



## PARTNER & INDUSTRY RELATIONS UPDATES

September 14, 2023

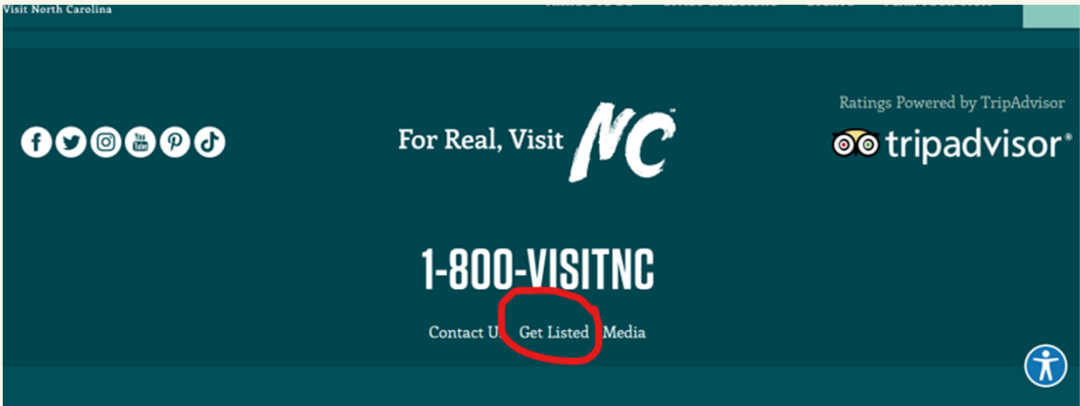


## Today's updates include

- VisitNC.com Database
- Consumer and Retire NC tradeshow
- Civil War site markers
- Evolution of TRAC
- Sports Marketing
- Outdoor NC 2.0
- Tourism Exchange
- Upcoming marketing program for Guides
- Outdoor Economy Conference



New



**Guidelines for Inclusion & Get Listed**

Located at the bottom of each webpage on VisitNC.com, people can click on “Get Listed” to find the Guidelines for Inclusion, along with the appropriate local tourism person to contact regarding updating or getting a listing.

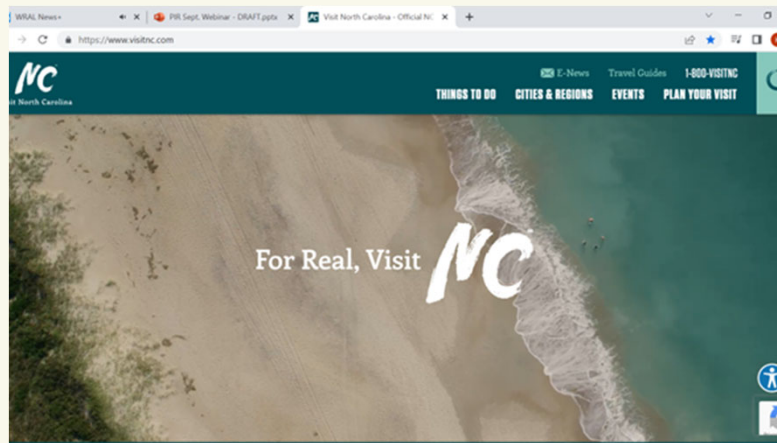
Before we last overhauled VisitNC.com and its database, we looked at how people were using the website, such as what individual listings they were viewing. Far and away, the most viewed listings were attractions. As we knew then – and it’s even more relevant today -- a potential visitor has so many ways to find information, we wanted VisitNC.com to be THE place someone would go to first. With the website, we’ve been striving to have the best attractions and events for any particular area, those sites and activities that would be the inspiration for a visit.

So with that in mind, we updated the Guidelines for Inclusion. These can be found via “Get Listed” located at the bottom on any VisitNC.com webpage.

For Events: 25% of the attendees would travel at least 50 miles just to attend that event.

For other listings, those sites and activities that are the top attractions for that area. And we want to have a strong listing, especially the description, to support why someone would want to travel at least 50 miles *just to visit that specific site* (vs. a place to stop by once already there). The point is to initially catch the interest of a potential visitor with the best, then they can click-thru to the local DMO's website to see what else is there.

