Mississippi Division of Tourism P. O. Box 849 Jackson, MS 39205

Contact: Darienne Wilson 601-359-2938

Date: February 5, 2002

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

INTERNET HIGHWAYS TO MISSISSIPPI BYWAYS: MDA/DIVISION OF TOURISM UPGRADES WEBSITE CREATING FASTER AND EASIER ACCESS FOR VISITORS

Jackson, MS...Mississippi Development Authority/Division of Tourism officials announce that accessing information on its website is now more user-friendly than ever. The announcement highlights new streamlined features that expedite the visitor's ability to get the most current and accurate information on travel and tourism in Mississippi.

"We are excited to implement these upgrades to our website," said Darienne Wilson, Director of the Mississippi Division of Tourism. "We feel that these innovative additions will increase retention and interest resulting in more travelers to our state."

MS Division of Tourism's new website features include:

- A trip-planner enables travelers to create their own Mississippi itinerary.
- On-line accommodations via WorldRes, Inc. facilitates travelers' abilities to make reservations at hotels, motels and bed and breakfasts.
- The Mississippian's Guide to Mississippi lets users request information about sites, events and attractions in their own state.
- The addition of quick links affords savvy computer users the opportunity to expeditiously navigate the site.
- Tourism incentive and matching grant program information with applications to download are available for Mississippi tourism partners.
- A Mississippi Certified Travel Specialist locater connects travelers with the nearest professional who will assist in planning their next Mississippi getaway.
- The inclusion of a unique single database allows individual inquirers, group tour operators, meeting and convention planners and hunting, fishing and outdoor enthusiasts to retrieve the most current information searching by category, city or attraction.

These upgrades are only the beginning," said Wilson. "The Tourism Division will continue to be proactive in its efforts to attract visitors to Mississippi by adding features that meet the ever-changing and sophisticated needs of our travelers and tourism industry partners."

To explore Mississippi Division of Tourism's new and improved site, log on to the World Wide Web at **www.visitmississippi.org**.