

*Visit Natural*  
**NORTH FLORIDA**

*Tourism ...  
Naturally*



Funding provided by the Florida  
Department of Economic Opportunity



**Strategic Marketing Plan 2016 - 2020**



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## Introduction

The **Original Florida Tourism Task Force (Visit Natural North Florida) Strategic Market Plan 2016 - 2020** defines future goals and objectives of the organization in its mission to promote the natural, historic, and cultural attractions of the area to increase the number of visitors and to extend their visits. The goal is to enhance the economy, image, and quality of life of the region through expanded revenues and employment opportunities. At the same time, the organization encourages the preservation of the area's beautiful natural resources that attract visitors to the area.

**Develop a five-year strategic marketing plan.** The strategic planning process focuses on setting long-term goals objectives of the Task Force in the areas of the tourism industry, organization development, marketing and promotion as well as education and training. Input from the Task Force has been incorporated into a five-year strategic marketing plan.

**Goal:** To develop a five-year strategic marketing plan for the Task Force to use as a guide in attracting additional visitors to the region.<sup>1</sup>

## Scope of the Project

This project was made possible through funding from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. The goal of the project is to increase tourism and economic development. The Original Florida Tourism Task Force contracted with a company with competency in the development of marketing plans for tourism marketing organizations to prepare the plan.

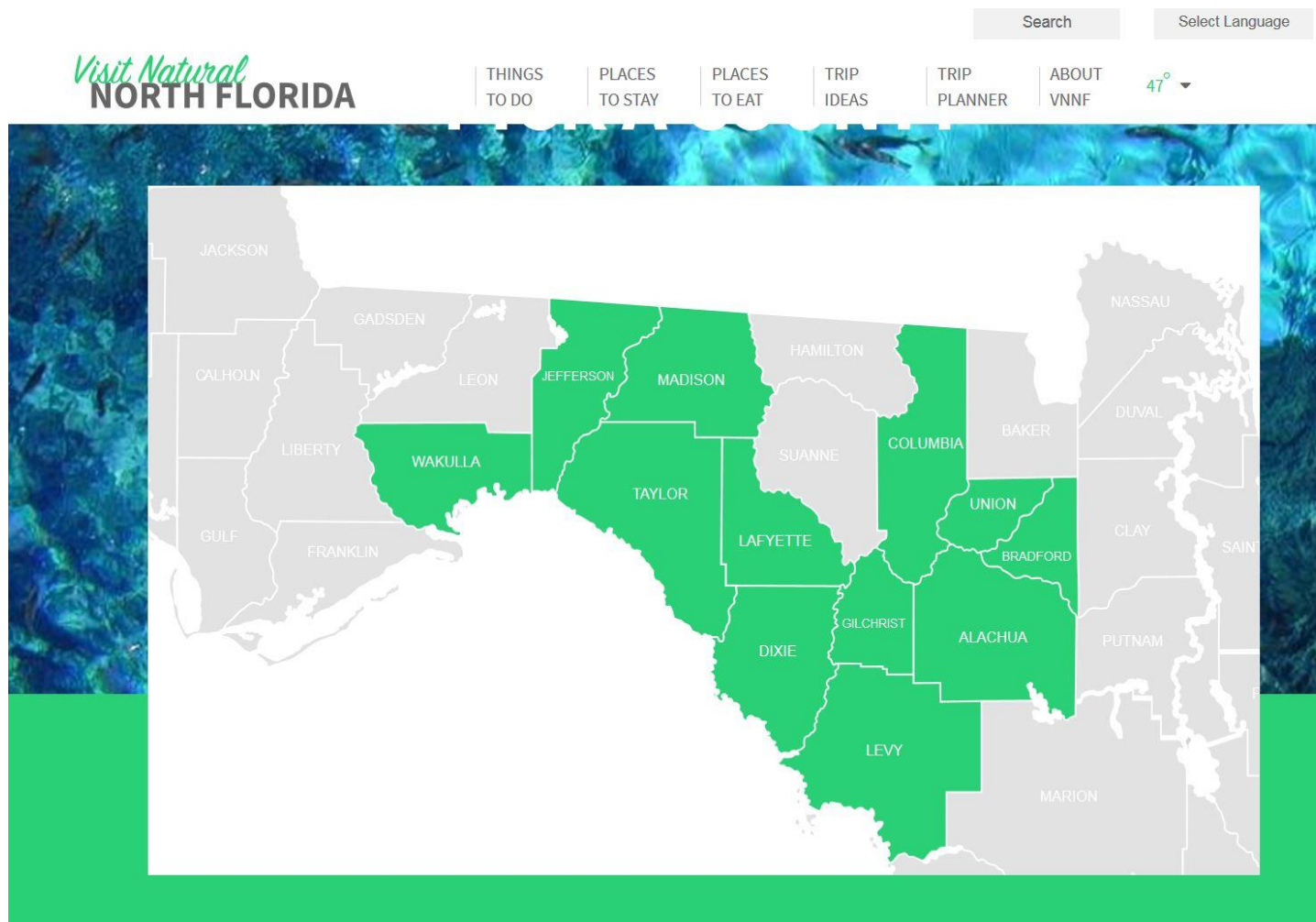
The Original Florida Tourism Task Force was created in 1993 through an intergovernmental agreement pursuant to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, in order to promote tourism as an economic development vehicle for north central Florida. The Task Force is comprised of the following counties: Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Taylor, Union and Wakulla.

