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For Immediate Release

## Tourism Industry Celebrates National Tourism Week

**Calgary** – June 6-12 is Tourism Week in Canada. It's the national celebration that highlights the economic impact and social benefits of Canada's tourism sector.

"The tourism industry brings a variety of tremendous benefits to Calgary. The \$1.1 billion economic impact to the Calgary economy and employment for 1 in 10 Calgary workers are clearly substantial tourism results," said Randy Williams, Tourism Calgary President & CEO. "Calgary's visitors bring a great deal of energy to our trails, parks and neighbourhoods. And it's the 4.7 million annual visitors to our city who contribute to the success of our great attractions like Canada Olympic Park, the Calgary Zoo, the Calgary Tower and Heritage Park, just to name a few."

Facts about tourism nationally:

- Tourism is one of the fastest growing economic sectors globally, with annual growth outpacing the world economy.
- Tourism generates \$74 billion in economic activity annually, with an economic impact that is equivalent to that of the fisheries, forestry and agriculture sectors combined.
- Travel and tourism is a job driver – 649,900 Canadian jobs were attributable to tourism spending in 2009. More than 1.6 million Canadians hold a job in the tourism sector – 1 in 10 Canadian workers.
- Approximately 28 cents of every tourism dollar spent in Canada contributes to tax revenues, resulting in more than \$20 billion in revenue for all levels of government and a federal share of \$9.6 billion.

Not every statistic is as positive:

- Canada's tourism gross domestic product was \$29 billion in 2009, a 4.2% decline over the previous year.
- The total number of overnight visitors from the U.S. was 11.7 million, down 6.7%.
- 2.2 million Canadians are driving across the border to use U.S. airports.

Locally, tourism is growing and many who work in the industry are optimistic about Calgary's future as a tremendous tourism destination. High gas prices and a strong Canadian dollar will have a negative impact on tourism, but Tourism Calgary anticipates a year of modest growth for the tourism industry of between two to three percent in 2011.

- The partnership between the Calgary Hotel Association and Tourism Calgary is stronger than ever. The website created through that partnership has just celebrated its first birthday on June 7.
  - visitcalgary.com has a continually growing monthly average of 44,611 unique visits per month – a 151% increase from the previous tourismcalgary.com website.
  - More than 78% of traffic to the website is from new visitors.
  - The visitcalgary.com booking engine includes 39 bookable hotel partners and 17 attractions.
  - 700 rooms have been booked and 1,400 attraction tickets sold on visitcalgary.com.
  - There are currently 19 unique packages available for booking on visitcalgary.com with different combinations of accommodations, attractions and events.
- Tourism Calgary is in market with its most ambitious marketing campaigns ever – Capture WOW and Experience WOW. The campaign has enjoyed unprecedented support for the Calgary tourism industry.
- In 2011, Tourism Calgary has confirmed 20,691 definite hotel room nights to be realized in 2011 and future years via 17 events – on track for a record year of production, which will result in a record amount of direct visitor spending from this segment.
- Tourism Calgary and Calgary Economic Development recently led the largest Calgary mission to China to promote business and tourism interests.
- Calgary's world-renowned western hospitality just celebrated a milestone. On June 8 the Calgary Airport Authority's White Hat Volunteer program celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> year of welcoming guests to Calgary, performing more than 2,500 White Hat Welcome Ceremonies with over 8,000 participants.
- Two of Canada's most anticipated new attractions are set to open in Calgary this year: the Canada's Sports Hall of Fame and the new TELUS World of Science – Calgary.

### **About Tourism Calgary**

Tourism Calgary is Calgary's Destination Marketing Organization. Representing more than 550 members, Tourism Calgary brings Calgary to the world and the world to Calgary. Tourism annually contributes \$1.1 billion in economic impact to the local community and employs 1 in 10 working Calgarians. For more information about Tourism Calgary, please visit our website at [visitcalgary.com](http://visitcalgary.com).

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