

# NATURALLY KENTUCKY



Number 21, January, February, March 1997

## KSNPC submits comments to Daniel Boone National Forest

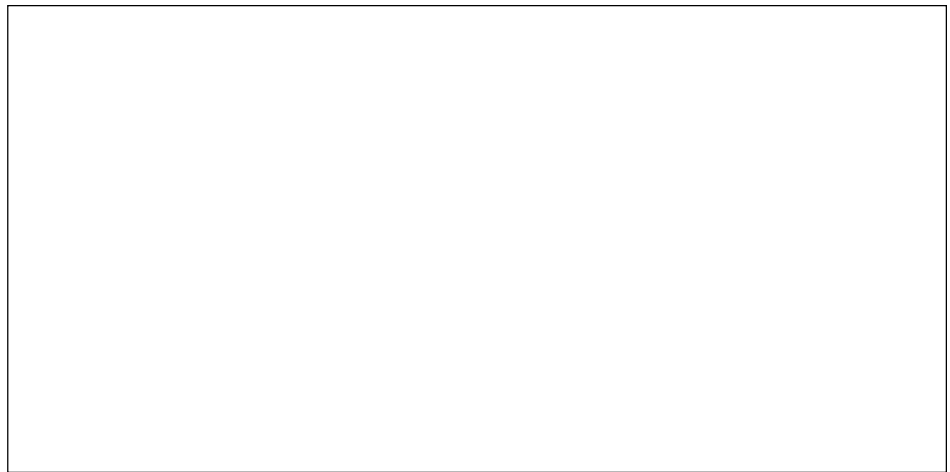
by Marc Evans

The Daniel Boone National Forest (DBNF) is the largest area of public land in Kentucky covering over 670,000 acres of mostly rugged topography on the western edge of the Cumberland Plateau. It contains a great diversity of plant and animal species and ecological communities. DBNF also supports a large number of rare, threatened and endangered species, some of which are found nowhere else in the state (or the world!).

DBNF is managed under guidelines established during the development of their Land and Resource Management Plan which is reviewed and revised every 10-15 years. The last plan was completed in 1985 and the development of a new, revised plan is currently underway. Part of the revision process is a public comment period which allows any group or individual to submit their comments and suggestions on how the DBNF should be managed.

In September 1996, after many long months of effort, the Commission submitted a 164 page report to the DBNF recommending the creation of a network of natural areas on the Forest. The Commission recommended a total of 51 ecologically significant sites be protected and four

U.S. Forest Service, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, The Nature Conservancy and the Commission. When the Commission first started to develop comments, 152 sites were identified as biologically important on the Forest. Of these, 111 were determined to have at



Daniel Boone National Forest

KSNPC Photo

currently protected sites be enlarged. The Commission also provided general comments on managing for biodiversity, caves and karst systems, cliffline habitats, impacts of off-highway vehicles, watershed and streamside protection policies, mineral rights policy and acquisition and wildlife management.

Most of these recommendations are based on the results of extensive inventories of plants and animals conducted between 1987 and 1994. The inventories were a cooperative effort of the

least some Forest Service ownership. This number was later reduced to 53 areas by eliminating the least significant sites and combining adjacent sites. They vary in size from under 100 acres to over 35,000 acres. Total area recommended for protection is estimated at 234,700 acres of both public and private land, or 12% of land within the proclamation boundary of DBNF. Of this total, approximately 143,700 acres, or just over 60%, is already owned by DBNF. Together with the protected areas already managed by DBNF, the total protected acreage would be about 176,000 acres, or 26% of

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land currently owned by DBNF. It is important to note that even though privately owned land is within some of these sites, DBNF planning will involve only the land under their management. Of course the Commission has encouraged the Forest Service to try to acquire the private portions from willing sellers.