The Original Florida Tourism Task Force, doing business as Visit Natural North Florida, also represents the North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity for VISIT FLORIDA in the promotion of the area to domestic and international tourism markets. The North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity consists of the following counties: Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor and Union.

The following graphic depicts the homepage of the Visit Natural North Florida website with the participating counties displayed. The 12 counties that encompass the Task Force are contiguous and represent a unified vision to increase tourism in the region and to extend stays in the area while contributing significantly to the economic development for the entire region.

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpts from 2013-2014 Regional Rural Development Grant.



Conduit Business Expertise, Inc. (CBEI) is a Florida based firm with expertise in marketing and strategic planning that was selected to render technical or professional services regarding the preparation of a strategic marketing plan. CBEI facilitated a series of three half-day retreat planning sessions for the organization, in various locations within the region, to work with the Task Force to create a sustainable and innovative Five-Year Strategic Marketing Plan, encompassing the years 2016 through 2020.

CBEI conducted a visioning process among Task Force members to identify past, present, and future opportunities for tourism development and promotion. During these sessions, Task Force members explored the development of current tourism opportunities in the designated region, focused on strengthening partnerships with a number of Florida tourism and economic development organizations, and investigated the investment of current funding allocations.

Discussions of how to increase Task Force funding that would directly impact the increase of visitors to the region was a focus of the workshop in correlation with ultimately increasing tourism occupancy tax and revenues.

Specifically, the Task Force discussed opportunities to enhance and create mutually beneficial Task Force relationships with various State of Florida entities such as VISIT FLORIDA, Florida State Parks and the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission. The retreats concentrated on the development of the Strategic Marketing Plan 2016 – 2020 that defines the future goals and objectives to direct the efforts of the Task Force in its critical mission over the next five years.

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats) analysis and a STRATEGIC (Strengths, Timeline, Results, Actions, Tasks, Externalities, Goals, Internal and Customers) analysis ensued. The sessions provided the foundation for lively discussion, Task Force engagement, and ultimately the preparation of this Strategic Marketing Plan.

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## **Target Audiences**

A critical component of developing a marketing plan is to create comprehensive descriptions of target audiences to define a detailed, vivid image of the visitors the region is likely to attract. For the purpose of this study, data mining is based upon past performance of marketing statistics and analytics that was available to the Task Force. It should be noted that no original research was conducted in the compilation and delivery of this marketing plan. The facilitating firm relied heavily upon data provided primarily from various documents of The Original Florida Tourism Task Force, VISIT FLORIDA, Google Analytics and the American Express Destination Travel Visitors Summary.

It should also be noted that due to the extensive focus on marketing and branding for this project, the Task Force Five-Year Strategic Plan Goal 5 is the development of its own original Task Force market research. The intent to develop a socio-demographic and psychographic profile of Natural North Florida tourists with relevant objectives are to be included in the future study.

The Task Force will review over the next 18 months how to most effectively achieve the goal of original research to profile visitors to the region. One area of concentration is to conduct visitor surveys at travel shows, campgrounds and lodging facilities. The Task Force is also considering an on-line digital survey to aid in demographic analysis. These original research projects will develop a more concise profile of tourists and further assess how to invest marketing allocations more effectively.

## **Tiered Target Residents and Visitors**

### **RESIDENTS**

Even though Residents are not typically considered in tourism statistics, for the purpose of this study, they are included as marketing efforts will impact resident active participation in the festivals, events, and activities staged and naturally available in the region. It is proposed that these individuals and families will be influenced by the promotional activities of the Task Force to participate more fully in regional activities thereby impacting economic development and potentially increasing tourism revenues in the area.

## Out-of-State Metro Areas

Table 1 below portrays the top 20 out-of-state metropolitan areas for calendar year 2014, as defined by Google Analytics. Of note is the fact that five of the top seven out-of-state metropolitan area markets were locations where The Original Florida Tourism Task Force attended travel shows.

