

TEAM  
**KENTUCKY**®

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT CABINET  
OFFICE OF KENTUCKY NATURE PRESERVES

*Conserving  
Kentucky's Natural  
Heritage since 1976*

Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves  
**Kentucky Heritage Land  
Conservation Fund  
Report 2025**

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*This report is submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly as directed by KRS 146 and 418 KAR relating to the Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves, the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund.*

# Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board

## **Russell Meyer, Chairman**

Representing the Department of Parks

## **Hugh N. Archer, Vice Chairman**

Representing environmental organizations

## **Zack Couch**

Representing the Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves

## **Derek Beard**

Representing the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

## **Shannon Galbraith-Kent**

Representing Kentucky Academy of Sciences

## **Ted Jessup**

Representing agricultural interests

## **Jimmy Cantrell**

Representing League of Kentucky Sportsmen

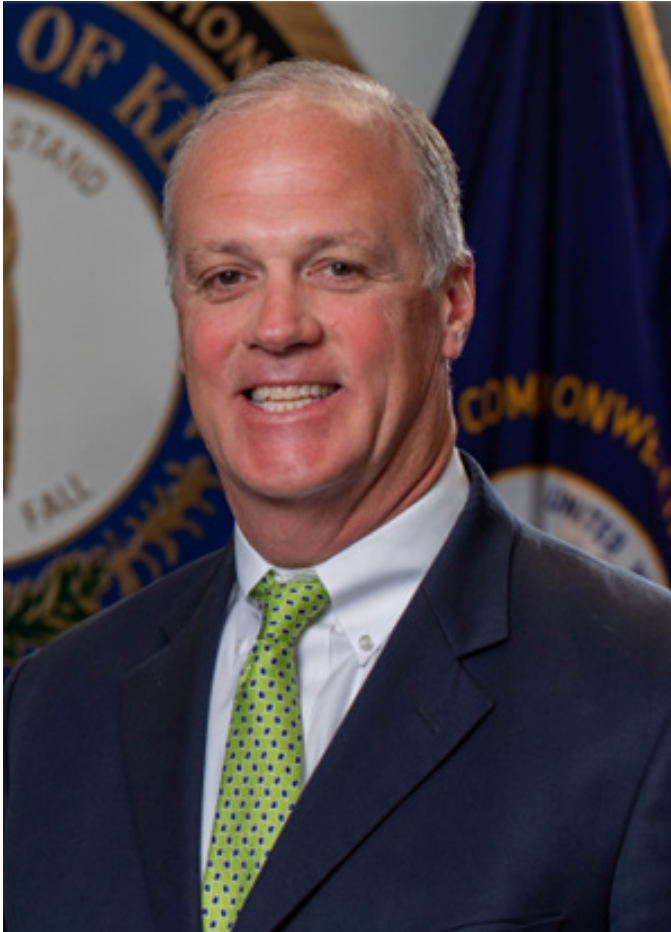
## **Gordon Slone**

Representing Kentucky Department of Natural Resources

## **Charlotte Turner McCoy**

Representing citizens of the Commonwealth with experience in land acquisition

# Letter from KHLCF Chairman



**Russell A. Meyer**

Chairman, Kentucky Heritage Land  
Conservation Fund Board

Since its establishment in 1990, the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund (KHLCF) has helped to conserve over 95,000 acres of Kentucky's finest woodlands, grasslands, and wetlands. These places serve not only as important habitats for Kentucky's native flora and fauna, but also as areas for public recreation. Be it the miles of hiking trails constructed within many of Kentucky's State Parks, thousands of acres of land available for public hunting and fishing, or the small local park just beyond your backyard, each stands as a testament to the Kentucky General Assembly's investment in Kentucky's natural resources.

Underscoring this investment was the appropriation of \$2 million into the KHLCF by the General Assembly in 2025. Applications for new projects across Kentucky have already been received and it continues to be our goal to distribute these funds in a manner that maximizes their benefit across the Commonwealth.

I'm excited to see how the KHLCF will continue to open new avenues for public outdoor recreation, increase local tourism, and conserve Kentucky's bountiful natural treasures. In the meantime, please consider this an open invitation to explore Kentucky via the many State Parks, Forests, Natural Areas, and Wildlife Management Areas that have already been conserved via the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund.

With gratitude,

**Russell A. Meyer**

Chairman, Kentucky Heritage Land  
Conservation Fund Board

Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Parks

# KHLCF Mission

*The KHLCF is the primary source of state funding for the purchase of natural areas and is committed to protecting and conserving our Commonwealth's precious natural areas for enjoyment by this and future generations.*

The KHLCF is the primary source of state funding for the acquisition of natural areas. These funds are dedicated to conserving Kentucky's natural beauty for enjoyment both now and in the future. Each property funded by the KHLCF is protected in perpetuity by a conservation easement or deed restriction.

The fund was established by the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Act in 1990. This legislation established priorities for property acquisitions including:

- natural areas that possess unique features such as habitat for rare and endangered species
- areas important to migratory birds
- areas that perform important natural functions subject to alteration or loss
- areas to be preserved in their natural state for public use, outdoor recreation and education

The fund is managed by the 9-member Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board. Revenue for the fund comes from the state portion of the unmined minerals tax, environmental fines, sale of Kentucky nature license plates, and interest.

By statute, the Environmental Education Council receives \$150,000 in environmental fines each year for environmental education programs and the Office of Energy Policy receives \$400,000 in unmined minerals taxes for the purpose of public education of coal-related issues. These funds are not part of the KHLCF. These transfers are reflected in the financial information section of this report.

Organizationally and administratively, the KHLCF is attached to the Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves in the Energy and Environment Cabinet.

