



# A STORY WORTH TELLING



# The Tennessee River Valley STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL



NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC

MapGuide  
Destination



The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council


# 2016: THE BIRTH OF A VISION



The Tennessee River is one of the most ecologically important river systems in the country. Through the efforts of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the river system has also become an American treasure for recreation diversity and a place for exceptional economic development opportunities.

Early in 2016, civic leaders and tourism professionals in the mid-south recognized an opportunity to unify the Geotourism efforts of the 125 counties in seven states that embrace the Tennessee River waterway system. In February of that year, The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council was launched for that purpose.

Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. Geotourism incorporates the concept of sustainable tourism—that destinations should remain unspoiled for future generations—while allowing for ways to protect a place's character.



The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council

# VOLUNTEERS WITH A VISION

Since its founding in 2016, the Stewardship Council has been composed of a prominent list of tourism and travel professionals who are volunteering their efforts towards the visionary goal of economic development through Geotourism for the Tennessee River Valley.

**TRV Mapguide Executive Director (Volunteer)**

Julie Graham, Executive Director-Middle East Tennessee Tourism Council/Chair Keep the Tennessee River Beautiful, Norris, TN

**TRV Mapguide Portal Editor**

Angie Pierce, Vice President Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association, Decatur, AL

**TRV Mapguide Social Media Manager**

Melea Hames, Social Media Manager, Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association, Decatur, AL

**2020- 2021 Officers of the TRV Stewardship Council**

Chairman: Tami Reist, Alabama

Vice-Chair: Jennifer Wheatley, Kentucky

Secretary: Karin Landers, Tennessee

Treasurer: Angie Pierce, Alabama



The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council

# VOLUNTEERS WITH A VISION

**Volunteer Members:**

- Ida Walker** Tourism & Recreation Development Specialist, Friends of Southwest Virginia Executive Director, Northeast Tennessee Tourism Association
- Alicia Phelps** Director, Middle East Tennessee-Cocke County Tourism
- Linda Lewanski** Director, Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association
- Adrian Lambert** Director of Tourism Blue Ridge, Georgia
- Jode Mull** President & CEO, Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association
- Tami Reist**

- Mary Cates Williams** Tishomingo County Development Foundation, Mississippi
- Abbie Gristy** Rural Tourism Program Manager, Tennessee Dept. of Tourist Development
- Karin Landers** Director, Visit Humphrey County TN
- Jennifer Wheatly** Director of Outreach & Sustainability, Friends of Land Between the Lakes, KY
- Laura Oswald** Director of Marketing, Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Susan Jones** Jones Public Relations
- Laura Suzanne Fisher** Ex-Officio Senior Program Manager, River and Resource Stewardship at Tennessee Valley Authority



The Stewardship Council is dedicated to serving the same geographic and economically diverse watershed region of the southeast United States as the Tennessee Valley Authority. This area is made up of more than 41,000 square miles embracing the Tennessee River Valley in portions of seven states.

**STATES WITH REGIONS SUPPORTED BY THE TRV STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL**

ALABAMA

GEORGIA

KENTUCKY

MISSISSIPPI

NORTH CAROLINA

TENNESSEE

VIRGINIA



The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VIA  
**TOURISM**

The mission of the Stewardship Council is to expand the economic health and to stimulate economic development within the Tennessee River Valley region through sustainable tourism, i.e. Geotourism. This mission is achieved through a variety of targeted methods with the purpose of showcasing the region as the premier destination for heritage and/or recreational tourism in America.

The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council

WHY TOURISM? IT'S A PROVEN

**SUCCESS**



*“A study of more than 200 cities over the past 23 years confirms that destinations with substantial and growing visitor economies tend to outperform their peers, making destination promotion a true engine of economic development.”*



OXFORD  
ECONOMICS

# Destination Promotion: An Engine of Economic Development

How investments in the visitor economy drive broader economic growth

## ATTRACTING STRATEGIC EVENTS

By securing meetings and conventions, DMOs attract the very prospects that economic development agencies target. Not only do these events create valuable exposure among business decision makers, they create direct opportunities for economic development agencies to deepen connections with attendees.