**Table 1**  
**Visit Natural North Florida Website Usage**  
**By Top Twenty Out-of-State Metro Areas**  
**Calendar Year 2014**

Metro Area	Users	New Users	Avg. Session Duration (Seconds)	Pages per Session	Avg. Time on Page (Seconds)	Bounce Rate
Atlanta GA	2,550	2,433	104.95	2.29	81.30	62.11%
New York NY	1,318	1,259	70.29	2.02	68.90	69.00%
Washington DC (Hagerstown MD)	630	605	95.86	2.57	60.98	65.83%
Chicago IL	507	490	71.23	2.18	60.62	64.78%
Charlotte NC	486	452	127.21	2.32	96.73	60.75%
Albany GA	474	462	108.97	2.69	64.46	55.58%
Philadelphia PA	395	375	66.12	2.09	60.47	71.03%
Nashville TN	370	360	72.75	2.46	49.72	57.54%
Flint-Saginaw-Bay City MI	367	328	75.42	2.52	49.75	69.17%
Los Angeles CA	330	321	102.56	2.36	75.35	66.19%
Birmingham AL	328	312	109.67	2.40	78.48	65.42%
Denver CO	328	313	97.03	2.64	59.09	67.72%
Macon GA	314	304	119.47	2.67	71.61	58.92%
Boston MA-Manchester NH	311	305	65.40	2.03	63.67	67.16%
Dallas-Ft. Worth TX	308	300	51.27	1.80	64.18	69.82%
Savannah GA	281	273	129.36	2.44	89.97	61.76%
San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose CA	279	265	40.83	1.88	46.29	74.18%
Houston TX	275	268	87.87	2.21	72.58	66.67%
Huntsville-Decatur (Florence) AL	258	250	120.83	2.31	91.92	60.84%
Detroit MI	257	254	107.16	2.54	69.73	60.37%
United States	71,411	70,437	97.30	2.37	70.83	62.69%
Source: Google Analytics. Accessed April 29, 2015						

## U.S. DOMESTIC VISITORS

Excluding Florida, the state-level data suggests that the top five out-of-state markets for Natural North Florida are Georgia, New York, Texas, North Carolina and Alabama.

**Table 2**  
**Visit Natural North Florida Website Usage**  
**By Top Twenty States**  
**Calendar Year 2014**

State	Users	New Users	Number of Sessions per User	Avg. Session Duration (Seconds)	Pages per Session	Avg. Time on Page (Seconds)	Bounce Rate
Florida	52,127	51,064	1.17	98.49	2.39	71.04	62.19%
Georgia	4,683	4,530	1.15	107.22	2.46	73.44	60.62%
New York	1,217	1,160	1.09	70.95	2.09	65.32	67.30%
Texas	1,119	1,079	1.09	81.22	2.03	78.82	66.42%
North Carolina	991	950	1.09	117.30	2.46	80.41	62.16%
Alabama	962	932	1.09	102.75	2.33	77.39	61.12%
California	862	836	1.08	77.07	2.18	65.40	68.82%
Michigan	768	725	1.05	87.03	2.45	59.81	65.64%
Tennessee	653	634	1.07	92.70	2.54	60.17	59.31%
Illinois	623	601	1.05	72.80	2.20	60.48	65.75%
Virginia	591	566	1.07	71.79	2.26	56.90	68.15%
Pennsylvania	576	556	1.09	93.18	2.32	70.55	67.15%
Ohio	524	519	1.06	117.94	2.63	72.33	60.90%
South Carolina	493	466	1.09	84.91	2.12	76.00	66.17%
New Jersey	387	377	1.05	66.54	2.07	61.97	69.29%
Colorado	380	365	1.06	91.89	2.61	57.13	66.83%
Kentucky	368	352	1.08	77.31	2.04	74.32	62.41%
Maryland	360	353	1.06	87.16	2.62	53.86	70.68%
Wisconsin	347	336	1.10	82.59	2.15	71.81	69.21%
Louisiana	320	311	1.09	84.92	2.08	78.61	65.80%
United States	71,411	70,437	1.16	97.30	2.37	70.83	62.69%
Source: Google Analytics. Accessed April 29, 2015							

## U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

Google Analytics for the Visit Natural North Florida website ([www.vnnf.org](http://www.vnnf.org)) indicate a total of 75,143 users accessed the website during the calendar year 2014. Of these, 71,411, or 95 percent of all users, were from the United States as indicated in Table 3, below. Brazil, Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany rounded out the top five countries of origin for the Visit Natural North Florida website users in 2014. Although Brazil was the second-ranked country of origin, its high bounce rate of 97 percent suggests that Brazilian users may not be likely visitors to the Natural North Florida area.

