

Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Sector — Project Interview Summary

Redwood Region – Arts Nature Trails Project

Representative Interviewed: **Calder Johnson**
 Interviewed by: **John Wentworth**

1 Assets

Think about the natural assets — public lands, parks, trails, or other features — and the community assets — community facilities, airports, train stations, unique areas, and/or cultural events — that draw visitors to the region, and how the project connects to them. Then consider what kinds of investments, whether in staff capacity, coordination, or regional information sharing, the project would most benefit from to move forward.

Consider:

- What natural assets attract people to the region, and how does the project connect to them?
- What community assets attract and bring people to the region, and how does the project connect to them?
- What investments would most help the project advance?

Discussion Points

Opportunities:

- Natural Assets
 - **Joint Federal and State Land**
 - Redwood State and National Park
- Community Assets and Regional Access
 - The **Great Redwood Trail** connects the natural landscape to an active, developing trail corridor
 - A distinctive **fusion of natural assets and a rich arts and cultural community** creates a unique regional identity

Challenges:

- **Rural staffing capacity, administrative capacity, and regional information sharing** limit the region's ability to develop and manage assets
- **Rural infrastructure constraints** impede project implementation; the region does not lack expertise, but lacks capacity to act on it

2 Policy & Regulations

Reflect on the policies or regulations the project has encountered, and whether they have opened doors or created roadblocks. Consider also where the policy landscape simply does not



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Presenter

- Calder Johnson

Jobs First Region

- Redwood Region

Catalyst

- Non-Catalyst Project

Project Status

- Development Ready



Assets - Opportunities

- Redwood State National Park
- The Great Redwood Trail
- Fusion between Natural and Cultural assets

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Assets - Challenges

- Staffing capacity
- Information sharing
- Administrative capacity
- Capacity to implement
- Reimbursement-based grants

Policy & Regulations - *Opportunities*

- Cannabis tourism offers economic benefits
- Recent CEQA exemption
- AB 518 - Low-impact camping

Policy & Regulations - Challenges

- State regulations create disproportionate burdens in rural areas
- ADA compliance

Funding - Opportunities

- The world's largest concentration of venture capital is only 300 miles away

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Funding - Challenges

- Federal sources are difficult to navigate
- The state hasn't been investing
- CA Arts Council grants oversubscribed 4 to 1
- Coastal Conservancy provides little funding
- No funding opportunities identified

Data - *Opportunities*

- Visit CA provides extensive county-level data
- Gaps exist in granularity and specific data
- Cities like Eureka and Ukiah invested in detailed visitor data

Data - Challenges

- These cities are "lanterns in a dark night" -
- Getting data to people who need it
- Providing capacity for analysis
- Rurals make decisions "based on vibes"
- Does Visit California sit on large data sets?

Climate Change - Opportunities

- Trail work and wildfire mitigation/recovery
- The Great Redwood Trail \$60 million funds
- Seasonality of wildfire mitigation and tourism creates workforce opportunities

Climate Change – Challenges

- Sea level rise is a major concern
- Coastal location provides Wildfire protection

Workforce - Opportunities

- Local talent
- Home growing
- Seasonal work > business development
- Pre-arranged off-season employment

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Workforce - Challenges

- Gaps in recruitment
- Workforce pipeline = "paths" or "trails"
- State data fails to capture this employment

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Collaboratives - Opportunities

- Jobs First's greatest benefit
- Rural regions need & desire collaboration
- Collaboratives can generate new projects
- Investment in collaboratives as a regional function provides tremendous value

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Collaboratives - Challenges

- Volunteer-run collaboratives fall apart

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Branding & Marketing - *Opportunities*

- Multiple experiences in one day
- Assets can attract investment and talent
- Assets can attract private sector funding and philanthropy
- Visit California has been active in the region

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Branding & Marketing - Challenges

- The region has too many assets!
- Single narrative, not multiple that compete
- A coherent elevator pitch
- Relationship-building with Visit California
- Local officials aren't aware that Visit California exists

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Thank You!

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