

Performance Review

Currituck Overview

Currituck County, North Carolina is the northernmost coastal county in eastern North Carolina. Currituck County is bisected by the Currituck Sound which lies parallel to the Atlantic Ocean on a north-south axis just north of the larger Albemarle Sound. The coastal half of the County is located on the Outer Banks and is a thriving beach destination, primarily comprised of rental beach houses. The mainland side of the County is located to the west of Currituck Sound and is primarily rural in nature, with farms, small towns and commercial areas along Highway 158. The rural community of Knotts Island is accessible by ferry. It is unique that the three geographic sections of the County are separated by the Currituck Sound and can only be accessed by driving through Dare County to the South or Virginia to the North or by taking a ferry.

Corolla is the primary community on the coastal side of the County. This beach area has experienced dramatic growth in development and visitation in the past two decades. In recent years, the development of large scale luxury beach homes has driven growth in the family vacation markets with a number of large vacation rental companies servicing this segment. The beach portions of Currituck are primarily residential with limited commercial development which is in stark contrast to the coastal counties to the south and north. Wild horses are a unique attraction in the northern portion of coastal Currituck that includes the Currituck National Wildlife Refuge. The only primary access road serving the coastal side of Currituck County is North Carolina Highway 12; the southern end of the County connects to United States Highway 158 in Dare County.

The township of Currituck, the County seat of Currituck County, is located on the mainland and is a one-hour drive from the coastal communities. In 2012 the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the County population to be just under 24,000, representing a 31% growth rate since 2000. This growth trend is typical as Americans are flocking to coastal areas all over the United States. The phenomenal tourism related growth of the coastal side of Currituck is in direct contrast to the slower growth in the western (mainland) side of Currituck. This situation of two economies is good in that it diversifies the economy. However, it does create political challenges as county officials must serve two very different masters.

Currituck County Tourism Development Authority

Currituck County began collecting a lodging tax to fund the promotion of travel and tourism in 1987. The North Carolina General Assembly requires counties that collect a lodging tax to establish a Tourism Development Authority (TDA) to provide oversight to the use of the lodging tax funds. A TDA serves in a similar capacity as an airport or development authority. The County Board of Commissioners in each county has the authority to appoint a TDA Board. The Currituck County Board of Commissioners was given legislative authority to serve as the TDA Board for Currituck County. However, it should be noted that currently most of the members of the Currituck County Board of Commissioners do not have any tourism or destination marketing experience or credentials.

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Prior to 2005, a portion of the lodging tax funding was allocated by Currituck County to the Currituck County Chamber of Commerce which served as the travel and tourism promotion agency for the County. The Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism (CCDTT) was established in July 2005 as the official tourism marketing agency for the County and was set up as a division of County Government. The Currituck County TDA Board (The Currituck County Commission) created a Tourism Advisory Board to provide regular oversight of the CCDTT. The CCTDA meets on an as needed basis while the Tourism Advisory Board meets at least quarterly.

Tourism Advisory Board

The Currituck County Commissioners/TDA Board created a Tourism Advisory Board to provide guidance and consultation to the CCDTT in October 2005. The Tourism Advisory Board is appointed by the TDA, meets quarterly and is governed by formal Rules of procedure established by the County Board of Commissioners.

The Advisory Board is assigned the following duties:

- Creation of an annual County Marketing Plan
- Allocation of County Occupancy Tax to promote travel and tourism
- Acceptance of any grant, gift, bequest or donation deemed useful for the tourism industry
- Construction, operation and maintenance of visitor centers
- Recommendation of events for the tourism department to support and participate in including advertising and other components

Board members are required to be residents of Currituck County but are not required to be employed by or affiliated with the travel industry. The Currituck County resolution creating the Board calls for three-year staggered Board terms. Board members can be appointed for a second term, then must step off of the Board. The current Tourism Advisory Board members are as follows:

2012 Currituck Tourism Advisory Board

Name	Place of Work
Don Cheek, Chairman	Corolla Light Resort
Paul Robinson, Vice-Chair	Currituck BBQ Company
Petrina Ramey	Twiddy & Company
Shearl Bell	Shearl Design
Leslie Daughtry	Sun Realty
Ted Jagucki	Giant Slice Pizza
Janice Farr	Sun Realty
<i>Ex Officio:</i>	
Paul O'Neal	Currituck County Board of Commissioners
Dan Scanlon	Currituck County Manager
Diane Nordstrom	CCTTD Director

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CCDTT Mission Statement

The mission of the Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism is to strengthen the local economy through the promotion of Currituck County as a vacation destination, therefore enhancing the quality of life for local citizens.

