

# 2007-2008 Annual Report



## Currituck County Department of Travel & Tourism

Tourism is Currituck County's most vital industry, generating over \$120,000,000 in travel expenditures each year. As a result, the County is fiscally sound and **citizens enjoy an annual tax relief of nearly \$1,600 per household.**

The Tourism Department, Tourism Advisory Board, and Tourism Development Authority are pleased to present this annual report. It highlights the economic impact of tourism in Currituck County during the 2007-08 fiscal year and contains information and data on tax collections and marketing programs, as well as the goals and objectives of the Tourism Department.

### TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD

**John Wright**, Chairman  
Sanctuary Vineyards

**Don Austin**  
Knotts Island Peach Festival

**Janice Farr**  
Sun Realty

**Cindy Seymour**  
Beach Bums

**Krista Boughey**, Vice-Chairman  
Seaside Vacations

**Don Cheek**  
Corolla Light Resort

**Vivian Simpson**  
Historic Jarvisburg Colored School

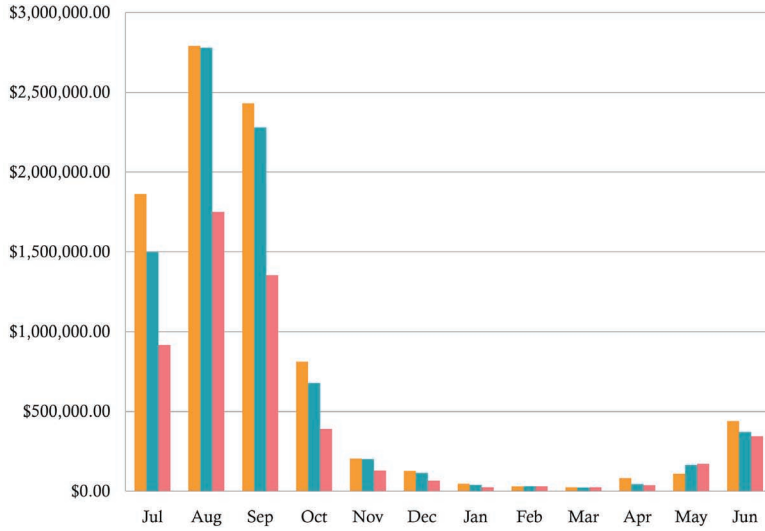
### TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**Barry Nelms**, Chairman  
**Ernie Bowden**  
**J. Owen Etheridge**

**Gene Gregory**, Vice-Chairman  
**Janet Taylor**

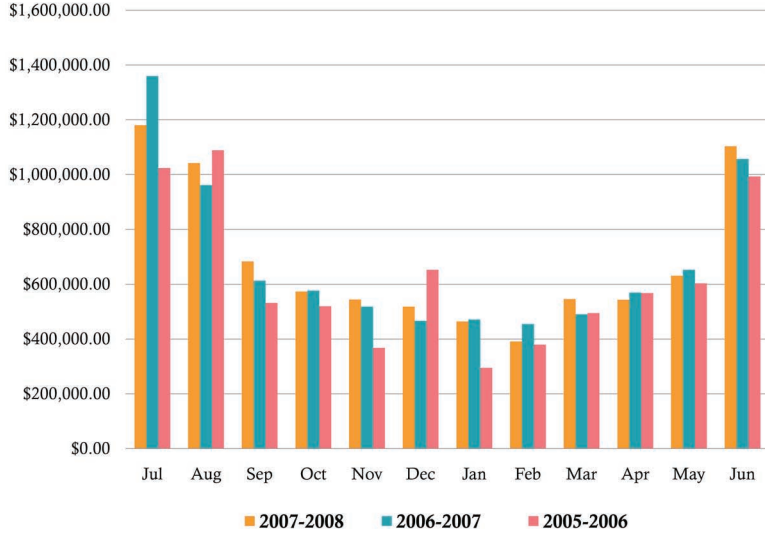


## Occupancy Tax Collections



Occupancy tax collections for 2007-2008 increased \$736,254 .00 from the previous year.

