

# Economic Development



**North  
Central  
Florida  
Regional  
Planning  
Council**

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# Economic Development

- Two Primary Areas of Focus:
  - Economic Development District
  - Natural North Florida  
(the Original Florida Tourism Task Force)

# Economic Development

## ■ U.S. Economic Development Administration

### *Economic Development District*

- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – 5-year plan
  - CEDS Committee - wide range of public & private sector leaders
  - Select top 5 priority and long range projects
  - Projects must be consistent with CEDS to receive grant funding from Economic Development Administration

# Economic Development

## ■ CEDS Priority Projects:

- Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern - Catalyst Sites Development
- Promoting Sustainable, Tourism Based Economic Development through Natural North Florida
- Healthcare and Life Science Professionals
- Regional Business Incubators and Research Parks
- Multi-modal Infrastructure Improvements

# Economic Development

## ■ CEDS Long Range Priorities

- Regional Energy Facilities – as the region grows there will be increasing energy needs
- Regional Airport Facilities – expansion of municipal and rural air parks is an important component of regional economic development

# Economic Development

- Economic Development Administration Funding:
  - Construction Grants – Provide infrastructure necessary to support job growth and retention. *Must be tied to jobs-producing or jobs-saving project.*
  - Planning and Technical Assistance Grants – Build local capacity for economic development projects.
  - Economic Adjustment Assistance Grants – Help overcome loss of major employer, natural disaster or special needs.

# Economic Development

## ■ Current/Recent Regional Projects

- University of Florida Innovation Hub - High-tech Business Incubator Project, Gainesville (\$8.1 Million)
- Santa Fe College Perry Center - Health Sciences Project, Alachua (\$1.86 Million)
- Suwannee County Catalyst Site – Feasibility Study Grant, Live Oak (\$275,000)
- Buckeye Wastewater Treatment Infrastructure Project, Perry (\$2.0 Million)

# Economic Development

- Additional Support for Economic Development Projects
  - Regional Economic Modeling, Inc.- Advanced economic impact modeling software used to measure:
    - Employment
    - Income
    - Population
    - Other economic variables

# Economic Development

## ■ Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern

- Regional Approach to Economic Development
- 14-County Region Spanning North Central Florida (including Baker, Jefferson, Levy & Putnam)
- Added State Development Incentives for Rural Counties



# Economic Development

## ■ North Florida Economic Development Partnership

- The Council Serves on the NFEDP Board of Directors
- Current Project: Rural Broadband Expansion
  - \$30 Million U.S. Department of Commerce Grant to Provide “Middle Mile” Network Throughout Region



# Economic Development

## ■ Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern

- Two Large Scale “Catalyst” Sites
  - Columbia County – Target Industries: Building Construction Component Manufacturing & Design, Logistics & Distribution Center
  - Suwannee County – Target Industries: Distribution & Logistics Center, Manufacturing

# Natural North Florida

(The Original Florida Tourism Task Force)

## ■ In Rural Communities, Tourism *is* Economic Development

- 11-County Region Marketing  
“Natural North Florida”
- Increase Tourism as a Means of Sustainable  
Economic Development
- Increase Entrepreneurial Capacity of the  
Hospitality Industry



# Regional Tourism Concept:



A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats!

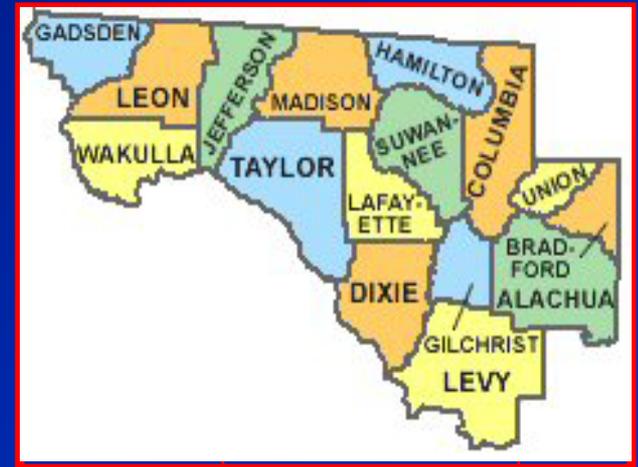
# Why Natural North Florida?

