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Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission Dedicates 60th Nature Preserve *Calloway County preserve is agency milestone*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 25, 2011) – The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission (KSNPC) recently purchased 192 acres in Calloway County, which was dedicated as the Blood River State Nature Preserve (SNP) during the commission's March meeting.

The Blood River SNP will protect a Coastal Plain forested acid seep, a type of natural wetland community and one of the rarest of its kind in Kentucky. This particular seep, found only in Calloway County, supports two state endangered shrubs, a state endangered sedge and one of the rarest crayfish in world, the Blood River crayfish. Additionally, the Blood River SNP provides habitat for other rare animal species including the great blue heron, the central mudminnow and the only county record of the western mud snake.

"It's gratifying to dedicate our 60th preserve during 2011 as the commission celebrates its 35th anniversary as an agency," said KSNPC Director Don Dott. "In the face of depleted staff and shrinking funds, the commission struggles to manage over 25,000 acres of natural lands. Continuing our mission hasn't been easy over the past 35 years and without partnerships, it would be impossible."

The nature preserve was purchased using Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Funds (KHLCF), which uses proceeds from the sale of “Nature’s Finest” license plates.

The public can help in these efforts by purchasing a “Nature’s Finest” license plate for an additional \$10 above the cost of a regular license plate, which is considered a tax deductible donation to KHLCF. Proceeds from the sale of “Nature’s Finest” plates goes toward purchasing natural areas in Kentucky that will be held in trust for future generations.

Another way to help is by making a donation at tax time to the Nature and Wildlife Fund located on the income tax form. Money from these contributions helps the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources and KSNPC to purchase and protect some of our best natural lands.

KSNPC’s mission is to protect Kentucky’s natural heritage by identifying, acquiring and managing natural areas that represent the best-known occurrences of rare native species, natural communities and significant natural features in a statewide nature preserve system. The commission also protects biological diversity and educates Kentuckians as to the value and purpose of nature preserves and biodiversity conservation. Discover more about KNSPC online at <http://naturepreserves.ky.gov>.

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