



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DMR Grand Bay Reserve and Coastal Preserves to Highlight Recreational and Volunteer Opportunities at My Coast Program on March 29

BILOXI, Miss. — The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources' (DMR) Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) is co-hosting an evening My Coast community program highlighting the recreational and volunteer opportunities to help Mississippi's coastal preserves at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 29. The program will be held in the first floor conference room of the Bolton State Office Building located at 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi.

DMR Coastal Resource Management Specialist Ali Leggett will introduce the new Habitat Stewards Program in Coastal Mississippi and explain how interested community members can train to help enhance wildlife habitat within the preserves and improve people's connection with nature. Leggett will also spotlight many of the recreational opportunities that visitors to Mississippi's coastal preserves can enjoy such as hiking, birding and paddling.

Grand Bay NERR Education Coordinator Jennifer Buchanan reminds everyone, "Many of the nature trails that were damaged during Hurricane Katrina have now been repaired thanks in part to volunteers from around the country. Although many of our coastal preserve lands are only accessible by water, trailheads like the one in our Wolf River Coastal Preserve and the popular birding trail located in Ansley can be easily driven to."

For more information regarding this event, please contact Jennifer Buchanan at 228-475-7047 or jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov.

The Grand Bay NERR is located near the community of Pecan in southeast Jackson County and includes wetlands and waterways from Bang's Lake to the Alabama state line. A major goal of the Reserve is to provide for research coordination and dissemination of scientific data to the community and local decision-makers to provide sound information on which to base management decisions.

The 18,000-acre reserve is home to several rare or endangered plant and animal species and serves as an essential nursery habitat for numerous important commercial and recreational fish species. The Reserve is managed through state-federal partnership between the DMR and its local partners—Mississippi Secretary of State's Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mississippi State University and the Nature Conservancy—and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Visit the NERR online at www.grandbaynerr.org.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at www.dmr.ms.gov.

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