

NC's Gorges State Park a Prime Viewing Location for Total Solar Eclipse

SAPPHIRE, N.C., Aug. 7, 2017 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – The Friends of Gorges State Park is sponsoring “The Eclipse at Gorges,” a 3-day celebration leading up the total solar eclipse on Monday, Aug. 21. This free, family-friendly event, hosted by Gorges State Park, promises to be an unforgettable experience for park visitors. Attracting adventure seekers and astronomy enthusiasts from all over the country, The Eclipse at Gorges will feature live music, food trucks and educational talks/hikes with Park rangers.



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The solar eclipse, frequently billed as an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, will travel a path of totality over the entire U.S. for the first time in 99 years. Everyone in the lower 48 states will get to see at least a partial eclipse but only those in the path of totality will experience the true total solar eclipse. Residing fully within the path of totality, Gorges State Park has been identified as one of the top ten viewing locations by CNNtravel (*note 1). Located entirely in Transylvania County, it is the only North Carolina State Park in the path of totality and is a center of eclipse activity.

Bob Andrews, president of the Friends of Gorges State Park, is eagerly anticipating the event. “We’re proud of the collective efforts from volunteers, friends and Park staff that are culminating in three days of events to showcase the eclipse and the park itself,” he said. “Thanks to the

leadership from Gorges State Park Superintendent Steve Pagano, this extraordinary event is set to exceed all expectations for visitors.”

EVENT DETAILS:

Saturday, August 19, 2017, Nature Day:

State rangers and naturalists will direct hikes from the Visitors Center to specific destinations in the park. Discussions will include flora, fauna, and geology.

Sunday, August 20, 2017, Fun Day:

Sharon Becker, Regional Director of Interpretation and Education Programming for N.C. State Parks, will offer a hands-on educational experience about the history of eclipses in the world and the actual science behind eclipses. Curtis-Wright Falconry will offer close-up experiences, educating participants about the ancient sport of falconry. Live music will be provided by Land of Waterfalls Dulcimer Players, Blue Ridge Bakery Boys and Tina Eno Music. On-site food will be provided by Lola's, Coffee Carts, Sugar & Snow Gelato and more. Exhibitors will include Let's Face It – Face painting, Paintings by Sharyn, Boutique of Blue Ridge, Mud Dabbers – locally produced pottery, North Carolinas Friends of State Parks, Rosman High School Seniors, and many more.

Monday, August 21, 2017, Eclipse Day:

Gorges State Park will open to the public at an unprecedented 5 a.m. Park staff recommends that all visitors be in their selected viewing locations by 11 a.m. The eclipse will begin at 1:07 p.m., with totality beginning at 2:36 p.m. and lasting for over 2 minutes. The eclipse will end at 4:01 p.m.

Safety is a priority for all. Safety glasses and an informational brochure will be shared with visitors, while supplies last, as they enter the park on eclipse day. The eclipse glasses are provided by the Friends of Gorges State Park and made possible through funding from the North Carolina Friends of State Parks.

This Eclipse at Gorges has been designated as an official “2017 Carolinas Solar Eclipse Party” through a joint effort between North and South Carolina, coordinated by the Morehead Planetarium and funded by the NC Space Grant and SC Space. For more information on the eclipse parties, please visit <http://moreheadplanetarium.org/eclipse>.

Along with the North Carolina Friends of State Parks, the Transylvania County Tourist and Development Authority has supported the efforts of the Friends of Gorges State Park in coordinating the weekend events.

For more information, please refer to the following resources:

[Friends of Gorges, Eclipse at Gorges](http://friendsofgorges.org/eclipse-at-gorges/)

(<http://friendsofgorges.org/eclipse-at-gorges/>)

[Great American Eclipse](https://www.greatamericaneclipse.com/) (<https://www.greatamericaneclipse.com/>)

Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute (PARI)
(<http://www.pari.edu/things-to-do/2017-eclipse/>).

*NOTE 1: [Where to See the Total Solar Eclipse by CNNtravel](http://www.cnn.com/travel/article/where-to-see-total-solar-eclipse-2017/index.html)
(<http://www.cnn.com/travel/article/where-to-see-total-solar-eclipse-2017/index.html>).

About Gorges State Park:

Gorges State Park is set in Western North Carolina in upper Transylvania County, the Land of Waterfalls. The gorgeous park is punctuated by plunging waterfalls, rugged river gorges, sheer rock walls and a high concentration of rare species. Exploration of this unique environment often begins at the expansive, Gold Level LEED Certified visitors center with its educational exhibits, retail center, beautiful stone fireplace and unbeatable vistas. The center is surrounded by picnic areas that are perfect for a family pit-stop before hitting the trails.

About the Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority (TCTDA):

The TCTDA is responsible for promoting Transylvania County to the wider world. Funding for the organization is provided by a 5% occupancy tax on Transylvania County accommodations. The TCTDA's mission is to: "generate and enhance tourism opportunities in Transylvania County through strategic promotion coordinated with tourism-related businesses and local government and to contribute to a vibrant, sustainable economy." In addition to advertising and promotion, the TCTDA annually sets aside funds for marketing and sponsorship grants. Local businesses, civic groups and individuals can apply for the funds to help support their tourism-oriented events and programs. The TCTDA also manages a year-round Visitor Center, located at 175 East Main Street in downtown Brevard. For more information about the TCTDA, contact Clark Lovelace at (828) 883-3700 or clark@brevardncchamber.org.

About Friends of Gorges State Park:

Friends of Gorges State Park was formed in March 2011 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt, tax-deductible public charity supporting Gorges State Park. FOG members develop, encourage and promote public awareness; serve as a philanthropic volunteer organization for support of programs, development of facilities, and promotion of recreational facilities for Gorges State park; solicit, hold, and expend funds for such purposes; and render assistance as requested by the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation. For more information, please visit our website at <http://friendsofgorges.org/>.

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*LOGO/IMAGE for Media: Send2Press.com/300dpi/17-0807s2p-eclipse-gorges-300dpi.jpg