## Sales Tax Collections



Sales tax collections increased slightly - \$28,882.00 over the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

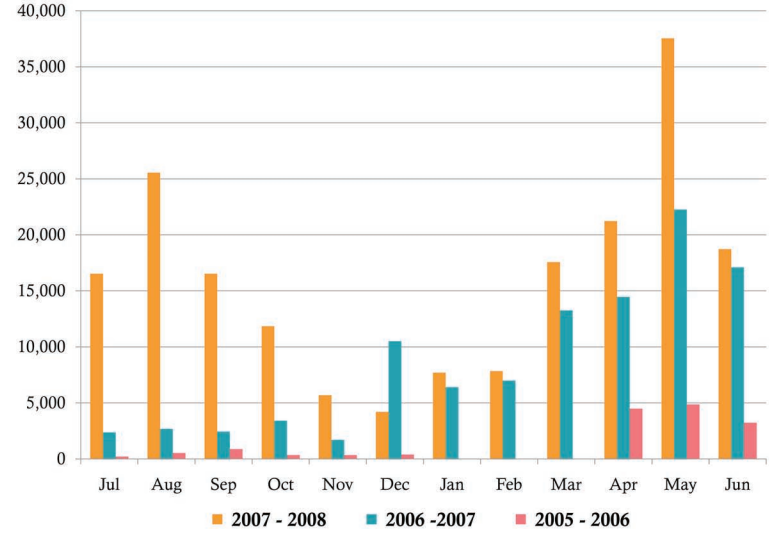
## Fiscal Year Statistics

Fiscal Year Statistics	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Total Website Hits	2,828,973	2,265,216	NA
Total Publications Distributed	190,938	103,595	15,281
Total Visitors to Information Centers	34,810	26,916	13,460
Total Phone Calls to Information Centers	3,809	3,411	2,271
Total Occupancy Tax Collected	\$8,957,545	\$8,221,291	\$5,238,134
Total Sales Tax Collected	\$8,218,722	\$8,189,840	\$7,516,862

Top Lead Generators	Leads Generated	Top States Requesting Information	Publications Requested
The Knot	18,850	North Carolina	22,216
O Magazine	14,332	Pennsylvania	8,267
Great Vacation Getaways	8,274	New York	7,622
AARP	7,982	Florida	5,981
Family Travel Insert	7,944	Ohio	5,707
Bridal Guide	6,275	New Jersey	5,674
Southeast Tourism Society	6,133	Virginia	4,877
Carolina Living	5,345	Massachusetts	3,683
Coastal Guide	4,714	Illinois	3,553
Women's Day	4,377	Texas	3,328

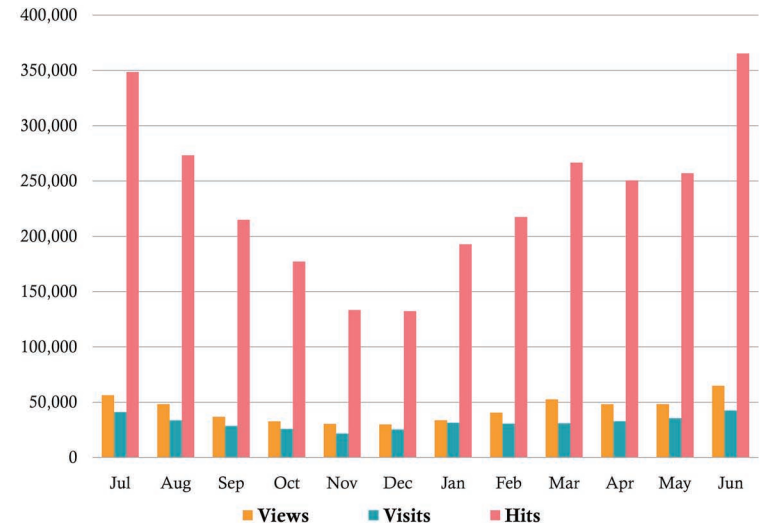
Leads are requests for information from perspective visitors.