Also via Get Listed, someone can find the appropriate local tourism contact. For many years, we have relied on our DMO contacts to maintain and update the listings for their respective areas. This provides us a valuable point person who's going to know their area better than we could, but also so the DMO has the correct information, too.



VisitNC.com  
Kathy Prickett  
(919) 447-7769, [kathy.prickett@visitnc.com](mailto:kathy.prickett@visitnc.com)

Kathy is happy to do a one-on-one database training with any DMO database contact, whether as a refresher or for a new database user. If a DMO is interested, please contact her (information is above on the slide) to discuss and to set up a time for a visit.



### TRAC Evolution –

- New name and format for TRAC, to Destination Emerging Sessions: Staff will come to your area for a FAM and meet with the DMO to discuss all the VisitNC programs and how we can assist with promoting your area. Kathy Prickett will be heading this program moving forward. Stay tuned as we'll have more information to come.

### Civil War Trails –

- We're in the process of reprinting the brochure (completely out of guides at the moment). With that we want to be sure we have all sites sponsored (\$200/yr) by a TDA or local historical society. If you have a marker in your area or have a potential site to add reach out to Andre Nabors or Drew Gruber at CWT Inc. Unfortunately, any markers that do not have a sponsor will not be on the brochure and CWT Inc. will come in to collect the marker. NC currently has 228 markers in 79 counties.

### Civil Rights Trail –

- In partnership with NCAAHC, we are developing the NC Civil Rights Trail. There's still time to send in an application for the NC Civil Rights Trail. Deadline is Sept. 30. There may be another round of application process in January but will depend on how many apps are received in Sept.

Applications can be found on the AAHC website, [www.aahc.nc.gov](http://www.aahc.nc.gov).

Currently there are 27 markers on the trail. The goal is to have 40+. The markers are courtesy of the William G. Pomeroy Foundation. Once complete the entire NC Trail will be part of the US Civil Rights Trail in conjunction with Travel South.

- NC is in the process of completing a 3-series podcast on the NC Civil Rights Trail.

## 2024 Consumer & Retire Shows

- **Travel & Adventure Shows – \$850 per partner; open to six (6) partners**

- \* New York, NY | January 27-28, 2024 (Full)
- \* Washington, DC | February 24-25, 2024 (Full)
- \* Atlanta, GA | March 9-10, 2024 (3 spots available)

(These shows bring approximately 8,000 to 20,000 participants)

- **Retire NC Expos - \$350 per partner; open to (3) partners**

- Greater NJ – January 13-14
- Greater NY – Feb. 3-4
- Greenwich, CT. – Feb. 17-18
- Greater DC – Feb. 24-25



- Travel & Adventure Shows –

Show fill up very fast so the NYC and DC shows are full. ATL is still available with 3 open spots.

Planning for 2025 shows so if you are interested, please reach out to Andre Nabors ASAP.

- Retire NC –

Open until full. Deadline is Sept. 27

There's no cost to attend for those who are part of the Certified Retirement Community program.

Want more information on the application process for Retire NC, please reach out to Andre Nabors





Sports NC is a part of the family of brands within Visit NC.

Visit North Carolina works to capitalize on hosting sports events in the state by focusing its resources on marketing the state as an attractive destination for both event organizers and athletes. Through partnership with the North Carolina Sports Association and N.C. Amateur Sports, North Carolina works as a team to promote the state's assets under the brand SportsNC.

One way we do this is through SportsNC.com.

DMO partners are eligible for a listing on [SportsNC.com](https://SportsNC.com) at no cost. Listings target sports events organizers and rights holders. They include a header image, paragraph about the destination for sports event planners, organization website, sports landing page link, contact info, 3 venues with links and 4 facility/sports photos.

Any DMO that is interested in adding or updating their listing on

SportsNC.com contact me at [amanda.baker@visitnc.com](mailto:amanda.baker@visitnc.com).

**sportsnc** WHY NC PARTNERS **ESPORTS** NEWS **SUBMIT AN RFP**

# ESPORTS EVENTS AND INCENTIVES IN NC

*Photo: Raleigh, NC; David Kuhn*

[S 105 \(SL 2021-180\) - establishing legislation](#)

[H 334 \(SL 2021-198\) – technical correction to establishing legislation](#)

[Download a combined version of establishing legislation & modifications \(as of December 1, 2021\)](#)  
Projects are ineligible if containing material that is "obscene," as defined in [G.S. 14-190.1](#), or is "harmful to minors," as defined in [G.S. 14-190.13](#).