Within the United States, in-state users constituted 71 percent of all domestic users of the Visit Natural North Florida website, as indicated in Table 3, below.

**Table 3**  
**Visit Natural North Florida Website Usage**  
**By Top Ten Countries**  
**Calendar Year 2014**

Country	Users	New Users	Number of Sessions per User	Avg. Session Duration (Seconds)	Pages per Session	Avg. Time on Page (Seconds)	Bounce Rate
United States	71,411	70,437	1.16	97.30	2.37	70.83	62.69%
Brazil	590	590	1.00	4.83	1.15	32.82	96.79%
Canada	473	471	1.05	70.59	2.25	56.68	68.41%
United Kingdom	369	367	1.06	61.37	2.19	51.62	71.10%
Germany	254	254	1.07	50.45	2.05	47.96	65.07%
India	231	231	1.03	53.78	1.35	152.36	78.99%
France	106	106	1.10	115.08	2.21	94.82	57.26%
Italy	92	90	1.00	6.78	1.20	34.72	94.57%
Philippines	67	66	1.09	80.48	1.66	122.40	76.71%
Netherlands	64	64	1.30	158.70	3.29	69.35	62.65%
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,143</b>	<b>74,151</b>	<b>1.15</b>	<b>95.17</b>	<b>2.35</b>	<b>70.65</b>	<b>63.40%</b>
Source: Google Analytics. Accessed April 29, 2015							

Please note that the analysis provided for Tables 1, 2, and 3 was provided by the VISIT FLORIDA - North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity Partnership 2015 Travel Show Report.

In its attempt to maximize exposure and usage of the Visit Natural North Florida brand and activities available in the target region, it is important to note the natural, historic, and cultural attractions of the area that draw residents and visitors alike. These activities present opportunities for market segmentation that directly impact Task Force advertising, marketing and public relations funding allocations for the years 2016 – 2020. Regional activities include but are not limited to:

<b>Biking</b>	<b>Arts &amp; Crafts</b>	<b>Natural Freshwater Springs</b>
<b>Birding</b>	<b>Agritourism</b>	<b>Museums</b>
<b>Canoeing</b>	<b>Hunting</b>	<b>Opera House</b>
<b>Fresh &amp; Saltwater Fishing</b>	<b>Kayaking</b>	<b>RV &amp; Tent Camping</b>
<b>Fresh &amp; Saltwater Paddling</b>	<b>Various Festivals</b>	<b>Parks &amp; Conservation Areas</b>
<b>Hiking</b>	<b>Wildlife Tourism</b>	<b>Sporting Events</b>
<b>Horse Back Riding</b>		

Goals 6 & 7 of the Strategic Marketing Plan 2016 - 2020 are focused on Branding & Marketing.

Heretofore this organization has utilized several monikers or organizational titles and three logos. It was first marketed as “The Original Florida Tourism Task Force” still serves as the legal name of the organization. One problematic use of “The Original Florida” was that it did not clearly define a geographical region. The second moniker of Visit Natural North Florida was the design of a logo with wavy lines to highlight the natural springs and water features of the region. In 2015, a third logo was designed that features “VISIT FLORIDA” in green with “North Florida” in gray. In 2016, the organization will fully integrate and exclusively use the newly designed logo of “Visit Natural North Florida” as incorporated in this document.

The adoption of this branding moniker “Visit Natural North Florida” offers a much more distinctive regional identity coupled with the concept of “natural” and all the connotations this affords for healthy, outdoor, non-human-made, and “one with nature” leisure interests. Additionally, naturally evolving historic and cultural centers, that develop as communities progress, such as opera houses and other cultural and historical edifices, also entice visitors and expand tourism offerings that result in additional visitors who will hopefully extend their stays.

The incorporation of the new logo will enhance and build the branding of the organization and further define what the region offers visitors to this region. All member counties are encouraged to include the new logo in all their promotional activities such as websites, printed identity materials, electronic media, etc., and to display the new logo at their visitor welcome centers.

The trademark Visit Natural North Florida will be registered in 2016; additionally a precise logo and licensing agreement will be developed and augmented in 2016 for member as well as external stakeholder usage. The enforcement of the licensing agreement is designed to provide a level of protection and prevent abuse and misuse of the Visit Natural North Florida branding logo.

The Policies put forth in the Goals regarding Branding and Marketing further stipulate Policies to execute over the next five years to specifically target market each of the above outlined activities that draw residents and tourist to the events and natural features of the region.