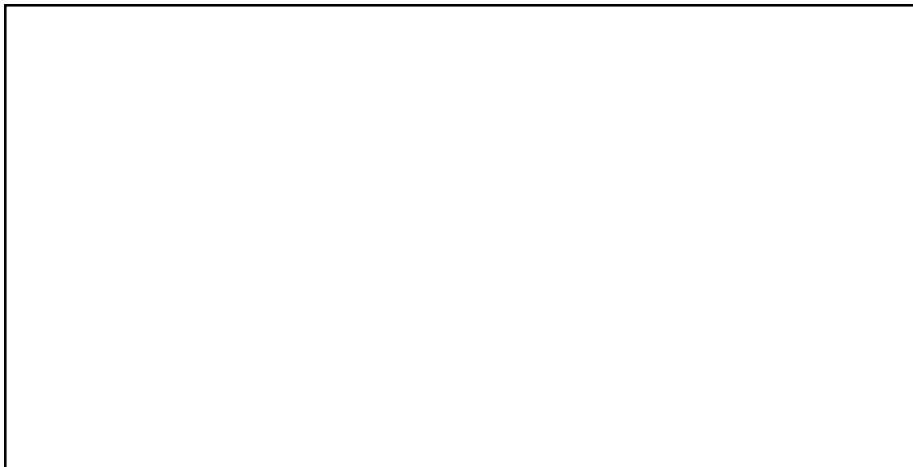
In addition to protecting the specific natural areas, the Commission has recommended the Forest Service protect the exten-

to areas designated for their use because of the environmental degradation they cause. Another recommendation was banning mining in areas where the Forest Service owns mineral rights and giving a higher priority to acquiring mineral rights on the forest, especially under natural areas. In addition, recommendations for better protection of rivers and streams, and allowing large blocks of forest to mature were included.

We believe these recommendations help fulfill our legislative duty "to promote, study, investigate, recommend, encourage, advise and assist in the preser-

## **The Nature Conservancy wins the Governor's Environmental Excellence Award**

During the Governor's Conference on the Environment in October of 1996, the Kentucky Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC-KY) was awarded the 1996 Governor's Environmental Excellence Award for Heritage Land Conservation. This award is given by the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet to recognize outstanding individuals and companies who have contributed to the enhancement of Kentucky's environment. TNC-KY received this award for its outstanding record of protection of natural lands within the Commonwealth. TNC-KY credits its conservation accomplishments to the ongoing generosity and commitment of their members.



Daniel Boone National Forest

KSNPC Photo

sive cave systems in the Forest. This includes protecting the surface over the caves instead of just the entrance areas as well as banning mining, logging and chemical spraying and keeping trails away from entrances. Other recommendations included expanding the protection currently given to some clifflines because of the large number of rare and endangered species which utilize or live there and restricting off-highway vehicles

vation, protection and management of natural areas" (KRS 146.485(12)). The DBNF management planning process has just begun and we will continue to encourage the protection of the best natural areas in the Forest.

(KSNPC comments can be seen on KSNPC's homepage.)

### **KSNPC Quarterly Commission Meeting**

**DATE: March 7, 1997**

**PLACE: KSNPC Office  
801 Schenkel Lane  
Frankfort, KY 40601**

**TIME: 10:00 a.m.**

## Nature Preserves Commission aids rare species conservation and sea lamprey control in Vermont

by Ronald R. Cicerello and  
Ellis L. Lauder milk

Efforts by Vermont Fish and Game (VFG) to control sea lampreys (*Petromyzon marinus*), a fish that parasitizes and has been implicated in the decline of Great Lakes sport (trout and salmon) and commercial fishes, while protecting Vermont's only channel darter (*Percina copelandi*) population were aided by Commission personnel this summer. Before using a selective poison called TFM to reduce a lamprey population, VFG was required to demonstrate that the chemical would not harm the channel darter population, which also resided in the target stream. This required performing a bioassay in which lampreys and darters were exposed to various concentrations of TFM to determine the application level at which lampreys succumb but the darters do not. But because channel darters are rare in Vermont, which is near their north-eastern distributional limit, a source outside the state was needed to provide bioassay specimens.

When contacted by VFG in July, we had recently completed extensive inventories of fishes in the North Fork Kentucky River.