*"Economic clusters and conventions have become synergistic"*

**Tom Clark**  
Metro Denver Economic  
Development Corporation

## RAISING THE DESTINATION PROFILE

Destination promotion builds awareness, familiarity, and relationships in commercial, institutional and individual networks that are critical in attracting investment.

*"We are learning a lot from Visit California by how they brand California and how to take their model and apply it to economic development."*

**Brook Taylor**  
Deputy Director  
Governor's Office of Business and  
Economic Development (GO-Biz)



## BUILDING TRANSPORT NETWORKS

By developing the visitor economy, destination promotion supports transportation infrastructure, providing greater accessibility and supply logistics that are important in attracting investment in other sectors.

*"Air service is profoundly important to corporate investment and location decisions... This is one of tourism's most significant contributions since the levels of air service at New Orleans far exceed what local demand could support."*

**Stephen Moret**  
Secretary  
Louisiana Economic Development

## RAISING THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Visitor spending helps support a broader and higher quality set of local amenities than an area could otherwise sustain. The cultural, entertainment, culinary, and retail attractions that visitors support make a place more attractive to investors.

*"Traveler attractions are the same reason that CEOs choose a place."*

**Jeff Malehorn**  
President & CEO, World Business Chicago



The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council  
**MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS**

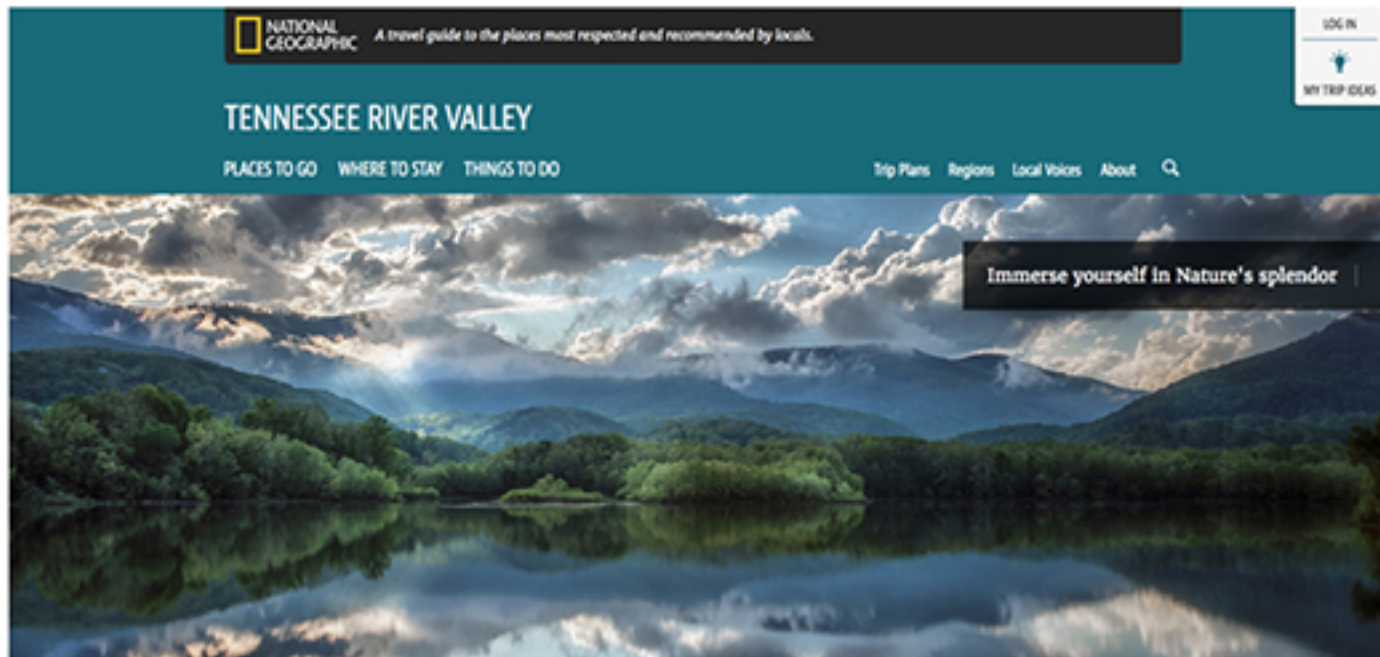


# EXPLORE MORE

AMERICA'S TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY

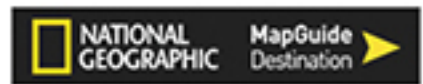
[WWW.TENNESSEERIVERVALLEYGEOTOURISM.ORG](http://WWW.TENNESSEERIVERVALLEYGEOTOURISM.ORG)

