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Lt. Governor Guadagno Continues “Tourism Tuesday” Campaign at Swartwood State Park and Spruce Run Recreation Area

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Visits Highlight Ecotourism Opportunities in the Skylands

Trenton, NJ – Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno was accompanied by Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin today as she visited Swartwood State Park and Spruce Run Recreation Area.

These visits mark this summer's fifth “Tourism Tuesday,” a tour that promotes the diversity of New Jersey's tourism industry during the busy summer season and showcases the state as the premier tourism destination in the Northwest to vacationers of all ages and interests.

Celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, Swartwood State Park was established as New Jersey's first state park and covers nearly 3,500 acres in Sussex County. Trails cross the park ranging from easy to difficult level, and visitors can also camp at the park's 65 tent and trailer campsites, three group sites or in the park's five yurts. Little Swartwood Lake and Swartwood Lake were formed by glaciers and serve as recreational venues for local residents and visitors to the area, offering opportunities for boating, fishing and swimming. Swartwood was visited by 115,000 people in 2013 and has already been visited by more than 118,000 in 2014 so far.

“Parks like Swartwood and Spruce Run are a great place to come with family and friends for the day or for an extended visit,” said Lt. Governor Guadagno. “More and more visitors are discovering and taking advantage of everything these sites and the surrounding communities have to offer. These parks are perfect examples of the many remarkable destinations found in Sussex and Hunterdon Counties.”

Set in the hills of Hunterdon County, Spruce Run Recreation Area spans more than 2,000 acres. The park itself is a peninsula surrounded by one of the first reservoirs owned and operated by the State and offers 67 tent and trailer campsites. Visitors can boat, swim and fish on the premises, and part of the Highlands Millennium Trail, which will eventually connect the Delaware and Hudson Rivers, passes through the grounds. Spruce Run is also used for a variety of winter activities, including cross-country skiing, ice fishing and ice boating. This year, the park has been visited by more than 382,000 people so far, compared to approximately 340,500 in 2013.

“New Jersey state parks offer an enormous array of active and passive recreational opportunities that can appeal to our state residents and visitors of all ages and skill levels,” said Commissioner Martin. “Our state parks are treasured assets that improve the quality of life in our state for all residents and offer an important economic benefit to our state.”

In November 2011, Governor Chris Christie announced the State's Sustainable Parks Plan, designed to keep all of New Jersey's state parks open to provide affordable recreation to residents and visitors. Components of the plan include enhancing and expanding park programs, facilities and amenities to generate more visitors and greater revenue that can make the parks, such as Swartwood State Park and Round Valley Recreation Area, more financially self-sustaining. Approximately 18 million people visit New Jersey's state parks annually.

In March of 2014, the Christie Administration announced that New Jersey's tourism industry set a new record in 2013,

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generating more than \$40 billion in overall tourism-related demand. Visitor spending, capital investment and general government support of tourism tallied a record of \$40.4 billion, a 1.3 percent increase over 2012. Visitation in New Jersey also rose to 87.2 million in 2013, a 5.9 percent increase compared to 2012.

"We hope that, in addition to visiting New Jersey's amazing state parks, ecotourists also enjoy the other myriad attractions in the Skylands, from antiquing, golfing, camping and ballooning to visiting a gallery, theater or award-winning winery," added Lt. Governor Guadagno.

Anyone interested in visiting Swartswood, Spruce Run or any of New Jersey's State Parks can find more information at: <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/index.html>.

New Jersey features more than 25,000 campsites across the state. For more information on one of New Jersey's campsites, contact the New Jersey Campground Owners Association at 609-545-0145. Reservations can be made online at www.reserveamerica.com or by calling 855-607-3075.

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