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Beach Renourishment Key to Protecting Tourism

Duane Parrish

Director, SC Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism

We're proud to serve as the administrative agency for the \$30 million [Beach Renourishment Funding Assistance Grant Program](#) made available in the State Appropriations Act of 2016-17 to help our coastal communities recover from last fall's historic flood.

Our state leaders wisely recognized that beaches are at the heart of South Carolina's \$19.1 billion tourism industry, accounting for significant tax collections, employment and South Carolina's rock-star reputation as a great place to visit ... but only if they continue to provide exceptional experiences.

The six coastal counties account for about 68 percent of all state and local taxes generated by visitor spending annually and 75

August 31, 2016

Statewide RevPAR -- RevPAR for June 2016 is slightly ahead of prior year's. Overall, RevPAR continues to outperform last year's business.

Admissions Tax -- Admissions Tax collections for June are 7.8% greater than the previous year.

State Parks Revenue -- Camping rentals were down in June, but overall, State Parks generated a record fiscal year for revenue, surpassing \$28 million for the first time.

Deplanements

Charleston International Airport leads other major airports in the state with a 10% increase in deplanements over June 2015. YTD, deplanements in South Carolina are up 8.7%.

Occupancy Forecast

STR, Inc., predicts little change in fall occupancy in 2016, with the exception of October which, when compared to business disruption in October 2015 due to flooding, likely will report an increase.

SCPRT Accepting Letters of Intent for Undiscovered SC Grant Program

Due by 4:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 3

The historic Garvin House under rehabilitation in Bluffton was awarded an Undiscovered SC Grant in the last cycle. The home is believed to have been built around 1870 by freedman Cyrus Garvin, a former slave of a local plantation, and will help interpret the Gullah Geechee culture of the region. Credit: Town of Bluffton

The 2016-17 grant cycle for the Undiscovered SC Grant Program, which

percent of the state's accommodations tax collections.

The top three counties for tourism business in South Carolina - Horry, Charleston and Beaufort - combined, accounted for 59 percent of the state's travel expenditures, \$1.3 billion in payroll income and 741,000 jobs from traveler spending.

These communities also are consistently ranked among the top of their class by the readers of national and international travel publications like Conde Nast and Travel+Leisure; and they further lift the state onto the world marketplace through televised major events like the RBC Heritage on Hilton Head and the Volvo Car Open in Charleston.

The return on investment makes renourishment funding more than worthy. We are happy to do our part to continue supporting the heart of the industry and helping it grow.

Reminders!

Advertise in the DISCOVER Guide

SCPRT is currently accepting advertising for the 2017 DISCOVER Guide. Rate card and specifications can be found at this [link](#). Space is limited and is available on a first-come first-served basis. The deadline to reserve your space is Friday, Sept. 23.

Save the Date!

The annual Governor's Conference on Tourism and Travel will be held Feb. 20-22, 2017 at the [Spartanburg Marriott](#). The Governor's Conference is the largest annual gathering of tourism industry professionals in the state and provides a business

assists with the development of publicly owned tourism products and attractions in South Carolina, is now open. SCPRT is accepting letters of intent until 4:30 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 3.

Through the grant, SCPRT will assist in the creation or expansion of viable tourism products with the potential to add value to their communities. The grants can help cover the implementation of existing plans and the expansion or enhancements of existing tourism product.

The applicant must be a county or municipal government with Accommodations Tax distributions of \$550,000 or less, according to data released by the SC. State Treasurer's Office.

For details about the program, click [here](#).

STAR Grant Program Now Accepting Applications Year-round

The Quidditch World Cup was held in Rock Hill in 2015 and Columbia (Irmo) in 2016.

SCPRT's Sports Tourism Advertising and Recruitment Grant program is now accepting applications year-round for both hosting and bidding assistance, and qualified entities, applying through their local governments, can use a single application.