The Department's goal is to assist tourism related businesses with advertising and marketing promotion while providing visitors information on the numerous attractions, activities, events, accommodations, services and historical sites located throughout Currituck County.

The Travel and Tourism Department's Ten Main Objectives:

1. Increase the number of visitors to Currituck County, thus increasing occupancy tax and sales tax revenues.
2. Continue to promote the attractions, events and tourism-related businesses located throughout the entire county, including the mainland, beaches and Knotts Island.
3. Utilize the County's Welcome Center and Visitor's Center as "sales centers" to promote overnight stays and visitor spending.
4. Enhance and aggressively market the tourism website using SEO (search engine optimization), pay-per-clicks, directories, and other online marketing strategies.
5. Increase exposure of Currituck County through popular online social networks such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.
6. Continue to analyze the effectiveness of print and online ad campaigns.
7. Expand public relations efforts to obtain editorial coverage 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. Promote Currituck County businesses through the MORE Card program, a discount card campaign designed to assist businesses in increasing sales revenues during the current recession. In addition, promote all county businesses through a Buy Local campaign.
10. Communicate effectively to residents, businesses, and elected leaders the importance of tourism to the local economy. In addition, encourage locals to thank visitors for choosing to vacation in Currituck County.

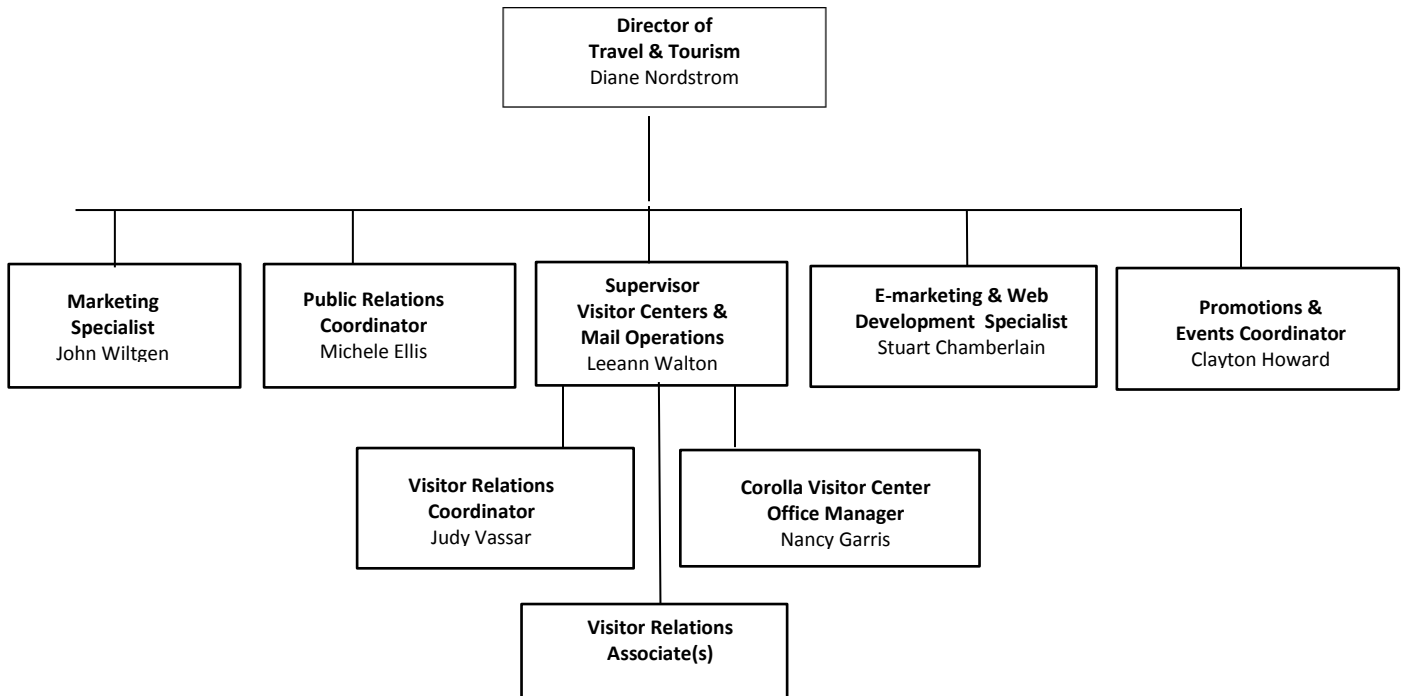
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Currituck County Department of Travel and Tourism Staff

