers visiting Humboldt County, and many guests plan their trip specifically to dine at the Inn and watch the fireworks from its patio overlooking the Eel River. The Inn's centennial celebration, combined with the return of the fireworks, creates a unique opportunity to attract regional visitors seeking a memorable holiday experience.

The 2026 fireworks celebration also coincides with the national America's 250th anniversary, further strengthening its tourism appeal. Rural Independence Day celebrations are increasingly sought after by travelers looking for authentic community experiences, and Southern Humboldt offers a distinctive setting surrounded by redwood forests, rivers, and outdoor recreation.

The Chamber will collaborate with lodging partners—including the Benbow Inn, local motels, and RV parks—to promote overnight stays and weekend getaways, highlighting dining, outdoor recreation, and shopping opportunities in Garberville and Redway.

Tourist participation and return on investment will be measured through:

- Estimated event attendance
- Lodging partner feedback on holiday weekend occupancy
- Visitor Center inquiries and walk-in traffic
- Social media engagement and digital reach
- Informal visitor surveys identifying visitor origin and overnight stays

By increasing overnight bookings and visitor spending, the Benbow Valley Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration provides a strong return on investment while strengthening Southern Humboldt's role as a welcoming gateway to Humboldt County.

Seasonal Impact

The Benbow Valley Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration anchors the start of Southern Humboldt's peak summer tourism season and fills an important gap in the regional Independence Day event calendar. Large-scale community events in Southern Humboldt are limited, and without this celebration many visitors would travel to larger communities outside the region.

Because the fireworks occur after dark, visitors often arrive earlier in the day or the day before, increasing demand for overnight accommodations at hotels, motels, RV parks, and campgrounds in Benbow, Garberville, and Redway.

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Many visitors extend their stay through the holiday weekend to explore nearby attractions such as the Avenue of the Giants, Humboldt Redwoods State Park, and the Lost Coast, while dining and shopping locally.

The 2026 Benbow Inn Centennial and the national America's 250th anniversary create an additional opportunity to attract visitors seeking an authentic small-town Independence Day experience.

Feasibility & Track Record

The Southern Humboldt Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center has successfully organized the Benbow Valley Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration for nearly two decades, producing 18 fireworks events and establishing the celebration as a well-recognized regional tradition.

The Chamber coordinates all aspects of the event, including permitting, insurance, safety planning, and logistics in partnership with CAL FIRE, the California Highway Patrol, the State Fire Marshal, and local volunteer fire departments. These long-standing relationships ensure the event is conducted safely and in full compliance with all regulations.

Planning and execution are led by Chamber staff with support from board members and community volunteers. This experienced team and strong agency partnerships ensure the event can be delivered safely, efficiently, and with strong community participation.

Innovation & Uniqueness

The Benbow Valley Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration offers a distinctive destination experience by combining a traditional Independence Day celebration with the historic and scenic setting of Southern Humboldt's Eel River Valley.

Unlike larger urban fireworks displays, this event offers visitors an authentic small-town celebration set amid redwood forests, rivers, and rural landscapes.

The 2026 celebration is especially unique, coinciding with two major milestones:

- the 100th anniversary of the Benbow Inn
- the national celebration of America's 250th anniversary

These milestones elevate the event's appeal and position it as a regional destination experience. Visitors are drawn not only to the fireworks display but also to the opportunity to stay overnight, dine at the historic Benbow Inn, and explore nearby communities such as Garberville and Redway.

How will you define success with your project and ensure sustainability?

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Success for the Benbow Valley Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration will be measured through a combination of tourism participation, economic impact, and community engagement indicators. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will include estimated event attendance, lodging occupancy feedback from local hotels and RV parks during the holiday weekend, visitor origin data gathered through informal surveys, and engagement metrics from event promotion across social media and digital channels. Additional indicators include increased visitor inquiries and walk-in traffic at the Southern Humboldt Chamber Visitor Center during the event weekend, as well as feedback from local restaurants, retailers, and tourism-related businesses in Garberville and Redway.

Long-term sustainability for the fireworks celebration will be supported through a combination of earned revenue, community sponsorships, and strategic partnerships. While Southern Humboldt's rural economy is currently facing challenges that affect local businesses' capacity for sponsorships, the Chamber continues to work with local businesses, lodging partners, and community organizations to build consistent annual sponsorship support. At the same time, we are strengthening partnerships with regional tourism stakeholders and expanding promotional efforts to increase visitor participation.

In rural communities like Southern Humboldt, events such as the Benbow Valley Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration function as important tourism infrastructure, helping attract visitors, support overnight stays, and generate economic activity for local businesses. Continued investment in this event helps ensure it remains a reliable draw for the community while the Chamber works to increase sponsorship participation and financial sustainability. With steady growth in community partnerships and visitor attendance, we anticipate the event moving toward a largely self-supported model within three to five years through recurring sponsorships, community contributions, and tourism-driven economic activity.

