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Record breaking group business levels result in economic impact of \$3.8 million for local businesses

Bend, OR – October 19, 2011 – The Riverhouse Hotel & Convention Center posted record breaking convention numbers in the month of September, generating the highest volume of meeting attendees to visit in a single month since the facility first opened in December 2006. The large volume of group business translated to over \$3.8 million in estimated economic impact for the Central Oregon area.

Meeting attendees came to The Riverhouse Convention Center from all over the state and country for conferences and meetings ranging from one to five days long. Over 27 different organizations and groups hosted an event at the Convention Center in the month of September alone, generating ancillary revenue for other lodging properties, restaurants, shopping outlets, gas stations, and a variety of businesses that benefit from guests visiting the area.

“The success of the Riverhouse Hotel & Convention Center in securing group and convention business is a tremendous benefit to the entire region. Large groups positively impact business at other area lodging properties who serve as overflow resources and this volume translates to ancillary spend at many other local outlets,” stated Alana Hughson, President & CEO of the Central Oregon Visitors Association. “The insurgence of people to the region creates a spillover effect throughout the community. Restaurants see more patrons, gas stations have more customers, hotels see higher occupancy rates, and the city generates more revenue from transient room tax.”

Bend saw its transient room tax grow a little over 5% in August, a much slower pace than in previous months. In addition, the gains in August 2011 came from lodging properties increasing room rates, not from an increase in number of visitors. Total room nights rented in August 2011 were actually down 4% from the previous year.

From early projections, September is on track to fare much better. “With all the additional group business The Convention Center had in September, we expect to see large double digit percentage gains in transient room tax in the City of Bend due not only to an increase in number of overnight travelers, but also due to an increase in average daily rate,” stated Wayne Purcell, operations manager at The Riverhouse. “It is this increase in the number of visitors that ultimately has a positive economic impact on Bend’s economy.”

Tourism in Bend generally peaks during the busy summer vacation travel time in July and August. Increasing business during the shoulder and off season is important for the economy of Bend and sustaining jobs.

“Convention business has great potential to impact our economy during the shoulder season months of April, May, September and October when tourism is historically slower. We desperately need an insurgence of visitors to the area during these times,” Purcell stated. “Now

that we've seen what this Convention Center facility is capable of, we hope to see more months like September. We've made a big push in our in-house sales efforts to attract new clients, but we all need to work every day to find new ways to bring people to the area and generate more business for our city as a whole. People from Central Oregon travel out of the area to attend all kinds of conventions. Let's get those conventions to come here to Bend."

The Riverhouse Convention Center is the only privately funded convention center of its size in the state of Oregon, meaning that this facility does not rely on city or state tax revenue to fund operations. It features the largest meeting facility east of the Cascade Mountains, as well as the second largest ballroom in Oregon.

There has been no other month on record since the Convention Center first opened in December of 2006 that has seen such a high volume of convention business as September. Major groups included Oregon Rural Health Association with 225 attendees, the Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association with over 250 attendees, and the League of Oregon Cities with over 500 attendees, all over multiple days.

"Group business can also translate into additional visits to the region during other parts of the year," added Purcell. "When large organizations and corporations in other cities plan meetings in Bend, it creates great word-of-mouth buzz in those communities and gets additional, leisure driven guests interested in planning a trip to Central Oregon as well, which benefits us all."

For additional information or to set up an interview with our operations manager or hotel manager, please contact Erin Woods with The Riverhouse Hotel & Convention Center: at 541-550-9947 or erin@riverhouse.com.

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The Riverhouse Hotel & Convention Center is the only full service hotel in Bend, Oregon. The state-of-the-art convention center includes over 30,000 sq. ft. of meeting space and has earned the distinguished LEED Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The building is located on the banks of the Deschutes River and can accommodate very large conferences with concurrent meetings, meals, tradeshow and breakout sessions. Visit us online at www.riverhouse.com