Diane Nordstrom is the Director of the CCDTT and reports directly to Dan Scanlon, County Manager, and the Currituck County Commissioners who serve as the TDA Board. There are eight full-time positions on staff as outlined below:

Diane Nordstrom	Director
John Wiltgen	Marketing Specialist
Stuart Chamberlain	E-marketing & Web Development Specialist
Michele Ellis	Public Relations Coordinator
Clayton Howard	Promotions & Events Coordinator
Leeann Walton	Supervisor of Visitor Centers / Mail Operations
Nancy Garris	Corolla Visitor Center Office Manager
Judy Vassar	Visitor Relations Coordinator

In addition to the full-time staff outlined above, there are 18 to 20 part-time, temporary visitor relations associates who work at the county's two visitor centers. These associates work the "front-line" providing concierge services to the traveling public as well as answering the toll free number and fulfilling information inquiries. RTM reviewed the job descriptions for each staff person and found them to be detailed and appropriate for each position. An organization chart for the CCDTT staff is found below.



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Office and Visitor Center Facilities

The CCDTT administrative offices are located at 106 Caratoke Highway, Moyock, in the Currituck County Welcome Center at the NC/VA state line. This facility has a total of 6,300 square feet. This includes the following:

- 3,460 square feet for lobby, exhibit hall, and new restrooms
- 1,400 square feet of warehouse/mail processing area
- 1,400 square feet of office space

This is much improved from their previous office space in a mobile trailer unit. Staff moved into the Moyock Welcome Center in 2008.

The building that now houses the Moyock Welcome Center was previously used as a car dealership. It now hosts over 60,000 visitors each year. Furnishings in the building include brochure racks and display cases that highlight restaurants, shops, attractions and activities on both the Currituck beaches and Mainland. The CCDTT hired a professional design team to help create the bright, cheerful environment, which effectively highlights the county’s destination branding.

A second visitor center is located in Corolla. Recently remodeled, it now reflects the same emphasis on highlighting the county’s destination branding. New brochure racks and additional desk space were added. The visitor center is in a modern facility that is in an excellent gateway location in Corolla with good directional signage and ample parking. The facility has approximately 1,642 square feet of space, is attractively designed and offers good information for the traveling public. Over 35,000 vacationers visited the center in 2011.

A visitor center should be a sales center environment where visitors can book lodging, attractions, dining, events and learn about the shopping and outdoor activities in the area.

Both the Welcome Center and Visitor Center currently sells Currituck Outer Banks branded merchandise. The centers feature Ipads that can be utilized by visitors to search for local business information, as well as used to survey guests.

