

News Release



Contacts:

Resource Management Service, LLC

Mary Kay Greer, Senior Vice President, Corporate Communications
Office: (205) 980-7304 Mobile: (205) 215-7423
Email: MGreer@resourcemgt.com

Wildlife Mississippi

James L. Cummins, Executive Director
Office: (662) 686-3375 Mobile: (662) 820-5703
Email: jcummins@wildlifemiss.org

Land Transfer Advances Pearl River Watershed Conservation to Protect Mississippi's Largest Drinking-Water Reservoir and Benefit Wildlife

*Wildlife Mississippi Purchase from Resource Management Service, LLC
Protects Forestland Along 27 Miles of the Upper Pearl River*

Stoneville, Mississippi (September 16, 2021) – Resource Management Service, LLC (RMS) and Wildlife Mississippi have completed the transfer of 4,617 acres in Leake County, Mississippi, allowing for the permanent protection of forested wetlands and uplands along 27 miles of the upper Pearl River, the source of drinking water for Jackson, the State of Mississippi's capital city.

The sale protects most of the remaining privately owned land along the Pearl River upstream from Jackson and the Ross Barnett Reservoir, Mississippi's largest drinking-water reservoir, to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' reservation in Neshoba County. The river and the land along it also provide important habitats for a variety of migratory and resident wildlife, including two species of turtles found only in the Pearl River and nearly a dozen other rare or at-risk species.

Forests provide critical protection for more than half of America's drinking water by filtering pollutants and sediment. Every 10-percent increase in forest cover in a watershed can lead to a 20-percent reduction in water-filtration costs downstream, according to the conservation group American Forests. Riparian forests, or those along rivers, also reduce flooding by storing high water and releasing it slowly.

"We have a 70-year track record of practicing exemplary environmental stewardship on the lands we manage for our clients," said Craig Blair, President and CEO of RMS. "Finding creative ways to permanently protect forested tracts that are environmentally sensitive or are of value to society for

reasons other than timber production, has always been a priority for us. We often do this by working closely with partners from the conservation community, and this project with Wildlife Mississippi is a great example of what can be accomplished through such collaborations."

RMS, based in Birmingham, Alabama, is one of the world's largest timberland investment management services providers.

"This is one of the most significant conservation projects in the history of Mississippi," said Charles Pickering, the immediate past president of Wildlife Mississippi, who helped guide the land transfer. "Permanent protection of this land will safeguard water quality downstream to Jackson, help lessen flood risks, and provide vital habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife," he said. "Wildlife Mississippi is committed to sustainable management of this land to benefit people and wildlife."

Most of the land is covered in mature, bottomland hardwood forest or upland forest. About 500 acres will be restored to native longleaf pine habitat.

Wildlife Mississippi is a private, non-profit conservation organization that has protected, restored, or enhanced more than 500,000 acres of wetlands, forests, and other natural habitats across Mississippi.

Two federal agencies recently approved \$6.6 million in grants to support the project. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) agreed to provide approximately \$5.6 million through its Regional Conservation Partnership Program, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agreed to provide \$1 million through North American Wetlands Conservation Act funds. The grants will partially pay for permanent protection of the land through conservation easements. Wildlife Mississippi is raising additional funds to support the protection of the land.

About Wildlife Mississippi: *Wildlife Mississippi is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to conserving, restoring, and enhancing fish, wildlife, and plant habitat throughout Mississippi. Wildlife Mississippi is devoted to the conservation of Mississippi's lands, waters, and natural heritage to secure the state's quality of life, making it a better place to live, work and raise a family. We measure success by the number of acres of habitat we protect, restore or enhance and by the number of miles of streams we improve. We believe that a healthy environment makes good economic sense for Mississippi and the nation. For more information, please visit us at: www.wildlifemiss.org.*

About Resource Management Service, LLC: *RMS is one of the world's largest and most experienced providers of timberland investment management services. RMS is committed to be a leader in environmentally and socially responsible sustainable forest management practices on our clients' forestlands. As a company founded, owned, and managed by professional foresters, RMS has long been guided by a forest stewardship ethic. Exercising good stewardship through responsible management of all forest resources meets the needs of our clients, customers, employees, society, and future generations. We believe sustainably managed forests provide clean air and water, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, outdoor recreational opportunities, and jobs and economic benefits to local communities in which we operate. RMS also has a longstanding commitment to promoting forestry as a profession. We do this by demonstrating and communicating the important role foresters play in managing and protecting our forest ecosystems and by supporting measures to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion within the profession. Ultimately, RMS exists to advance the practice of forestry and appreciation for the societal importance of privately-owned forests and our goal is to be recognized as the premier creator of forest value. Based in Birmingham, Alabama, we are a Registered Investment Adviser with \$4.2 billion of timberland assets under management in the United States and Brazil. For more information, please visit us at: www.resourcegmt.com.*