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For Immediate Release

Fort Fisher Historic Site Begins Strategic Planning With Public Forums

KURE BEACH - Fort Fisher State Historic Site will launch its strategic planning process with two public forums on August 25 and August 26, 2010. Each will begin at 6:30 p.m. The August 25 public forum is being held at the New Hanover Arboretum auditorium, 6206 Oleander Drive in Wilmington and the August 26 public forum will take place in the Police Training Room at the Carolina Beach Municipal Administration Building, 1121 N. Lake Park Blvd. in Carolina Beach.

The purpose of the meetings is to receive public comment regarding development and utilization of the historic site. The public input will be used by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee during a 5 month long strategic planning process to chart the site's future. The forum is open to the public and all interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Charles Page, President and Senior Facilitator of Cool Spring Center, will moderate the public forum sessions. A graduate of Davidson College and the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, Page brings with him over 35 years in facilitation, strategic and leadership training throughout North Carolina.

A state historic site is a property of cultural and educational significance to the residents and visitors of North Carolina. Historic Sites are a division of the NC Department of Cultural Resources. The sites are organized into geographic localities, which serve as a medium for communicating the economic, cultural, and political development of the state. Located just south of Wilmington, NC, Fort Fisher receives more than 500,000 visitors annually and is the most visited historic site within the Division.

Fort Fisher State Historic Site consists of 264 acres, state owned or leased property from the US Army. A quarter mile tour trail—accessible to the physically challenged—surrounds the archaeological remains of the fort. Wayside exhibits, the reconstructed palisade fence, a reconstructed gun emplacement, and artifacts and exhibits within the visitor's center enhance the educational experience of the site.

Fort Fisher began its development as a state historic site in 1960 after the state of North Carolina acquired the historic property. It was designated as NC's first National Historic Landmark in 1962 and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966. A visitor center was built and opened to the public in 1965.

Historically, Fort Fisher was the largest earthen fortification in the Confederacy and the scene of the greatest naval bombardment of the Civil War. Less than 90 days after the fort fell, the Civil War drew to an end. Fort Fisher's strategic importance lay in the protection it afforded to blockade running ships importing supplies into the South and exporting cotton to finance the war effort.

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