The state has also established an Esports Industry Grant Fund. North Carolina's Esports incentive, a 25% rebate on qualifying Esports expenses and purchases while in-state, demonstrates North Carolina's long-term commitment to the Esports community and industry.

It's the first of its kind. You can download the combined version of establishing legislation & modifications on SportsNC.com.

After the legislation was established. It was given to the Department of Commerce to manage. As a contractor of the Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Partnership of NC under the SportsNC brand is marketing the rebate, collecting and sharing the completed applications with Commerce, and I'm acting as the liaison between commerce and the applicants. I'm your contact should you or your future events have any questions about the grant.

Commerce is who ultimately approves and denies the applications.

It's important to note this funding is discretionary. In addition to the application process, there is a review process, and if awarded their will be about 20 other steps including a signing of contracts between Commerce and the awardee to bind the agreement.

If you're interested in attracting esports events to your destination, please review the info on [SportsNC.com](https://SportsNC.com) under the esports tab and reach out to schedule a time to discuss in more detail.

## WHAT IS OUTDOOR NC?

OUTDOOR **NC**<sup>SM</sup>

In 2020 Visit North Carolina and the N.C. Outdoor Recreation Industry Office entered a partnership with Leave No Trace to help maintain outdoor experiences and manage natural assets for future generations, called Outdoor NC.



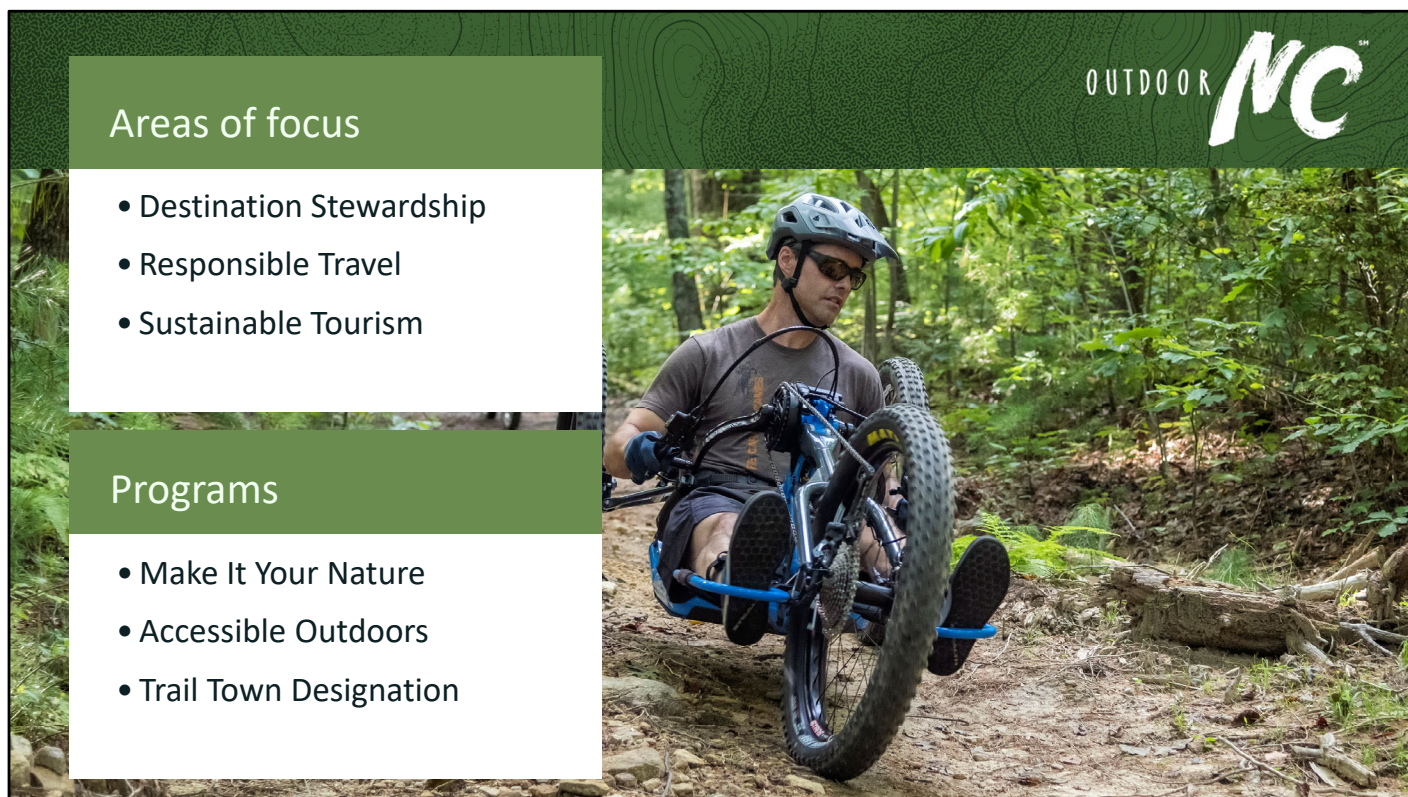
Outdoor NC is a part of the family of brands within Visit NC.