## Visitor Information Distributed

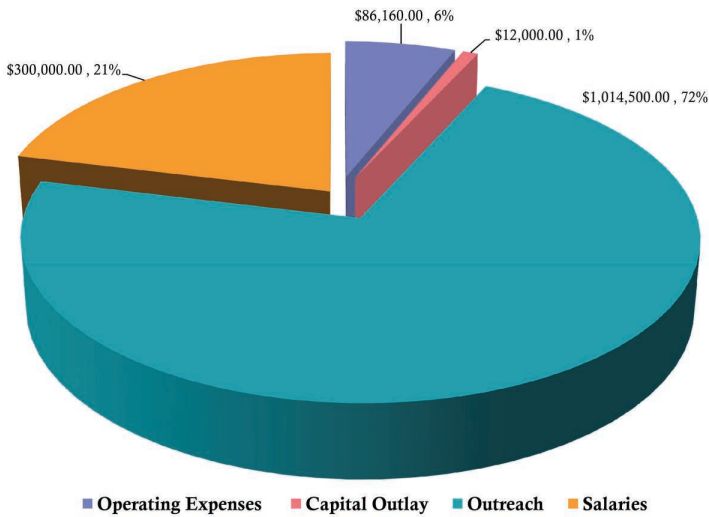


Guides Distributed	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Visitor Guides	121,995	85,341	15,281
Wedding Guides	33,927	17,604	NA
Trail Guides	31,989	300	NA
Newspapers	3,027	350	NA

## Website Statistics



## Travel & Tourism Department Expenditures



## Support of Funds

Recipient	Event Name	Event Date	Financial Support
American Red Cross	A Carolina Oktoberfest	October 6, 2007	\$4,424.00
Coinjock Ruritan Club	Currituck Wildlife Festival	September 8-9, 2007	\$3,359.79
Knotts Island Ruritan Club	Knotts Island Peach & Wildlife Festival	July 28, 2007	\$4,542.15
Native Vine	International Wine Festivals	October 13, 2007 May 1, 2008	\$3,721.75
Moonrise Bay Vineyard	Summer Wine Celebration & Holiday Open House	July 21, 2007 December 8, 2007	\$4,950.00
Currituck County Arts Council	2008 Art Extravaganza	March 8, 2008	\$3,696.71

The purpose of the Support of Funds program is to assist Currituck County non-profit organizations and tourism-related businesses in promoting and marketing tourism and culturally-related events and activities. The program provides monies for advertising and the promotion of events and festivals.

## Tax Relief

Currituck County's average tax relief benefit per household in 2007 was \$1,593.74. This means that due to the tourism industry, **each household in County saved \$1,593.74 in taxes** for 2007. Tax relief is the sales tax revenue from state and local taxes divided by the number of households.

Although occupancy tax (the lodging tax paid by visitors) was up by over \$700,000 from the previous year, visitor spending remained flat. This is more than likely due to the country's struggling economy.

Currituck County ranked 27th in travel impact among North Carolina's 100 Counties for 2007.

Tax Data	2007	2006
Total Domestic Travel Expenditures	\$120,010,000	\$120,250,000
Total Travel Related Payroll	\$23,530,000	\$24,400,000
Total Number of Travel Related Jobs	1,520	1,600
State & Local Sales Taxes Paid by Travelers	\$11,000,000	\$11,290,000

## Publications

### E-NEWSLETTERS

The Travel and Tourism Department sends periodic e-newsletters to businesses in order to keep tourism stakeholders informed and up-to-date on news and happenings in Currituck County.

E-blasts and e-newsletters are also sent to perspective visitors to the Currituck Outer Banks. They include special offers, discounts, and announcements of special events.

### WEBSITE

Currituck County tourism businesses and attractions are promoted free of charge online on the Department's travel website, [ComeToOurBeach.com](http://ComeToOurBeach.com).

## PRINTED PUBLICATIONS

**Currituck Outer Banks Visitor's Guide** - includes a comprehensive list of all tourism-related businesses, annual events, historical features and general travel information.

