

Prepared Statement of Carl Wilgus
State Tourism Director, Idaho Division of Tourism Development

On behalf of our 2002 Executive Committee, we're pleased to provide you with this report of our activities in connection with the staging of the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. By almost all measures Idaho's efforts were successful. A ten-point strategy was developed to provide a blueprint to gain economically, socially, and culturally from the 2002 Winter Games being held by our Southern neighbors.

We had many accomplishments, which are detailed in the report, but allow me to touch on a few of the most noteworthy:

1. Nearly 1 in 10 of the athletes who competed in the Winter Games trained and/or competed in Idaho – early marketing efforts were started to identify and solicit national Olympic teams to Idaho. A comprehensive directory of Training Sites was compiled, published, and distributed to national teams. The Directory identified critical contact information, highlighting facilities in Idaho that offered an ideal setting for training. The Sun Valley area became a true Mecca for such training, which included the likes of:

Ukrainian Biathlon & Nordic (M&W)
Norwegian Nordic (M&W)
Swedish Biathlon & Nordic (W)
Italian Alpine (M&W)
United States Alpine & Snowboard (M&W)
Liechtenstein Nordic
Slovakian Hockey (M)

2. Over 200,000 Idahoans were directly exposed to the Olympic movement through events and exhibitions — exposing the highest ideals of the Olympics to Idaho's citizens and youth through the staging of pre- and post-Olympic events proved to be one of the most fulfilling things we could have done. Over 20 events were staged in Idaho exposing many families and youth to the drama of international competition. Olympic fever hit a high point in Boise just weeks before the opening ceremonies with the 9 community stops of the Olympic Torch and record crowd of nearly 5,500 at the Bank of America Centre to witness the historic meeting of Team USA/China women's hockey teams.

3. Idaho received an economic impact of over \$100 million in the two years leading up to the Games and the year following — team training, the special exhibitions, along with visits by torch relay to Idaho, contributed millions of dollars to the Idaho economy. Several Idaho businesses large and small took advantage of procurement opportunities and pumped tens of millions of dollars into the Idaho economy.

Such companies included:

Washington Groups — Highway Construction
A- Company — Portable Toilets
Fleetwood Homes — Trailers
Idaho Sowing for Sports Inc. — Protective Padding
Jytte Mau — Specialty Knit hats
Cascade Raft Company — Drivers and Vans

Add in the revenue generated by Salt Lake City bound visitors who stopped on the way to or from the Games to enjoy Idaho, and the thousands of Utah residents who were enticed by our advertising campaigns to escape the crowds of Games and come to Idaho. All our Southern Idaho ski resorts reported increased numbers of vehicles in their parking lots with Utah plates. The University of Utah's basketball and track and field teams set up temporary training camps in Pocatello during the Games because they were displaced from the University.

4. Boise was permanently awarded the Olympic cauldron that carried the Olympic flame across the country, in recognition of the "enthusiasm, spirit, and participation" it exhibited during the National Torch Relay – the torch relay began in Atlanta covered 13,500 miles in a span of 65 days. Some 11,500 torchbearers carried the Olympic flame. When all was said and done of the more than 100 communities visited Boise was selected by the Salt Lake Olympic Committee as the outstanding torch relay community and permanently awarded the Olympic Torch cauldron. Just for your information, the cauldron is on display at World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame on the campus of Boise State University.

5. Idaho's travel and tourism was significantly helped in the wake of 9/11, largely as a result of the efforts connected with the Winter Olympics – the establishment of the Western States Discovery Center, a three-state (Idaho, Utah, and Nevada) visitor center on Main Street, proved to be an excellent way to communicate with more than 65,000 Olympic attendees. Eleven computers provided online access to the Internet so visitors to the center could send e-mail postcards to their friends and family at home. Over 7,500 postcards were sent from the booth during the Games. We also conducted three special "Idaho Days" featuring Idaho icons like Spuddy Buddy, the Junior Jammers, and the Sho-ban Tribal Dancers.

We are pleased that so many Idaho families and school children were personally touched by the spirit of the Olympics. The efforts of the many businesses, volunteers, and State agencies that helped our State benefit from this significant event is greatly appreciated by the Committee and the many families throughout the State that were touched by the Olympic movement.