

DENR Makes Key Leadership Appointments

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - Mike Murphy has been tapped to be director of North Carolina state parks, while Patricia Simmons will become deputy director and chief operating officer of the North Carolina Zoo.

The appointments were announced by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Wednesday. As its director, Murphy will oversee the state's 35 parks and four recreation areas, 20 natural areas, seven lakes, four rivers and four state trails. He begins his job July 22. Murphy is 60 years old. He succeeds Lewis Ledford, who retired after 37 years of service to the state parks system. Murphy is a past managing director and president of Trident Financial Services, a Raleigh company acquired by Ohio-based KeyCorp in 1999. He most recently served as an astronomy and physics instructor at Ravenscroft School in Raleigh and is the immediate past president of the Friends of the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences, the private, nonprofit group that raises money for the museum and its educational programs.

According to DENR, Simmons will provide oversight for the facility's future growth and is positioned to succeed Zoo Director David Jones when Jones retires in March 2016. Simmons' first day is Sept. 2.