



TENNESSEE RIVER VALLEY

Geotourism MapGuide Nomination Guidelines

The Tennessee River Valley Geotourism Council and National Geographic have created the Tennessee River Valley Geotourism MapGuide Website. National Geographic defines geotourism as “*Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and the well-being of its residents.*”

An Opportunity for You!

Residents, visitors, community organizations, tourism stakeholders and local businesses are asked to nominate places of interest (POIs) and events for potential inclusion in the website. [Sign Up](#) and complete an online nomination form and help identify destinations and experiences most distinctive to the people, places and things that capture the region’s unique character and beauty.

What are the Guidelines for a Geotourism Site?

A test for inclusion on the MapGuide: *Is the spot, attraction, business, activity or experience distinctive to our town, area or region, and is it authentic to the Tennessee River Valley?* Examples may include:

- Remarkable natural areas and geologic features such as water bodies, rock formations, beaches, and forests
- Distinctive wildlife habitats and notable species of birds, mammals, flowers or trees
- Places featuring local cuisine or agricultural products: farmers markets, shops and restaurants, agri-tourism sites
- Events, ceremonies, festivals that highlight the community’s heritage, food, music and traditions
- Cultural experiences: heritage sites, museums, theaters, music, literature and performing arts
- Artist studios and galleries, craft workshop, shops featuring handmade items from the region
- Outdoor experiences such as paddling, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, deep sea fishing, water activities and parks, heritage areas or water themed parks
- Historic places such as trails, battlefields, civil rights sites, distinctive architecture or Native American sites
- Scenic routes including hiking trails, bike routes, birding trails and scenic byways
- Community stewardship projects, land trusts, conservation or restoration initiatives
- Locally owned and family businesses like a café, pub, craft shop, winery, unique lodging
- Local artist or artisan, storyteller, outdoor guide or historian
- Legends, stories or other unique aspects of the region

Once you identify a potential site, consider what makes the site unique:

- What story does this site or experience help tell?
- Are there significant historic, cultural or natural features associated with the site?
- Is it under-appreciated by local residents and visitors, or is it already crowded or at capacity?
- Does the site offer a unique experience? Is there local awareness and pride in this place?
- Do the community and local businesses benefit from and support visitation at the site?
- Is interpretative or educational information available at the site?

Nominating a Site

To nominate a site, sign up and go to your Nomination Dashboard at: TennesseeRiverValleyGeotourism.org

National Geographic works closely with the Tennessee Valley Geotourism Council to select the sites that will appear on the map. National Geographic makes final decisions about wording and site selection.

Questions? Contact Julie Graham - Website Administrator - TennesseeRiverValleyMapGuide@gmail.com