

NEWS RELEASE

MS Dept. of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi 39530



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MS Gulf Coast National Heritage Area launches new website, logo

BILOXI, Miss. – Officials with the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area on Thursday launched the new website, logo and video for the program at an event held at the Biloxi Visitors Center.

Gov. Phil Bryant, Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann and U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker were on hand for the announcement.

"This is a designation that we must be proud of," Bryant said. "One that we must go tell everyone about. It is remarkable, and it is up to us to make sure we maintain it."

Pres. George W. Bush established the Mississippi Gulf Coast as a National Heritage Area on Dec. 8, 2004. The area includes Harrison, Hancock, Jackson, Pearl River, Stone and George counties.

The Department of Marine Resources administers the program, which is part of the National Park Service.

The Heritage Area is a partnership of communities, businesses, government agencies, non-profit organizations and individuals working together to promote this region's cultural and environmental diversity, history, beauty and traditions.

"Our designation as a Heritage Area is a good opportunity for the MDMR to work with our community partners and promote the history and culture of the Mississippi Gulf Coast," said Jamie Miller, executive director of MDMR. "It also creates an opportunity to foster tourism and economic development."

Hosemann introduced the Nature-Based Tourism Task Force and its management plan, which he said will enhance the National Heritage Area.

"This is another opportunity, in conjunction with baseball fields, golf and gaming, to get people to spend one more day here," Hosemann said. "In managing public lands as

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Secretary of State, one of my key priorities has been to entice visitors and Mississippians residing elsewhere in the state to spend one more day on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.”

Wicker was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives when President Bush named the six counties a National Heritage Area.

“This is all about getting people to Mississippi and particularly the Coast,” Wicker said. “This is something that is going to create jobs in the tourism business, particularly ecotourism. There is no better time for this to happen.”

Bryant said the Nature Tourism Task Force is a public-private partnership that is helping to bring jobs and tourists to Mississippi.

“This is a place of history, and a place that is making history,” he said. “We are just beginning.”

Rhonda Price, coordinator of the Heritage Area for MDMR, said, “Today is the start of our new adventure together. We’ve worked hard to get to this point, and we are filled with the hope of great potential.”

The video for the Heritage Area can be seen at msgulfcoastheritage.ms.gov.

Photo courtesy MS Department of Marine Resources

Cutline: The Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area unveiled its new logo, website and video Thursday at the Biloxi Visitors Center. From left are: Jamie Miller, executive director of MDMR, Gov. Phil Bryant, Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann, U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker and Rhonda Price, coordinator of the Heritage Area.

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The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at dmr.ms.gov.

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