- Proven Track Record
- Relationships that Can Shape Policy with VISIT FLORIDA
- Synergies of Event Planning
- Return on Investment:  
\$33 for each \$1 of Member Investment



# Natural North Florida

- Founded in 1993 as a Result of a Study Conducted by the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council
- Market the Region as One Destination to Increase Visibility and Increase Tourism Offerings
- Mission: Enhance Tourism While Preserving the Historical, Cultural and Natural Assets of North Florida



# Tourism Marketing Program

- Press Familiarization Tours
- Sales Missions
- Trade Shows
- Advertising
- Tourism Education
- Public Relations Campaigns
- Website:

[www.VisitNaturalNorthFlorida.com](http://www.VisitNaturalNorthFlorida.com)

- Calendar of Events
- Trip Planner Function
- Travel Bloggers



Natural NORTH

Natural NORTH FLORIDA

Click on the calendar for dates you want to

## Chiefland Watermelon Festival

Chiefland, FL

Phone:

[Chiefland Watermelon Festival](#)

The annual Chiefland Watermelon Festival is held the biggest event of the year in Chiefland. Come out for fun filled events including: a parade, auction, see the Watermelon Queen contest.

By NaturalNorthFlorida.com on May 11th, 2011

No Comments

## For a Mix of Relaxed and Action-Packed, Think Jellystone

Category: Events and Activities, Outdoors and Nature, Tags: cabins, camping with kids, jellystone, jellystone campground, madison



Jellystone's waterslide is just one of the resort's family-friendly attractions.

We had them at "waterslide."

My son and his best friend are squarely in the tween set now, as they're starting middle school in the fall. Suddenly, it's not that cool to play on playgrounds, watch cartoons or do the kind of kid stuff I happily enjoyed until I was at least 13. Or 16. Or maybe 21.

Nevertheless, when we arrived at Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Camp-Resort in Madison, all traces of teen pretension disappeared in an all-out race to throw themselves down the waterslide, goof around at mini-golf, splash in the lake and pool and even enter the bubble-blowing contest, working their bubble gum with laser intensity in an effort to win.

Jellystone is that kind of place — where kids can forget about Facebook and hairstyles for a while and just enjoy being kids.

Paddle boats, putt-putt and planned activities add to the fun of just hanging out in your cabin, tent or RV or enjoying a picnic lunch at the lake. When you want to relax and hold down part of the sandy beach, you can. When the kids are restless and looking for excitement, there's always something going on, as evidenced by the schedule below.

Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park/Camp Resort	
Activity Schedule	
9:00	Stone Cars
10:00	Cartoons
11:00	Sack Races
12:00	Movie
1:00	Candy Bar Bingo
2:00	Choc. eating contest
3:00	Bubble Gum Blowing
4:00	Pool Diving contest
5:00	Waterslide closes
6:00	Karaoke
7:00	Scavenger Hunt
8:00	Movie
9:00	Stone Cars
10:00	Quiet Time

### Pages

- › [About Visit Natural North Florida and The Original Florida Tourism Task Force](#)

### Recent Posts

- › [Heaven Scent: Rose's Botanicals Soap Factory and Gift Shop](#)
- › [Keaton Beach Hot Dog Stand: Much More Than Dogs!](#)
- › [There's still time to sign up for the 2011 Doug Johnson Reeling For Kids Tournament at Steinhatchee](#)
- › [Cofrin Nature Park: Get Outside in Gainesville](#)
- › [Gainesville's Dragonfly Lands "Excitement" Cocktail in National Contest](#)

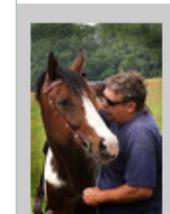
### Categories

- › [About Our Bloggers](#)
- › [Events and Activities](#)
- › [Fishing and Boating](#)
- › [Outdoors and Nature](#)
- › [Uncategorized](#)

### Tags

alachua county big bend Biking boating Botany canoeing Capt. Tommy Thompson cedar key dams day trips Ecology Family Fun festivals fishing fishing forecasts florida florida museum of natural history

r trip builder.



