Planning for Tourism: NC Eco-Tourism Opportunities

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Tourism by the Numbers

1. World’s largest industry with nearly 700 million international tourist arrivals and total revenues of $475.8 billion

2. NC is the 6th most visited state in US

3. 2008 NC visitor spending contributed $16.9 billion to state’s economy

4. 2008 NC tourism industry employs 190,000 people

5. Contribution of tourism to local taxes in 2008 was $542.3 million

6. 53% travelers in a recent TripAdvisor survey stated they will go hiking in 2009, up from 50 percent last year

7. 3.1% and 32%: Growth between 2000 and 2007 in total number of adults engaging in nature based tourism and number of days spent

From Ken Cordell [http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/sustainabletourism/upload/Ken-Cordell.pdf](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/sustainabletourism/upload/Ken-Cordell.pdf)
NC’s Main Strengths vs. Competitors

People visit North Carolina for it’s *Natural and Scenic Beauty*

- Offers a diversity of landscapes
- Beautiful fall colors
- Great for outdoor adventure sports
- Truly beautiful scenery
- Natural, unspoiled scenic beauty
- Great for professional/college sports
- Good weather in the summer
- A good contrast of seasons
- Good trail system
- Great for golfers

Diagram showing the difference in percent who strongly agree with each statement.
What Makes Good Tourism

Although similar, needs of tourists are not the same needs as locals

- Restrooms, parking, safety
- What’s New?
  - Does the trail convey a unique story?
  - Does it play and does it sell?
- Does it connect?
  - Can I get to multiple places from there?
  - Does it lead me somewhere else?
- Do people know how to get there?
  - Is the trail marked and have mileage information?
  - Do you have a web site? Is that site web mobile ready?

Can you make money with it?

- Does the trail generate revenue?
- How does the trail contribute to increasing visitor spending?
  - If I use your trail, park, or lake, where can I spend money?
“The average tourists wants to go to places where there are no tourists”  Sam Ewing

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Center for Sustainable Tourism: Serving the Region, State and Nation.
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