



## **Trade Show Report**

### **Go West Summit – Anchorage, AK**

**February 27 – March 3, 2023**

#### **Montana Representation:**

- Glacier Country – Debbie Picard

#### **Overview:**

- Go West Summit gathers international and international inbound receptive tour operators and travel agencies that focus on offering tours to the 18 western states in the United States. These tour operators specialize in group travel, FIT, and fly/drive programs.
- Attendance was up from international tour operators and inbound receptive tour operators this year with a 1:1.2 buyer to supplier ratio.
- Participation was down from suppliers in the GAW region. I was the only one there from Montana. We need to have better representation from throughout the state to make an impact.
- Glacier Country was matched with 44 buyers for 12-minute appointments, the most appointments we've ever received. And the best Go West appointments I have ever had.

#### **Trends:**

- Pent up demand is real, especially out of European countries.
- National Parks and rural destinations are back to a second or third visit to the U.S., but something that first-time travelers to the U.S. are incorporating on itineraries.
- One thing hurting us is the vehicle reservation system and recreation.gov not working with U.S. international inbound tour operators to purchase for their clients.
- International visitors are attracted to Montana for our wildlife viewing, wide open spaces, scenic drives, soft adventure, our unique culture that includes cowboys and American Indians.

#### **Recommendations for 2023 and beyond:**

- Keep educating our GC partners on the international travel trade and working with international inbound (receptive) tour operators. We've added a few this year.
- We have talked about offering welcome pages on our website for our key international markets. Maybe revisit that if budget allows.
- Recognize the developing need for multi-lingual step on guides.
- Work with the state office on multi-lingual promotional materials, perhaps we can take their information on Glacier National Park and make it a one sheet we can use.
- Recommend attending Go West Summit: Lake Tahoe – February 26 – March 1, 2024.