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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Beach Tram Service Expands in Walton County

Walton County – 05/26/26 – Walton County launched an expanded Beach Tram service on May 22 connecting visitors to Grayton Beach State Park and Topsail Hill Preserve State Park. The inaugural ride was hosted by the Walton County Board of County Commissioners in partnership with the Beach Operations and Tourism departments.

Walton County Tourism is again offering complimentary day-use entry to Grayton Beach State Park and Topsail Hill Preserve State Park from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. With the

addition of Beach Tram service to both parks, residents and visitors now have an easier, more convenient way to access two of Walton County's most treasured natural areas.

The free tram service is designed to reduce vehicle traffic and parking pressure near the parks while supporting Walton County's commitment to preserving the natural ecosystems that make the community special. The tram will operate in coordination with state park capacity limits, helping ensure riders know park availability before boarding.



(L-R): Walton Tourism Director Matt Algarin, Commissioner Danny Glidewell, Rep. Shane Abbott, Commissioner Brad Drake, County Administrator Brian Kellenberger launch the new Beach Tram service.

“This service aligns with the visions and goals outlined in the parks’ unit management plans by improving public access in a way that supports conservation, reduces vehicle impacts and helps protect the natural character and long-term sustainability of these treasured parks,” said Josh Ervin, beach operations director for Walton County Tourism. “It is a thoughtful approach that expands access without compromising the integrity of the parks themselves. “Today is a great example of what can happen when local leaders, state partners and community stakeholders work together for a common goal,” Ervin said.

State Representative Shane Abbott, who was instrumental in achieving this expanded access, said the service helps Walton County better utilize the public beach access already available within the two state parks while continuing to follow established capacity guidelines.

“We have 4.7 miles of beach in those two state parks that we were grossly underutilizing, and I knew we could get more people on those beaches without harming the state parks themselves,” said Rep. Abbott. “We are abiding by the capacity rules that are in the unit management plans. We invest in the state parks not to keep people out, but to get people into the parks, and now we can finally utilize them to their full capacity.”

Rep. Abbott also emphasized that bicycles and pedestrians will be able to enter the parks until capacity is reached.

Walton County Commissioner Danny Glidewell said the expanded tram service reflects the value of cooperation between state and local governments.

“We’re here to be public servants – not to create problems, but to solve problems,” said Commissioner Glidewell. “This is a problem that is being solved through the work and cooperation of state and local governments, and that is something to be proud of.”

With the addition of state park access, the Beach Tram network expands public beach access for visitors and residents through routes operating from two facilities:

393 Beach Park and Ride - 1668 S County Hwy 393, Santa Rosa Beach

Operating daily from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Ed Walline Express

Ride directly to Ed Walline Regional Beach Access

Departs every 10 minutes

Dune Allen Local

Stops include: Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, Dune Allen RBA, and Fort Panic RBA

Departs every 30 minutes

Grayton Beach Park and Ride - 1505 County Hwy 283 S, Santa Rosa Beach

Grayton Express

Ride directly to Bets “Beachmama” Haynes RBA

Departs every 10 minutes

Daily from 6 a.m. – 9:45 p.m.

Blue Mountain Local

Stops include: Blue Mountain RBA, Gulfview Heights RBA and 393 Beach Park and Ride

Departs every 30 minutes

Runs from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Grayton Beach State Park Express

Ride directly to Grayton Beach State Park

Departs every 30 minutes

Runs from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

For route schedules and additional information, please contact Beach Operations at (850) 267-4578 or visit WaltonTransportation.com. Photo courtesy of Walton County Tourism.

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