

Rangers offer virtual tour of state parks to launch 2016 centennial

A virtual tour of all North Carolina state parks – through the eyes of park rangers and their coworkers – will debut in a theater setting Jan. 2 as part of the launch of the state parks 2016 centennial celebration, according to the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation.

The 30-minute video “*Here in This Place: A Celebration of North Carolina State Parks*” will be shown in The Daily Planet theater of the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences at 2:30 p.m.



A Hanging Rock State Park ranger videotapes a sunrise. Photo courtesy of R.D. Hill

A team of 28 videographers was trained to contribute to the year-long project, consisting of rangers, a retired ranger, education specialists, office personnel and temporary AmeriCorps workers. Several thousand hours at the task resulted in hundreds of hours of stunning video of state park landscapes at their best.

The video’s soundtrack is provided by composer, musician and WRAL-TV news anchor Bill Leslie and Joe Newberry of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, a nationally known composer of traditional-style music. Editing was completed by Greg Snyder, Digital Media Group director for the museum. The project was produced under the guidance of Dave Cook, the parks system’s north district superintendent.

“This video truly is a labor of love by our rangers and others who are working daily in the parks, people that know and revere these landscapes,” said Mike Murphy, state parks director. “It’s a wonderful contribution as we begin our celebration of the system’s 100th anniversary.”

It is planned that the video will also be presented at the North Carolina State Fair and other regional venues in 2016. The project also has yielded an extensive library of footage that will be used to produce shorter videos highlighting individual parks.