## **KHLCF funds are allocated quarterly as follows by statute**

- 50% Local governments, state colleges and universities, nonprofit trust organizations, and other public agencies
- 10% Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
- 10% Department of Parks
- 10% Division of Forestry
- 10% Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves
- 10% Wild Rivers Program

## **The Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund**





# Why Conserve Kentucky?

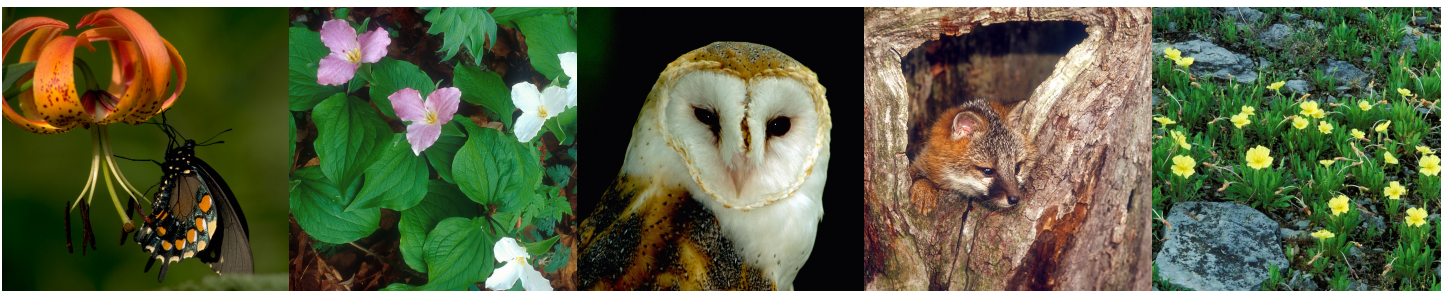
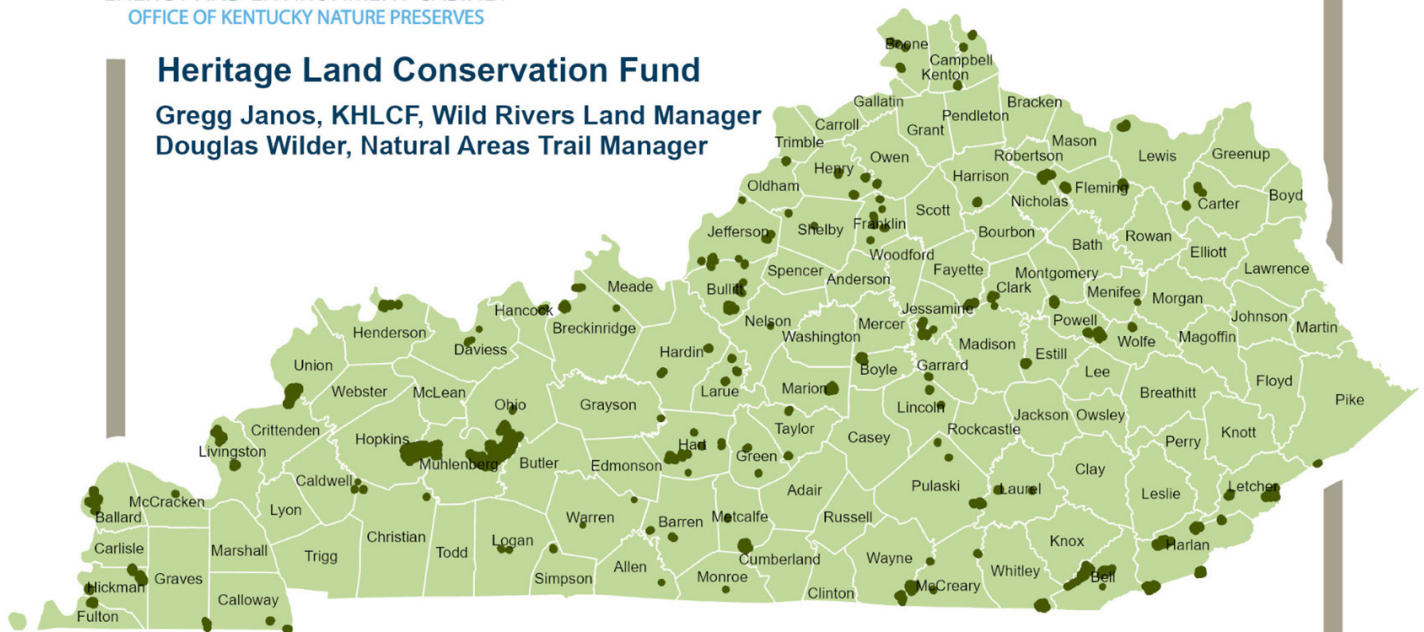
Kentucky spans approximately 25 million acres, the vast majority of which has been significantly altered since early European settlement. Despite this, there are still pockets of high-quality natural areas that exist throughout the Commonwealth. The goals of the KHLCF are simple: conserve Kentucky's remaining natural areas and maximize appropriate public access to as many of them as possible.

KHLCF sites provide the state, its citizens and its visitors with a wide range of conservation, education and recreation opportunities such as hiking, wildlife viewing, hunting areas, environmental education, protection of endangered species habitat and more. As of July 1st, 2025, the KHLCF program has funded the acquisition of 95,922 acres in 70 counties across Kentucky via an investment of \$81,219,645.



## Heritage Land Conservation Fund

**Gregg Janos, KHLCF, Wild Rivers Land Manager**  
**Douglas Wilder, Natural Areas Trail Manager**





# KHLCF and Kentucky's Economy

Natural areas and water resources conserved by KHLCF provide a host of economic benefits that have a measurable impact on the Commonwealth of Kentucky and its communities, such as drinking water protection, flood control, wildlife habitat, air pollution removal, jobs, and strengthening local economies.

Based on a report from the 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, & Wildlife Associated Recreation, an estimated **4.3 million people spent \$11.2 billion on fishing, hunting, or wildlife watching activities in Kentucky** in 2022. That includes money spent on equipment, clothes, lodging, food, and other trip related expenses. Anglers spent \$2.5 billion, hunters \$2.3 billion, and wildlife watchers \$6.4 billion.

Another study, conducted by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, found that consumer spending on outdoor recreation

contributed **\$5.1 billion of gross domestic product (GDP) to Kentucky's economy** (2% of Kentucky's GDP). Specifically, boating/fishing generated \$210M, hunting/shooting/trapping generated \$157M GDP, and hiking/climbing/tent camping generated \$48M GDP. Kentucky ranked 30th among states in value added to the economy. Additionally, outdoor recreation generates nearly 52,000 jobs in Kentucky (2.5% of all Kentucky jobs).

KHLCF sites are important destinations for Kentuckians and the nearly **2 million visitors to the state** who engage in these activities. Some of the most visited KHLCF sites include Cumberland Falls State Resort Park, the Green River, Big Rivers Wildlife Management Area, properties along Pine Mountain, John James Audubon State Park, and Livingston County Wildlife Management Area and State Nature Preserve.





