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# Palawan underground river in 'seven new wonders' search

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PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, Philippines--The Puerto Princesa Underground River National Park, a vast limestone cave complex some two hours north of the city center that attracts thousands of tourists every year, has made it to a list of candidates for the New Seven Wonders of the World search.

The city government has embarked on a campaign to make the cut of 77 nominees by yearend via Internet voting, and get into the second round of selection for the top 21 nature sites to be announced in January.

"I'm confident we will make the cut even before the end of the year. After all, our underground river is very popular locally and abroad," Mayor Edward Hagedorn said in an interview Sunday.

A second round of Internet-based voting will be held for the remaining 21 candidates starting in January next year and will culminate with the official declaration by the organizers of the New Seven Wonders of the World by year 2010.

Also known as the St. Paul's Underground River, the tourist attraction consists of 8.2 kilometers of winding narrow waterways emptying into the South China Sea. Local tourism officials claim it is the longest navigable underground river in the world,

The search is organized by the nonprofit New Seven Wonders Foundation.

The same group also undertook the "New Seven Wonders of the World" search that ended last year.

Puerto Princesa's underground river joins three other nominees from the Philippines led by the Chocolate Hills of Bohol, the Tubbataha Reefs also in Palawan and Mayon Volcano in the Bicol region.

The Chocolate Hills and Tubbataha currently share the limelight in the top 10 of the list composed of nearly 300 nominees.

Mayon Volcano, which was ranked 21st a week ago was delisted by organizers for voting after entry requirements were clarified with the organizers, but is expected to be back online.

Tubbataha, which was nominated by the Department of Tourism, was also delisted last week but got back online after resolving questions on requirements also raised by the organizers.

Anyone who has access to the Internet may cast their vote by logging on to the website [www.new7wonders.com](http://www.new7wonders.com).

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