# ■ Social Media: Facebook

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile for "Visit Natural North Florida". The page header includes the Facebook logo, a search bar, and the organization's name "Visit Natural North Florida" with its location "Gainesville, Florida". The profile picture is the organization's logo, which features a map of Florida with blue waves at the bottom. The cover photo is a collage of images including a boat, a fish, and a building. The main content area displays a post from May 25, 2011, at 3:44pm, with 135 impressions and a 0.74% feedback rate. The post text reads: "What's Happening This Weekend - May 28, 2011 All American Car Show A salute to veterans. Hosted by the Busted Knuckles Car Club. Show runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Tyler Creek Business Community. Contact Russ at 352-221-0500 or Dan at 352-535-5906 for more information." Below the text is a photo of a yellow boat. The left sidebar contains navigation links for "Wall", "Info", "Photos", "Events", "About", and "Likes". At the bottom, there are links for "Subscribe via RSS" and "Share".

# ■ Mobile Web

The screenshot shows the mobile website for "Visit Natural North Florida". The browser address bar displays "www.naturalnorthflorida.com/mobile/index.cfm?". The main content area features a large map of Florida with the organization's logo overlaid. Below the map is a "Main Menu" section with a green header. The menu items are: "Introduction Video" (with a YouTube icon), "Things To Do", "Events Calendar", "Photo Album", "Find us on Facebook", and "Other Options". Each menu item has a right-pointing arrow. At the bottom of the page, there is a "Home" button.

# “Gulf Coast Seafood” Press Familiarization Tour

Featuring:

- Coastal Communities of Natural North Florida
- Hosted 6 Travel Writers From Within Southeast “Drive Market”
- Writers Have Featured the Region in Several Magazine Articles and “Blogs”



# Post FAM Results:

Experience the South by People Who Know it Best



"Travis McGee's still in Cedar Key  
That's what ol' John MacDonald said  
My rendezvous's so long overdue  
With all of the things I've sung and  
I've read."  
Jimmy Buffett, *Incommunicado*

**CEDAR KEY, FL.** The Big Bend on Florida's Gulf Coast overflows with priceless treasures from the sea, sporting rivers with fairyland names like Wakulla, Steinhatchee and Suwannee. This is Florida's Cracker nation. Cross Creek's Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings wrote about the indigenous culture that harkens back to ancient Spain. My culinary evolution began here before I was old enough to vote: raw oysters, smoked mullet, fried grouper sandwiches and stone crabs.

Visiting the magnificent region combined fishing with food. My journey began just south of Tallahassee at Posey's Seafood in Crawfordville, with fried Gulf mullet, mullet roe and raw oysters, a warm-up for dinner at Clay Lovel's Spring Creek restaurant where fresh fruits from the Gulf like mullet, crab, flounder and oysters, are piled on the dinner table. Between meals, we did some Mullet seining and worked the oyster beds at Panacea.



Pictured above, Roy's is a popular restaurant in Steinhatchee serving local seafood.

**There wasn't a trace of oil in the water, on the shore or in the food.**

Dean Fowler's renowned Steinhatchee Landing Resort was the next stop that included seafood at Roy's restaurant followed by trout fishing expertly guided by Captain Charlie Norwood. Fiddler's, Chef Jim Hunt's acclaimed restaurant served a spectacular dinner, a cornucopia of local fish paired with exquisite wines, topped off by a virtuoso washtub bass performance by the ebullient Chef. Breakfast at Rachel's a romantic Cracker house offered biscuits with gravy and memorable conversation.