# KHLCF Historic Accomplishments

*Since 1995, the KHLCF Board has played an integral part in protecting and conserving over 95,000 acres of Kentucky's natural areas and habitats across 176 projects in 70 counties. KHLCF funds both the acquisition of property and management, including hiking trail development and habitat improvement.*

Summary of the Kentucky Heritage Conservation Fund Efforts as of 1995—June 2025			
Applicant	Number of Projects	Acreage Covered	Funding Amount
County Governments	35	7,333.11	\$13,693,295.13
Multiple Agency Partners	6	14,781.09	\$11,673,455.86
Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	49	11,788.03	\$10,155,385.42
Wild Rivers Program	17	6,430.28	\$8,389,489.94
Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	8	40,701.18	\$7,915,255.59
Department of Parks	16	5,342.18	\$7,047,138.74
Division of Forestry	6	3,662.77	\$6,213,849.35
Colleges/Universities	8	2,078.70	\$4,952,276.55
Conservation Districts	8	1,484.44	\$4,624,699.85
Metro Governments	8	1,013.24	\$3,288,294.45
City Governments	10	542.55	\$1,709,119.25
Non-profits	5	946.44	\$1,932,385.50
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>96,104.01</b>	<b>\$81,594,645.63</b>





# KHLCF Projects and Acquisitions

Seven of the eight approved projects will be financed utilizing funds from the \$2 million that the Kentucky General Assembly allocated to the KHLCF in FY2025. Projects to receive funds from this allocation are denoted in the table below with an asterisk by the name.

FY2025 KHLCF Acquired Projects			
Project	Agency	County	Acres
Bernheim-Barman Tract	Bernheim Forest and Arboretum	Nelson	182

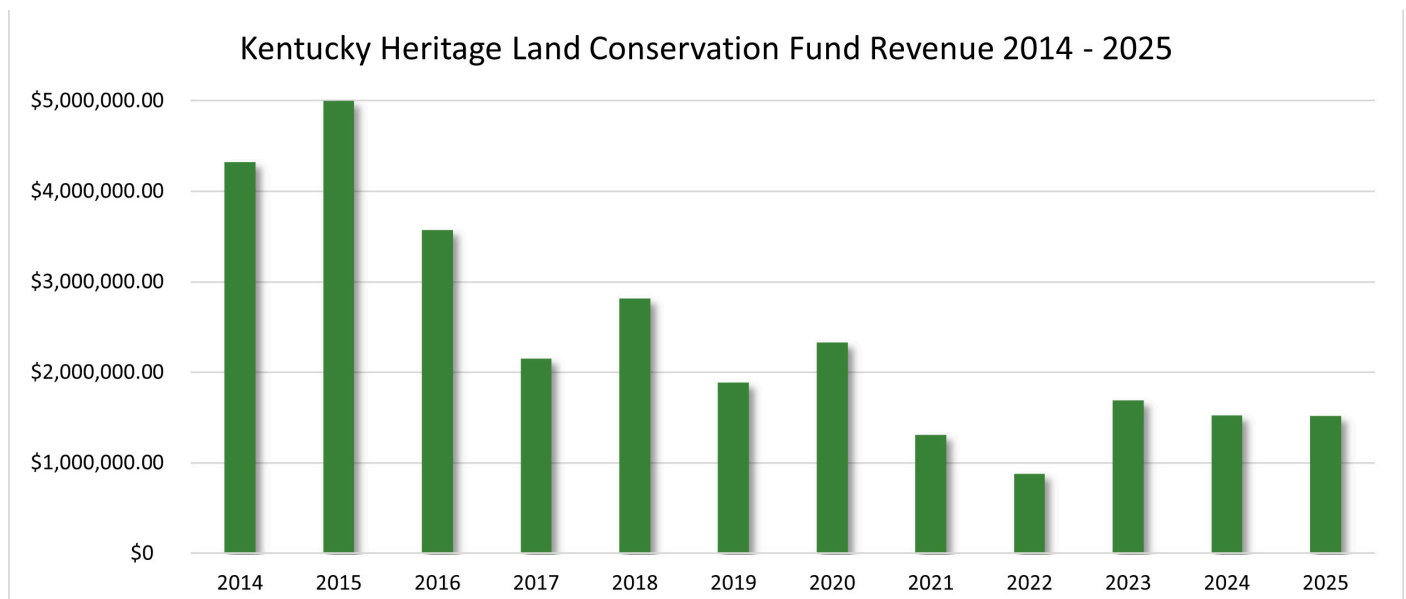
FY2025 KHLCF Projects Awarded			
Project	Agency	County	Acres
Gail Lincoln Tract	OKNP	Carter/Greenup	700
*Hall Hill Tract-Vernon Douglas SNP	OKNP	Hardin	250
*Payne Hollow on the Ohio	Payne Hollow on the Ohio	Trimble	20
*Leavell Addition to Logan Hubble Park	Lincoln County Fiscal Court	Lincoln	112
*Handy Tracts	OKNP	Green	110
*Porter Historic Property	Furture Fund Land Trust	Jefferson/Bullitt	55
*Roy Property Expansion-Logan Hubble Park	Lincoln County Fiscal Court	Lincoln	183
*Trooper Lake Preserve	City of Elizabethtown	Hardin	38



# KHLCF Annual Revenue

Funding for the KHLCF is generated from the sale of nature license plates, the state portion of unmined mineral tax environmental fines, interest income, and donations. By statute, the Kentucky Environmental Education Council receives the first \$150,000 collected from environmental fines and the Office of Energy Policy receives the first \$400,000 of unmined minerals taxes. Last year, the Kentucky General Assembly appropriated \$2 million into the KHLCF. The KHLCF Board utilized the full allotment to approve seven projects across seven counties. The table and figure below do not include this \$2 million.

KHLCF Annual Revenue 2013-2025							
Fiscal Year	License Plates	Fines	Un-Mined Tax	Interest	Other	KEEC/OEP Deductions	Totals
2013	\$431,100.00	\$2,332,183.00	\$2,820,758.00	\$(14,433.00)		\$(550,000.00)	\$5,019,608.00
2014	\$412,370.00	\$1,709,373.00	\$2,676,912.00	\$71,526.00	\$71.00	\$(550,000.00)	\$4,320,252.00
2015	\$402,118.00	\$2,773,396.00	\$2,287,058.00	\$85,541.00	\$945.00	\$(550,000.00)	\$4,999,058.00
2016	\$288,182.00	\$2,070,527.00	\$1,637,571.00	\$126,302.00		\$(550,000.00)	\$3,572,582.00
2017	\$379,370.00	\$1,586,457.00	\$676,305.00	\$59,298.00	\$25.00	\$(550,000.00)	\$2,151,454.00
2018	\$365,590.00	\$2,262,555.00	\$636,307.00	\$100,261.00	\$385.00	\$(550,000.00)	\$2,815,098.00
2019	\$361,050.00	\$1,492,233.00	\$333,392.00	\$182,467.00		\$(483,392.00)	\$1,885,750.00
2020	\$361,460.00	\$1,909,592.00	\$166,097.00	\$60,986.00		\$(166,097.00)	\$2,332,038.00
2021	\$349,170.00	\$961,284.00	\$281,899.00	\$(52.00)		\$(281,899.00)	\$1,310,402.00
2022	\$365,120.00	\$667,373.00	\$6,559.00	\$(7,781.00)		\$(150,000.00)	\$881,271.00
2023	\$386,960.00	\$1,417,391.00	\$(939.00)	\$35,813.00		\$(150,000.00)	\$1,689,226.00
2024	\$391,625.00	\$1,131,006.00	\$197,650.00	\$140,857.00		\$(334,365.00)	\$1,526,773.00
2025	\$377,650.00	\$1,106,010.08	\$13,463.07	\$169,786.27		\$(150,000.00)	\$1,516,909.42





# KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 - 2025

KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 — 2025					
County	Project	Acres	Agency	State Senate District	State House District
Allen	Carpenter Cave Conservation Area	14.35	Private with Conservation Easement	16	22
Ballard	Axe Lake Swamp State Nature Preserve	458.45	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	2	1
Ballard	Boatwright Wildlife Management Area	1432.81	Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	2	1
Barren	Brigadoon State Nature Preserve	187.46	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	9	23
Barren	Mutters Cave State Natural Area	108.28	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	9	23
Bath, Fleming, Nicholas	Clay Wildlife Management Area	813.65	Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	27, 28	72, 74
Bell	Kentucky Ridge Forest Wildlife Management Area	3504.51	Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources; Kentucky Division of Forestry	29	87
Bell	Kentucky Ridge State Forest	288.24	Kentucky Division of Forestry	29	87
Bell, Harlan, Letcher	Pine Mountain State Scenic Trail	2108.70	Kentucky State Parks	29	87
Boone	Big Bone Lick State Historic Site	228.52	Kentucky State Parks	20	60
Boone	Boone County Cliffs State Nature Preserve	75.42	Boone County Fiscal Court	11	66
Boone	Dinsmore Woods State Nature Preserve	104.52	Boone County Fiscal Court	11	66
Boone	Gunpowder Creek Nature Park	125.91	Boone County Fiscal Court	11	66
Boyle	Perryville Battlefield State Historic Site	511.95	Kentucky State Parks & Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	12	54
Breckinridge	Breckinridge County Wildlife Education Area	25.19	Breckinridge County Fiscal Court	5	10
Breckinridge	Yellowbank Wildlife Management Area	1331.15	Breckinridge County Fiscal Court; Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	5	10
Bullitt	Apple Valley Glades State Nature Preserve	60.36	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	38	49
Bullitt	Knobs State Forest and Wildlife Management Area	2035.93	Kentucky Division of Forestry; Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	38	49
Bullitt, Jefferson	Jefferson Memorial Forest	669.79	Louisville Metro Government	10, 33, 37, 38	26, 28, 37, 38

# KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 - 2025

KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 — 2025					
County	Project	Acres	Agency	State Senate District	State House District
Bullitt, Jefferson, Oldham	The Parklands of Floyds Fork	332.85	Louisville Metro Government & The Future Fund Land Trust	7, 36, 38	26, 29, 36, 49
Bullitt, Nelson	Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest	591.91	Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest	14, 38	49, 50
Caldwell, Christian	Pennyrile State Forest	200.62	Kentucky Division of Forestry	3	8
Calloway	Blood River Seeps State Nature Preserve	192.49	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	1	5
Calloway	Fort Donelson National Battlefield (Fort Heiman Unit)	179.80	U.S. National Park Service	1	5
Campbell	Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area	137.88	Campbell County Conservation District	24	67
Campbell	St. Anne Woods and Wetlands Research and Education Center	146.49	Campbell County Conservation District	24	68
Campbell, Kenton	Morning View Natural Area	223.05	Kenton County Conservation District	17	78
Carlisle, Fulton, Hickman	Obion Creek Wildlife Management Area	1637.89	Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	1, 2	1
Carter	Carter Caves State Resort Park	100.50	Kentucky State Parks	18	96
Carter	Olive Hill Lake Conservation	214.83	City of Olive Hill	18	96
Carter	Tygarts State Forest	255.04	Kentucky Division of Forestry	18	96
Christian	Bob Overton Conservation Area	54.82	Private with Conservation Easement	3	16
Clark	Civil War Fort at Boonesboro	25.38	Clark County Fiscal Court	28	73
Clark	Lower Howards Creek Heritage Park	168.66	Clark County Fiscal Court	28	73
Clark	Lower Howards Creek State Nature Preserve	227.99	Clark County Fiscal Court	28	73
Crittenden, Union	Big Rivers Wildlife Management Area and State Forest	6730.58	Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources; Kentucky Division of Forestry	1, 4	12
Cumberland, Metcalfe	Marrowbone State Forest and Wildlife Management Area	1955.63	Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources; Kentucky Division of Forestry	15, 16	21
Daviess	Adkisson Greenbelt Park	22.41	City of Owensboro	8	7, 13
Daviess	Yellow Creek Park	1.43	Daviess County Fiscal Court	8	13



# KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 - 2025

KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 — 2025					
County	Project	Acres	Agency	State Senate District	State House District
Estill	Lily Mountain Nature Preserve	565.87	Estill County Conservation District	30	91
Fayette, Madison	Floracliff Nature Sanctuary	348.63	Floracliff Nature Sanctuary	28, 34	73
Fayette, Madison	Raven Run Nature Sanctuary	365.09	Lexington/Fayette Urban County Government Parks and Recreation	34	73
Fleming	Park Lake Mountain Nature Preserve	821.11	Fleming County Fiscal Court	27	72
Fleming, Nicholas, Robertson	Blue Licks Battlefield State Resort Park	866.71	Kentucky State Parks	27	70, 72
Fleming, Robertson	Shorts Goldenrod State Nature Preserve	228.00	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	27	72
Franklin	Cove Spring Park	88.75	City of Frankfort	20	56, 57
Franklin	Feindel Conservation Area	14.72	Private with Conservation Easement	20	56
Franklin	Julian Savanna State Nature Preserve	42.43	Private with Conservation Easement	20	57
Franklin	River Cliffs State Nature Preserve	210.20	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves & Private with Conservation Easement	20	57
Franklin	Rockcross Hills State Nature Preserve	84.17	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	20	57
Franklin	Swallowfield Conservation Area	72.20	Private with Conservation Easement	20	56
Garrard, Jessamine	Tom Dorman State Nature Preserve	911.11	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	22	55, 80
Garrard, Lincoln	Logan Hubble Park	122.94	Garrard County Tax Admin	21, 22	80
Graves	Terrapin Creek State Nature Preserve	269.23	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	1	2
Grayson	Lone Oak Barrens State Nature Preserve	33.64	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	5	18
Green	Glenview Heritage Land	168.09	Green County Fiscal Court	9	24
Green	Wyatt Jefferies Woods Park	57.14	Green County Fiscal Court	9	24
Hancock	Jeffreys Cliff	239.56	Hancock County Fiscal Court	8	14
Hardin	Eastview Barrens State Nature Preserve	119.21	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves; The Nature Conservancy	10	18
Hardin	Jim Scudder State Nature Preserve	231.06	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves & Hardin County Fiscal Court	10	25

# KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 - 2025

KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 — 2025					
County	Project	Acres	Agency	State Senate District	State House District
Hardin	Springhouse Barrens State Nature Preserve	54.08	Private with Conservation Easement. HLCF funds were used to place KNP easement on the property.	10	18
Harlan	Blanton Forest State Nature Preserve	3504.01	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	29	94
Harlan	James E. Bickford State Nature Preserve	347.80	Pine Mountain Settlement School	29	94
Harlan	Kentonia State Forest	762.99	Kentucky Division of Forestry	29	94
Harlan	Martin's Fork State Natural Area	1600.64	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	29	87
Harlan	Stone Mountain Wildlife Management Area and State Natural Area	1025.79	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves; Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	29	87
Harlan, Letcher	Hi Lewis Pine Barrens State Nature Preserve	426.18	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves & Kentucky Natural Lands Trust	29	94
Harrison	Griffith Woods Wildlife Management Area	391.35	Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	27	70
Hart	Frenchmans Knob Preserve	65.87	Hart County Fiscal Court	9	24
Hart	Green River State Natural Area (Boiling Springs)	121.37	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	9	24
Hart	Green River State Natural Area (Davis Bend)	165.52	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	9	24
Hart	Green River State Natural Area (Rush Island Bottoms)	139.25	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	9	24
Hart	Hidden River Cave	10.14	City of Horse Cave	9	24
Hart	Upper Green River Biological Preserve	1247.58	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves & Western Kentucky University	9	24
Hart	Upper Green River Biological Preserve (Lawler Bend)	371.56	Western Kentucky University	9	24
Henderson	Green River State Forest	404.29	Kentucky Division of Forestry	4	11
Henderson	John James Audubon State Park	650.99	Kentucky State Parks	4	11
Henderson	John James Audubon State Park State Nature Preserve	338.31	Kentucky State Parks	4	11
Henry	Drennon Creek State Nature Preserve	328.96	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	7	47



# KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 - 2025

KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 — 2025					
County	Project	Acres	Agency	State Senate District	State House District
Henry	Kentucky State University Environmental Education Center	294.68	Kentucky State University	7	47
Henry, Owen	Kentucky River Wildlife Management Area	533.26	Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	7, 20	47
Hickman	Obion Creek State Nature Preserve	1598.97	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves & Murray State University	1	1
Hickman	Three Ponds State Nature Preserve	528.25	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	1	1
Hopkins, Muhlenberg, Ohio	Peabody Wildlife Management Area	42598.15	Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources & Western Land Services & Patriot Coal Corporation	3, 4, 5	4, 14, 15
Jefferson	McNeely Lake Park	26.79	Louisville Metro Government	38	29, 37
Jefferson	Putney Pond and Woodlands	24.36	City of Prospect	6	48
Jefferson	Rolleigh Peterson Educational Forest	112.67	Louisville Metro Government; Kentucky Division of Forestry	36	36
Jessamine	Camp Nelson National Monument	58.51	U.S. National Park Service	22	55
Jessamine	Jessamine Creek Gorge Nature Preserve	267.49	Jessamine County Fiscal Court	22	55
Larue	Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park - Boyhood Home Unit	227.98	U.S. National Park Service	14	24
Larue	Larue County Environmental Center	215.90	Larue County Fiscal Court	14	24
Larue	Thompson Creek Glades State Nature Preserve	169.08	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	14	24
Laurel	Sinking Creek State Natural Area	301.00	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	21	71, 85
Laurel	Whitley Branch Wetland Restoration Project	75.57	City of London	21	90
Letcher	Bad Branch State Nature Preserve	2829.07	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	29	94
Letcher	Lilley Cornett Woods	543.03	Eastern Kentucky University	29	94
Lewis	Crooked Creek State Nature Preserve	728.53	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	18	96
Lincoln	Bouteloua Barrens State Nature Preserve	260.16	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	21	80
Lincoln	William Whitley House State Historic Site	81.32	Lincoln County Fiscal Court	21	80

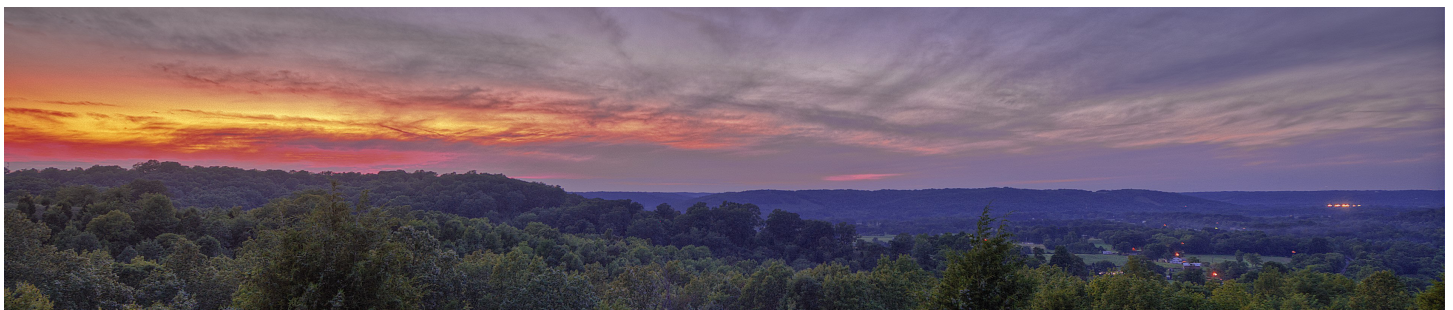
# KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 - 2025

KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 — 2025					
County	Project	Acres	Agency	State Senate District	State House District
Livingston	Livingston County Wildlife Management Area (Reynolds Tract)	873.13	Livingston County Fiscal Court	2	3
Livingston	Livingston County Wildlife Management Area and State Nature Preserve (Bissell Bluff SNP)	563.24	Livingston County Fiscal Court	2	3
Livingston	Livingston County Wildlife Management Area and State Nature Preserve (Newman's Bluff SNP)	993.81	Livingston County Fiscal Court	2	3
Logan	Baker Natural Area	66.16	Logan County Conservation District	32	16
Logan	Logan County Glade State Nature Preserve	41.61	Logan County	32	16
Marion	Marion County Wildlife Management Area and State Forest	1293.14	Marion County Fiscal Court; Kentucky Division of Forestry; Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources	14	51
McCracken	Perkins Creek Nature Preserve	80.56	City of Paducah	2	1
McCreary	Little South Fork State Natural Area (Tucker SNA)	23.05	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	25	52
McCreary	Rock Creek State Natural Area	89.92	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	25	52
McCreary, Wayne	Little South Fork State Natural Area (Burnett Branch SNA)	1067.88	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	15, 25	52
McCreary, Wayne	Little South Fork State Natural Area (Steele Hollow SNA)	2191.02	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	15, 25	52
McCreary, Whitley	Cumberland Falls State Resort Park	119.88	Kentucky State Parks; Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	25	52, 82
Menifee	Broke Leg Falls	15.85	Menifee County Fiscal Court	28	74
Metcalfe	Dry Fork Gorge	79.97	Metcalfe County Fiscal Court	16	21
Monroe	Old Mulkey Meetinghouse State Historic Site	16.93	Kentucky State Parks	16	21
Nelson	Bernheim-Barman Tract	181.96	Bernheim Forest and Arboretum	14	50
Nelson	Town Creek Greenway	13.22	Kentucky State Parks; City of Bardstown	14	50
Nicholas, Robertson	Blue Licks State Park State Nature Preserve	54.12	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	27	70, 72
Ohio	Highview Hill	255.50	Ohio County Fiscal Court	5	14



# KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 - 2025

KHLCF Purchased Properties 1995 — 2025					
County	Project	Acres	Agency	State Senate District	State House District
Ohio	Ohio County Park Nature Area	115.45	Ohio County Fiscal Court	5	14
Oldham	Morgan Conservation Park	227.59	Oldham County Fiscal Court	6	59
Powell	Natural Bridge State Park State Nature Preserve	1238.55	Kentucky State Parks	30	91
Powell	Pilot Knob State Nature Preserve	742.13	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves & Powell County Fiscal Court	30	91
Powell	Powell County Conservation Tracts	82.83	Powell County Fiscal Court	30	91
Powell, Wolfe	Natural Bridge State Resort Park	270.06	Kentucky State Parks	30	89, 91
Powell, Wolfe	Red River State Natural Area	754.33	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	30	89, 91
Pulaski	Buck Creek Nature Preserve	35.20	Pulaski County Fiscal Court	15	71
Pulaski	Dr. William H. Martin State Natural Area	459.20	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	15	85
Pulaski	Frances Johnson Park State Nature Preserve	250.13	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	15	85
Pulaski	Hazeldell Meadow Preserve	44.03	Pulaski County Fiscal Court	15	71
Shelby	Clear Creek Park	27.02	Shelby County Fiscal Court	7	58
Shelby	Shelby Trails Park	75.79	Shelby County Fiscal Court	7	58
Simpson	Flat Rock Glade State Nature Preserve	98.59	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	32	22
Taylor	Clay Hill Memorial Forest	153.61	Campbellsville University	16	51
Taylor	Tebbs Bend Nature and Recreation Area	172.14	Taylor County Fiscal Court	16	51
Warren	Crumps Cave Research and Education Preserve	2.01	Western Kentucky University	16	19
Warren	Lost River Cave Valley	2.02	Warren County Fiscal Court	32	17
Whitley	Archer-Benge State Nature Preserve	2229.69	Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves	25	82





# KHLCF Highlights: Partners

## Floracliff Nature Sanctuary, Fayette County

OKNP staff led a Controlled Burn Workshop for the Kentucky Prescribed Fire Council at Floracliff Nature Sanctuary. This workshop trained 25 potential crew members from the public on the basics of prescribed fire. During Floracliff's second annual Bluegrass Land & Nature Symposium, an OKNP burn boss led a session on utilizing prescribed fire as a management tool in the Bluegrass Region. The recently burned areas at Floracliff were used as an outdoor classroom for attendees.



OKNP Prescribed Fire lecture at Floracliff's Bluegrass Land & Nature Symposium

This summer, OKNP biologists hosted a bat workshop at Floracliff. Attendees learned about the bat species of Kentucky, what bat biologists do, and how to make a career in the biology field. Students also got to try their hand at being a bat biologist by removing felt bats out of a mist-net and collecting data.



Attendees of OKNP's bat workshop at Floracliff practicing mist-netting and data collection.

Lastly, over 30 new species were added to the species list at Floracliff this year. Notable additions include slender toothwort (*Cardamine angustata*), angle pod (*Gonolobus suberosus*), and Mulsant's water treader (*Mesovelia mulsanti*) which was the first observation on iNaturalist in Kentucky for the species.



New species documented at Floracliff: Angle pod (right) and slender toothwort (left).

## Jessamine Creek Gorge Nature Preserve, Jessamine County



Small gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*) cluster on cave ceiling.

In partnership with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, a cave gate/fence was installed at Jessamine Creek Gorge Nature Preserve in spring 2025. More than 8,500lbs of steel were hauled by hand via a pulley system to the cave entrance, where it could be



# KHLCF Highlights: Partners

## Jessamine Creek Gorge Nature Preserve, Jessamine County (cont.)

welded into place. The fence protects endangered gray bats (*Myotis grisescens*) that utilize the cave in the summer to raise their young. Gray bats are susceptible to disturbance and the population at Overstreet Cave has declined due to people visiting the cave.



© Michaela Rogers  
New fence/gate installed at Overstreet Cave entrance to protect gray bats that inhabit the cave.

## LaRue County Environmental and Education Research Center (EERC), LaRue County

The LaRue County EERC is home to the Pearman Forest which was enrolled into the Old-Growth Forest Network this spring. A ceremony was held on site in April with approximately 60 people in attendance. After the ceremony, attendees enjoyed a hike through the forest. LaRue County EERC becomes Kentucky's sixth old growth forest in the Network and joins Brigadoon SNP, Blanton Forest SNP, and Lilley Cornett Woods as the other KHLCF properties enrolled in the Network.



© Victoria Cox  
LaRue County EERC receives Old Growth Forest Recognition.

## Lone Oak Barrens Nature Preserve, Grayson County

The Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves hosted a tour of Lone Oak Barrens State Nature Preserve for Kentucky and Tennessee Quail Forever staff. The goal of this tour was to showcase for other conservation professionals OKNP's management strategies when working on ecologically sensitive sites. OKNP land managers and prescribed fire coordinator covered Lone Oak's site significance, rare plant and community characteristics, and management history, as well as management progress and goals.



