

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **SCOTT COUNTY DEDICATES CLINCHFIELD HERITAGE WAYSIDE**

*(Copper Creek Viaduct Interpretive Overlook)*

CLINCHPORT, Va.—(August 29, 2007)—Local, regional, and state officials today dedicated the Clinchfield Heritage Wayside, an interpretive overlook located on U.S. Hwy. 23 near the unincorporated community of Speers Ferry in Scott County.

The Clinchfield Heritage Wayside overlooks the famed Copper Creek Viaduct. Railroad photography is a popular hobby and this viaduct is one of the better-known photographic locations in the eastern portion of the country. The Scott County Chamber of Commerce saw the development of this overlook as a great opportunity to capitalize on this segment of the tourism industry.

The wayside will increase awareness for Natural Tunnel State Park by providing marketing and directions to the park, which is located only three miles from the wayside and provide an improved interpretive center for the Daniel Boone Wilderness Road Driving Tour. This site will also host a Crooked Road kiosk which allows visitors to see and hear the pioneering role that the Carter Family had on traditional music throughout the region.

"The Virginia Tobacco Commission's goal is to revitalize the economy and one way to do this is through enhancing local tourism efforts," said Delegate Terry Kilgore Vice-Chairman of the Virginia Tobacco Commission. "The Commission is pleased to team up with Scott County as they continue their heritage tourism efforts. We anticipate that visitors traveling along US Highway 23 will be more likely to stop in Scott County and boost the local economy as a result of this project."

"The Virginia Tobacco Commission is pleased to partner with the Virginia Department of Transportation through the Enhancement Grant Program to jointly fund this project," said Senator William Wampler. "We feel this project provides a boost to Scott County's tourism development efforts and also creates a safe viewing experience for railroad enthusiasts and photographers. The Clinchfield Heritage Wayside is a great example of the diversity in tourism opportunities we have sought for Southwest Virginia."

"The Scott County Chamber of Commerce is pleased to join these state agencies to celebrate the completion of this Wayside project," said Larry O'Bryant, Chamber President. The Chamber strives to promote a unique range of tourism options for visitors to Scott County and this project fits well with our goal to capitalize on the heritage and history of our County.

The Scott County Chamber of Commerce partnered with the Scott County Economic Development Authority to secure funding for the project. The Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission approved \$20,000 in Southwest Economic Development Funds and the Virginia Department of Transportation provided \$72,000 in Enhancement Grant Program funding. The Daniel Boone Wilderness Trail Association, Scott County Chamber of Commerce, and the East Tennessee Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society also provided financial assistance for the project. The LENOWISCO Planning District Commission, the Duffield Development Authority, Natural Tunnel State Park, and the Crooked Road provided funding strategy and final construction assistance.

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