**Wedding & Event Planner** - assists in planning weddings, family reunions and other events. The publication lists the service businesses needed to plan these special occasions.

**Currituck Outer Banks Newspaper** - highlights key attractions and activities in the area and assists visitors in planning activities once they arrive. Popular features include "Activities for Kids" and "Rainy Day Ideas."

**Corolla Map** - displays attractions on the Currituck Outer Banks. It is distributed to guests at County Information Centers and via local businesses.

**Trails Guide** - highlights the County's dining, shopping, wineries and brewery, and farm markets.



### MEDIA KIT

A media kit was created and has been distributed online and in print to various media outlets in an effort to gain editorial and increase public relations for tourism businesses.



# Public Relations



In an effort to obtain more editorial, the Tourism Department held several press tours and familiarization tours in the County. These tours exposed the media and travel professionals to attractions and the unique experiences of the Currituck Outer Banks. Guests had the opportunity to tour vineyards, see the Grave Digger, observe the Corolla Wild Horses, climb the Currituck Beach Lighthouse, visit the Whalehead Club, shop, and sample coastal fare.

The media wrote editorial for their publications, giving readers insight into what Currituck has to offer. (Travel professionals can better recommend the area once they have seen and experienced it.)

Press releases and e-blasts were sent to media about the unique events, businesses, and attractions. This has resulted in several stories being released that promote Currituck County.

# Awards

The Department received four state awards from the Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina.

First place awards were received for **Best Print Advertising** and **Best Local Constituents Communications/Newsletter**. Second place awards included **Best Visitor's Guide** and **Best Niche Marketing**.

Currituck County competed in the Large Budget category against destinations such as Asheville, Raleigh, and Charlotte.

The Tourism Department also won a Bronze Award in the Summit International Awards.

Throughout its fourteen-year history, the Summit International Awards has established itself as one of the premier arbiters of creative and communication excellence. Companies and individuals, from more than 25 countries submitted entries to this year's awards programs.

# 2008 - 2009 Goals & Objectives

1. Increase the number of visitors to Currituck County, thus increasing occupancy tax and sales tax revenues.
2. Continue to promote the attractions and tourism-related businesses located throughout the entire County, including the mainland, beaches and Knotts Island.
3. Utilize the County's visitor information centers as "sales centers" to promote visitor spending.
4. Enhance and aggressively market the tourism website, visitcurrituck.com (ComeToOurBeach.com).
5. Maintain strategic alliances with tourism-related businesses, attractions and other groups in Currituck County.
6. Continue to analyze the effectiveness of print and electronic ad campaigns.
7. Expand efforts to obtain editorial through local, regional, state, national and international media.
8. Continue to work closely with, and utilize the knowledge of, the industry leaders appointed to the Tourism Advisory Board.
9. Utilize the objectives set forth in the Comprehensive Tourism Research and Strategic Plan recommended by Randall Travel Marketing, Inc. and adopted by the Tourism Advisory Board.
10. Communicate effectively to residents, businesses, and elected leaders the importance of tourism to the local economy.

*To learn more about the marketing strategies for the Currituck County Department of Travel & Tourism and to view a complete copy of the 2008-2009 Marketing Plan, go to the Business Resources section of [ComeToOurBeach.com](http://ComeToOurBeach.com).*



# Contact Information

## CURRITUCK COUNTY WELCOME CENTER

106 Caratoke Highway  
Moyock, NC 27958  
877-287-7488 | 252-435-2947

## CURRITUCK OUTER BANKS VISITOR'S CENTER

500 Hunt Club Drive  
Corolla, NC 27927  
252-453-9612

## CURRITUCK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRAVEL & TOURISM

**Diane Sawyer**, Director  
**Veronica Brown**, Marketing Coordinator  
**Irina Coccetti**, Public Relations  
**Daniel F. Scanlon II**, County Manager

252-435-2938 | [info@visitcurrituck.com](mailto:info@visitcurrituck.com)