Visitor Center Walk-Ins

Year	Moyock	Corolla
2007-2008	5,269 (May '08-June '08)	29,666 (closed Jan-Feb)
2008-2009	34,246 (No Dec stats)	34,496 (closed Jan-Feb, plus no Dec stats)
2009-2010	52,722	37,684 (closed Jan-Feb)
2010-2011	54,022	37,648 (closed Jan-Mar for remodeling)

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Lodging Taxes and CCDTT Funding

The CCDTT is funded through annual appropriations received from the Currituck County Board of Commissioners. Each spring, the CCDTT prepares a budget request that is submitted as part of the overall County budget to be reviewed by the seven-member Currituck County Board of Commissioners who also serve as the TDA. Funding for the CCDTT budget comes directly from the occupancy tax collected on all short-term lodging (less than 30 days) in Currituck County. North Carolina Statute requires counties to receive approval from the state legislature to levy any local taxes. The legislation that enables Currituck County to levy the occupancy Tax was first passed in 1987 and amended in 1991 and 1999. Therefore, the current occupancy tax in Currituck is levied at 6% and was established for the following purposes in each of the three legislative amendments:

Year	Levy	Purpose
1987	3%	Tourism related expenditures
1991	1%	1/3 Tourism related expenditures 2/3 Promotion of travel and tourism
1999	2%	1/3 Tourism related expenditures 2/3 Promotion of travel and tourism

The distribution of the current 6% occupancy tax in Currituck County is as follows (based on the 1987 initial legislation authorizing the 3% occupancy tax and the two subsequent amendments raising the total occupancy levy to 6%):

Tourism Related Expenses = 4%

Currituck County defines this category as “expenditures that, in the judgment of the Currituck County Board of Commissioners, are designed to increase the use of lodging facilities, meeting facilities, recreational facilities and convention facilities in a county by attracting tourists and business travelers to the County. This term includes tourism related capital expenditures and beach nourishment.” Past and current appropriations from this fund have included the Wild Horse Fund, beach nourishment, beach ramps, law enforcement/public safety (fire, EMS), water/sewer.

Promotion of travel and tourism = 2%

Currituck County defines this category as “to advertise or market an area or activity, publish and distribute pamphlets and other materials, conduct market research and engage in similar promotional activities that attract tourists or business travelers to the area. The term includes administrative expenses incurred in engaging in these activities.”

Past and current appropriations from this fund have included the Currituck County Chamber of Commerce and the CCDTT as the primary tourism promotion agencies. Additional funds have been allocated on a limited basis to various festivals and other community related grant applicants. In addition, Currituck County has made appropriations from this fund to the operation of the Currituck County Department of Economic Development.

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Currituck Lodging Tax Revenues

Year	6% Transient Occupancy Tax Actual Revenue	4.25% North Carolina Sales Tax	2.5% Currituck Sales Tax
2001/02	\$2,828,107	\$2,003,242	\$1,178,378
2002/03	\$3,130,910	\$2,217,728	\$1,304,545
2003/04	\$3,268,297	\$2,315,044	\$1,361,790
2004/05	\$4,667,481	\$3,306,132	\$1,944,784
2005/06	\$5,322,539	\$3,770,132	\$2,217,725
2006/07	\$8,221,291	\$5,823,414	\$3,425,538
2007/08	\$8,957,545	\$6,344,928	\$3,732,310
2008/09	\$9,259,610	\$6,558,890	\$3,858,170
2009/10	\$8,667,381	\$6,139,397	\$3,611,410
2010/11	\$9,421,232	\$6,673,373	\$3,925,513

Source: CCDTT. Sales tax amounts calculated by RTM based on Occupancy Tax figures

The above table shows dramatic increases in tax revenues generated by short term rental and lodging in Currituck County. Tax revenues have more than tripled since 2001/02 and this has occurred without increasing the tax rate (last increase was 1999). It is important to recognize the large amount of **sales tax revenue** that is generated by lodging in addition to the Occupancy Tax. These statistics reveal one of the primary sources of economic impact directly generated by travelers who come to Currituck County.

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CCDTT Budget Analysis

The CCDTT staff is to be commended for demonstrating solid fiscal responsibility when it comes to the appropriate use of the occupancy tax funding appropriated to them by the County. The charts below show that the CCDTT is well within standard industry ranges when it comes to the allocation of their current funding.

