



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES
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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Paddlers Wanted to Clean Bayou Heron during Coastal Cleanup

BILOXI, Miss. – Bring your canoe or kayak, and get ready to paddle for a cleaner Coast on Saturday, Oct. 17, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., at the DMR/Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (GNDNERR), one of the 62 sites to be cleaned in the three Coast counties and barrier islands as part of the 21th annual Mississippi Coastal Cleanup. Participants who bring their own canoes and kayaks will be provided with the equipment needed to pick up trash along Bayou Heron.

A limited number of kayaks are available for volunteers (12 years of age and older) to use. Volunteers must call (228) 475-7047 and sign up in advance to reserve a canoe. Cleanup participants who do not have access to a boat are also needed to clean up the area adjacent to the Bayou Heron Boat Launch. People of all ages are invited to join the staff of the GNDNERR in the cleaning up of the reserve. Children 12 and under are reminded that they must wear a life jacket if they are cleaning the bayou from a boat. Please bring insect spray, sunscreen and a pair of work gloves, if possible. Wearing closed-toed shoes is also highly recommended.

Participants in the cleanup should meet at the Grand Bay Reserve in the pavilion parking lot located at the end of Bayou Heron Road in southeast Jackson County 7:30 a.m. to 8 a.m. on the day of the cleanup to sign in and receive their cleanup supplies. **All participants, boaters and land-lovers alike, are encouraged to call the GNDNERR office at (228) 475-7047 to pre-register** and to receive additional details regarding the cleanup. Or, for more information, contact Tom Strange at tom.strange@dmr.ms.gov.

A free cooler tote will be given to everyone who participates in the cleanup, while supplies last. Children are welcome and encouraged to participate in the cleanup but must be accompanied by an adult. After the cleanup, there will be a picnic for Jackson County volunteers, sponsored by The Shed Barbeque & Blues Joint and Chevron, at the new **Estuarine Education Center on the campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Gautier** from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. only, on the day of the event. Cleanup participants will need to show their lunch ticket to receive a free lunch.

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The GNDNERR is located near the community of Pecan in southeast Jackson County and includes wild lands and waterways from Bangs 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 plant and animal species and serves as an essential nursery habitat for numerous important commercial and recreational fish species. GNDNERR 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, The Nature Conservancy, The University of Southern Mississippi 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.

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