

## **State Announces Management Change for Two Park Lodges**

**ATLANTA, GA. September 26, 2012** -- Today the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced plans for management changes at two north Georgia state park facilities. The lodges and cottages at Amicalola Falls and Unicoi state parks will soon be operated by a hotel management company, allowing the state to improve both the financial performance and guest experience.

Through a third party operator agreement, Coral Hospitality will assume operation of the lodge guest rooms, conference facilities, restaurants and cottages at Unicoi State Park on November 1 and at Amicalola Falls State Park on December 1. Other park facilities, including campgrounds, will remain under DNR management. Unicoi is located near Helen and Amicalola Falls is located near Dawsonville.

Earlier this year, the DNR announced plans to close Unicoi State Park's lodge during 2013 for renovations. However, further exploration of renovation plans revealed that the costs, coupled with revenues lost during the closing, exceeded available funds for the project. Instead, Coral Hospitality will upgrade Unicoi's and Amicalola Falls' guest rooms, while keeping the lodges open, with more major renovations of the conference facilities, restaurants and cottages scheduled during the next two fiscal years.

The DNR was able to engage Coral Hospitality through an existing agreement with the North Georgia Mountains Authority (NGMA). The NGMA is affiliated with the DNR and was the state authority responsible for originally developing Unicoi's lodge. The NGMA also manages the state-owned Brasstown Valley Resort & Spa in Young Harris and the Lake Blackshear Retreat and Golf Club at Georgia Veterans State Park, which have been operated by Coral Hospitality since 2005.

Coral is a full-service hospitality management company specializing in resorts, hotels, clubs and residential communities. Coral's expertise well equips it to operate the state park lodges while enabling the DNR to focus more on its core mission of protecting the parks' natural resources and providing outdoor recreation to Georgia's citizens.

"Both Amicalola Falls and Unicoi state parks are natural treasures for Georgia, and we are committed to preserving them for future generations," said DNR Commissioner Mark Williams. "We are pleased to be partnering with the NGMA and Coral Hospitality to achieve improved efficiencies and customer service at these state park lodges. We are confident that visitors will have an exceptional experience when they stay overnight and attend business functions."

Both Amicalola Falls and Unicoi state parks are among Georgia's most popular, drawing approximately one million visitors annually to the north Georgia mountains. Amicalola features the tallest waterfall in the Southeast, and Unicoi has outstanding hiking and

biking trails as well as a lake and stream. To learn more about Georgia's State Parks, visit [GeorgiaStateParks.org](http://GeorgiaStateParks.org) or call 1-800-864-7275.

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