**A codified version of Branding and Marketing in the short-term include:**

1. Trademark and develop a Licensing Agreement for usage of the name Visit Natural North Florida and associated logo.
2. Target market regional activities and market sectors incorporating the new logo, through the website, printed, electronic media, and public relations endeavors.
3. Encourage all members to use the new logo on their website, printed, electronic media and public relations efforts.
4. Fully incorporate the new logo on all external outreach programs such as tourism trade shows, chamber of commerce and educational outreaches, etc.

## **Project Goals and Objectives**

During the first session, the Task Force members and the facilitator participated in a STRATEGIC (Strengths, Timeline, Results, Actions, Tasks, Externalities, Goals, Internal and Customers) analysis defining the past performance, present status and future direction of the organization and potentially the vital role the Strategic Marketing Plan 2016 -2020 would play in the eventual success of implementing the visional evolution and implementation of the plan as presented.

The group engaged not only in a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis but also a STRATEGIC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis on steroids. The STRATEGIC (Strengths, Timeline, Results, Actions, Tasks, Externalities, Goals, Internal and Customers) analysis provided a much deeper probe into the structure, defined practices, and how the organization could expand its vision and create greater cohesiveness as a team as the group created its five-year vision with revised Goals and Objectives.

During the second session, the Task Force members and the facilitator reviewed the findings of the first session and set about the task of further defining and refining specific Goals and Objectives to include in the Five-Year Strategic Marketing Plan. The group was challenged to envision expansively what the Task Force could provide to drive greater tourism for the region over the next five years. The third session continued to build upon efforts of the first two sessions in presenting the findings as compiled below.

Having this length and breadth of exposure to the group afforded a more thorough and in-depth analysis that resulted in this **Strategic Marketing Plan 2016 – 2020**:

### **The Original Florida Tourism Task Force Five-Year Strategic Marketing Plan Goals and Objectives**

#### **Mission Statement**

Visit Natural North Florida promotes the natural, historic, and cultural attractions of the area to increase the number of visitors and extend their stay. The goal is to enhance the area's economy, image, and quality of life through expanded revenues and employment opportunities. At the same time, the organization encourages the preservation of the resources which bring visitors to the area.

## **1. Membership**

**Goal 1.1      Retain existing counties as Task Force members and add new counties to the Task Force.**

Objective 1.1.1    Review the Cooperative Regional Marketing Program Fee structure to a more equitable scaling of the dues structure to insure that annual membership fees represent an equitable percentage of the annual budget of the Member County Tourist Development Councils.

Objective 1.1.2    Review the inter-local agreement which created The Original Florida Tourism Task Force to add additional counties and to change the name of the Task Force to Visit Natural North Florida.

Objective 1.1.3    Inform County Commissions annually regarding the Task Force purpose program and functions.

Objective 1.1.4    Display member county logos on the Task Force website and maintain links to member county tourism websites.

Objective 1.1.5    Explore expanding the membership of the Task Force to include all counties comprising the North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity.

## **2. Partnerships**

**Goal 2.1      Maintain the Task Force partnership with VISIT FLORIDA.**

Objective 2.1.1    Maintain the VISIT FLORIDA Rural Areas of Opportunity Partnership beyond 2017 by demonstrating to VISIT FLORIDA annual increases in Task Force Member County bed tax revenues, continued participation at travel shows and other marketing promotions.

Objective 2.1.2    Continue annual meetings with VISIT FLORIDA staff.

Objective 2.1.3    Display the VISIT FLORIDA Partner logo on the Task Force website.

Objective 2.1.4    Encourage the establishment of one visitor information center in each Task Force member county.



**Goal 2.2            Create new partnerships with state agencies such as the Florida State Parks Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.**

Objective 2.2.1    Schedule meetings with Florida State Parks and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission officials to introduce and inform officials of the purpose and functions of the Task Force.

Objective 2.2.2    Cooperate with state agencies such as the Florida State Parks and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission regarding natural resource promotion and protection

Objective 2.2.3    Start annual meetings/briefings of Task Force activities with state agencies such as the Florida State Parks and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

### **3.    Professional Enhancement**

**Goal 3.1            Increase the professionalism of Task Force staff and member organizations.**

Objective 3.1.1    Provide scholarships to Task Force staff and member organizations to attend professional education and enhancement opportunities such as the Southeast Tourism Society Marketing College as well as the annual Florida Governor's Tourism Conference.

Objective 3.1.2    Establish and maintain Task Force membership in tourism professional organizations which provide opportunities to increase the professionalism of Task Force staff and member organizations.