Budget Category	2005/06	%	2006/07	%	2007/08	%
Salaries & Benefits	\$154,706	21.1%	\$261,243	17.5%	\$159,556	11.4%
Overhead	\$67,849	9.3%	\$229,122	15.3%	\$86,820	6.2%
Outreach	\$470,813	64.3%	\$1,005,550	67.1%	\$1,111,500	79.2%
Capital Outlay	\$39,371	5.3%	\$2,000	0.1%	\$46,000	3.2%
TOTAL	\$732,739	100%	\$1,497,915	100%	\$1,403,876	100%

Source: Currituck County Budget Actuals 2005/2006 to 2007/2008

NOTE: For 2005/06 through 2007/08 CCDTT was combined into two operations (Promotion and Public Information).

Budget Category	2008/09	%	2009/10	%	2010/11	%
Salaries & Benefits	\$436,055	17.9%	\$470,304	16.7%	\$526,303	17.6%
Overhead	\$113,472	3.4%	\$ 91,664	3.3%	\$74,525	2.59%
Outreach	\$1,891,158	77.5%	\$2,231,849	79.0%	\$2,281,926	76.3%
Capital Outlay	\$29,924	1.2%	\$30,302	1.07%	\$107,811	3.6%
TOTAL	\$2,440,685	100%	\$2,824,119	100%	\$2,990,565	100%

Source: Currituck County Budget Actuals 2008/2009 to 2010-2011

A review of the three basic budget categories for CCDTT (Salaries & Benefits, Office Expenses & Outreach) reveals that the CVB is spending the funding it receives appropriately as a percentage of the whole budget. These figures compare favorably with the standards set by the DMAI (Destination Marketing Association International). According to DMAI, salaries and benefits should fall within a 25-40% range. Marketing and outreach should be approximately 40-50. The Office expenses fluctuated in 2006/07 due to a one time contracted services charge of approximately \$150,000. Outreach expense is appropriate given the size and type of the travel market in Currituck.

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CCDTT Marketing and Advertising

RTM reviewed the advertising plans, overall positioning and marketing materials produced by the CCDTT. The CCDTT produces high quality marketing materials that fit into the overall brand image used by the County. The primary logo is presented below.



This logo is used in all CCDTT materials including the website. RTM found the design of all materials to be very professional with a solid image that would appeal to all travelers. We particularly like the current photos being utilized in the marketing materials. The CCDTT is hitting all the correct hot buttons according to the research conducted by RTM!

CCDTT Website – www.visitcurrituck.com

This website is very well organized and easy to navigate. It provides plenty of detailed information for trip planners of all types and does not have long load times for graphics and images. This is one of the most functional and easy to use sites that we have encountered. As with the other materials, RTM is particularly pleased with the photos used throughout this website. It hits all the hot buttons, especially the wild horses, weddings, family gatherings, rental houses, etc. The only improvement we recommend is adding photos to the restaurants if possible. Also, including additional descriptor lines for “Shopping” section would be beneficial. This would also be advisable for the “Play” section. Also, we love the maps provided on the website. Best maps of the area we’ve seen! Another favorite feature is the new Currituck MORE Card. What a great way to capture mind share! This will go a long way in helping visitors remember the name of where they are visiting (Currituck County) as opposed to just referring to the whole area as “The Outer Banks”. Excellent job!

CCDTT Visitor Guide

This 42 page publication is also very professionally designed using consistent imagery as found in other CCDTT publications. The visitor guide was a very useful tool for our team while in the area and thus passed the critical usability test. We like the overall content and layout of the piece and do not anticipate the research identifying the need for a major overhaul of this guide.

Niche Publications

The CCDTT produces individual marketing pieces for the County including the Shopping & Dining Guide and the Wedding & Event Planner. These publications are designed to attract and provide visitors with specific information regarding local farm markets, vineyards/ wineries, shopping, and wedding and event planning.

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CCDTT Inquiry Records and Statistics

The primary purpose of a destination marketing organization (DMO) is to advertise the destination to generate inquiries that are “fulfilled” by mailing a package of visitor information. This effort is intended to generate increased visitation to the destination, which creates economic impact as a result. One method of measuring the impact of the DMO’s advertising efforts is to look at the number of inquiries that are generated each year. The true test of the success of the DMO’s marketing efforts comes from research that determines the number of inquiries that are “converted” to actual visits and economic impact. In the following chart, outreach is defined as the total advertising, fulfillment and PR expenditures (includes expenses such as telephone, postage and printing in addition to advertising).

