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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Mammoth Lakes Food Bank Serves More Than 37,000 in 14 Weeks**

Mammoth Lakes, Calif. (July 13, 2020) — On June 26, 2020, after 14 weeks of operation, Mammoth Lakes Tourism wrapped up its community food bank amid the reopening of many business segments in town. In total the food bank served 10,312households containing 37,054 persons with 25,000 bags of food during its time of operation.

Additionally, 196 volunteers gave their time at the food bank, donating nearly 3,500 hours to keep things running smoothly.

“It was so gratifying to see how the community pulled together to help each other,” said MLT Board Treasurer Rhonda Duggan. “With so much uncertainty about how COVID-19 would impact our residents and visitors, relieving the stress of how to feed our families seemed like the right thing to do. It started as a two-week commitment and grew into 14 weeks, through rain, snow, wind, and finally sunshine. Through all that time, the donations from locals, businesses, second homeowners, friends, and strangers kept coming.”

The food bank initiative began when the Mammoth Lakes Tourism Board of Directors decided it wanted to do something to support the local tourism industry as things were shutting down in town due to coronavirus. The organization wanted to make sure it helped keep tourism workers taken care of so they could remain in town. The food bank opened on March 23.

“When our MLT board looked at how we could best serve our business community, the food bank was almost instantly the best option,” said MLT Executive Director John Urdi. “In order for our workforce to survive, food would be a critical resource that would be difficult for many to afford. Within days we were able to formulate a plan, US Foods stepped up to provide food at cost, Paul and Kathleen Rudder offered what turned out to be the perfect location in the Promenade at Main Street, the volunteers immediately signed up to help, and cash donations from around the state poured in to assist our efforts to help sustain our workforce. To say the effort was well received by our community is an understatement.”

A huge thanks goes out to everyone involved in the food bank whether through donation, volunteer time, support, and everything else.

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