



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Little South Fork Conservation Efforts a Success

FRANKFORT, Ky. (August 27, 2018) - The Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves has announced the conservation of over 1,000 acres of forest with rare species habitat for their Wild Rivers Program. These additions to the Steele Hollow Watershed Conservation Area in Wayne and McCreary counties were funded with assistance from the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund (KHLCF), the Imperiled Bat Conservation Fund and the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Kentucky field office.

"These tracts lie within the watershed for the Little South Fork of the Cumberland River, which contains habitat for several imperiled species," said Lee Andrews, State Field Office Supervisor for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in

Kentucky. "The palezone shiner, for example, is one of those species and is only known to occur in the Little South Fork and in the Paint Rock River in Alabama.

"It is important to the survival of the palezone shiner to have conservation lands in the watershed to ensure that good water quality is maintained. Other species that will likely benefit from these acquisitions are the fluted kidneyshell, Indiana bat, and northern long-eared bat."

Zeb Weese, executive director of the Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves, said that while one of the highest priorities of the Wild Rivers Program is conservation of rare species habitat, the Little South Fork is a beautiful place to paddle and fish with its populations of smallmouth bass, rock bass, and spotted bass.

"It is important to have wild places like this where people can unplug and enjoy the quiet," Weese said.

Paddlers and anglers can access the Little South Fork Wild River at the Steele Hollow Road Bridge in Wayne County for a fairly easy 7-mile trip down Baldy-East Coopersville Road Bridge, just off KY 92 east from its junction with KY 1756. For more information on paddling access, please see the Blue Water Trail Guide at <https://fw.ky.gov/Education/Pages/Little-South-Fork-of-Cumberland-River.aspx>

The KHLCF is funded in part by the sale of "Nature's Finest" license plates, allowing citizens to voluntarily contribute to the management and conservation of natural areas. For more information on the KHLCF, Kentucky Wild Rivers, and other programs of the Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves, just visit <http://naturepreserves.ky.gov>.

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