RTM is extremely impressed with the level of reporting and accountability demonstrated by the CCDTT. The monthly reports that the CCDTT produce are the best and most comprehensive that we have encountered among all destination marketing organizations. This achievement is most impressive given the fact that the CCDTT is still a young organization, having been officially begun in 2005 and thus in 2012 is only seven years old. The following data was gleaned from the CCDTT monthly reports.

Type of Inquiry	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Advertising Generated Inquiries	9,870	67,259	85,002
On-line Generated Inquiries	364	18,463	27,738
Total Inquiries	10,234	85,722	112,740
Unique Website Visitor Sessions	14,713	82,360	29,134
Total Inquires (includes unique website visitor sessions)	24,583	168,082	141,874
Outreach Expense	\$470,813	\$1,005,550	\$1,111,500
Cost Per Inquiry (generation & fulfillment)	\$19.15	\$5.98	\$7.83

Type of Inquiry	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Advertising Generated Inquiries	75,804	127,213	143,464
On-line Generated Inquiries	19,321	11,136	12,057
Total Inquiries	95,125	138,349	155,521
Unique Website Visitor Sessions	186,950	235,634	243,628
Total Inquires (includes unique website visitor sessions)	282,075	373,983	399,149
Outreach Expense	\$1,891,158	\$2,231,849	\$2,281,926
Cost Per Inquiry (generation & fulfillment)	\$6.70	\$5.97	\$5.72

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RTM is impressed by the statistics in the above chart. CCDTT ramped up its advertising efforts in 2005/06 and was then considered a start-up program. A new website was launched in February 2006. All of the 2006/07 statistics show dramatic improvement over 2005/06. While the advertising expense doubled in 2006/07 the resulting inquiries increased over 600%! As a result, the cost per inquiry came down dramatically from \$19.15 in 2005/06 to \$5.98 in 2006/07. This was a dramatic improvement in the second year of the program and indicated that the CCDTT was focusing on cost efficiency and improved return on investment.

In this 2012 report, RTM is very pleased to see that proficiency has continued to improve. One need only look at the number of Total Inquiries generated to see exactly how well CCDTT has performed. Kudos to this outstanding team!

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Economic Impact and Tax Relief

An analysis of the 2011 economic impact of travel and tourism in Currituck County shows the financial impact that visitors leave in the County. The figures below show the amount of tax revenue that is generated by visitors to the area, thus relieving residents of some of the tax burden of maintaining the local infrastructure. The figures below are based on 2011 data, the most recent economic impact figures that are available from the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development. The final row of the chart below shows that the tax relief per household as a result of visitors coming to Currituck County and paying state and local taxes is \$1,197.32. The huge disparity in tourism generated tax relief between Currituck County (ranked 32nd largest tourism economy of the 100 counties in North Carolina) and Camden County (ranked last of the 100 counties in North Carolina) shows the impact that a beach community can have on a local economy.

2011 North Carolina Travel and Tourism Economic Impact Data by County

	<u>Statewide</u>	<u>Dare</u>	<u>Currituck</u>
Rank of County tourism economy in North Carolina	n/a	4/100	32/100
Total domestic travel expenditures	\$18,421,060,000	\$877,150,000	\$121,340,000
Total travel related payroll	\$4,192,450,000	\$175,740,000	\$22,010,000
Total number of travel related jobs	188,400	11,260	1,380
Total LOCAL sales tax paid by travelers	\$3,043,870,000	\$40,540,000	\$5,780,000
Total STATE sales tax paid by travelers	\$959,600,000	\$44,280,000	\$5,480,000
Total STATE & LOCAL sales taxes paid by travelers	\$4,003,470,000	\$84,820,000	\$11,260,000
County Population	9,656,401	34,307	23,995
County Households	3,626,179	15,465	9,396
Tax relief per capita from sales taxes paid by travelers	\$414.60	\$2,472.38	\$469.26
Tax relief per household from sales taxes paid by travelers	\$1,104.05	\$5,449.76	\$1,197.32

