



June 24, 2010

Georgia Focused on a Strong Tourism Season

Update about the Oil Spill and Georgia

Dear Tourism Partners:

As the eyes of the nation remain focused on the oil spill along the Gulf Coast, experts continue to believe it is unlikely that Georgia will be directly affected by the damage.

Still, given the remote possibility that extreme weather could change the spill's path – and the real impact oil is already having on our neighbors in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana – we want to keep you informed about how the State of Georgia and its partners are monitoring the crisis and responding.

Staying On Top of the Spill

The Division of Tourism is in close contact with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which has been working with the U.S. Coast Guard to plan for any potential impact on our coastal marshes and beaches. At this time, they believe that there is a very low probability of oil reaching our shores, particularly because the Gulf Stream passes some 70 miles off the coast of Georgia.

Should oil reach the Atlantic Ocean and affect our state, the Coastal Area Contingency plan would be implemented and a unified command structure would be activated. This would include the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, DNR and the responsible party – BP – as well as numerous other federal, state and local agencies.

Minimizing the Impact on Georgia Tourism

There's no doubt that a robust tourism industry in Georgia depends, in part, on visitors to Florida. It's in everyone's best interest that families continue with their plans to visit the U.S. Southeast this summer.

So far, from anecdotal reports, we are seeing a strong summer shaping up along the Georgia Coast. However, it's too early to know the full impact the spill will have on tourism in our state. We will continue to implement our well thought out and proven global tourism marketing strategy, including our focus on reaching potential visitors in drive markets and encouraging Georgians to spend their vacation dollars here at home.

Moving Forward

As the crisis continues for the foreseeable future, we will keep you informed about how the State and its partners are working to protect and support the tourism industry that's so important for Georgia. In the meantime, you can find the latest information about Georgia and the oil spill at [GEMA: Latest Emergency Info](#).

Please also let us know about any questions or concerns you have.

Thank you.

Kevin Langston

Deputy Commissioner, Tourism

Sources: Georgia Emergency Management Agency and Georgia Department of Natural Resources