In 2020 Visit North Carolina and the N.C. Outdoor Recreation Industry Office entered a partnership with Leave No Trace to help maintain outdoor experiences and manage natural assets for future generations. We called this program Outdoor NC.

North Carolina was the first coastal state to partner with Leave No Trace, the nonprofit dedicated to protecting the outdoors and inspiring people to use it responsibly. Our partnership with Leave No Trace was imperative to this initiative. With their 25 years of research and education, they have brought authority and credibility to our program.

This has been a partner led responsible travel initiative designed to educate and inspire visitors and residents to recreate responsibly.





We are expanding the Outdoor NC initiative to further enhance industry partnerships, destination stewardship, and visitor experiences.

- Destination stewardship which brings together community allies to find a balance between residents' quality of life and visitors experience.
- Responsible travel which encourages visitors to balance enjoyment of local heritage and nature with respect for community assets.
- Sustainable tourism which emphasizes industry operations that balance economic returns with social responsibility and environmental conservation.

**Make It Your Nature:** This is our legacy program in partnership with

Leave No Trace. This is an annual membership-based program with multiple tier levels with varying incentives pricing ranging from \$300-\$4,000. Our goal is to inspire visitor to change behaviors to be more mindful of recreating responsibly. Over 25 organizations have joined the movement. If you'd like more information about joining the movement, give a shout out in the chat or send me an email. In addition to an updated toolkit, we have new opportunities including signage infrastructure, clean-up kits, sweepstakes and more!



Save the date

OUTDOOR **NC**

Friday, November 3 – Currituck Maritime Museum, Corolla  
Monday, November 6 – Surf City Welcome Center  
Tuesday, November 7 – Smithfield Recreation & Aquatics Center  
Wednesday, November 29 - Blowing Rock Art and History Museum  
Friday, December 1 - Nantahala Outdoor Center

**\*\*Registration Required**

In the Fall of 2023, Outdoor NC is launching a series of free continuing education workshops that are designed specifically for North Carolina TDA/DMO partners.

These free workshops for DMOs will:

- Give you the opportunity to learn more about Outdoor NC 2.0 programs
- Dive into emerging tourism trends
- Hear insightful case studies on accessible outdoors, destination stewardship and responsible visitation

- Get a preview of practical tools and resources to help advance your stewardship activities

These full day workshops (10am-4:30pm) will be held in each region of the state, and we encourage our partners to bring a cohort of colleagues to join in.

Lunch will be included.

Participation in the workshops will bring TDA/DMO partners one step closer to being recognized in a new specialized stewardship visitor guide that will be launched in 2024.

Encourage you to arrive early or stay late to enjoy the outdoors.

**Registration required**



**Outdoor NC Guide Custom Trainer Course: The Subaru/Leave No Trace team will conduct a 2-day, 16-hour course with a select group of guides from across North Carolina. This course will not only provide guides with an in-depth overview of the skills associated with Leave No Trace, but it will also prepare them to teach the newly developed Outdoor NC Guide Workshop. There is a limited number of spots available for this summit.**

Helping our guides to be equipped the tools to be good stewards of our natural spaces and educate visitors. Helping visitors have a richer experience and stronger connection to the NC outdoors. This will also assist our efforts to recognize and promote tour guides and outfitters as one of our state's tourism assets. If you have a guide or guide business in your destination, you'd think would be great for this opportunity shoot me an email at [amanda.baker@visitnc.com](mailto:amanda.baker@visitnc.com) .



