**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Take Time for Downtime In Kansas**

**TOPEKA, KS –** National Tourism Week is May 1-7, and the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) urges Kansans to make time for a refreshing travel experience in Kansas. According to the U.S. Travel Association, Americans accrue 429 million days of unused leave annually and forfeit $52 billion in benefits each year. Forty percent of workers cite having to return to a mountain of work as the reason for not taking time off. Thirty-five percent of workers feel that nobody else can do their job, while 22 percent do not want to be seen as replaceable.

There is an upside to downtime, however. Taking a vacation lowers stress and helps build a healthy mind and body. Time off creates stronger bonds with family and friends, builds a productive workforce and helps cultivate a fulfilled life. Eighty-five percent of workers say time off makes them happier and 90 percent say time away helps them relax and recharge.

A Kansas vacation helps more than the intrepid travelers. Tourism is big business in Kansas and bolsters the state’s economy. Kansas hosted 34.8 million visitors in 2014, and they spent $6.2 billion in our state. Tourism has an annual economic impact of more than $9.8 billion and brings in $570 million in state and local government revenues. Tourism-supported employment represents 4.9 percent of all employment in the state.

So, celebrate your leisure time and boost the economy with some downtime in Kansas. Start your vacation planning with a click-trip through TravelKS.com, the website of the Kansas Division of Tourism. You’ll find plenty of ideas for things to do and places to eat, stay and shop. Visit KSOutdoors.com for more information on outdoor activities at Kansas state parks and other rejuvenating fresh-air opportunities.

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**Editors:** Information about the impact of travel in Kansas can be found at <http://www.travelks.com/industry/research-reports/economic-impact/>. More information about the U.S. Travel Association’s Project: Time Off can be found at [www.ustravel.org/programs/project-time](http://www.ustravel.org/programs/project-time).