

VISIT MENDOCINO COUNTY

From Inspiration to Overnight Stays

Connecting California Pet Parents to
Mendocino's Extraordinary Experiences



Inspire

DogTrekker.com, newsletters,
media network, social



Create the reason

Coast, redwoods, events,
packages and more



Choose the stay

Lodging search or
specific property



Book

Visit Mendocino Book
or direct



Measure

Referrals, intent, visitation



DogTrekker®

Have Dog Will Travel®



Visit Mendocino County + DogTrekker Media: The Next Chapter

From No. 1 Destination Affinity to Measurable Overnight Stays

For more than a decade, Visit Mendocino County and DogTrekker have worked together to build Mendocino County into one of California's most recognized dog-friendly travel destinations. That sustained partnership has helped move Mendocino/North Coast from outside DogTrekker's early top 20 destinations to the No. 1 California destination our readers want to visit for the past three years.

Introduction

Visit Mendocino County's new FY2026-2027 marketing plan creates an opportunity to build on that success in a very different way. The plan shifts the primary measure of marketing success to overnight visitation, with greater emphasis on specific reasons to travel, lodging conversion, direct booking paths, shoulder-season demand and measurable results.

DogTrekker Media is well positioned for that shift. We already reach a highly qualified audience of California pet parents interested in Mendocino's coast, wine country, outdoor experiences and dog-friendly lodging. The next step is to shorten the path between that established interest and an overnight stay.

The Why: the Opportunity Has Changed

The Next Phase

The next phase is not about proving that California dog parents want to visit Mendocino. It is about converting that established interest into overnight stays.

VMC's new direction: The FY2026-2027 marketing plan makes overnight visitation the primary measure of success. It calls for two regional strategies, greater specificity, direct booking paths, shoulder-season reasons to travel and stronger lodging participation.

Why DogTrekker Media is Well Positioned for This Shift

- Mendocino/North Coast has risen from outside DogTrekker's early top 20 destinations to No. 1 in the DogTrekker Reader Survey for three consecutive years
- 78% of DogTrekker readers prefer to BOOK DIRECT (DogTrekker 2024 reader survey)
- Lodging is the #1 activity that DogTrekker readers want to see on both DogTrekker.com site and newsletters (DogTrekker 2024 reader survey)
- Recent VMC and lodging campaigns have generated more than 900,000 impressions/pageviews, with expanded distribution pushing visibility beyond 1 million
- More than 12,000 campaign clicks were generated equally in FY2024-2025 to VisitMendocino.com and partner dog-friendly pages or booking engines



The Important Change

Historically, much of that qualified traffic has been sent to VisitMendocino.com or its pet-friendly page. The traveler then has to continue through additional steps before seeing lodging rates and availability. DogTrekker's audience is already self-qualified: they are actively looking for places to travel, stay and explore with their dogs. We know that, we track them.

VMC's new BookDirect lodging platform changes the conversion opportunity. Destination campaigns can now send qualified DogTrekker traffic closer to rates, availability and lodging referral, while DogTrekker's individual lodging listings can continue to provide direct property booking paths.

As a Premier Destination partner, all Mendocino dog-friendly listing pages have a booking button linking to the property's booking page. **Many partner destinations who submit dog-friendly events are automatically presented with a "Dog-friendly places to stay near this event" link adjacent to their event listings.** This "Stay by the Event" treatment will apply to all Mendocino county events.

One county, two conversations

- **Coast + Anderson Valley:** Lead DogTrekker's leisure effort with coastal beauty, lodging, wine, redwoods, beaches, trails, seasonal experiences and specific overnight trips.
- **Highway 101:** Support VMC's inland strategy with dog-friendly road-trip stops, overnight stays and connections between the Bay Area, Sacramento, the coast and points north.

The How: Shorten the Path from Inspiration to Booking

Changes to the Visit Mendocino Campaign

DogTrekker.com creates desire and confidence. DogTrekker Media creates scale. Newsletters deepen engagement. Social creates immediacy. Direct booking paths close the loop.

1. Continue marketing Mendocino on DogTrekker.com and the DogTrekker Media channels

Keep Mendocino highly visible through destination stories, regional itineraries, events, beaches, trails, wineries, attractions, dining and lodging. The goal is not less DogTrekker.com. It is stronger calls to action from that trusted planning content.

2. Use large-scale media to drive lodging intent

DogTrekker Media advertising on DogTrekker.com and across the DogTrekker Media Network, together with Paw Press updates and newsletters, remains the major reach and traffic engine.



Broad VMC lodging message → Visit Mendocino BookDirect for countywide rates/availability and dog-friendly lodging referral.

Specific property or package message → DogTrekker lodging listing and direct property booking path.

3. Follow VMC's 'specificity over generality' principle.

Build campaigns around a specific room, property, reason and season rather than generic county awareness.

- Fort Bragg/Noyo Harbor: harbor, beaches, Skunk Train, Botanical Gardens and lodging
- Mendocino/Little River: coastal getaway, trails, dining and lodging packages
- Anderson Valley: wine, food and dog-friendly weekend stays
- October-May: a continuing calendar of shoulder-season reasons to book, including events, which have not been a priority until now
- Highway 101: convenient dog-friendly road-trip stopovers and meeting marketing

4. A Case for the Inland Corridor

With the leisure traveler less a priority for the inland corridor along Highway 101, DogTrekker can assist in promoting small groups and conferences. When Visit Redding separated its leisure-facing Visit Redding website from the group- and events-focused Choose Redding website, DogTrekker was tasked with promoting lodging and events through our “Redding Retreats” program.

The target was groups attending events, corporate meetings and other group travel. The campaigns consistently drove significant engagement to the Choose Redding website.