# The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS: INTERNET



Cove Lake State Park on the Powell River arm of Norris Lake - Photograph by Peter Koczera

## Recommended Places



## 53% Increase in nominations in past three years.

- 2,452 Total nominations with more than 9,500 images.
- 35 Custom trip plans on site.
- 50 Featured blogs/stories.

## Website Stats

### (July 2019-Aug. 2020:

- 5,055 Users.
- # of New visitors: 331,046 (55% increase)
- # of Organic visits: 84.9% (70.51 % increase)
- # States, DC, PR visits: 52
- # of Direct visits: 33,758 (18% increase)

## Supporting E-newsletter:

- E-newsletter sent every month.
- E-newsletter has 3,200 active subscribers.
- Average open rate is 17% which is 1% higher than the industry average.

# The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council

## MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS: INTERNET



**MUSIC, MOUNTAINS AND MEMORIES - EAST**



**MUSIC, MOUNTAINS AND MEMORIES - WEST**



**LEGENDS, LORE AND LANDSCAPES - EAST**



**LEGENDS, LORE AND LANDSCAPES - WEST**

AMERICAN TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY	AMERICAN TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY	AMERICAN TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY	AMERICAN TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY
MUSIC, MOUNTAINS AND MEMORIES - EAST	MUSIC, MOUNTAINS AND MEMORIES - WEST	LEGENDS, LORE AND LANDSCAPES - EAST	LEGENDS, LORE AND LANDSCAPES - WEST
<p><b>Goal 1</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 2</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 3</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 4</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 5</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p>	<p><b>Goal 1</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 2</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 3</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 4</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 5</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p>	<p><b>Goal 1</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 2</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 3</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 4</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 5</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p>	<p><b>Goal 1</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 2</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 3</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 4</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p> <p><b>Goal 5</b></p> <p>Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the venue, including a mix of traditional and digital marketing, and a focus on social media and content marketing.</p>

- In April 2020, TRVSC announced the migration to a new platform for its newly revamped website.
- New features include "Book Now", "Reserve Now" and "Visit Now" buttons, simpler mapping tools, a more user-friendly nomination process, capability to change featured attractions and events on the home page, and blog capability.
- The TRV Stewardship Council manages a second website focused on conservation and partnerships: [www.trvstewardshipcouncil.org](http://www.trvstewardshipcouncil.org)

# The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council

## MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS: INTERNET



Explore Tennessee River Valley

DiscoverTennesseeRiverValley - Tourist Information Center

Sign Up

DiscoverTennesseeRiverValley.com

Home About Photos Videos More

Like

Message

Search

More

### About

Use the TRV Destination MapGuide to explore the most ecologically diverse river system in US & the region's rich cultural, heritage, & recreational assets.

The Tennessee River Valley Destination MapGuide is an online travel planning tool for the watershed of the Tennessee River, one of the major tributaries...

16,358 people like this

16,829 people follow this

<http://www.tennesseevalleyadventure.com/>

(865) 585-0811

Typically replies within a day

Send Message

[tennesseerivervalleyadventure@gmail.com](mailto:tennesseerivervalleyadventure@gmail.com)

Tourist Information Center

### Suggest Edits

Is this the right phone number for this page?

(865) 585-0811

Yes

Update

No

### Photos



Create Post



Explore Tennessee River Valley is a Pinay Campground - Land Between The Lakes

Pinay Campground - Land Between The Lakes, TN

Wouldn't this view be relaxing to wake up to each morning? Pinay Campground at Land Between The Lakes is surrounded by so much beauty.