	<u>Pasquotank</u>	<u>Camden</u>
Rank of County tourism economy in North Carolina	70/100	100/100
Total domestic travel expenditures	\$53,190,000	\$1,820,000
Total travel related payroll	\$7,890,000	\$190,000
Total number of travel related jobs	470	10
Total LOCAL sales tax paid by travelers	\$1,200,000	\$150,000
Total STATE sales tax paid by travelers	\$2,980,000	\$100,000
Total STATE & LOCAL sales taxes paid by travelers	\$4,180,000	\$250,000
State or County Population	40,696	10,014
State or County Households	14,563	3,442
Tax relief per capita from sales taxes paid by travelers	\$102.71	\$24.97
Tax relief per household from sales taxes paid by travelers	\$287.03	\$72.63

Notes:

- Lodging taxes are NOT included in these tax figures, only sales taxes are included.
- TIA produced the data above using its proprietary Travel Economic Impact Model (TEIM) to measure the impact of travel on the U.S. Economy. The TEIM can also estimate the economic impact of travel at the county level. *Economic impact* is represented by measures of spending, employment, payroll, business receipts and tax revenues generated by traveler spending. *Travel expenditures* are assumed to take place whenever travelers exchange money for activities considered part of their trips. Travel expenditures are allocated among states by simulating where the exchange of money for goods or service actually took place. By their nature, some travel expenditures are assumed to occur at the traveler's origin, some at his/her destination and some enroute expenditures less the sales and excise taxes imposed on those expenditures.

Data Sources:

- *The 2011 Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties*, TIA for the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development.
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 population estimate for North Carolina, Currituck, Pasquotank and Camden Counties.

Currituck County Statistics for year 2011

Source: NC Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development

Year	Revenues \$(millions)	Change from previous year
2011	\$121.34	3.61 %
2010	\$117.12	3.19 %
2009	\$113.50	0.75 %
2008	\$112.66	-6.12 %
2007	\$120.01	-0.20 %
2006	\$120.25	9.87 %
2005	\$109.45	9.83 %
2004	\$99.65	-0.17 %
2003	\$99.82	10.44 %
2002	\$90.38	22.60 %
2001	\$73.72	1.56 %
2000	\$72.59	3.20 %
1999	\$70.34	10.96 %
1998	\$63.39	55.33 %
1997	\$40.81	-7.40 %
1996	\$44.07	15.94 %
1995	\$38.01	17.86 %
1994	\$32.25	13.84 %
1993	\$28.33	35.49 %
1992	\$20.91	12.97 %
1991	\$18.51	6.20 %

Domestic tourism in Currituck County generated an economic impact of \$121.34 million in 2011. This was a 3.61 % change from 2010.

In 2011, Currituck County ranked 32 in travel impact among North Carolina's 100 Counties.

More than 1,380 jobs in Currituck County were directly attributable to travel and tourism.

Travel generated a \$22.01 million payroll in 2011.

State and local tax revenues from travel to Currituck County amounted to \$11.26 million. This represents a \$470.05 tax saving to each county resident.

Area attractions include Currituck Beach Lighthouse in Corolla, Mackey Island National Wildlife Refuge and vineyards on Knotts Island and Atlantic beaches.

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2011 North Carolina Visitor Profile

Source: TNS Research for NC Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development.