Another important advantage DogTrekker can offer is the drive-through traveler. More than 70% of the DogTrekker audience expresses interest in traveling to Oregon, making Mendocino's inland corridor an affordable and accessible stop over for northbound or southbound travelers.

We also have an Oregon marketing initiative beginning this fall which will benefit Northern California and Mendocino County.

5. Make social the 'Why now?' engine

In 2023 DogTrekker Media created dedicated event and social media positions.

Social should support VMC's video-first, authentic-first direction rather than function mainly as another impression count. Short-form content should answer four questions quickly: Why Mendocino? Why now? What can I do? Where can I stay?

Examples:

- Three things to do with your dog in Fort Bragg this fall
- A dog-friendly Anderson Valley wine weekend
- Seafood and sips with your dog
- Ride the new Noyo Presidential Class Car from the Willits Skunk Train depot
- Three dog-friendly stops along Highway 101



While social media may not always lead directly to a booking, it plays an important role in creating another reason to visit Mendocino County and explore a trip. By connecting social content to specific itineraries, experiences and lodging, we can move engaged pet parents closer to planning an overnight stay.

Across general Mendocino County posts, broader multi-destination California travel and activity content, and posts featuring county lodging partners, last year's campaign generated more than 33,300 social interactions, providing powerful, sustained destination branding.

For 2026-2027, the DogTrekker Media social media team will work with VMC on "reason to book" events and activities that provide specific, timely reasons to book.

6. Build a lodging co-op layer

VMC's plan calls for structured co-op advertising with lodging partners and direct booking links. DogTrekker already has several lodging partners in Mendocino County that have significantly reduced campaign pricing as a result of the ongoing Visit Mendocino campaign.

Results: Keep the Scale. Measure Closer to the Stay

Impressions and Clicks Still Matter

Yes, impressions and clicks still matter, but they become the top of a more accountable conversion story. We have already shown over the past several years that DogTrekker Media can drive highly qualified visitors who travel with and without their dog (an important segment for many destinations). Next comes the reporting question: **What happens after the click?**

The Proposed 2026-2027 Scorecard

- Drive DogTrekker Media traffic to VisitMendocino.com BookDirect
- Lodging searches and outbound lodging referrals attributable to DogTrekker campaigns, where BookDirect reporting supports attribution
- Direct clicks from DogTrekker lodging listings to property booking systems
- Development of shoulder-season campaign response by region, story and offers
- Use of social engagement as supporting indicators

Revised 2026-2027 Plan

The DogTrekker Media team has reviewed the recently sent agreement in order to plan and execute the campaign as proposed in this document and in line with Visit Mendocino County's new FY2026-2027 marketing plan. Please find the details on the next page.



Premier Partner Assets & Campaign Deliverables

Long-Term Digital Asset Creation

1. Dedicated Mendocino County landing pages on DogTrekker.com, with lodging, dining, attractions and local services continually reviewed and triple-vetted for dog-friendliness.
2. Mendocino County image and link will be featured on the “Explore California” slider on the DogTrekker.com home page, as well as the “Featured Counties” slider on DogTrekker.com’s “All Destinations” landing page.
3. Continued Premier Destination status on DogTrekker.com.

Audience Activation

4. Three new display advertising campaigns:
 - a. Seasonal leisure travel to Mendocino County during fall, winter and spring.
 - b. Highway 101 corridor travel, including events, meetings and overnight stays.
 - c. Lodging-focused advertising fixed across DogTrekker listing pages, excluding existing lodging partner pages. Lodging-focused ads will link directly to BookDirect.
5. A minimum of two exclusive Mendocino County takeover newsletters, each featuring four stories built around seasonal events, activities, experiences and lodging. Appropriate lodging calls to action will link directly to Book > Direct rather than requiring readers to navigate through the VisitMendocino.com pet-friendly pages.
6. A minimum of two additional activity-focused newsletter features, such as wine, hiking, coastal activities, road trips and other seasonal experiences.
7. New Mendocino stories added to the Mendocino County and North Coast landing pages, joining the existing library of 230-plus stories that are permanent searchable digital assets. Appropriate content will include lodging calls to action.
8. Mendocino stories cross-promoted within appropriate “Things to Do” categories on DogTrekker.com.
9. All Mendocino editorial content permanently added to DogTrekker.com’s searchable archives, creating long-term digital value beyond the campaign period.
10. Priority Event promotion for major Mendocino County events, along with regular postings for other qualifying events. DogTrekker Media will work directly with VMC to develop and expand the “specific bookable reason to book per week, October through May.”
11. A minimum of 300,000 targeted display ad impressions across DogTrekker.com and the DogTrekker Media Network. Sacramento, San Francisco and San Jose are all high on the list of markets generating interest in Mendocino content. While Los Angeles is not currently a VMC paid-media target, the campaign will also touch Southern California dog parents through DogTrekker.com’s significantly expanded SoCal audience.



12. Social media integration supporting destination, seasonal, event, itinerary and lodging content, with an increased emphasis on VMC's video-first and "Why now?" strategy.
13. Continued promotion of Mendocino County animal welfare organizations and appropriate community-focused events, issues and activities.

A Completely Turnkey Campaign

The proposed \$20,000 campaign is completely turnkey, including strategy, creative, content development, media placement, optimization, social media and reporting, allowing the VMC team to remain focused on the broader implementation of its new marketing plan.

Conclusion

We salute Visit Mendocino County for the thoughtful and comprehensive work reflected in its FY2026-2027 Marketing Plan. DogTrekker Media is ready to play an important role in bringing that plan to life. Our ability to adapt campaigns to meet the changing needs and priorities of our destination partners has been a hallmark of our success.

Together, we can turn Mendocino's No. 1 destination affinity among DogTrekker readers into measurable overnight stays. Thank you for the opportunity.

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