



MEDIA RELEASE

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Northeast Commission**
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Hub and Spoke Marketing Attracts Group Visitors *North Carolina's Northeast Commission sponsors new website*

Edenton, NC – Regional tourism in North Carolina's Northeast received an economic boost toward the development of Hub and Spoke group tour marketing. A recent grant from the NC Rural Center provided funding for a new regional tourism website found at www.visitncne.com, as well as funds for published marketing materials centered around the Hub and Spoke theme, and finally, funding for group tour familiarization tours targeted to group tour operators.

Hub and Spoke marketing encourages visitors to begin at one of the larger towns in the region where 50 people can stay together in hotels and eat together at restaurants, then provides options for visiting two to three smaller towns within an hour drive of each hub. This "Hub & Spoke" concept allows small towns to reap the benefits brought by a group of travelers spending the day in the small town. By encouraging day trips to more rural areas, Hub and Spoke marketing provides tourists with the opportunity to visit the local attractions, spend money in the local shops, and become more familiar with all the region has to offer.

The new regional website helps tourists and locals plan their trips through the region and provides an easy way to access information about the many historic sites and interesting activities throughout the entire 16-county region. The website includes tourist information about all 16 counties in North Carolina's Northeast. Rather than focusing on tourism sites within each separate county, this website connects the 16 counties into one region and demonstrates that there are multiple destinations within the region. This is especially helpful to the more rural areas that can be overshadowed easily by the more well-known destinations within the region.

North Carolina's Northeast Region relies on tourism to support our local economy, and Hub and Spoke marketing expands that impact to the rural areas. Bus trips are affordable ways of vacationing, and North Carolina's Northeast is taking advantage of this by marketing the region to group tour operators. "Improving the economy of North Carolina's Northeast Region takes a multi-faceted approach," stated Vann Rogerson, President/CEO of North Carolina's Northeast Commission. "As we work together to diversify our economy and increase the capacity for new jobs, we must include tourism as an important part of economic development."

For additional information about tourism in North Carolina's Northeast Region, visit www.visitncne.com or www.ncnortheast.com.

About North Carolina's Northeast Commission:

North Carolina's Northeast Commission is dedicated to increasing the standard of living for citizens in its sixteen-county region through tourism, industrial, and business development. The 16 counties that comprise the regional Commission are: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington. For more information about the North Carolina's Northeast Commission, contact us at www.ncnortheast.com and www.visitncne.com.



Charlotte Underwood, Nancy Nicholls, Sara Lilley Phelps, and Penny Leary-Smith are members of Northeast Tourism (NET), and represented North Carolina's Northeast at the American Bus Association Conference designed for group tour operators. NET is working to bring group tours into the region.



Sara Lilley Phelps, Chair of Northeast Tourism (NET), and Nancy Nicholls, past NET chair, at the American Bus Association Conference.

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