Though considered rare in the early 1980's, we knew that channel darters were not uncommon in Kentucky rivers, and that they were abundant in the North Fork. Our open-ended plans to help VFG obtain the fishes solidified quite unexpectedly. On the evening of 10 September, they called our Campbellsville, Kentucky, motel room to ask if we could collect the channel darters from the North Fork and deliver them to a hatchery truck in Jackson, Kentucky, on 13 September! Fulfillment of this request was considerably more difficult than buying a can of tuna at the local grocery store. In addition to scrambling to obtain necessary equipment, our knowledge of channel darter ecology was based on work performed during spring and summer. Would the channel darters occupy the same habitat in September? Or would a cold front and recent rain that elevated water levels and cooled water temperatures cause the darters to move to deep pools for the winter?

Along with summer assistant Matt Thomas, we were disappointed by high and muddy water in the North Fork and limited success in finding channel darters during the afternoon of 12 September. Rain and lightning drove us from the river and these conditions persisted into the night. Our success also was limited the next morning. At lunch, we met VFG and United States Fish and Wildlife Service personnel who had just finished the 1,000 mile drive from Ver-

mont, and tried to lessen their expectations regarding the number of darters they would haul back. This proved unnecessary, because at the next site we collected all the darters needed for VFG to conduct a valid bioassay. We later learned that all but one darter survived the trip to Vermont and that the remainder successfully survived the bioassay! We suspect that a little TFM is not a challenge to a channel darter that has grown up in the less than pristine North Fork Kentucky River!

We were pleased to assist VFG and to know that our work contributed to rare species conservation far from Kentucky. However, we remain concerned about the efficacy of the TFM treatments to control the sea lamprey. We are prepared to leave for Vermont in the trusty Commission Jeep, armed only with our fishing equipment, to see for ourselves if the salmon are indeed lamprey-free!

### **VOLUNTEER PRESERVE MONITORS NEEDED**

If you would like to assist in the management of one of our state nature preserves, call (502)573-2886. (See the "Neither wind, nor snow, nor broken foot?" article on page four.)

# Neither Wind, Nor Snow, Nor Broken Foot?

by David Skinner

Sonja Fields is a volunteer at Jesse Stuart State Nature Preserve in Greenup County. She is part of a special group of devoted volunteers that the Stewardship Program refers to as Preserve Monitors. Preserve Monitor duties include inspecting the condition of trails, signs and other facilities; basic trail maintenance; cleaning up litter; checking boundaries for signs of encroachment and providing information to preserve visitors on a regular basis. Preserve Monitors are the right arms of the Commission's stewardship staff. They are usually the first to notify us about problems on preserves like illegal use of all-terrain vehicles, fallen trees across hiking trails, vandalism to facilities, etc.

It is a challenge to manage Kentucky's 34 state nature preserves from our central office in Frankfort, but Preserve Monitors like Sonja make the job much easier. Urgent situations occasionally occur on preserves which require immediate action. With a three to four hour drive to some of the preserves, it is not possible for preserve management staff to be on site as a questionable situation unfolds. One recent example of how Sonja helped in such a situation occurred this



Sonja Fields

spring. We received a call that a large oak tree on the preserve was leaning over a propane tank on a neighbor's property at Jesse Stuart State Nature Preserve. Since preserve management staff are stationed in Frankfort, it was impossible to determine if the tree would fall on the propane tank in a few minutes or a few months. We called Sonja to see if she might be available and willing to assess the situation for us. She had just had her foot broken by a horse the day before and it had not yet been set by a doctor. Sonja disregarded her throbbing foot and spontaneously went to the site to evaluate it for us. She determined that while the tree needed to be removed it did not appear to be a situation that required emergency action. The tree was removed a week or so later and Sonja saved us the need to make the six hour round-trip from Frankfort to Greenup County.

Other ways Sonja has gone above and beyond normal Preserve Monitor duties include donating paint and supplies and helping to paint

Op's Cabin, which is a small ridgetop cottage where Jesse Stuart would go for inspiration to do his writing. This summer Sonja also changed her schedule so she could help our stewardship staff for an entire work week. We were very fortunate that she did since one staff member became ill and was unable to work that whole week. If it were not for Sonja, much of our work planned for that week would have gone undone.