Hosting applications can only be submitted between 270-90 days before the event's start date. For Bidding applications, only successful bids for new sports events in South Carolina qualify, and those applications must be submitted within 180 days of the signed letter of intent from the Rights Holder recognizing a partnership between the Rights Holder / Event Organization and the hosting destination.

Grants are provided on a 1:1 match basis, up to \$50,000 per event, for common sporting event recruitment and hosting costs such as bid fees, event advertising and equipment rentals.

The purpose of the grant program is to provide financial assistance to nonprofit tourism or sports-related organizations, applying through their respective local government, for the recruitment of new sporting events in South Carolina that will generate a significant additional economic impact to local communities through participant and visitor spending.

For complete guidelines and an application, click [here](#).

setting for educational sessions and networking. Registration should begin in November and will be available at www.SCGovCon.com.

SCPRT Launches New Corporate Website

Taking cues from industry partners and website users, the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism recently updated its corporate website at SCPRT.com. The new design helps improve access to the agency and its public service, and makes it easier for frequent visitors as well as newcomers to navigate the volume of data.

Industry partners who regularly search for services like grants, research and construction bids will find quick links in a utility navigation bar at the top of the homepage. Browsers who know very little about the agency have a more intuitively organized structure to find precisely what they want, including job vacancies and procurement opportunities. There's also a Twitter feed that publishes business news on the parks, recreation and tourism industries. The website is compatible with iPads, smartphones and other devices.

The upgrade also makes it easier for industry partners to manage their product assets in SCPRT's Enterprise database. The "Partner Log-in" and "Become a Partner" portals have been streamlined and automated.

Like most websites, SCPRT.com will be a living, editable platform that can adjust to the industry's needs. SCPRT is committed to keeping the content up-to-date and relevant in order to fully serve the parks, recreation and tourism industries.

Ultimate Outsiders Celebrated by State Parks

More than 160 Ultimate Outsiders attended a reunion picnic hosted by the SC State Park Service.

The State Park Service treated its Ultimate Outsiders to a catered cookout and Fun Day at Lake Greenwood State Park last week to celebrate their achievements. Ultimate Outsiders are families and individuals who have visited and learned something from each of South Carolina's 47 state parks. Currently, there are more than 230 registered Ultimate Outsiders with the Park Service and more than 160 of them showed up for the picnic.

They were treated to activities, games and prizes, and the outdoor adventure store Cabela's provided paddling on Lake Greenwood.

The [Ultimate Outsider](#) program invites people to visit all state parks (plus eight National Park Service sites in South Carolina this year to celebrate NPS'

100th anniversary) and to win prizes when they complete the task.

Huntington Beach to Host Annual Atalaya Arts & Crafts Festival

"Roanoke Marsh Lighthouse" by Pawleys Island photographer James Hilliard. Hilliard will be one of more than 100 artists participating in the Atalaya Arts & Crafts Festival.

Masters of canvas, wood, glass and other media will showcase and sell their unique creations at the 41st Annual [Atalaya Arts & Crafts Festival](#), Friday through Sunday, Sept. 23-25, on the picturesque grounds of Huntington Beach State Park.

Hosted in the historic home, Atalaya, the festival will run from noon to 6 p.m. on Friday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. The historic home was built in the 1930s by New York industrialist and philanthropist Archer Huntington for his sculptor wife, Anna Hyatt, as a winter home and studio.

More than 100 artists will fill the rooms in Atalaya, showcasing wearable fabric, jewelry, metal, pottery, acrylic paintings and other fine art. They hail from Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia.

Food and live entertainment will be offered in the courtyard of Atalaya.

The daily festival admission fee is \$8 for adults, with multi-day passes available for \$10, and free for attendees who are 15 years old or younger. Free festival admission is also available for Park Passport Plus holders and three guests. Admission to the park during the festival is free for everyone. Tickets are currently available for purchase online at [AtalayaFestival.com](#).

Festival organizers kindly request attendees to refrain from bringing dogs or other pets to the festival. Please also note that stroller and wheelchair access can be difficult due to uneven surfaces, stairs, crowds and narrow hallways.

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