We traveled down to the community of Suwannee where the storied river empties into the Gulf. Salt Creek Restaurant was culinary headquarters. Lunch included a fried soft shell crab sandwich and oyster stew. The piece de resistance at dinner was baked grouper. An unforgettable wildlife cruise headed

*continued*



**Gotta to Get to the Gulf**  
SEE FOR YOURSELF  
WHAT REALLY SHINES

**L**ies, Dave, and Taylor Coates' steers and coast how the most extraordinary sparkling water you've ever seen, even for Florida. From Steinhatchee to Suwannee to Cedar Key, the twilight flickers of the pristine waters like nowhere else, with a shimmering invitation to explore some more. The Steinhatchee River, Suwannee, and waters of the Gulf provide some of the best fishing in the world, and the heaviest seafood boat's ever passed across your palate, but when it comes to visiting this Hidden Coast, it's the people that really shine.

Whether it's a couple of days or a couple of weeks you spend eating, relaxing, fishing and exploring, you're going to come away having met some of the finest Floridians around. Like Jim, the beaming, razz-dazzled restaurateur in Steinhatchee, Jim's also the chef and master cooking up great catches and a good time at Fiddler's Restaurant in Steinhatchee ([fiddlersrestaurant.com](http://fiddlersrestaurant.com)), open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. He's also the mind behind the area's Valentin's, a weekend Fiddler Crab festival, replete with lots of great music and family fun, plus a rousing water crabbing competition. Fiddler's offers to cook your catch for you, too, and you may not get the "gut burn" after all the eating.

Even though no slumping at Roy's where we had lunch, get soft shell crab sandwich all the way to the end that this place owns, too.

Need a fish guard? Stop into sign up with the loaves every fish, perchies, and a you really want you'll be fishing, mackerel, bluefish, groupers, and tarpon. Round up the best time visit <http://fisherflorida.com>. At the Gulf Coast Fishing Capital the vision: Roy's owner, D. as soon as you Web 66 newsack



funny man Russ Muller and his hard-working wife Fern, or get a guide and you're sure to walk away with a smile on your face ([suwanneeguides.com](http://suwanneeguides.com)).

Sonia Reed won't just rent you one of the most breathtaking views from the shores of Suwannee Cove ([suwanneecove.com](http://suwanneecove.com)), she's certain to share a good tale or two about the locals. Want to try something different? Rent a houseboat for a week and float through the unspoiled bays and coves, fish, snorkel, and visit the underwater archaeological park, enjoying the miles and miles of unspoiled wilderness along the coast ([suwanneehouseboats.com](http://suwanneehouseboats.com)). Oh, the wildlife you will see!

The local's? Well, of course, that's obvious, too. You'll want to take on many trips to Salt Creek Restaurant (352-542-7072), opened in 1954, as you can afford, "you'll never grow tired of the fresh foods on their menu, or their specialties like grouper stuffed with crab, scallops, and shrimp. I can't imagine it tastes better anywhere! A tasty finale to a treat of a meal, Salt Creek's key lime pie, perfectly priced at \$3.95 a slice."

Further down the coast sits Cedar Key. A historic colorful coastal town, it was Florida's clam and oyster town in July 4th "Clamfest", not to mention the Cedar Key Seafood Festival in late October. This 200-year-old fishing village has adapted the buildings developed in the 1800's to house their museums, shops, stores, and restaurants.

With rooms to condos, and local hotels to stay at, there's nothing commercial about this affordable, family-friendly town just over an hour from our Ocala. No wonder this cozy, tucked away coastal town was voted the "Best Western Getaway" in Florida Monthly Magazine's Best of Florida 2009, and earned honorable mention for "Best Sunset 2009".

