



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

News Release

Contact: Susan Perkins

Phone: 228-523-4124

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Paddle Through the Grand Bay Reserve's Seaside Wetlands to Celebrate American Wetlands Month on May 18

BILOXI, Miss. – **May is American Wetlands Month!—Learn! Explore! Take Action!** Join the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources' Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve on May 18, 9-11:30 a.m., in a kayaking adventure to learn about the plants and animals of a salt marsh and the many important functions that wetlands provide. This free, family-friendly event will be informative and fun! Participants will be able to explore the upper reaches of the smaller Gautier Bayou and visit a very unique salt marsh habitat called a salt panne, which is located adjacent to Bayou Heron. Paddlers of all skill levels are invited to join us for a morning on the water. Paddlers will learn how to take action to conserve our critical coastal wetlands and make a difference in their community.

This activity is designed for those participants aged 12 and above. Space is limited, so **pre-registration is required** and will be limited to the first **14** participants to sign up. Dress to get wet; however no swimming is allowed. Participants must wear closed-toed shoes (no flip flops) and are advised to bring sunscreen, water bottles and bug spray. Kayaks will be provided, or you may bring your own. Life jackets will be provided and must be worn by all participants.

For more information or to pre-register, please contact Jennifer Buchanan at jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov or call the Reserve at (228) 475-7047. Participants should arrive at the Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center by 8:30 a.m. to sign in and prepare for the trip. The Center is located at 6005 Bayou Heron Road near Moss Point, Mississippi. For directions to the Center and more information on these events, please visit our website at www.grandbaynerr.org.

The Grand Bay NERR is located in southeast Jackson County, Mississippi 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.

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. Follow us on Twitter @Mississippi_DMR.

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Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Presents May's **Adventure Quencher** Event



Paddle Through America's Seaside Wetlands

What: May is American Wetlands Month!—Learn! Explore! Take Action! This family friendly event will be informative and fun! Join us in a kayaking adventure to learn about the plants and animals of a saltmarsh and the many important functions that wetlands provide. We will explore the upper reaches of the smaller Gautier Bayou and visit a very unique salt marsh habitat called a salt panne located adjacent to Bayou Heron. Paddlers of all skill levels are invited to join us for a morning on the water! Come learn how you can take action to conserve our critical coastal wetlands and make a difference in your community.

Free!

Space is limited, so **pre-registration is required and will be limited to the first 14 participants to sign up.** Dress to get wet; however no swimming is allowed. Participants must wear closed-toed shoes (no flip flops) and are advised to bring sunscreen, water bottles and bug spray. Life jackets will be provided and must be worn by all participants (whether or not you bring your own kayak).

When: Saturday, May 18, 2013 from 9:00 AM till 11:30 AM

Who: Ages 12 and above (unless you bring your own kayak)

Where: Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center located at 6005 Bayou Heron Road, Moss Point, MS 39562 in southeastern Jackson County. Check out www.grandbaynerr.org for directions and a map.

Info? Need more info or want to pre-register? Call Jennifer at 228.475.7047 or email her at jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov .