



For immediate release

### **Visit St. Mary's MD Recognizes National Travel and Tourism Week**

LEONARDTOWN, MD May 8, 2026 — Visit St. Mary's MD joined members of the tourism industry and the Commissioners of St. Mary's County on Tuesday to recognize National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW), May 3-9, 2026.

During a proclamation reading, Commissioner Mike Alderson, Jr., encouraged visitors and residents alike to support the retail businesses, restaurants, historic sites, museums, lodging options, and event venues available throughout St. Mary's County.

"Whereas, tourism creates jobs, brings in revenue to the local economy, and enhances the quality of life for citizens throughout Southern Maryland," said Alderson.

In 2024, tourism in St. Mary's County generated \$247 million in visitor spending and supported 4.5% of all jobs in the region. The spending and jobs crossed industries including lodging, food and beverage, transportation, retail, and recreation.

Established in 1983 by the U.S. Travel Association, NTTW spotlights the economic impact of tourism and the workforce responsible for its growth.

"National Travel and Tourism Week gives us a chance to recognize the hospitality industry for their dedication to creating unforgettable guest experiences," said Liz Mildenstein, Executive Director of Visit St. Mary's MD. "We are grateful for the many ways this industry brings our destination to life. From the warm welcome at check-in, to adventures along the Chesapeake Bay, to meaningful connections with our history and culture, to sourcing, cooking, and serving regional cuisine. This workforce is essential to every visitor's experience."

This year's NTTW theme, "Postmarked: Essential," highlights that in every corner of the country, travel is an economic pillar critical to a region's growth and prosperity.

"People who come to visit are going to spend their hard-earned dollars in our local businesses, at events, and in our attractions," said Mildenstein. "And that economy is critical to the other services that support our residents, including first responders, the school system, and other regional benefits. It's the tax revenue we all need to sustain the community standards we have come to expect in the region."



Mildenstein also wants to highlight the role St. Mary's County residents play in welcoming visitors to the region.

“Positive everyday interactions with visitors have the power to increase spending and improve their experience in our communities,” she said. “Your personal recommendations of where to shop or eat, and activities or events to try, give visitors an authentic connection to St. Mary's County. These meaningful interactions not only enhance their stay but can lead to higher satisfaction, increased return visits, and more word-of-mouth recommendations to others.”

Residents and visitors alike are encouraged to use the Visit St. Mary's MD website as a planning resource. The site includes a robust events calendar, business listings, and itinerary ideas. In addition, Visit St. Mary's MD offers resources for members of the tourism industry including professional development, sponsorship opportunities, and marketing resources. To learn more, visit [www.visitstmarysmd.com](http://www.visitstmarysmd.com).

Visit St. Mary's MD is a 501(c)(6) and the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for Maryland's Original Destination: St. Mary's County. The organization focuses on attraction development, marketing, and supporting tourism partners in delivering unique visitor experiences that highlight the history and culture of the region.

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Photos from the event are available, courtesy of the St. Mary's County government: [National Travel & Tourism Week Proclamation 5.5.26 | Flickr](#)