Room Night Strategy

The Southern Humboldt Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center will implement targeted strategies to convert interest in the Benbow Valley Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration into overnight stays in Benbow, Garberville, and Redway.

Target Markets

Marketing will focus on visitors seeking an authentic small-town Independence Day experience. Promotions will highlight Benbow, Garberville, and Redway as welcoming destinations where visitors can stay locally, dine at area restaurants, and enjoy the scenic Eel River Valley, Avenue of the Giants, and Shelter Cove.

Marketing Channels

Promotion will occur through the Chamber's website, Visitor Center communications, email newsletters, social media platforms, and regional event calendars. Messaging will position the fireworks as part of a holiday weekend destination experience.

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Lodging Partnerships

The Chamber will collaborate with lodging partners, including the Benbow Inn and local motels, RV parks, and campgrounds, to encourage overnight bookings. The Benbow Inn's 100th anniversary in 2026 provides an additional promotional opportunity.

Digital Campaigns

Targeted digital and social media campaigns will showcase the natural beauty of the Eel River Valley and the welcoming atmosphere of Garberville and Redway to encourage multi-day visits.

Visitor Data & Measurement

Because the event is free and open to the public, the Chamber will track visitor participation through informal surveys, Visitor Center engagement, and lodging partner feedback on occupancy levels.

Has this project or idea been successfully tried elsewhere?

Yes. Independence Day fireworks celebrations across the United States are proven tourism drivers that attract visitors, increase overnight stays, and generate economic activity for local businesses.

Similar rural communities throughout California and the Pacific Northwest host fireworks celebrations that serve as anchor tourism events for the holiday weekend, increasing visitor traffic and lodging occupancy.

The Benbow Valley Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration itself demonstrates this success. For nearly two decades, the Southern Humboldt Chamber of Commerce has organized the event, establishing it as a well-recognized regional tradition.

Following a temporary pause due to rising production costs, the event returned in 2024 with approximately 700 attendees, reaffirming strong community demand and the event's continued potential to attract visitors to Benbow, Garberville, and Redway.

Projected Room Nights

The Southern Humboldt Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center estimates that the Benbow Valley Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration will generate 80–120 overnight room nights within the communities of Benbow, Garberville, and Redway during the Independence Day holiday period.

This estimate is based on several factors, including past attendance, local lodging capacity, and typical visitor travel patterns during the July 4th holiday weekend. The 2025 fireworks celebration attracted approximately 900 attendees, many of whom traveled from surrounding communities and counties. Based on informal visitor surveys, Visitor Center interactions, and lodging partner feedback from similar holiday periods, we estimate that 15–20% of visitors travel from outside the immediate area and require overnight accommodations.

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Within the immediate jurisdiction, there are a limited number of lodging properties—including the Benbow Inn, several motels in Garberville and Redway, and nearby RV parks and campgrounds. Assuming that 60–100 visitors choose to stay overnight and that many travel in pairs or small groups, this translates to an estimated 80–120 room nights during the July 3–5 holiday window.

Because the fireworks occur after dark on July 4th, visitors often arrive earlier in the day or the evening before, with many choosing to stay the night after the event. As a result, the event primarily impacts lodging occupancy on July 3rd and July 4th, with some extended stays into July 5th as visitors explore nearby attractions such as the Avenue of the Giants and Humboldt Redwoods State Park.

This projected room-night impact represents a meaningful increase in occupancy for lodging providers in a small rural market with limited accommodation inventory. The fireworks celebration helps ensure that available lodging in Benbow, Garberville, and Redway experiences strong demand during the Independence Day holiday weekend while also supporting local restaurants, retailers, and tourism-related businesses.

Proposed Budget

Note: To proceed with the fireworks production contract, a funding commitment is required no later than May 25, 2026, in line with the payment schedule set by Pyro Spectacular. In 2025, the Chamber submitted the required 50% deposit on that date to secure the fireworks display.

In addition, the event generates modest earned revenue through event parking. In 2025, parking fees generated \$1,930.00, with a revenue share of \$816.00 revenue share paid to the park, helping offset event costs and supporting the venue partnership.

Expense Item Estimated Cost

Pyro Spectacular (10% increase over last year due to tariffs): \$22,000.00
California Highway Patrol \$1,200.00
State Fire Marshal: \$1,700.00
Benbow State Park Permit: \$200.00
County Event Permit: \$256.00
B&B Portable Toilets: \$880.00
Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection: \$1,680.00
Dept of Forestry & Fire Protection: \$240.00
Posters & Promotion: \$300.00
Total Estimated Cost: \$28,456.00

Certification

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