Sonja is an exceptional individual; her selflessness and generosity shows in all aspects of her life. Besides volunteering for KSNPC, she also gives her time to a program in Flatwoods called Equi-Visions that employs horseback-riding as a therapy for disabled children. Sonja has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and is working on a Master's Degree in Psychology and an Equine Studies program through the Ironton, Ohio campus of Ohio University. She is hoping to combine her love of animals, her concern for people and her education into a career doing work similar to what she is doing as a volunteer with the children's horseback-riding program. In her spare time, which she has little of, Sonja enjoys reading, astronomy and playing guitar. Sonja's concern for living things is apparent in everything she does; her good work at Jesse Stuart State Nature Preserve helps not only KSNPC staff but all Kentuckians. Sonja, keep up the good work!

## Exotic plant symposium a success

by Joyce Bender, Stewardship Coordinator

On October 19, 1996, eighty-four people attended the first meeting ever held in Kentucky to discuss the threat to our state's biodiversity posed by non-native plants. The meeting, sponsored by the Commission, the Kentucky Native Plant Society, the University of Kentucky Department of Forestry, Cooperative Extension Service, and East Kentucky Power Cooperative was held at the Cooperative's offices in Winchester. The promise of a sunny fall day was not enough to distract the attendees from learning about the efforts being made on the international, national, and state levels to stem the tide from this onslaught of unwelcome pests.

Randy Westbrook, National Weed Coordinator for the USDA, APHIS and John Randall, Invasive Weed Specialist for The Nature Conservancy set the stage with their presentations on the global and national scale of the assault on our native ecosystems. Exotic plants can actually alter the physical environment of the places they become established by depleting the amount of moisture available to organisms, building up soil, and increasing shade. Exotic plants displace native flora and fauna by competing for nutrients and space and by reducing the amount of suitable habitat available for food and cover.

Our host at East Kentucky Power and Chairman of the Biodiversity Council, Jeff Hohman, discussed the Council's views on the impact of exotics and offered powerline rights-of-way as potential native plant seed sources. As the Commission's Stewardship Coordinator, I discussed the impact of exotic plants on state nature preserves and several federally listed plants as well as illustrated the efforts the Stewardship Program has been making to control the spread of exotics on the state nature preserves. Dr. Jim Luken, biology professor at Northern Kentucky University and Margaret Shea, Director of Science and Stewardship for Kentucky TNC provided information on their research on Amur honeysuckle and garlic mustard, respectively. These two exotics are changing the species composition of our woodlands in northern Kentucky.

Dr. Tom Barnes, with the University's Extension Service, offered some alternatives to using exotics in the landscape. His research on revegetating strip mine sites with native grasses shows promise. Pat Haragan, the author of *Weeds of Kentucky*, gave us a heads up on exotic plants that are moving toward Kentucky. Myles Buhlig, Assistant Director for the state's Division of Pests and Weeds, provided information on his agency's role and the state's noxious weed list. There is only one weed on it--Musk Thistle. We need to get more species onto that list! To close our symposium, Brian Bowen, an ecologist with the Tennessee Natural Heri-

tage Program, discussed ways to organize a group to effectively raise public awareness about the exotics problem. He serves as president of the Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council.

Many folks stayed after the end of the formal meeting to discuss our next steps. My goal is to contact state government agencies and encourage them to examine policies and processes that may be contributing to the exotics problem. Others have offered to compile a list of the most threatening exotic plants and to work on getting them on the state's noxious weed list. We will be meeting again in January (sometime between the 21-24) at a wild-life habitat conference Tom Barnes is organizing in Lexington at the Marriott Griffin Gate Resort. Please contact Tom at (606) 323-1301 for more information about the conference. Contact Joyce at (502) 573-2886 for the exotics meeting date and time.

Pat Haragan and Clara Wieland worked with me for over a year planning and organizing this meeting. I want to thank them both for helping me achieve an important goal. We want to especially thank Jeff Hohman for providing top rate meeting facilities with lunch and refreshments for the breaks, as well as notepads and staff assistance. Jeff, you made it easy! We'd also like to thank Tom Barnes for developing our text into a brochure, printing all those copies, and providing some mailing costs. We would like to extend our thanks once more to all the speakers for pro-

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## Two new state nature preserves dedicated in Kentucky

KSNPC voted at its quarterly meeting on December 10 to dedicate two new state nature preserves, Kentucky River Authority Palisades State Nature Preserve in Garrard and Jessamine counties and John B. Stephenson Memorial Forest State Nature Preserve in Rockcastle County.