Replying to @TennesseeTRV

@TennesseeTRV



11

1 Comment · 0 Shares

Like

Comment

Share

Other



Replying to Beautiful

Like · Reply · 0



Facebook growth

July 2019 – 13,833 users

July 2020 – 15,241 users



Instagram growth

July 2019 – 5,425 users

July 2020 – 10,411 users



Pinterest growth

July 2019 – 422 users

July 2020 – 1,000 users



### DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Revamped to promote social distancing outdoor travel activities.

Targeting: Nashville, Atlanta, Birmingham, St Louis, Chicago, Detroit, Ohio, and Indiana.

# The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS: PRINT

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**  
TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY MAPGUIDE  
www.tennesseerivervalleygeotourism.com #TNRiverValley

**Play like a local.**  
Adventure is all around in the Tennessee River Valley.  
raft • zip-line • boulder • bike • jet-ski • atv • paddle • sail

**TN RIVER VALLEY**  
Geotourism (n.): tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

Be a GEOTourist with the Tennessee River Valley MapGuide!

**DIRECT MAIL POSTCARD**

TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY  
**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**

There is an Adventure to be **Discovered**

Roots of American Music  
Authentic Experiences  
Appalachian Culture  
Vibrant River Communities

**TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY**

**History Lives And Thrives Here**  
Find authentic places to go and things to do in this region that is rich in natural and cultural heritage. Discover the heritage of Native American people, Civil War sites, and African American roots told through the stories of people and place. All of the listings on our site have been nominated by local people who know the region best and offer visitors the most unique, fun, and interesting experiences.

TennesseeRiverValleyGeotourism.org  
**DOWNLOAD OUR MOBILE APP**  
Visit and tell us your story!

f t+ @TRVgeotourism  
MAPGUIDES ON THE GO

**RACK BROCHURE**

**GEOTOURISTS** patronize locally owned businesses and guides. They buy from local craftspeople and eat at restaurants serving regional cuisine. They seek out traditional music and dance.

As a result, the money they spend helps local people earn a living and preserve the place's authenticity.



"Lots of response to ours already...thank you!"

- Ann Crosby  
Joppa Mountain Pottery

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC COLLABORATION HAS IT BENEFITS:**

- Free to participate in FAM tours
- Free to participate in consumer shows
- Free to participate in blog stories



**INFORMATIONAL CARD FOR TOURIST DESTINATIONS**

# The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL PRINT

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC** MapGuide Destination

## EXPLORE MORE

### AMERICA'S TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY

WHERE RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS MEET | WWW.EXPLORERTV.COM

## COLLATERAL PIECES

- ✓ Tear-off Map
- ✓ Trifold Brochure
- ✓ Tour Itineraries Booklet
- ✓ Business Cards

## AMERICA'S TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MapGuide Destination THE TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Explore the range of experiences in seven spectacular states!  
From white-water rafting to fall water paddling, from boondocking to wildflower hikes, from boating to sailing, from bass fishing to fly fishing, from antiquating to live music, there is an adventure waiting to be discovered by you. Find authentic places to go and things to do in this region that is rich in natural and cultural heritage. Discover the heritage of the Cherokee, Civil War, and African Americans told through the stories of people and place. All of these settings have been nominated by local people who know the region best and offer visitors the most unique, fun, and interesting experiences.



### SCENIC POINTS

**Cherokee State Park**  
The Cherokee State Park is a beautiful, scenic area with over 100 miles of hiking trails, picnic grounds, and a historic log cabin. Located near Cherokee, TN. [www.exploretrv.com](#)

### FISHING SPOTS

**Big O' Fish Guiding Service**  
Big O' Fish Guiding Service offers expert guidance for all types of fishing, including bass, crappie, and catfish. Located in Nashville, TN. [www.exploretrv.com](#)

### HERITAGE AREAS

**Tennessee Hill Heritage Center and Museum**  
The Tennessee Hill Heritage Center and Museum is a historic site that offers a glimpse into the lives of the people who lived and worked on the hill. Located in Nashville, TN. [www.exploretrv.com](#)

### TASTE OF THE VALLEY

**Food & Wine Festival**  
The Food & Wine Festival is a celebration of the region's culinary scene, featuring local chefs, wineries, and breweries. Located in Nashville, TN. [www.exploretrv.com](#)

### OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

**White-water Rafting with Smoky Mountain Outdoors**  
Smoky Mountain Outdoors offers exciting white-water rafting adventures on the Tennessee River. Located in Nashville, TN. [www.exploretrv.com](#)

### MUSEUMS

**U.S. Space and Rocket Center**  
The U.S. Space and Rocket Center is a world-class museum that showcases the history of space exploration. Located in Huntsville, AL. [www.exploretrv.com](#)

### WHERE RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS MEET

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## America's Tennessee River Valley

THERE IS AN ADVENTURE TO BE DISCOVERED

TOUR ITINERARIES  
Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee

# The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council

## MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS: PRESS

CISION  
PROMOS

HOME NEWS CENTER BLOG

United States

LOGIN

CREATE A FREE ACCOUNT

FRONT PAGE ARTS BUSINESS EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRY LIFESTYLE SPORTS TECH MORE ▾

Monday, April 23, 2018

RSS

Email Newsletters

Put PRWeb on your site

### Food Festivals Offer Tasty Trips to Tennessee River

The food festivals of the Tennessee River Valley offer delicious opportunities to explore how food has shaped local culture. From the pungent ramps of the Appalachian Mountains to the delectable country ham in the western region, visitors have a lip smacking, good time discovering the historic specialties of these charming, small towns.

#### Share Article



#### Contact Author

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Email >

VISIT WEBSITE

PARIS, TENN. (PRWEB) MARCH 30, 2018

#### Food Festivals offer Tasty Trips to Tennessee River

It's festival time in the Tennessee River Valley, and nothing offers a more lip smacking, traditional experience than events that celebrate local cuisine, many of which are featured online on [TennesseeRiverValleyGeotourism.org](http://TennesseeRiverValleyGeotourism.org), a site dedicated to authentic experiences along the Tennessee River.

The word "cuisine" may seem a little uppity for affairs that tout foods such as cornbread, ramps, catfish or ham, but these storied staples of the Appalachian Mountains have paid their dues. They now appear in the kitchens of celebrity chefs from New York City to Los Angeles. Their beginnings, however, were less than glamorous.

Long before European settlers sought farming advice from Native Americans, these indigenous people were cultivating, preserving and cooking with vegetables such as corn, beans and squash. As time passed, these foods were adopted by the colonists and pioneers. Many of the recipes were adapted as these individuals moved west into the Appalachian Mountains, which border the eastern edge of the Tennessee River Valley.

Early settlers probably thought they had created something special when they came up with johnnycakes, a mixture of corn flour, water and eggs, but Native Americans had been making similar bread recipes for millennia. If these two groups could take part in the [National Cornbread Festival](#) in South Pittsburgh, Tennessee, they would see how far their humble creations have come. The 2017 winning recipe, Cornbread Cuban Sandwiches with Mojo Sauce is a far cry from a johnnycake. Still, it includes corn, buttermilk and a few other items that would have been familiar to mountain dwellers.

Cornbread isn't the only cuisine that residents of the Valley put on a pedestal. For generations, spring in the mountains has signaled ramp gathering, another food that was highly prized by Native Americans. Later, settlers survived, in large part by what the mountain forests offered, from fruits to nuts to ramps. Sometimes described as a cross between a spring onion and a garlic clove, ramps were the first plant to produce in the spring and were thought to help thin the blood after the cold winter months. Eaten both raw and fried, they are a delectable addition to beans, salads, eggs, potatoes and more. Attendees of Ball Play Ruitan Ramp Festival in Tellico Plains, Tennessee or the [Polk County Ramp Tramp Festival](#) in Reliance, Tennessee can enjoy plenty of ramps along with their traditional companions of soup beans or pinto beans, fried potatoes, streaked meat and cornbread. Visitors are lured by the delicious dinners, but the live mountain music and local crafts are as enticing as the food.

As good as ramps and cornbread are, for some folks it takes a tasty mess of fish to complete a dinner. The Cherokee of the Valley used several methods to catch their meals, including the fishing weir, a trap constructed of stones that channeled fish downstream into a basket. Today, most fishing is not for subsistence, but rather for recreational purposes, and its devotees are passionate.