OKNP takes Tennessee Quail Forever staff on tour of Lone Oak Barrens SNP.



# KHLCF Highlights: Partners

## Hazeldell Meadow Preserve, Pulaski County

Hazeldell Meadow is a popular KHLCF site, providing an area for public recreation, nature viewing, bird watching, as well as providing a unique natural area suited for academic research. Regular trail maintenance occurs on the preserve as the trail continues to be a popular outdoor recreation location.

Though the name of the preserve calls it a meadow, this site is actually home to Kentucky's only remaining protected example of the globally rare plant community, the Highland Rim Wet Barrens. This site provides vital habitat for almost a dozen rare plant species, including the carnivorous dwarf sundew (*Drosera brevifolia*). Recently, OKNP conducted camera trap surveys for least weasels and acoustic surveys for bats. Data are still being analyzed.



Yellow fringed orchid (*Platanthera ciliaris*) blooming at Hazeldell.



Dwarf Sundew (*Drosera brevifolia*), a rare carnivorous plant at Hazeldell. Dime for scale.

Prescribed fire has been an essential tool in maintaining the openness of this site, as it replicates natural processes that occurred before European settlement. While most previous prescribed burns have been conducted at Hazeldell in the fall, in 2025 OKNP conducted the first spring burn to reduce woody vegetation.



Prescribed fire at Hazeldell, spring 2025.

Partnerships with universities for academic research are essential for providing data that OKNP biologists and land managers can use to better their understanding of a site and how best to manage it. Dr. Krupa of the University of Kentucky is in the 14th year of research of crayfish, spiders, and dwarf sundew on the property. Following the spring burn, Krupa monitored the dwarf sundew and estimated 234,960 plants covering an area of 445m<sup>2</sup>, the highest he has recorded since 2016.



# KHLCF Highlights: Trails

## Blanton Forest State Nature Preserve, Harlan County

Blanton Forest SNP located in Harlan County is one of the few remaining places in the state a person can see an old growth forest. Blanton Forest has over four miles of hiking trails with two loop trails and one linear trail. The trails will cross a few streams, follow the cliff lines, and take you through some of the most beautiful forests in the state. The Knobby Rock loop trail travels across a sandstone out cropping that provides 360-degree views of the pine mountain region. Work performed on site over the past year has included new trail signs, installation of a new bridge, clearing trails, a new kiosk and boot brush station, and a pollinator garden.



View from Knobby Rock at Blanton Forest SNP.

## Pilot Knob State Nature Preserve, Powell County



View from Pilot Knob

Pilot Knob SNP located in Powell County is where Daniel Boone first laid eyes on the Bluegrass Region of Kentucky. The Oscar Gerald Jr. trail is the ½ mile main trail that takes you up to Pilot Knob which offers one of the best views in the state. The 2.25-mile loop Sage Point Trail has reopened and takes you through the heart of the preserve consisting of oak/hickory forest. This trail will lead hikers across 5 new wooden log bridges and reroutes. Work done on site consisted of new bridges, trail clearing, new trail head signs, and guard rail posts and cable to prevent vehicle access.



New kiosk at Blanton Forest SNP.



New bridge built on the Sage Point Trail at Pilot Knob SNP



# KHLCF Highlights: Trails

## John James Audubon State Park, Henderson County



The Audubon Wetlands boardwalk is an ADA accessible path to beautiful cypress swamps.

A total of 664 of the nearly 1,000-acre John James Audubon Pilot Knob State Park in Henderson County was acquired with KHLCF funds. The Audubon Wetlands are a unique ecosystem of bald cypress swamp, shrub wetland, and floodplain forest. This ecosystem is accessible via a 750ft boardwalk offering views of beaver, otter, warblers, waterfowl, and other aquatic life. This past year trails were cleared, and new interpretative signs were installed along the ADA accessible boardwalk.



Installation of new interpretative signs along the Audubon Wetlands boardwalk.

## Lily Mountain Nature Preserve, Estill County



Gorgeous view from the top of Lily Mountain.

Lily Mountain Nature Preserve in Estill County preserves 565 acres of predominately forest, with many ridges and streams. The main trail takes hikers to the top of Lily Mountain, AKA "Rocky's Roost", which provides a scenic overlook of the Cumberland Plateau and the Bluegrass. This past year the non-profit group Friends of Lily Mountain held an Earth Day event for Estill County High School students who began work on a trail reroute on the main trail to the overlook. The remainder of the reroute was laid out for future completion.



Estill County High School students work on a trail reroute at Lily Mountain Nature Preserve for Earth Day.



# KHLCF Highlights: Native Pollinators

## Native Bee Inventory

Preliminary results from the Native Bee Natural Heritage Survey on KHLCF sites—including Embury Lay, Hi Lewis, McNeely Lake Park, Terrapin, The Parklands of Floyds Fork (a.k.a. Glory Road), and Three Ponds—have revealed a strong diversity of native bees. Sites host specialists and multiple state record observations. These findings suggest that our protected lands offer important habitats for pollinators, particularly where intact native plant communities and low disturbance levels are maintained. Notably, June surveys at Glory Road documented several state records across genera such as Leafcutter and Resin Bees (*Megachile*) and Long-Horned Bees (*Melissodes*), with additional species from genera Striped Sweat Bees (*Agapostemon*), Mining Bees (*Andrena*), Pure Green Sweat Bees (*Augochlora*), Green Sweat Bees (*Augochlorella*), Furrow Bees (*Halictus*), and Sweat Bees (*Lasioglossum*). A fall 2024

survey at Terrapin SNP yielded genera Pure Green Sweat Bees (*Augochlora*), Furrow Bees (*Halictus*), and Sweat Bees (*Lasioglossum*), with spring and summer 2025 surveys currently being processed. Results from other KHLCF SNPs listed will be added as identifications are completed.

## Orchid Pollinator Camera Traps

OKNP biologists are utilizing camera traps to identify pollinators for the federally threatened white fringeless orchid (*Platanthera integrilabia*). Native orchids often have specialized pollinators, meaning only a few pollinators are adapted to pollinating complex orchid flowers. Without pollination, orchid populations cannot maintain or increase plant health and population size. Therefore, to ensure longevity of rare orchid populations, conservation efforts must also consider pollinator population health. In the future, land managers can use this data to implement strategies that will increase the presence of these pollinators, which will have positive impacts on the white fringeless orchids at KHLCF sites.



