

Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development
P.O. Box 849
Jackson, MS 39205-0849

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stephen Martin, 601.359.3555
Date: September 5, 2000

**STATE TOURISM DIRECTOR HONORED BY NATIONAL TRAVEL
PUBLICATION**

JACKSON, Miss., - Darienne Wilson, director of Tourism for the Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development (MDECD) has been named, One of the 100 Most Powerful Women in Travel by Travel Agent magazine, a national weekly industry news publication.

This is the fifth year the publication has produced the special edition profiling the individuals and their achievements. The 100 Most Powerful Women are selected by the editors, reporters and associates of Travel Agent magazine.

“This is truly an honor to be recognized as a force in the hospitality industry by a national publication. The thousands of people working everyday throughout the state in the travel and recreation industry are really the ones that deserve the special recognition for what they are doing everyday. These are the individuals meeting the needs of our visitors and making a difference,” said Darienne Wilson.

Prior to joining the MDECD as director of Tourism, Wilson served as executive director of the Mississippi Tourism Association. Wilson is a certified association executive and certified tour professional. She was recognized in 1986 by the International Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus for the Best Tourism Promotion and was named Executive of the Year in 1991 by the Mississippi Society of Association Executives. In 1999 she received the Mississippi Travel Association’s Tourism Achievement Award for the Decade.

Tourism Development is charged with developing and promoting domestic and international tourism programs, as well as managing the state’s Welcome Centers and the Mississippi Film Office.

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Tourism
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Media Contact: Stephen Martin, 601.359.3297
Date: September 6, 2000

TOURISM DIVISION CONDUCTING RECREATIONAL INVENTORY

JACKSON, Miss., September 6 – Tourism Development, a division of the Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development is conducting an assessment of new outdoor recreational activities and facilities.

“People from across the nation are discovering the bountiful natural resources that make Mississippi one of the most popular outdoor destinations in the country. Keeping an accurate inventory of our outdoor assets is an important element of the promotional activities we are involved in,” said Darienne Wilson, director, Tourism Development. Nearly half of all Americans (45%) say they “engage in outdoor recreation as a family” at least once a month, and over one in ten (11%) do so more than once a week. “Our *Outfitters Guide* and our *Hunting, Fishing and Outdoor Recreation Guide* have proven to be very popular highlighting the number of outdoor recreational activities available in Mississippi. The increased interest in outdoor recreation is serving as a catalyst for the development of new facilities and activities. In order to capture our share of this market it is important to be familiar with the variety of new offerings we have for potential visitors,” added Wilson.

The information, collected through local Convention & Visitors Bureaus and Chambers of Commerce will enhance the comprehensive information base currently utilized by the Tourism division. The data collected will be organized and published in future tourism publications and also posted to the division’s web site. Tourism publications are distributed through the state tourism office to anyone requesting information on Mississippi.

Individuals are encouraged to contact their local tourism organizations and Chamber of Commerce to submit details regarding new developments in their area.

For additional information, contact Cynthia Holifield at the Mississippi Division of Tourism at (601) 359.3297.

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