The Kentucky River Authority Palisades State Nature Preserve consists of two tracts on opposite sides of the Kentucky River. Tract 1 in northern Garrard County consists of 222.54 acres and Tract 2 in southern Jessamine County has 133.73 acres. This state nature preserve was originally purchased from The Nature Conservancy by the Kentucky River Authority (KRA) and will be owned by KRA and managed by KSNPC. The limestone cliffs tower above the Kentucky River nearly 300 feet, making it one of the most scenic landscapes in the state.

The 123-acre tract of the John B. Stephenson Memorial Forest State Nature Preserve, located in Rockcastle County, contains two waterfalls: Anglin Falls and Venable Falls. This preserve was named in memory of former Berea College President, John B. Stephenson. Over the years, Anglin Falls has been used as an environmental and educational outdoor laboratory by faculty and students of Berea College, as well as other education institutions such

as Eastern Kentucky University and the University of Kentucky. Purchased by the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development, Inc., (MACED) in Berea with funds raised by the Friends of John B. Stephenson, this preserve will be transferred to Berea College and will be managed by the College.

With the dedication of these new preserves this now brings a total of 10,810 dedicated acres statewide. The Kentucky River Authority Palisades State Nature Preserve will be open to the public in the spring following development of hiking trails and parking facilities on the Garrard County tract. The John B. Stephenson Memorial Forest State Nature Preserve is now open to the public. Contact John Perry of Berea College at 606/986-9341, ext. 5587, for further information on visitation.



### Exotic Plant Symposium continued from page 6

viding such informative presentations. I would like to thank Dot Marek for her cheerful assistance in keeping track of all the registration information and in sending out correspondence. Thanks to Brad Nyholm for his work on the meeting location map and to Teresa Prather for her work on the final agenda design.

## Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission awards first Biological Diversity Protection Award

Thomas Barnes, University of Kentucky extension wildlife specialist in the Department of Forestry, is the first award recipient of the Biological Diversity Protection Award given by KSNPC. The commissioners gave Mr. Barnes the award during the quarterly meeting on December 10, 1996. The honor is given to the individual who has demonstrated dedication and success in protecting Kentucky's biological diversity.

Mr. Barnes has demonstrated his dedication to the goals of biological diversity protection through his work-related research and education activities and his personal time commitments. He has worked to educate foresters, wildlife biologists and county extension agents on the importance of protecting rare species and natural communities, and controlling the introduction and spread of exotic species that are costly to suppress and harmful to the natural environment.

His photographs and slides of Kentucky's beautiful natural diversity and rare species are shared with organizations and individuals, and are used in many educational programs throughout Kentucky. The commission congratulates Tom Barnes on his accomplishments and dedication.

## So you or your parents own valuable land?

by Robert McCance Jr.

Much of the private land in Kentucky is owned by citizens over 60 years of age. Many of these landowners have owned the land for many years, and it has significantly appreciated in value. For many elderly Kentuckians, much of their wealth is in the land they own, and they expect to give their property to their children in their wills. Without proper planning by the parents, the children may be sadly awakened to the power of government taxation after it is too late to do anything about it. Because of federal and state estate taxes, frequently the land that the parents believed would be treasured by the children must be sold to pay the estate and other taxes. An estate worth \$600,000 is only taxed at about \$45,000, but the tax rates go up as the value increases. An estate worth \$2 million will lose about \$625,000 to estate taxes, and an estate worth \$5 million will lose about \$2.2 million. If most of the estate value is in land, the land may need to be sold to pay the taxes. While owners of family businesses have for years managed to plan the transition of ownership in ways that protects the business from excessive taxation, landowners have not used similar opportunities. With proper planning now or in the landowners' wills, the estate and children can accrue more of the parents' wealth and the land can be protected from an unwanted sale to pay taxes. We recommend *Preserving Family*

*Lands: Essential Tax Strategies for the Landowner* by Stephen J. Small, Attorney at Law (available from Preserving Family Lands, P. O. Box 2242, Boston MA 02107) to landowners or children of landowners who believe they may one day find themselves in this situation. The single copy price is \$8.95 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling, payable to "Preserving Family Lands." Considering it may save your family \$10s of thousands, it may be the best investment you ever make! A copy also can be reviewed in the KSNPC library.