The Tennessee River offers anglers everything from bass to crappie to bream and more, but in Paris, Tennessee, catfish is king. To illustrate their enthusiasm for this whiskered species, locals serve more than six tons of tasty, fried filets during the [World's Biggest Fish Fry](#). A grand parade, rodeo, catfish races and other activities create non-stop fun throughout the last 5-6 week in April.

The word "cuisine" may seem a little uppity for affairs that tout foods such as cornbread, ramps, catfish or ham, but these storied staples of the Appalachian Mountains have paid their dues.

PRWeb- Reaching Influencers  
20 press releases issued between  
July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020.

Topics included:

- RVing and Exploring Wide Open Spaces
- The Dream of Catching a Triple-Digit Fish
- 'Tis the Season for Holiday Shopping
- African-American Heroes in the TRV

Date:

- ✓ Average Potential audience- 30 Million
- ✓ Average pick-up by media sources- 100
- ✓ Average views and hits: 3000
- ✓ Average reach- US, Canada, International (Germany, UK, India,)
- ✓ Influencers following us- 365
- ✓ Atlanta, National Geographic, World Wildlife Federation, NEEF, National River Travel, local media, South Arts, Conservation Fund.
- ✓ Explore Tennessee River Valley has an influence rating of 63 (out of 100). This is up from 61 in 2019.
- ✓ Value of campaigns: 49K reach, 847.1K impressions, a .57% engagement rate, and an EMV of \$11K. (The EMV is what this content would have been worth had it been paid advertising.)

# The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council

# MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS: PRINT



Photo credit: [www.ExploreLakeGuntersville.com](http://www.ExploreLakeGuntersville.com)

*Connected by the Rivers.*

*To put your hands in a river is to feel the chords that bind the earth together.”— author Barry Lopez*

## In This Edition

Dear Angie,

*Water sustains and connects all of us in so many ways.*

When the first settlers came to the Tennessee Valley, they came for the abundance of rich—fertile bottomlands for farming, lumber to build and heat homes, wild game to fill their winter larder, and water, the most necessary of elements for human survival.

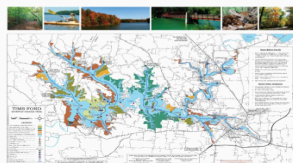


Today, these same abundances draw people to the Tennessee Valley. The rich recreational assets are destination experiences for outdoor enthusiasts. By the numbers, the region boasts seventeen National Park Service units, forty-six lakes, and seventy-plus rivers, all providing a bounty of outdoor, cultural, and heritage activities to experience.

This month's edition is dedicated to the paddlers we met at Canoecopia and our readers who understand the importance of water to our good health. We are sharing some of the best paddling trails to explore; checking in on the progress of the Cumberland Trail, talking southern biscuits and grits, and getting to our roots by honoring strong women who have made their impact on the region through their music.

In the Tennessee Valley, there is a bounty of riches to explore!

### 14 Water Trails you want to Paddle in 2021 by Mark Engler



The Tennessee River Valley's sprawling system of "great lakes" is fed not by one, but by numerous great rivers that gather in the rugged highlands of the Appalachian Mountains and Cumberland Plateau. Waterways throughout the region offer ample opportunity for flat water and smooth-current paddlers to enjoy some of the best

Developed in association with



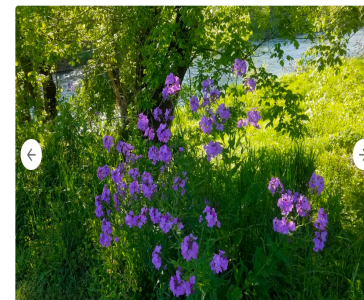
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TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY

[PLACES](#) [ACTIVITIES](#) [LODGING](#) [TRIP PLANS](#) [Q](#)

## New Thinking, New Design for Newest Virginia State Park

*Tennessee Valley Stories*



The dawning of spring this year didn't bring with it a typical sense of promise and resurgence.

But while COVID-19 has darkened the tourism economy's skies in the shorter term, there's still a spirit of optimism and hope for the visitor-services sector's future in communities along the Clinch River in Southwest Virginia.

No strangers to rough economic waters, the once thriving communities throughout the region have been fighting job loss and out-migration the past few decades as the historically mighty coal and lumber industries have dwindled to shadows of their former selves.

But the Heart of Appalachia region is also home to vast beauty that fosters a stubborn optimism, proud independence and pragmatic adaptability of a sort that living among rugged mountains and winding, woods-enveloped rivers can singularly inspire.

Gliding through the heart of the remote Virginia environs known as the Heart of Appalachia is one extraordinary river special even for a realm of the country overflowing with special places.

The Clinch River rises in Tazewell County and flows for more than 130 miles along a southwesterly course past Russell, Wise, and Scott counties before crossing into Tennessee en route to Norris Lake. It's widely considered the most biologically diverse river in North America, and one of the richest habitats for freshwater mussels on the planet.



The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council  
**CCC- COVID, CONSERVATION, CONNECTING**

**#RecreateResponsibly** <https://www.recreateresponsibly.org>

**In 2020, COVID changed the landscape of tourism.**

**Focused on drivable vacations**

**Social distancing**

**Recovery opportunities for metro regions (headlines of stories)**

**Conservation- Launched a secondary site [trvstewardshipcouncil.org](http://trvstewardshipcouncil.org) (we have stories and headlines)**

**Sustainable Travel- COVID Impact and outdoor visitation**

**Water and land stewardship**

**Connecting with motivated travelers-<https://tennesseerivervalleygeotourism.org/explore-more>**

**FAMS and story blogs**

**Virtual Travel Shows**



# GEOTOURISM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: CASE STUDY



Joppa Mountain Pottery

## TOURISM BOOSTS SMALL BUSINESSES

Rutledge, Tennessee- Family-owned business- 2 employees

Known for stoneware and raku pottery, Joppa Mountain Pottery's award-winning work has been featured several times on HGTV and PBS. It has a growing reputation with collectors and galleries worldwide.

### Challenges-

- Geographic location is off a rural road and no easy access from a major road.
- Grainger County, TN has a budget of less than \$1000 to market tourism.
- No website. Broken link on the state website. No paid tourism staff to correct.
- Small business with no funds to market via print or digital. Marketing is word of mouth, Facebook, ETSY.

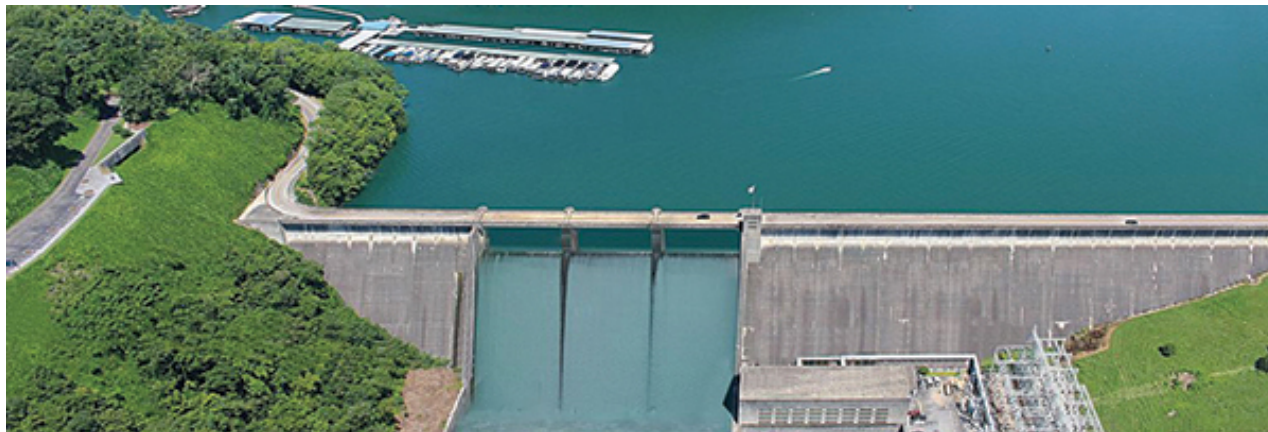
### TRV Geotourism Benefits-

- The owners can manage their nominations and refresh with information, events, and pictures as needed. A narrative can be built. This also brings the nomination to the top of the site.
- Provides geographic relationships. What's nearby to do, see, grab a meal, or a place to stay.
- Provides direct contact information for visitors to take action.
- Power of SEO and SEM with a larger brand. Increased visibility and higher page 1 listings.
- Ability to promote events on a larger platform to a broader market.
- Most visits are organic. Visits to a specific page are motivated leads for that attraction.
- Partners can use the "Nat Geo Destination" badges on their websites.