Objective 3.1.3    Enhance the professional capacity of Task Force staff and member organizations by providing speakers at Task Force meetings who are knowledgeable of "best practices" in tourism promotion as well as tourism attractions within the region.

### **4.    Advocacy**

**Goal 4.1            Establish tourism-oriented directional signage**

Objective 4.1.1    Encourage the Florida Department of Transportation to provide directional signage from Interstate Highways, U.S. Highways and State Roads to Visit Natural North Florida partner Visitor Information Centers.

- Objective 4.1.2 Encourage the Florida Department of Transportation to provide signage along Interstate Highways, U.S. Highways and State Roads to local and national historic districts.

## **5. Market Research**

**Goal 5.1 Develop socio-demographic and psychographic profiles of Natural North Florida tourists.**

- Objective 5.1.1 Perform demographic analysis on existing American Express Destination Insights data as well as Google Analytics data to determine demographic profiles of visitors to the region.
- Objective 5.1.2 Provide a visitors survey form for Task Force member visitor centers to develop demographic and psychographic profiles of Natural North Florida tourists.
- Objective 5.1.3 Subscribe to a publication such as Visa Vues to develop demographic information on domestic and foreign visitors to the region as well as their spending behavior.
- Objective 5.1.4 Consider conducting visitor surveys at travel shows, campgrounds and lodging facilities.
- Objective 5.1.5 Consider conducting on-line visitor surveys through the Task Force website as well as through other digital survey vehicles.

## **6. Branding**

**Goal 6.1 Enhance branding by promoting the Visit Natural North Florida brand at county tourist welcome/information centers.**

- Objective 6.1.1 Provide Task Force member counties with Visit Natural North Florida Partner logo signs for display at their visitor welcome centers.
- Objective 6.1.2 Display Visit Natural North Florida logo on the Task Force website, promotional items and collateral material.

**Goal 6.2 Enhance branding by promoting the Visit Natural North Florida brand through regional businesses and organizations.**

- Objective 6.2.1 Trademark the Visit Natural North Florida name and logo and develop a licensing agreement for the use of the Visit Natural North Florida name and logo by others.

Objective 6.2.2 Provide criteria for logo usage on the website.

## **7. Marketing**

**Goal 7.1 Maintain an engaging, informative and up-to-date website which features Task Force natural, historical, and cultural attractions as well as events.**

Objective 7.1.1 Continue to encourage Task Force member counties to maintain and update their respective portions of the website.

Objective 7.1.2 Provide regularly-updated blogs of Natural North Florida attractions and events.

Objective 7.1.3 Provide information on the Task Force website which promotes the natural, recreational, cultural and historical assets of the region.

Objective 7.1.4 Maintain an up-to-date listing of events and festivals on the Task Force website as well as Task Force-produced brochures and other collateral material.

**Goal 7.2 Inform potential tourists on tourist-oriented events and festivals within the region.**

Objective 7.2.1 Publish a regional brochure/map featuring nature, cultural and historical-base attractions as well as events and festivals which will entice visitors to investigate Natural North Florida on their current or subsequent trips to Florida.

Objective 7.2.2 Distribute the regional brochure at Florida Welcome Centers.

**Goal 7.3 Increase bicycle-based tourism throughout the region.**

Objective 7.3.1 Create and maintain bicycle route maps for every Task Force county and make the maps available for downloading from the Task Force website.

Objective 7.3.2 Create and maintain an on-road and off-road bicycle route microsite as part of the Task Force website featuring the best County bicycle trails as well as multi-day regional bicycle trails.

Objective 7.3.3 Publish a bicycle route guide of the best County bicycle trails as well as multi-day regional bicycle trails and make it available for downloading from the Task Force website.

Objective 7.3.4 Consider attending bicycle-oriented travel shows in order to feature on-road and off-road bicycling opportunities within the region.

**Goal 7.4 Increase birding and wildlife tourism throughout the region.**

Objective 7.4.1 Create and maintain birding and wildlife information on the Task Force website featuring the best opportunities for birding and wildlife viewing in the region.

Objective 7.4.2 Provide a birding and wildlife viewing guide of the best birding and wildlife viewing locations in the region and make it available for downloading from the Task Force website.

Objective 7.4.3 Consider attending birding and/wildlife viewing-oriented travel shows in order to feature birding/wildlife viewing opportunities within the region.

**Goal 7.5 Increase tourism by promoting the freshwater springs of the region.**

Objective 7.5.1 Create and maintain a freshwater springs microsite as part of the Task Force website featuring the best springs of the region for nature-based tourism.

Objective 7.5.2 Provide a guide of the best springs of the region for nature-based tourism and make it available for downloading from the Task Force website.