### Staff Update


As the seasons change and the weather turns cold outside, we must bid farewell to most of our seasonal employees. Without our seasonal employees, there is absolutely no way that our important work could get done. Even though seasonals are here for a short period of time, they are extremely helpful and necessary for our staff and the work they are committed to accomplishing.


We had to say goodbye to Bryce Fields and Pat Carroll who spent the summer searching for historical occurrences of rare plants. Bryce will be finishing his thesis: *The Vascular Flora of Blanton Forest*. After assisting the aquatic biologists during the hottest part of the summer, Bryce Daniels (not to be confused with Bryce Fields) left us to return to Eastern Kentucky University to complete his education. (What are the odds of hiring two guys named Bryce in one summer?) Matt Thomas, another aquatic-kind-of-guy,

assisted the aquatic biologists with sampling and report preparation. Matt will enter graduate school this fall. Kristen Johnson helped out the stewardship staff in building trails and regular preserve maintenance. After a long, hot summer, Kristen will be returning to Hocking College to work on her A.A. degree in Forestry. Also, Robert Kiser departed our employ after offering much needed help with terrestrial studies in various parts of the state. KSNPC wishes all the very best and thanks for all your help!

New to our "family" is Barry Howard, as our new land protection specialist. He comes from the Department of Parks after serving more than fifteen years with them. We're so glad to finally have him with us.

### Noteworthy News

 Don Harker, the Commission's first director, recently donated his personal copies of Commission publications and reports from the first few years of our agency. At least a few were no longer in our library, so we are deeply indebted to Don for his generosity. Thank you, Don.

 In October 1996, Congress provided \$3 million for the initiation of land acquisition for the Clark's River National Wildlife Refuge in Kentucky (to be carried out by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

***Aquatic and Wetland Plants  
of Kentucky***

by Ernest O. Beal and John W. Thieret

**REPRINTED**

To order send a request and a check for \$22 plus \$2.68 shipping (KY residents add \$1.32 tax, for a total of \$26.00) to: Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission  
801 Schenkel Lane  
Frankfort, KY 40601

***Kentucky Breeding Bird Atlas***

by Brainard Palmer-Ball

The Kentucky Breeding Bird Atlas has been completed and can be obtained from a variety of sources. Copies are in bookstores across the state or you can order it through the University Press of Kentucky by calling 800/839-6855 for \$29.95 + tax. The 372-page, hardbound book has black-and-white photographs of all 150 species confirmed or suspected of breeding during the study. Also included are maps showing their distribution and abundance in the state. Accompanying text gives many details concerning nesting habits, historical notes, and habitat information.



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The Nature and Wildlife Fund, Kentucky oldest checkoff program, is now entering its 17th year. You can help save wetlands, natural areas, and endangered species habitat, bald eagles, ospreys, peregrine falcons, river otters and many other nongame animals. No amount is too small. Your contribution on the state's income tax form will increase the quantity and quality of the care given to the beauty and bounty of Kentucky's natural heritage.

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**Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission**

801 Schenkel Lane, Frankfort, KY 40601  
Tel. (502)573-2886 Fax (502)573- 2355  
[tprather@mail.state.ky.us](mailto:tprather@mail.state.ky.us)

homepage: [www.state.ky.us/agencies/nrepc/  
ksnpc/index.htm](http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/nrepc/ksnpc/index.htm)

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*It is the mission of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission to protect Kentucky's natural heritage by: (1) 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 preserves system; (2) working with others to protect biological diversity; and (3) educating Kentuckians as to the value and purpose of nature preserves and biodiversity conservation.*

Commonwealth of Kentucky

**Kentucky State  
Nature Preserves  
Commission**

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