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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington Wine Country Funds City Revitalization *Banner Campaign Spreads Far and Wide*

SEATTLE, Wash. — (February 7, 2008) — Washington Wine Country, a non-profit organization dedicated to wine-related tourism and economic development in Washington state's wine country, announces three new grant recipients from their City Revitalization Fund. Now in its third year, the Fund awards grants to support Eastern Washington "wine town" revitalization projects that inject a wine country theme.

The Historic Downtown Prosser Association, the Wenatchee Downtown Association and the combined application from the Yakima Valley Visitors and Convention Bureau and the City of Yakima received matching grants totaling \$10,975 to provide the resources to erect street banners throughout major tourist areas. The banners carry Washington Wine Country's "Perfectly Balanced" campaign promoting the region as one of the top wine producing destinations in the nation. The entire campaign to date delivers over 62 million "viewings" each year by city, street, highway and visitor traffic.

As stipulated by the City Revitalization Fund, the recipients leveraged the grant monies by providing a local match for their projects. Such merchant and city organization cooperation comes as good news to Washington Wine Country.

"The impact of the Perfectly Balanced banner and billboard campaign in Eastern Washington has been phenomenal," said Janet Leduc, Founding Director of Washington Wine Country. "Each year, three-quarters of a billion dollars are spent on travel in the region. The banners remind travelers that they are in the midst of one of our state's rapidly growing treasures, its world-class wine country."

In Prosser, approximately 25 Washington Wine Country banners will be hung by this summer. The Historic Downtown Association plans to expand the wine country theme that exists in other areas of Prosser to their downtown core where visitor traffic is ever increasing.

The Wenatchee Downtown Association developed a banner combining Washington Wine Country's "Perfectly Balanced" campaign with art from their Taste of the Harvest event. Fifty of the banners will be on display in their downtown streets in time for the 2008 harvest event.

At least sixty banners will be installed along both sides of North First Street in Yakima. "North First Street is a major North arterial into the city core," said John Cooper, President and CEO of the Yakima Valley VCB. "It's our hope that this banner project will help 'jump start' more initiatives among the business owners and neighborhood to improve the corridor."

Yakima was the first to adopt the banner campaign in 2005 along Yakima Avenue and parts of downtown. Until now, there has not been an association to undertake the project for the North First Street area. The VCB and city are installing the banners on behalf of the community.

Formed in 2003, Washington Wine Country is a non-profit association of Eastern Washington businesses promoting wine-related tourism, economic development and recognition of the world-class wine-growing region comprising the Yakima Valley, Columbia Valley, Walla Walla Valley and Red Mountain, and the newer appellations of the Columbia Gorge, Horse Heaven Hills, Wahluke Slope and the Rattlesnake Hills. For more information visit www.winecountrywashington.org.

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