Ties onto the main street and you're met by a large, new playground that calls out "FUN!" to your kids. And, it's right on the beach. You can even step across the street and get an ocean view at the non-frivolous Park Place ([parkplacecedarkey.com](http://parkplacecedarkey.com)), where you can walk to all of your planned destinations.



# Sales Missions

## Atlanta-Birmingham Sales Mission

### *Relationship building with:*

- Southern Living
- Coastal Living
- Birmingham News
- Atlanta Journal Constitution
- Chattanooga Times
- Sweet Tea Magazine
- Cottage Living
- Cooking Light



Feature article in Southern Living –  
Advertising Equivalency of over \$85,000

# Trade Shows

- In 2011, Original Florida has Reached Over 10,000 Consumers that are Interested in Visiting Attractions in North Florida
- Each County is Represented in Natural North Florida's Marketing Materials. Your County's Message Reaches Thousands of Travel Consumers Annually.



# Cooperative Advertising

- Original Florida “Buys Down” the Cost of Advertisements so that Each Participating County Gets a Reduced Rate for their Individual Advertisements
- Publications Feature Editorial Content About Our Region as a Result of Ads

# Cooperative Advertising

## Example: Villages Daily Sun

- Three Month Advertising Campaign Following Villages Consumer Travel Show

## Advertising Campaign Following Villages Consumer Travel Show



North  
Central  
Florida  
Regional  
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Council

**Your Amazing Natural North Florida Adventures!**

visit us online at  
[www.VisitNaturalNorthFlorida.com](http://www.VisitNaturalNorthFlorida.com)  
or call 877-955-2199

Looking for fun special events, one-of-a-kind festivals and incredible vacation adventures that are just around the corner from the Villages? Then welcome to Natural North Florida. From Gainesville, west to the Gulf of Mexico, winding along the historic Suwannee River and north to the Tallahassee area, this pristine collection of 12 off-the-beaten-path counties will amaze and entice you with their charming and historic old-fashioned towns, amazing sunsets, peaceful recreational rivers and trails, rich and abundant flora and fauna and the world's largest collection of crystal clear springs.

Natural North Florida sports an incredible array of annual special events and festivals – there's one to fit every interest, pocketbook or weekend. From the now world-famous Cedar Key Seafood Festival to Springtime Tallahassee and so much in between, the Natural North Florida's on-line calendar of special events provides details to kick-off your festive spirit and whet your appetite for unparalleled entertainment.

Natural North Florida is also your resource for outdoor and sports enthusiasts. Detailed information about this region's Equestrian trails, fresh as well as salt-water fishing, kayaking and canoeing and even the new, high-tech scavenger hunting adventure, Geocaching, is just a mouse click or phone call away.

So when you ask yourself, "What's my next adventure?" remember the answer is as easy as a one-tank trip to neighboring Natural North Florida. *Naturally!*

For additional getaway adventures, a calendar of special events or general visitor information simply visit [www.VisitNaturalNorthFlorida.com](http://www.VisitNaturalNorthFlorida.com) or call 877-955-2199.

**MONTICELLO**

**TOUR OF HOMES**  
Saturday, March 20, 2010  
9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Enjoy a leisurely visit to the historic district of Monticello in rural north Florida featuring over 300 buildings built before 1930.

*The heritage of Florida is right here...*

www.visitjeffersoncountypflorida.com

**Welcome To The Nature Coast**

"Discover your next adventure in a world of natural wonder far away from the hustle and bustle of busy cities. Take off your shoes, put down your cell phone and breathe in relaxation. Allow your worries to melt away as you watch a gorgeous sunset in the 200-year old fishing village of Cedar Key or indulge yourself with some ice cold watermelon at the 56th Annual Chiefess Watermelon Festival, June 5th. Step back in time to cotton candy, strawberry preserves and farm animals at the Levy County FAIR April 8-11, 2010. Levy County Visitors Bureau [www.visitnaturecoast.com](http://www.visitnaturecoast.com) or Toll Free at 1-877-387-5673

Where do folks go in Gainesville when it's not Gameday?

