National Exposure Driving Great Tourism Year

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

As summer hits the midway point, KMXT checked in with the Kodiak Island Convention and Visitors Bureau to see how tourism is going. Janet Buckingham is the executive director of the bureau and said there have been an unprecedented number of visitors to Alaska's Emerald Isle.

"By all looks we are having an unprecedentedly busy year. We have been so busy in the visitor's center, even without cruise ships, we just have thousands of people seem to be coming through the visitors center this year."

Buckingham said the numbers come from excellent marketing by everyone on the island, but also the amount of publicity Kodiak has gotten in the media. She said shows like the weather channel's Coast Guard Alaska have really put Kodiak on the minds of a lot of people. On that note, Buckingham said she expects to see even more tourists when singer Pitbull visits at the end of the month.

"We are hoping for a little tourism spike when Pitbull comes. We still don't have any official word. We have been in communication with some of the people working on the event, but we don't have a specific date or venue. We don't know yet, but I know that there are people that were planning on coming down from Anchorage and other places in Alaska if he does give a performance here, so we're hoping that will give us a little spike."

Pitbull's Facebook page has more than 22 million fans, so if anything, Buckingham says that's 22 million more people that know about Kodiak.

Cruise ships will continue to bring tourists through September. The next ship will arrive on July 22.