Visit NC is excited to announce a new program in partnership Travel South USA and Tourism Exchange USA that is designed to help travel businesses grow their online bookings and grow international visitation to the United States. Tourism Exchange USA is a B2B digital marketplace that connects inventory and availability from tourism businesses with a diverse marketplace of Online Travel Agency (OTAs), travel distributors and international buyers. The goal of this program is to help businesses increase their distribution and online visibility, including helping offline businesses with making inventory bookable online for the first time.



## Introduction: What We Want to Accomplish Together

1. Create value for travel businesses with TXUSA toolkit via supplier onboarding
2. Set up interested Destinations as distributors to leverage bookable supplier inventory
3. Enable access to first-party transaction data for Destinations
4. Launch the National Travel Trade Portal powered by BrandUSA to expand reach of local businesses with international travel buyers
5. Continue to expand platform connectivity to increase value for suppliers, distributors and DMOs
6. Create a virtuous cycle of growth while expanding the equity of international travels economic impact



- Tourism Exchange is a B2B platform – Business to Business
- By 2025, it is forecasted that 74% of all global travel will be booked online
- Less than 50% of activities and curated experiences are currently available through online booking channels
- The Travel South region of 12-states goal is to make 10,000 businesses across the South available online by the end of 2025
- These businesses will assure we expand our sales partners across the world, develop domestic and international online bookings for small, often minority-owned businesses, and develop strong first-party data for retargeting and efficient marketing.

- Our collective goal is to disperse domestic and international travelers across the expanse of the South
- In YOUR states – this platform will allow consumers worldwide to explore neighborhoods in cities, journey to small towns and outdoor recreation that currently are not easily bookable.

# Introduction to Tourism Exchange USA

Hopefully you were able to attend the DMO webinar. If not, here is the link to view.

Passcode is **y#2Uo#6**

[https://milespartnership.zoom.us/rec/component-page?action=viewdetailpage&sharelevel=meeting&useWhichPasswd=meeting&clusterId=aw1&componentName=need-password&meetingId=3HgDFFE0SiW07Lg4ejYpKDsgf8jTT8JzbP64jtZ7KvJppWJJyd8mhHGILKa-wt3.a-JfeLKRzMILYQpu&originRequestUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fmilespartnership.zoom.us%2Frec%2Fshare%2FqfBoEbjvuRbsUxIMzzrKvH5PYi9hDOFuLDp0dSihWx7s7LZzU\\_cGqoiXch2BgODC.gUzNFgK46zd84FDD](https://milespartnership.zoom.us/rec/component-page?action=viewdetailpage&sharelevel=meeting&useWhichPasswd=meeting&clusterId=aw1&componentName=need-password&meetingId=3HgDFFE0SiW07Lg4ejYpKDsgf8jTT8JzbP64jtZ7KvJppWJJyd8mhHGILKa-wt3.a-JfeLKRzMILYQpu&originRequestUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fmilespartnership.zoom.us%2Frec%2Fshare%2FqfBoEbjvuRbsUxIMzzrKvH5PYi9hDOFuLDp0dSihWx7s7LZzU_cGqoiXch2BgODC.gUzNFgK46zd84FDD)

*(contact Heidi Walters or Kathy Prickett if need link)*

# WHAT IS TOURISM EXCHANGE?



- ▶ The Exchange is a B2B digital tourism marketplace that facilitates the real-time exchange of live inventory and content between suppliers and distributors around the world.
- ▶ It is an established PaaS product partnered with national tourism organizations in Australia, Japan, Great Britain and has several more markets coming online, including the USA.
- ▶ The Exchange helps source new product for globally recognized OTAs, including Priceline, Expedia, TripAdvisor/Viator, Google, and Ctrip.
- ▶ The Exchange provides support and resources for independent suppliers who have not been available for online booking previously, or who lack access to digital distribution.





## System Roles: Participants in the Exchange

You'll hear reference to these participant types in documentation and during the setup process.

