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December 13, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tourism is Good for Forsyth

Tourism has been good for the City of Forsyth and Monroe County. Tourism creates jobs, both through direct employment and indirectly in sectors such as retail and transportation. When these people spend their wages on goods and services, it leads to what is known as the "multiplier effect," creating more jobs. The tourism industry also provides opportunities for small businesses, which is especially important in rural communities, and generates extra tax revenues, such as hotel taxes, which are used for schools, housing and hospitals.

The City of Forsyth collected hotel-motel taxes from 14 hotels last year. 20% of the hotel-motel tax goes to the City's general fund, 40% to Forsyth Main Street, and the remaining 40% to the recently (2015) formed Convention & Visitors Bureau.

According to the Georgia Department of Economic Development and a 2016 US Travel Association report, in 2015, the City of Forsyth and Monroe County's domestic tourism industry:

- Supported nearly 300 jobs and 6.7 million in payroll
- Generated \$31.93 million in direct travel spending
- Created \$1.29 million in state tax revenues
- Generated \$890,000 in local tax revenues

Each Monroe County household received nearly \$200 in tax relief per household, as a result of the taxes generated by direct travel spending. Direct travel spending was up from 29.97 million in 2014 – that is a record increase of 1.96 million.

The improvements to infrastructure and the creation of new leisure amenities resulting from tourism, also benefit the local community. Tourism encourages the preservation of traditional customs, handicrafts and festivals that might otherwise have been lost, creates civic pride, and greater cultural understanding.

Tourism -- particularly nature and ecotourism -- helps promote conservation of wildlife and natural resources such as wildlife management areas and state parks. It also helps generate funding for maintaining these through entrance charges and guide fees.

For more information about tourism in the City of Forsyth and the surrounding area, please contact the City of Forsyth Convention & Visitors Bureau, 478.974.1460, www.forsythcvb.com, or visit us at the Welcome Center, 68 North Lee St. in Forsyth.