



## Story Ideas for Covering Interests and Activities in The Sounds Region

### **Educational Vacations**

Today more than ever, families are deciding to take educational vacations versus just another day at the beach. The Sounds region offers families multiple educational opportunities including the North Carolina Estuarium, the Walter B. Jones, Sr. Center for the Sounds and the Roanoke/Cashie River Center.

### **Ecotourism Trend**

When most people hear 'ecotourism' they think of a backpacker trekking through lush lands in faraway locations or traveling via camels in vast lands. However, what most don't realize is there are ecotourism opportunities in their backyards, particularly throughout The Sounds region. The various wildlife refuges, natural boardwalks, trails, and bird watching sites offer explorers a chance to learn about and participate in the protection of local environments.

### **Economic Impact of the Agriculture of The Sounds**

With more than 650-thousand acres of land used to harvest vital crops for North Carolinians and the state's export industry, The Sounds farmland is a healthy contributor to the economic base of the State. The region's main crops include corn, cotton, potatoes, peanuts, soybeans, and wheat. Estimates from the North Carolina Department of Agriculture state that the counties within The Sounds region produced more than \$350 million in cash receipts last year.

### **World-class Bird Watching**

A majority of The Sounds area is perfectly situated along the path of numerous species of migratory birds including tundra swans and other waterfowl, songbirds, and colonial wading birds. Additionally, bald eagles and endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers can be observed in the surrounding preserves and wildlife refuges.





## Unique Waterways

The Sounds region is home to some of the most unique and important water systems in the country. The estuary that is formed by the Albemarle and Pamlico sounds is the second largest individual estuarine system in the United States, ranked only behind Chesapeake Bay. The City of Washington marks the general area where salt water and fresh water begin mixing in the Pamlico River, creating a dynamic and vital ecosystem. In addition North Carolina's largest natural lake, Lake Mattamuskeet, is located in the region, along with numerous vital rivers, watersheds, and basins. The Partnership offers free boat tours on several of these waterways.

