



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

Matthew G. Bevin, Governor

Charles G. Snavely, Secretary

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Contact: Zeb Weese

zeb.weese@ky.gov

Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Protects Audubon Wetlands

Additional 650 acres added to Audubon State Park

Frankfort, Ky. (April 15, 2016) – The Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund (KHLCF) partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Imperiled Bat Conservation Fund (IBCF) and a group of Henderson County citizens to purchase an additional 650 acres of land for John James Audubon State Park.

The property protects wetlands and rare species' habitats and also provides passive outdoor recreational opportunities, including extensive handicapped accessible boardwalks throughout the wetlands. According to KHLCF biologist Zeb Weese, rare species likely present on the site include copperbelly water snakes and endangered bats. The KHLCF has protected nearly 90,000 acres in 68 counties for nature tourism and natural resource enhancement.

"The purchase of the Audubon Wetlands for Kentucky State Parks is a great example of the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund at its finest," said KHLCF Chairman Dr. Richard K. Kessler. "Cooperation between private, local, state and federal partners has resulted in the addition of one of the finest examples of western Kentucky wetlands to one our state's most beloved state parks.

More than six miles of trails are planned, as well as tree plantings and wildlife habitat improvement projects. A dedication ceremony will take place at the park on May 16, followed by the quarterly meeting of the KHLCF Board.

Roads, parking and signage must be completed before the new property is open to the public.

"The Kentucky State Parks is grateful to all of the people and agencies who assisted with making this project work," said Parks Commissioner Donnie Holland. "Park guests and future generations will be able to learn about wildlife and the natural beauty of Kentucky thanks to this addition at John James Audubon State Park."

The KHLCF is funded in part by the sale of "Nature's Finest" license plates and is the Commonwealth's primary source of funding for natural areas. For more information, visit the

Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund website at <http://heritageland.ky.gov> or contact Zeb Weese at zeb.weese@ky.gov.

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John James Audubon State Park is the site where Audubon studied and painted birds from 1810-1819. The park is equipped with cottages and a campground, and offers many recreational opportunities. It also has a museum and nature center that interprets Audubon's life through a collection of his paintings and memorabilia. The park is located on U.S. 41 in the northern outskirts of Henderson, a half-mile south of the U.S. 41 bridge over the Ohio River.