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WOODLAND CONSERVANCY ACQUIRES AND PERMANENTLY PROTECTS 190 ACRES

Woodlands Conservancy protects vital migratory lands adjacent to English Turn Community

ORLEANS & PLAQUEMINES PARISH, La. (Jan. 18, 2013) – Woodlands Conservancy announced today the purchase of 190 acres of important bottomland hardwood wetlands in Orleans Parish. This acquisition completes a multi-year effort initiated by the Conservancy, and supported by The Conservation Fund, in southeastern Louisiana.

The newly acquired property is located parallel to Woodland Conservancy's existing managed acreage in Plaquemines Parish and adjacent to the existing Wilderness Park on one end and the English Turn Golf Course Community on the other. The acquisition of the 190 acres will expand the habitat for over 100 species of migratory birds and provide additional hiking, wildlife viewing, and outdoor education opportunities to local citizens.

Due to the continued loss of our coastline and increased rate of relative sea level rise, USFWS estimates that this Woodlands area (now just 6 miles from open waters connected to the Gulf of Mexico) will be one of the largest forested land masses between open water and the city of New Orleans within the next fifty to one hundred years.

"The low lying forested wetlands within the peninsula formed by Orleans and Plaquemines Parish provide a contiguous greenway corridor that wildlife and migratory birds depend on for their existence," said Katie Brasted, Executive Director of Woodlands Conservancy. "This acquisition will ensure that our children and their grandchildren will have the opportunity to hike in this unique wilderness area and view the wildlife it supports in perpetuity."

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Funding from the Coypu Foundation, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Martha Gunther, Jackie Leonard, Curtis Sorrells, Orleans Audubon Society, the New Orleans Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Crescent Bird Club and the Louisiana Ornithological Society was used to evaluate and appraise the property over the past couple of years. The land acquisition by Woodlands Conservancy was made possible through the generous donation from a local businessman and his wife who value the mission of Woodlands Conservancy to preserve contiguous low-lying areas for storm protection and provide educational and recreational access to the public in their community.

“There’s no place like Southeast Louisiana, and we’re thrilled to have assisted Woodlands Conservancy with the protection of these important lands for everyone to enjoy,” said Ray Herndon, Lower Mississippi Director for The Conservation Fund. “Even as we celebrate today’s success, we’re rolling up our sleeves to do more together, for all of us and for generations to come.”

“This is a monumental day for our city and the entire region,” stated Councilmember Kristin Gisleson Palmer who represents the district in which the land is located. “With the acquisition of this land by Woodlands Conservancy, this crucial wetland will remain intact to protect Orleans and Plaquemines parishes for generations to come. The environmental impacts of this cannot be overstated. But this is not just smart land use – the wetlands will also be a nature preserve for all of us to enjoy.”

New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu said, “It is vitally important that we work to protect and preserve this wetland area. It is also another example of Woodlands Conservancy creating a legacy for future generations who will come to this wildlife area for recreation and education.”

About Woodlands Conservancy

Woodlands Conservancy is a 501(c) (3), nonprofit organization created with the mission to preserve and develop an ecosystem dedicated to creating daily public opportunities for recreation, ecotourism and education in a natural and historic setting. The vision of Woodlands Conservancy is to be the regional model for the conservation of hardwood forests, and a leader in the advocacy and preservation of Louisiana’s coastal forest ecosystems. www.woodlandsconservancy.org

About The Conservation Fund

At The Conservation Fund, we combine a passion for conservation with an entrepreneurial spirit to protect your favorite places before they become just a memory. A hallmark of our work is our deep, unwavering understanding that for conservation solutions to last, they need to make economic sense. Top-ranked, we have protected more than 7 million acres across America. www.conservationfund.org