# GEOTOURISM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: CASE STUDY



Wilder coal camp, 1942, FDR Presidential Library



ONCE WAS THE LARGEST COAL PRODUCING COUNTY IN TENNESSEE

## TRANSITIONING COUNTY: COAL TO TOURISM

Norris Lake, Campbell County, Tennessee

- Designated an ARC Distressed Area with average per capita income of \$13,301 and 22.8% living below poverty line.
- Tourism boom centered around Norris Lake created by TVA dam helping area expand economic base.
- Natural assets: Norris Lake, 4 state parks, 2 wildlife management areas, 11 marinas, an annual private investment of \$3.5 million, and more than \$57million in sales for the Royal Blue Trails Complex.



# GEOTOURISM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: CASE STUDY



INGALLS SHIPYARD, 1942



REDEVELOPMENT OF ABANDONED INGALLS HARBOR SHIPYARD INTO

## INGALLS HARBOR AND EVENT CENTER

Wheeler Lake, Decatur, Alabama

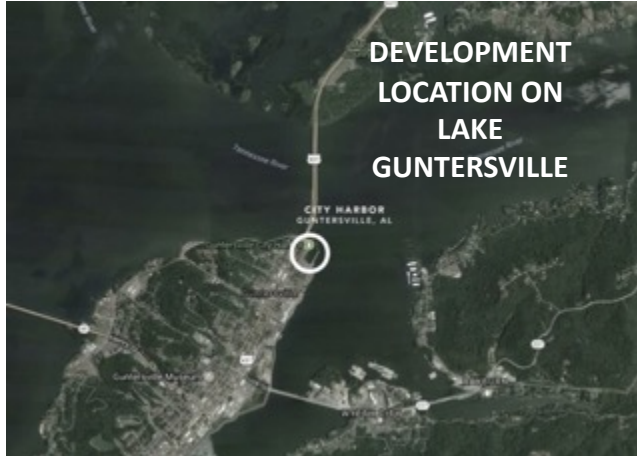


INGALLS HARBOR MASTERPLAN

- Features 10-boat wide launch ramp. Has hosted major fishing tournaments from BASS, FLW, Crappie USA.
- Features a 27,000-square foot multi-purpose pavilion that more than doubled the city's capacity for hosting large gatherings.
- Spurred development of a new hotel on the riverfront, and event, restaurant, and retail business development in downtown Decatur.



# GEOTOURISM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: CASE STUDY



\$15 MILLION DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULED TO OPEN IN 2022

## CITY HARBOR DINING & ENTERTAINMENT

Lake Guntersville, Guntersville, Alabama

- 55,000 Square feet of restaurants, entertainment venues, and available business space.
- Dallas-Fort Worth Developer Patrick Lawler said he believes the City Harbor development will generate more revenue to the area.
- Local City Council expands project to include short-term rental condos.



The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council  
**A STORY WORTH TELLING**



# EXPLORE MORE

AMERICA'S TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY  
[WWW.TENNESSEERIVERVALLEYGEOTOURISM.ORG](http://WWW.TENNESSEERIVERVALLEYGEOTOURISM.ORG)

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Thank You for Your Interest in the Tennessee River Valley and The Tennessee River Valley Stewardship Council.  
To join the TRVSC, please contact Julie Graham at 865-585-0811 or [tennesseerivervalleymapguide@gmail.com](mailto:tennesseerivervalleymapguide@gmail.com).



 **Nominate a Place to the MapGuide**

Help tell the story of what is special about this place. Nominations open now!

Nominate at: [www.tennesseeivervalleygeotourism.org](http://www.tennesseeivervalleygeotourism.org)