

NEWS RELEASE

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gulf Coast Heritage Area to hold business workshop Sept. 6

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area, in conjunction with the Hancock Chamber of Commerce, will hold a business workshop for nature-based tourism business owners and operators on Thursday, September 6, in Bay St. Louis.

During the workshop, attendees will learn how their business can be recognized as a Gulf Coast Outpost, a voluntary program that begins October 2018.

This program will recognize those businesses who are knowledgeable about the coast's natural environment and take steps to protect that environment by fostering environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation.

The workshop will actively prepare business owners and operators with a checklist that focuses on training, sustainability and stewardship. The program is aimed at those companies whose primary business is dependent on the natural environment in Mississippi's six coastal counties. This includes eco tours, locally owned outfitters, charter boat operators, tour guides, eco-lodges and agritourism entities.

The Gulf Coast Outpost business recognition program is part of the 2016 Nature-Based Tourism Plan for Coastal Mississippi. It was developed for the Heritage Area by stakeholders in the industry.

The Heritage Area is a program managed by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

"Nature-based tourism is an important component of the Heritage Area's mission," said Director Rhonda Price. "The Gulf Coast Heritage Area is dedicated to balancing economic development and conservation through the Gulf Coast Outpost program. We invite those businesses interested in being a part of this voluntary recognition program to join us at the workshop."

The event will be held from 8:30 until 10:30 a.m. at Bodega, 111 Court St. in Bay St. Louis. The event is free, but registration is required by visiting gulfcoastoutpostworkshop.eventbrite.com. For more information, contact Bridgette Varone at bridgette.varone@dmr.ms.gov or 228-523-4075.

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