2011 Visitor Profile	NC Overnight Visitors	NC Coastal Overnight Visitor
Primary Trip Purpose	72.6% = Leisure 26.6% = Business/Meetings	93.3% = Leisure 6.6% = Business
Lodging Type	49% = Private home 42% = Hotel/Motel/Resort 5% = Condo	49.9% = Private home 34.8% = Hotel/motel 7.9% = Condo
Mode of Transportation	78.4% = Auto/truck 11.1% = Airplane 4.8% = Rental Car 4.7% = Other 1% = Camper	84.6% = Auto/truck 6.6% = Airplane 6.2% = Rental Car 2.2% = Other 0.4% = Camper/RV
Average Length of Stay	3.5 Nights	4.5 Nights
Visitor Activities	36% Visit relatives/family reunion 21% Shopping 18% Visit friends 16% Beach 15% Rural sightseeing 14% Fine dining 10% Historic Sites/ Churches 9% Urban Sightseeing 9% State/National Park 8% Museums 6% Wildlife viewing 5% Old home / Mansions 4% Art Galleries 4% Gardens 4% Nightclubs / Dancing 4% Hiking / Backpacking 3% Nature travel / Ecotouring 3% Golf 3% Casino / Gaming 3% Fishing (fresh/saltwater) 3% Special events / Festivals 2% Camping 2% Bird watching 2% Wine tasting / Winery tour 2% Spa / Health club 2% Biking 2% Theme park	68% Beach 36% Shopping 33% Visit relatives/family reunion 20% Historic Sites/ Churches 19% Fine dining 16% State/National Park 16% Rural sightseeing 14% Museums 13% Visit friends 11% Wildlife viewing 11% Urban Sightseeing 9% Fishing (fresh/saltwater) 7% Old home / Mansions 6% Golf 4% Biking 4% Gardens 4% Zoos 4% Nature travel / Ecotouring 4% Bird watching 3% Art Galleries 3% Hiking / Backpacking 2% Nightclubs / Dancing 2% Special Events
Expenditures	\$576 daily = Overnighters \$155 daily = Daytrippers	\$1,003 daily = Overnighters
Travel Party Size	2.1 persons	2.4 persons
Adults Only Vs. Families	74% = Adults / 26% = Families	61% = Adults / 39% = Families
Point of Origin	NC 35% VA 9.8% SC 7.6% FL 7.3% GA 5.6% NY 4.3% PA 3.7% MD 2.9% TN 2.8% NJ 2.3% OH 2.2%	NC 37.9% Other 16.5% VA 14.5% PA 8.1% NJ 4.4% NY 4.2% OH 4.1% MD 2.9% FL 2.8% CA 2.4% GA 2.2%

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CCDTT Staff Interviews

As part of this 2012 update to the Performance Review, RTM conducted confidential staff interviews with the CCDTT staff. The following is a summary of the input provided by staff:

Staff rated the overall tourism marketing effectiveness of the CCDTT at a 4.66 on a 1-5 scale, where 1=low and 5=high. This rating indicates the team feels that it is doing excellent work and is accomplishing its goals and objectives.

When asked to identify the strengths of the CCDTT, the following was reported:

- **Teamwork – staff works together very well (5)**
- **Funding level (4)**
- **Good leadership; Director’s ability to develop ideas and plans (2)**
- Good relationship with industry partners
- Our product is outstanding

Weaknesses were identified as:

- Wrongful use of occupancy tax
- Periodic difficulty in working with other departments within the county
- Need more tourism professionals on TDA Board
- Losing staff to better paying jobs
- Lack of support from County Commissioners
- General lack of flexibility due to county regulations/restrictions

When asked what is needed to market travel and tourism in Currituck County more effectively, the following was noted:

- **More funding (2)**
- Additional staff – especially for social media and new emerging technologies
- Access to the entire allowable Occupancy Tax funds (2/3 of 3% should be going towards promotion rather than other uses).
- More tourism industry involvement – especially in TDA Board

The following ratings (on the same 1-5 scale) were given by staff:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Rating</u>
Providing leadership for the local tourism industry	4.33
Development of effective marketing materials and advertising	4.75
Recruiting leisure tourism to Currituck County	5.00
Bringing conventions/meetings to Currituck County	N/A
Bringing motorcoach tours to Currituck County	N/A
Providing results reports to local industry partners	4.33
Working with local elected officials	3.00
Communication with local community leaders	4.00
Wise use of CCDTT funds	4.50
Fostering an atmosphere of teamwork	4.75
Providing on-going education and career advancement	4.00
Providing the tools you need for your job	4.66

In evaluating the ratings given above, as well as specific commentary provided, RTM finds a staff that is comfortable with their jobs, and their management. The lowest ratings were typically given to items beyond staff control, such as ensuring that occupancy tax funds are spent only on those things that promote tourism as opposed to other expenditures.