Objective 7.5.3 Consider attending outdoor adventure-oriented travel shows in order to feature the springs of the region.

**Goal 7.6 Increase visitor awareness of saltwater and freshwater paddling opportunities within the region.**

Objective 7.6.1 Create and maintain saltwater and freshwater paddling information on the Task Force website featuring the best opportunities for paddling in the region.

Objective 7.6.2 Create and maintain freshwater and saltwater paddling guides to the region and make them available for downloading from the Task Force website.

Objective 7.6.3 Consider attending paddling-oriented travel shows in order to feature saltwater and freshwater paddling opportunities within the region.

**Goal 7.7            Increase visitor awareness of the saltwater and freshwater fishing opportunities within the region.**

- Objective 7.7.1    Create and maintain saltwater and freshwater fishing information on the Task Force website featuring the best opportunities for saltwater and freshwater fishing in the region.
- Objective 7.7.2    Post blogs on saltwater and freshwater fishing on the Task Force website.
- Objective 7.7.3    Create and maintain freshwater and saltwater fishing guides of the region and make them available for downloading from the Task Force website.
- Objective 7.7.4    Consider attending boating-oriented travel shows in order to feature saltwater and freshwater fishing opportunities within the region.

**Goal 7.8            Increase visitor awareness of recreational vehicle and tent camping opportunities within the region.**

- Objective 7.8.1    Maintain information on recreational vehicle and tent camping facilities in the region on the Task Force website.
- Objective 7.8.2    Create and maintain recreational vehicle and camping facilities brochure and make it available for downloading from the Task Force website.
- Objective 7.8.3    Consider attending recreational vehicle travel shows in order to feature recreational vehicle and tent camping opportunities within the region.
- Objective 7.8.4    Consider attending outdoor adventure travel shows in order to promote outdoor adventure and tent camping opportunities within the region.

**Goal 7.9            Increase visitor awareness of equestrian opportunities within the region.**

- Objective 7.9.1    Maintain information on equestrian attractions and opportunities in the region on the Task Force website.
- Objective 7.9.2    Consider creating an equestrian-oriented brochure and make it available for downloading from the Task Force website.

**Goal 7.10        Increase visitor awareness of agritourism opportunities within the region.**

Objective 7.10.1 Maintain information on agritourism opportunities within the region on the Task Force website.

Objective 7.10.2 Consider creating an agritourism-oriented brochure and make it available for downloading from the Task Force website.

**Goal 7.11        Increase visitor awareness of hiking opportunities within the region.**

Objective 7.11.1 Maintain information on hiking opportunities within the region on the Task Force website.

Objective 7.11.2 Consider creating a hiking trails brochure and make it available for downloading from the Task Force website.

**Goal 7.12        Increase visitor awareness of parks and similar conservation areas located within the region.**

Objective 7.12.1 Maintain information on parks, wildlife refuges, nature preserves and forests located within the region on the Task Force website.

Objective 7.12.2 Highlight parks, wildlife refuges, nature preserves and forests in brochures and make the brochures available for downloading from the Task Force website.

Objective 7.12.3 Distribute information on parks, wildlife refuges, nature preserves and forests located within the region at travel shows.

**Goal 7.13        Increase visitor awareness of the natural, recreational, cultural and historical assets of the region in order to attract more visitors.**

Objective 7.13.1 Place advertisements featuring Natural North Florida in digital and/or print media publications to promote consumer awareness of the Natural North Florida brand and to attract visitors to the region.

Objective 7.13.2 Distribute regional brochures to private businesses, such as hotels, along major travel routes where they will be picked up by travelers.

Objective 7.13.3 Consider implementing coordinated, cooperative marketing campaigns among Task Force members.

**Goal 7.14        Increase travel writers’ awareness of the natural, recreational and cultural assets of the region in order to generate articles by travel writers featuring Natural North Florida.**

Objective 7.14.1 Attend the VISIT FLORIDA annual New York City Media Reception for New York City-based travel writers and travel-oriented publications.

**Goal 7.15        Increase visitor awareness among Florida residents of the natural, recreational, cultural and historical assets of the region through direct contact with potential tourists who are Florida residents in order to attract more visitors.**

Objective 7.15.1 Participate in in-state travel, recreational vehicle, and outdoor recreation shows.

Objective 7.15.2 Place digital and/or print advertisements within metropolitan areas of travel shows attended by the Task Force.

**Goal 7.16        Increase visitor awareness among domestic out-of-state residents of the natural, recreational, cultural and historical assets of the region through direct contact with potential tourists who reside out-of-state in order to attract more visitors.**

Objective 7.16.1 Participate in domestic out-of-state travel, recreational vehicle, and outdoor recreation shows.