- **Suppliers:** Travel businesses, including accommodations, activities, experiences, rentals, etc. Also referred to as providers in some instances.
- **Distributors:** There are two different types:
  - 1) Online travel technology like OTAs and travel content websites (media companies, DMOs),
  - 2) Tour operators, travel agents and other buyers/packagegers.
- **Aggregators:** Travel technology products that supply bulk inventory to the Exchange. Priceline Partner Network is an example.
- **Destinations:** DMOs (national, regional, state, local) and related organizations who are responsible for promoting and managing tourism.



# VALUE CREATION ACROSS THE ECOSYSTEM



## SUPPLIERS

(Hotels, Tours, Attractions & Events)

- ▶ Grows visibility and revenue through convenient access to global distribution partners
- ▶ Connects to TXUSA through existing booking system or TXLoad inventory manager
- ▶ Directly manages content & pricing
- ▶ No upfront costs



## DISTRIBUTOR

(OTAs, TOUR OPERATORS & AGENTS)

- ▶ Sources new product for free
- ▶ Secures access to product across sectors in more markets
- ▶ Opportunities to work with destinations to create new types of campaigns
- ▶ Unique distributor data reported in dashboard



## NATIONAL/ REGIONAL DMO

- ▶ Lead domestic and international markets
- ▶ Proactively improve reach and equity of international product development
- ▶ Create a 'global' view of your destination's industry distribution dynamics
- ▶ Understand efficacy of campaigns either with distributors (e.g. Expedia) or owned digital campaigns



## LOCAL DMO

- ▶ Provides impactful tools for local suppliers
- ▶ Provides suppliers with connectivity to international distribution
- ▶ Supports greater equity and visibility for independent, rural and BIPOC suppliers
- ▶ Activates local information centers with bookable product



## CONNECTING SUPPLIERS TO DISTRIBUTORS

The Exchange will accelerate the development and global distribution of U.S. tourism products by increasing the volume, reach and diversity of available suppliers.

These are some of the current distribution partner connections.



Tourism Exchange USA allows businesses that aren't currently digitally enabled to get their tourism products online and make them bookable, opening access to domestic and global visitors and making destinations more compelling for prospective visitors.

Tourism Exchange USA allows businesses that don't currently have digital distribution to connect to some of the most popular global distributors from one platform, including Google, Expedia and TripAdvisor/Viator, democratizing access to global consumers.

- Get better visibility into how marketing efforts drive interest and transactions, including first-party transaction data from your market
- Create new revenue streams for your organization (non-tax, non-dues) by participating as a unique, low-cost distribution channel for your community
- Directly support community businesses with tools that convert offline bookings to online bookings with no upfront costs for the business
- Support tourism business growth by driving campaigns directly to potential transactions with your industry partners without favoring suppliers in specific channels
- Create greater visibility for authentic destination experiences and accommodations by integrating transactional CTAs with inspirational destination content on your website
- Take more control over international product and itinerary development by expanding availability of smaller businesses that have been excluded from traditional tour operator contracting
- Improve the equity and distribution of travel's economic impact by supporting more diverse suppliers, including secondary markets and rural areas that are frequently under-represented in international marketing



## Creating Impact: New Strategic Opportunities for DMOs and Communities

New avenue to market your partners and their products/services to both domestic and international audiences.

Low cost of entry. 3.5% commission on each booking. Much lower than the traditional 30% by conventional receptive operators.

Suppliers will get paid at the time of booking, not after the stay/use.

By getting more of our suppliers on board, our visitors will have a more authentic experience. The smaller suppliers can utilize the use of marketing by integrating CTAs.

Tourism Exchange will be featured at TSUSA Int'l Showcase and at the annual Visit NC Tourism Conference.



The VNC team is currently researching a program focused on getting more visitors to use our guides to enhance their vacation experience. It will be much like Oregon's Why Guides program. Not only for outdoor guides, but also, food tours, wine and beer services, etc. Soon we will be looking for lists of guides in your areas.



If you aren't going to be at the Outdoor Economy Conference, we will have the one-page brochures and suite of information to share with you afterwards.

If you are doing...hope you can stop by and say hello at this pre-conference event



QUESTIONS?

**Next Webinar:**  
**October 12**  
**Mid-Year Update**  
**and Partner Feedback**

