Coastal Mississippi’s Nature Based Tourism Program
A partnership of communities, businesses, governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, and individuals who value the region's rich cultural and environmental diversity, history, natural beauty, and traditions.

It tells the distinctive story of our six coastal counties national significance. Visitors experience the Heritage Area through a set of integrated themes that forefronts the Coast's unique qualities and emphasizes the important role the region has played in the history of the United States.
Our mission is to promote understanding of and to conserve and enhance the heritage resources of the six counties of the Mississippi Gulf Coast by telling the area's nationally significant story to residents and visitors through activities and partnerships that celebrate the area's unique history, people, traditions, and landscapes.

Resources that provide authentic experiences reflective of the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area. The residents benefit from increased awareness and appreciation of their environment, history, culture, traditions, and lifestyles. The economic effects of heritage tourism benefit the entire region, and support the long-term enhancement and conservation of those qualities that make the Mississippi Gulf Coast unique.
The 2015-2016 Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area Community Grants Awarded $200,000.00 to Six (6) Community Partners:
The 2016-2017 Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area Grants Awarded $150,800.00 to Eight (8) Community Partners:
NBT Task Force developed an emerging vision of how investment in a rapidly growing sector of the tourism industry will improve the region’s economy, while conserving precious resources, like clean water and wildlife habitat, for future generations.

The 2016 NBT Plan Process and Strategy Document for Coastal Mississippi is the first of its kind in the State and represents the culmination of years of evidence gathering, consensus building, stakeholder engagement, and eco-tourism outreach.
Nature Tourism Task Force – Stakeholder Workshops
Package and share Coastal Mississippi’s story at home and around the country.

Short-Term

Mid-Term

Long-Term

Improve infrastructure, fund pilot programs, and restore natural areas

Secure funding, enhance trails, blueway & byway connections, and strengthen small businesses
While encouraging a local culture of natural resource stewardship, its also proposes strategic planning, marketing and management actions to achieve an optimal balance between growth and conservation.

The 2016 NBT Plan for Coastal Mississippi plans for 10 years of economic growth in Mississippi’s six coastal counties and provides a sustainable framework to achieve success.
Marketing the Mississippi Gulf Coast as a nature-based tourism destination will require consistency between local tourism entities, chambers of commerce, main streets, businesses, and municipalities, and local ambassadors. The MGCNHA has developed a beautiful and relevant website with crisp new branding and proper brand extensions to grow the program.
BUSINESS RECOGNITION PROGRAM
The NBT Task Force recommended a voluntary program designed to reward those businesses who: are knowledgeable about the natural product; prioritize customer safety; and protect the natural environment. The task force and consultants that developed the recommendations for the Business Recognition Program included nature-based businesses and workforce development educators.

SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR
Providing support to new and struggling NBT businesses in this fledgling industry is included in the long term NBT management plan. In the sixth year, funds are budgeted to begin development of a dedicated business incubator program. This program should foster small business growth and support workforce development by providing grants to non-governmental organizations; fund educational and community programs that stimulate job creation and job readiness; support scholarships for individuals with a desire to enter NBT industry; and to assist landowners with exploration of nature-based enterprise.
Launch Day
October 6, 2016
The MGCNHA developed a beautiful and relevant website with crisp new branding and proper brand extensions to grow the program. **Re-branded its identity to connect the area’s unique history, people, traditions, and landscapes as Historically Innovative, Naturally Flavorful.**

**Kiosk and NPS Passport Station**
Your adventure begins.

We are a people with a flavorful culture. We blend a mixture of customs, traditions, and backgrounds that combine to bring a warm pace of life that welcomes visitors and soothes the soul. We are place where food, music, our heritage, and our region is shared in fine seafood houses, gourmet kitchens, backwoods barbecue, and tiny dives. Our art for life is celebrated throughout the year with small festivals, large events, and coast wide celebrations.

Welcome you to experience this place of land and water. We invite you to discover our history and experience our innovation. We welcome you share in our passion for this place we call the Mississippi Gulf Coast. We are proud to share our place with our country.

For more info on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, National Heritage Area, go to MS GulfCoastNHA.com

Innovative, by nature.

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