Objective 7.16.2 Place digital and/or print advertisements within metropolitan areas of travel shows attended by the Task Force.

**Goal 7.17        Increase visitor awareness among international tourists of the natural, recreational, cultural and historical assets of the region through direct contact with potential tourists who reside out-of-state in order to attract more visitors.**

Objective 7.17.1 Participate in professional and consumer travel shows in Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom.

Objective 7.17.2 Place digital and/or print advertisements within metropolitan areas of travel shows attended by the Task Force.

Objective 7.17.3 Consider placing brochures in Florida international airports such as Fort Lauderdale, Fort Myers, Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, and Tampa to attract international tourists to the region.

Objective 7.17.4 Provide support for multiple languages on the Task Force website.

**Goal 7.18      Increase visitor awareness of the natural, recreational, cultural and historical assets of the region in order to attract more visitors among consumers who have either visited the region or have expressed an interest in visiting the region.**

Objective 7.18.1 Produce a quarterly digital newsletter and distribute to persons whose email addresses have been collected by the Task Force.

**Goal 7.19      Increase visitor awareness of the region to combat the effects of off-peak travel resulting in “seasonality” and “shoulder seasons” that occur especially in the spring and fall between high seasons.**

Objective 7.19.1 Incorporate the use of the quarterly digital newsletter as outlined in Objective 7.18.1 emphasizing the exceptional value of travel during the spring and fall in the region.

Objective 7.19.2 Encourage participation in spring and fall festivals and events to augment tourism experiences in the region during the off-peak travel periods

Objective 7.19.3 Consider the creation of promotional materials to distribute at various travel events, in which the Task Force participates, to encourage travel in the off-peak travel periods.

## **Goal 8                      Funding**

**Goal 8.1              Explore additional funding opportunities to augment the annual budget of the Task Force.**

Objective 8.1.1 Consider selling advertising on the Task Force website.

Objective 8.1.2 Consider developing fee-based Educational Components of the Task Force.

Objective 8.1.3 Consider developing fee-based partnership opportunities with travel and tour-based organizations.

Objective 8.1.4 Consider developing partnership opportunities with media organizations.

Objective 8.1.5 Consider developing fee-based partnership opportunities with schools to be funded by external organizations.



Objective 8.1.6 Investigate grant funding opportunities.

**Goal 9**            **Education and Outreach**

**Goal 9.1**            **Develop an Educational Component as an Outreach Program from the Task Force to Regional Chamber of Commerce offices as well as to other non-profit and for-profit organizations intent on creating tourism in the region or in their respective counties and businesses.**

Objective 9.1.1 Create an outreach presentation regarding the Task Force purpose, program and functions and develop customized presentations to address: Customer Service & Tourism Topics; Benefits of incorporating Visit Natural North Florida as a regional brand; Managing International Tourists; and other tourism issues.

Objective 9.1.2 Develop web-based and/or printed material programs focused on youth, designed to increase awareness of the natural, recreational, cultural and historical assets of the region.

Objective 9.1.3 Develop a Task Force Speakers Bureau of knowledgeable individuals to present “best practices” in tourism promotion.

Objective 9.1.4 Develop outreach and advocacy programs to impact local, regional and national governmental officials to increase awareness of the natural, recreational, cultural and historical assets of the region and to present programs and projects of particular and timely topics.

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## Conclusion

The Visit Natural North Florida Task Force was fully engaged in the activities required to create this Strategic Marketing Plan. Implementation and execution will result in a powerful tool for the group to increase tourism and extend the stay of the region's visitors.

Economic development and increased revenues are certain to result with greater economic sustainability for the North Central Florida region.

Jobs in tourism should remain constant based upon current economic trends. With the influx of additional tourists, as a direct result of efforts of the Task Force in its execution of the 2016-2020 Plan, additional jobs are predicted.

One of the many benefits of utilization and implementation of the objectives of the Task Force in this document is to maintain the culture of the area while inviting visitors to enjoy the natural, cultural and historic attractions of North Central Florida.

This Strategic Marketing Plan will position Visit Natural North Florida to maximize and build upon the strengths of the organization and its Task Force to develop *Tourism Naturally*.

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## Acknowledgements

### *Visit Natural* **NORTH FLORIDA** *Members of the Task Force*

*It was a pleasure to engage with the **Task Force Members** who were genuinely supportive of this effort. They were delightful, professional, and completely devoted to enriching their region.*

*Also, we appreciate the generous efforts and support of individuals from the*



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### *And for the following Participating Organizations:*



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