Media Kit – Nature Tourism

Contact: Miles Phillips,
Asst Professor and Extension Specialist-Nature Tourism

979 845 1023 office,
979-204-8448 cell
email: mdphilips@ag.tamu.edu
http://naturetourism.tamu.edu
2261 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843

As the Nature Tourism Specialist Miles Phillips provides support to the Extension Agents living and working in each of the 254 counties of Texas who provide local needs based programs.

The Nature Tourism program of Texas AgriLife Extension provides educational & training programs, materials and consultations for professionals, landowners and the general public. Extension is a nationwide continuing education agency associated with each states land grant and sea grant university program. http://www.csrees.usda.gov/

Programs are often done in partnership with other agencies and organizations and are supported through grants, contracts and some fee based programs and materials.

Some Numbers…

A 2006 survey by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service documents the economic value of nature tourism, and in effect, points out the importance of recognizing and promoting best practices in the industry, Phillips said.

TEXAS: In 2006, some 6 million people participated in some form of fish and wildlife-related recreation in Texas. In addition an unknown number of people participated in nature based recreation when wildlife was a secondary rather than primary activity. Examples are mountain or forest hiking, paddling, beach and lakeside activities etc.

Anglers, hunters and wildlife viewers spent $8.91 billion in retail sales ($8.24 billion by residents and $671 million by non-residents), creating $4.67 billion in salaries and wages, and supporting 139,404 jobs.

The total economic effect from fish and wildlife-related recreation for 2006 was estimated at $15.8 billion.

An ongoing project by Texas Agrilife Extension to inventory the number of nature tourism businesses in Texas indicates the significance of this sector as there are currently more than 10,000 nature tourism operations in Texas.
Texas Facts

Population is ~24 million

Texas includes 268,581 square miles of land and water, or 7.4% of the nation's total area.

~94% of Texas Land is privately owned

~78% of Texas Land is used for agriculture

There is greater BIODIVERSITY in the South Texas Lower Rio Grande National Wildlife Refuge (141 sq miles, 1100 plant species & 700 vertebrates) than the Florida Everglades (2,356 sq miles, 1,033 plans species, 633 vertebrates)

Almost 10% of Texas is covered by forest which includes four national and five state forests.

El Paso, Texas is closer to Needles, California (516 miles) than it is to Dallas, Texas (571 miles).

Texas has ~90 mountain peaks a mile or more high, with Guadalupe Peak in West Texas at 8,751 feet being the tallest.

Texas' largest county is Brewster with 6,208 square miles. Connecticut (5,544 Sq Mi), Delaware (2,489 Sq Mi) and Rhode Island (1,545 Sq Mi) can fit inside this county.

Select Texas State Symbols
   Flower = Bluebonnet
   Bird = Mockingbird
   Tree=Pecan

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