Santa Fe College Spring Arts Festival April 19 - 21, 2010

**VISIT GAINESVILLE**  
where nature and culture meet

[www.visitgainesville.com](http://www.visitgainesville.com) 1-888-978-6392

**8th Annual Florida State Bluegrass Festival**  
APRIL 1-2-3, 2010  
Forest Capital State Park  
Highway to South - Perry, FL

Featuring:  
Cedric Gray, Steve Rabin, Vince Smith & Liberty Hill, Jerry & Amanda Smith, Southern Life, Pam & Susan, Skip Collins, Rick Straker of Green, Southern State Bluegrass, The Anderson Family Band, The Johnson Family, Tallahassee Riders and much more!

The Florida State Bluegrass Festival was Nominated By The IBMA as "Best Event" in 2006

WELCOME to the FL State Bluegrass Festival! We're offering a variety of ticket options for the weekend. (Includes parking and access to the festival grounds.)  
ADULTS & SENIORS: \$45 (includes parking)  
CHILDREN: \$20 (includes parking)  
Sponsorships and more information: [www.flstatebluegrass.com](http://www.flstatebluegrass.com)  
850-594-5366  
www.visitjeffersoncountypflorida.com

Welcome to a place where super insects natural!

Here nature greets you with open arms, and friendly faces to be sure to enlighten, inspire and experience an inspiring mix of the past, present and future. A long-standing tradition of fine recreation from a contemporary Capital City, Tallahassee. Where it all comes together.

[www.tallahassee.com](http://www.tallahassee.com) 904.432.2866

**Experience The Wonders of Wakulla**

Just 4 hours drive from The Villages Inn

World Class Birding at St. Mark's National Wildlife Refuge  
Hiking/Biking Trails  
Fishing & Saltwater Fishing  
Certified "Green Guides" offering Eco-Tours  
Canoeing / Kayaking  
Wakulla Springs State Park and Lodge  
Drive the Big Bend Scenic Byway "the Best Deal in Golf!"

Join Us For Wild About Wakulla Week March 15-21, 2010  
10th Annual Super-Happy Warm Grassie Festival April 16, 2010  
Call 850-929-1200 #1 or visit [www.visitwakulla.com](http://www.visitwakulla.com)



# Public Relations Campaign:

## ■ Natural North Florida Fishing Trail:

- Fishing is Big Business in Florida, Bringing over \$1 Billion/Year From Out of State Anglers
- Establish Key Fishing Locations in Each County
- Develop Contest to Encourage Visits to Each County to Qualify for Prizes

# Return On Investment (2010)

Advertising Equivalency	\$1,000,000
Trade Show Attendance/Brochure Distribution	\$10,000
Public Relations Campaigns	\$15,000
Direct Ads and Co-op Opportunities	\$10,800
FAM Trips	\$10,000
Other Marketing Intangibles	\$34,000
(Includes: VISIT FLORIDA Grants, Trade Show Leads, Travel Writer Relationships, Proactive Press Release Campaign, Brochure Distribution, Website, Research/Conversion Study)	
<u>Staff Expenses &amp; Overhead</u>	<u>\$35,000</u>
Total:	\$1,114,800

For Each \$1 of Member Dues,  
Average Return on Investment is = \$33



# Next Steps

- Your County Makes a Small Investment That Provides Big Returns. *There is Added Value in Both Local Marketing and the Larger Umbrella Group of Natural North Florida.*
- Active Participation Provides Better Regional Branding, Continuity of Marketing Message Through FAMs, Travel Writers and Media Relations and Opportunities for Regional Grants.
- Monthly Meetings Spark Creative Solutions to Local Problems and Cross-Promotion of Area Events. Active Participation by Your County Maximizes the Return on Your Investment.

*Visit*

# Natural North Florida

