



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Total Solar Eclipse Draws Huge Crowds to NH and with it significant increase in Economic Activity

Concord, N.H. – (April 16, 2024) – The [New Hampshire Division of Travel and Tourism Development](#) (DTTD) is reporting a surge in visitation and economic activity surrounding this month’s Total Solar Eclipse. While the entire state experienced at least a partial eclipse, New Hampshire’s Great North Woods - from Lancaster north to Pittsburg and the Canadian Border – was directly in the path of totality.

“Lodging in the Great North Woods was sold out leading up to the event,” said NH Travel and Tourism Director Lori Harnois, “and the weather forecast on eclipse day led to huge crowds of people traveling here to witness the event in person. We’ve heard from tourism leaders across the northern part of the state, that this event was a huge success and a significant economic boost during what is normally a shoulder season.”

Visitor foot traffic at the state’s Welcome Centers was up 211% on Monday, April 8th from the same day last year, and from Friday to Tuesday foot traffic was up 79% year over year.

DTTD’s website [NHSolarEclipse.com](#) that launched last June as a resource with everything from eclipse events and packages to facts and planning tips, saw a surge in activity in the days leading up to the event. Between Friday April 5 – Monday April 8 there were more than 31,000 page views on the homepage; Monday alone, there were close to 12,000.

DTTD has been working on planning and preparations for the eclipse for more than two years. Over the past year much of those efforts have focused on working with the tourism industry to raise awareness about the potential influx of visitors to their communities. Those efforts also included distributing approximately 115,000 solar eclipse glasses to lodging properties around the state to provide to guests visiting for the once-in-a-lifetime event.

New Hampshire was one of only 13 states in the path of totality. The next time the state will be in the path of totality again won’t be until 2079.

Quotes from New Hampshire Businesses and Tourism Leaders about the impact of the event:

Tim Stevens, Colebrook Town Manager

“It’s always good to receive accolades from someone we don’t know and who goes out of their way, to find someone so they can complement how smooth and effortless the day went. From the parking spaces to the traffic control to the port-a-potties, to the trash receptacles, to the vendors, to the businesses, to the available information on the web. I have received complements on the town and the event from countless people from outside our area and continue to hear from others daily. I have heard so many complements from our community on how respectful and clean the visitors were. I have driven and checked on many of the parking areas and was glad to see there was little to no sign any event had occurred. I have heard many comments about it being a first trip to the North Country and how they fell in love with the it. Many stated they can’t wait to return during other parts of the year.”

Hannah Campbell, President Board of Directors North Country Chamber of Commerce

“We had quite an influx of people! Since the event, we've returned to normal, but were so grateful for the perfect weather and the opportunity to welcome so many visitors to the North Country during mud season, typically not a popular season for us. We still had some snow on the ground, and mud in areas, but overall, we are all wildly impressed with how respectful all visitors were - there wasn't even a sign that there had been that many people in our area. No trash, no damage reported anywhere, just amazing photos and memories for all who visited, and locals included. What a once-in-a-lifetime event!”

Donna Jordan, Great North Woods Center for the Arts, Colebrook

“We had 300 cars, 1,000-plus people at the Great North Woods Center for the Arts. When you add up the parking fees, concession sales and donations, this was a great economic boost for our small non-profit. The town itself did extremely well--there were crowds everywhere. Colebrook was on top of things with prepping a year in advance, designating parking areas--both free and paid--signage, extra CERT people to help keep the traffic flowing as best as possible. Folks were set up with lawn chairs, blankets, lawn games, walking the art sculpture path, taking in the Domesticated art exhibit, touring the former chapel in the old barn, children were behind the barn playing games (tag, tossing a ball) in what we call the amphitheater, people walking around with dogs on leashes. There were tons and tons of telescopes--both homemade and store bought. The atmosphere of positive attitudes was unreal, and it was a family event that just cannot be topped.”

Paula Kinney, Executive Director Androscoggin Valley Chamber of Commerce

“It was a SPECTACULAR day in Northern NH! The weather could not have been any better. Although Berlin itself was not in totality – it was extremely busy, and Gorham was just as busy. I saw license plates from MA, RI, CT, ME, VT, NY, NJ...just to name a few! Many of the businesses that I have seen all report business was up. They planned, but still managed to sell out of everything and the hotels were packed.”

Charyl Reardon, President White Mountains Attraction Association

“The total solar eclipse brought a significant economic and tourism boost to the region, exemplified by the surge in motor vehicle traffic along all major routes, resulting in travel delays of several hours. This influx of visitors from all over New England led to strong hotel occupancy rates throughout the eclipse weekend, with the post-event traffic delays further increasing stays. Local restaurants and convenience stores also benefited greatly from the increased foot traffic, seeing very strong sales numbers, with some reporting increases of 100%-300%. From Saturday to Tuesday, visitor numbers to the area rose by 50%, with a peak on Monday, where the visitor count reached approximately 140,000—a 60% increase compared to the same day in 2023. This event undoubtedly provided a significant economic boost during what is typically a slower period of the year.”

Michelle Cruz, Executive Director Mt Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce

“Many of our lodging properties reported being sold out for both Saturday and Sunday nights representing a huge increase over the previous year. Properties reported being up anywhere from 95% (Eagle Mountain House) to 500% (White Mountain Hotel) up over the previous period last year. Restaurants also saw increases in revenues. Ski areas were also able to get in on the action, Cranmore Mountain sold out their summit lunch event and viewing with 325 participants and King Pine Ski Area saw over 100 visitors at their viewing party. Overall, it was a busy period for Mt. Washington Valley businesses and a welcome one for what is usually a very quiet time here.”

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ABOUT THE NH DIVISION OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The Division of Travel and Tourism Development, as part of the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs, works with the state’s seven travel regions to increase visitation, travel and visitor expenditures in order to expand business activity and employment throughout the state. The division is responsible for domestic and international advertising and public relations, literature publication and distribution, www.visitnh.gov administration, grant administration and research to monitor and measure the impact of travel and tourism to the state. For more information about New Hampshire tourism, call 603-271-2665 or visit www.visitnh.gov.

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