

sync[®] NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES FROM N.C. COMMERCE



The North Carolina delegation to the Outdoor Retailer trade show in Denver last week.

North Carolina Launches New Focus on the Outdoor Industry

The North Carolina Department of Commerce will lead a new effort by the state to promote North Carolina's outdoor recreation economy and to recruit new outdoor industry businesses to the state.

The effort kicked off with a flurry of activity this month as Commerce Secretary Anthony M. Copeland announced that David Knight has joined the department as the state's Outdoor Industry Recruitment Director. Knight will lead Commerce's outreach efforts to the industry.

Knight's appointment became effective on January 22 and he hit the ground running, leading a delegation of industry and public sector leaders from North Carolina to one of the industry's premiere trade shows, the Outdoor Retailer + Snow Show in Denver, Colorado.

Knight also joined seven other state-level outdoor directors for the first Outdoor Recreation Industry Confluence, a meeting to compare notes and collaborate on programs of joint interest to maximize the outdoor economies of each state and the country as a whole.

"I'd like to set up an industry advisory council," said Knight in an interview with *The Daily*, an industry magazine published at the trade show. "We can certainly learn from other states, hear from economic developers in the field, and get to know folks in this realm nationwide. Establishing the North Carolina Outdoor Industry Office demonstrates a strong commitment from the state to this industry."

David Knight is an accomplished executive. Most recently, he established and ran his own policy consulting business based in Raleigh. Before that, Knight served as Assistant Secretary



Copeland Addresses N.C. Realtors in Greensboro

North Carolina Secretary of Commerce Anthony M. Copeland delivered keynote remarks to a group of state real estate professionals last Wednesday (January 24). The Winter Leadership Meetings of the North Carolina REALTORS were held at the Grandover Resort in Greensboro.

NC REALTORS is a non-profit trade association founded in 1921 and now one of the largest trade associations in the state. The association has a membership of 42,000 people and brings together professionals representing 48 local associations from across North Carolina.

In his remarks, the Secretary shared thoughts regarding the current opportunities and challenges facing the state's economic development community.

More information about NC REALTORS is available online at [the group's website](#).

for Natural Resources at the N.C. Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, now known as the Department of Environmental Quality. Knight supervised multiple divisions and offices at the agency including Parks and Recreation, Marine Fisheries, the North Carolina Zoo, N.C. Aquariums, and Forestry. Earlier in his career, Knight served as Director of Government Relations for The North Carolina Nature Conservancy.

The outdoor recreation industry currently supports 260,000 jobs in North Carolina and shows signs of continuing growth.

Read more: [Cover story on state outdoor recreation directors in The Daily.](#)



Secretary Copeland presents a gift from the state to Andrew Terrell (left), Consul for Business & Government Affairs for the United Kingdom.

Secretary Copeland Celebrates One-Year Anniversary for U.K. Raleigh Office

One of the newest global outposts for the British government celebrated its one-year anniversary last week. The UK Government Office, Raleigh-Durham, hosted officials from industry, government and the community on January 25.

Secretary Copeland attended the ceremony and offered brief remarks highlighting the importance of the United Kingdom to North Carolina's economy, both from an international trade standpoint and as a source of foreign direct investment into the state.

Since 2007, 73 companies from the United Kingdom have announced new locations or expansions in North Carolina, bringing 3,940 new jobs to the state and \$1.127 billion in investment.

The UK is also an important market for North Carolina goods and services. In 2016, exports sold from North Carolina into the United Kingdom topped \$1.5 billion. Imports of \$1.9 billion were recorded over the same time period.



Snow and Ice Falls, Calls for Information Climb at N.C. Visitors Call Center

Operators with the state's visitor assistance team handled more calls than usual during the recent bout of winter weather.

From January 17 through January 19, call center staff attended to 3,103 calls from the public seeking information about road conditions and activities canceled or hampered due to the storm. This average of 1,033 calls per day outpaced normal call volume for the center, which typically run between 400 and 450 calls per day.

The Center expanded to 24 hours-operation for one night of the winter event, on Wednesday. The operators were managed the high call volume with efficiency and poise.

The call center is part of the state's Visitor Services team based at the Department of Commerce.



Commerce's Rural Development Team Wins Award from Caldwell County

Commerce's Rural Economic Development Division received the 2017 Partner Award from Caldwell County recently, part of a celebration event held in Lenoir on January 16.

The county noted in its award presentation that the team of rural development specialists at Commerce have formed a transformational partnership with local officials over the years,

and have played an integral role in a dramatic comeback for the county. The agency's solution for building reuse was cited as a significant driver of this success, with both Grant Programs Director Melody Adams and Building Reuse Program Administrator Hazel Edmond winning recognition.

Newly-appointed Assistant Secretary for Rural Economic Development Kenny Flowers offered remarks at the ceremony and assisted with the awards presentation.

N.C. in the News

- [Economist: Sell Wilson as retirement haven](#) (*Wilson Times* - January 29)
- [Legislators may tinker with state's economic tier system](#) (*Carolina Public Press* - January 29)
- [Secretary Copeland announces new effort to recruit outdoor industry](#) (*Mountain Xpress* - Asheville - January 19)

About Us

SYNC is North Carolina Commerce's electronic newsletter for local government officials, private-sector allies, state policy makers, and other economic development leaders. We offer unfiltered details about new economic development projects and events, useful news about your peers, and opportunities to synchronize with statewide programs and tools in order to advance economic development in your community. [Send your story ideas to the editor.](#)

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Building Location:
301 North Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-1058

Mailing Address:
4301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4301

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