Top: Orchard Mining Bee (*Osmia lignaria*)  
Bottom: Geranium Miner Bee (*Andrena geranii*),



Camera trap set up to document pollinators of the white fringeless orchid.



# KHLCF Highlights: Rare Plant Conservation

## Kentucky Gladecress

KHLCF sites are vital to OKNP's efforts to recover Kentucky's federally listed plants. Several KHLCF sites are locations of the federally threatened Kentucky Gladecress (*Leavenworthia exigua* var. *laciniata*). In addition to annual monitoring of this rare mustard, seeds of the Kentucky Gladecress were introduced to the KHLCF site Glory Road, which is part of the Parklands of Floyds Fork. The seed introduction conducted in 2022 and 2023 has been deemed successful, with approximately 200 new Kentucky Gladecress plants reproducing at the site in 2025. Working with partners, more seed was collected from vulnerable sites nearby to continue augmenting the introduced population.



Federally threatened Kentucky Gladecress (*Leavenworthia exigua* var. *laciniata*) flowers.



Federally threatened Kentucky Gladecress (*Leavenworthia exigua* var. *laciniata*).

## Rare Plants of the Bluegrass Region: Braun's Rockcress, Globe Bladderpod, and Kentucky Clover

KHLCF properties have been instrumental in preserving habitat for global, federal and state rare plants through land acquisition. Two endangered Bluegrass plants, Globe Bladderpod (*Physaria globosa*) and Kentucky Clover (*Trifolium kentuckiense*), have dramatically declined in the recent decades. OKNP botanists are utilizing KHLCF lands to restore habitat for existing populations and rare plant translocation. In the case of Globe Bladderpod, restoration and moving seed has maintained or increased two existing populations on



Starting at top left, going clockwise: Globe Bladderpod (*Physaria globosa*), Braun's Rockcress (*Borodinia perstellata*) and Kentucky Clover (*Trifolium kentuckiense*).

# KHLCF Highlights: Rare Plant Conservation

## Rare Plants of the Bluegrass Region (cont.)

protected land and helped establish at least one introduced population. Recent restoration on one of those sites led to high germination of seedlings, leading to the highest population count in the past 12 years.

Kentucky Clover is being grown by the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden's CREWS Plant Program through a partnership with OKNP. Previous introductions of transplants into limestone woodlands with active restoration on two KHLCF sites have led to the successful germination on a State Nature Preserve. OKNP is working with the Cincinnati Zoo to improve translocation success with the goal of establishing a self-sustaining population and preventing the extinction of this rare clover. In spring 2025, the first spring-time translocation of Kentucky clover was conducted, resulting in over 900 clovers being planted across the Bluegrass Region, including a few KHLCF sites.



OKNP biologists and Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden's CREWS Plant Program partnered to form the Kentucky Clover translocation team.

## Crooked Creek Barrens State Nature Preserve, Lewis County



Prairie gentian (*Gentiana puberulenta*)

KHLCF has funded multiple tracts of Crooked Creek Barrens SNP which features a unique oak barrens and prairie habitat. Thanks to recent land management efforts to expand the prairie habitat, a new rare plant population, Prairie gentian (*Gentiana puberulenta*), was discovered at the preserve. Prairie gentian is a native perennial forb that occurs in dry calcareous prairies, barrens, and sandy ridges. It has striking blue flowers and blooms early August to late October. It is a Kentucky state endangered species.

The prairie gentian at Crooked Creek Barrens SNP is a new record for Lewis County, with the closest population occurring across the Ohio River in Adams County, Ohio. In Kentucky, this species primarily occurs in the Big Barrens Region, with the newly documented Crooked Creek Barrens SNP population expanding its range in Kentucky to the Outer Bluegrass Region.

Crooked Creek Barrens SNP is open to the public and can be accessed via a 1.35 mile hiking trail that travels through prairie, barrens, and forested habitat.



# KHLCF Highlights: Rare Plant Conservation

## Wild American Ginseng Monitoring across Kentucky



American Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), State Commercially Exploited

Kentucky is the leading exporter of wild American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), exporting up to \$8 million annually. Unfortunately, large scale development and multiple generations of over harvesting have resulted in state-wide American ginseng decline, therefore it is listed as State Commercially Exploited. The Kentucky Forest Biodiversity Assessment Program is a long-term monitoring program that assesses American ginseng populations and the biodiversity of the plant's forested habitats. Almost one third of all American ginseng populations in the program occur on KHLCF lands, making KHLCF essential to the conservation of this economically important plant for future generations of

Kentuckians.

Six years of the program have been completed, resulting in the documentation of high-quality forested communities, discovery of new populations of several listed plants, and a better understanding of the effects of natural and human disturbance on Kentucky's forests.





# KHLCF Highlights: Prescribed Fire

Historically, fire played a crucial role in the distribution of natural communities, plants, animals, and insects across the Kentucky landscape. Due to decades of active fire suppression and fragmentation of the landscape, Kentucky's fire-dependent natural communities, along with the organisms that inhabit them, are at risk of disappearing. Prescribed fire provides the necessary disturbance in these grasslands and other natural communities to keep them from disappearing by reducing woody encroachment, controlling some invasive species, and stimulating the growth of native plants.

Over the past fiscal year, OKNP's prescribed fire crew conducted or assisted on ten prescribed burns on KHLCF properties for a total of 596 acres. Burn objectives were typically to maintain open habitat for rare species conservation within a glade, prairie, or barrens complex. The following information highlights a few of the burns.

Summary of prescribed burns on KHLCF sites in the fiscal year July 2024 to June 2025			
Site Name	County	Unit(s) Acres	Date of Rx Burn
Eastview Barrens State Nature Preserve	Hardin	13	8/22/2024
Bouteloua Barrens State Nature Preserve	Lincoln	120	10/9-10/10/2024
Rockcress Hills State Nature Preserve	Franklin	9	12/7/2024
Hazeldell Meadow Preserve	Pulaski	5	3/10/2025
Springhouse Barrens State Nature Preserve	Hardin	7	3/11/2025
Blue Licks State Park State Nature Preserve	Robertson	14	3/12 & 3/27/2025
William Whitley House State Historic Site	Lincoln	25	3/18/2025
Jim Scudder State Nature Preserve	Hardin	10	3/26/2025
Francis Palk State Nature Preserve	Pulaski	207	4/16/2025
Little South Fork State Natural Area	McCreary	186	4/17/2025





# KHLCF Highlights: Prescribed Fire

## Eastview Barrens State Nature Preserve



**County:** Hardin

**Property Size:** 119 acres

**Burn Unit Size:** 13 acres

**Site Significance:** Eastview Barrens SNP is an example of a high-quality sandstone and limestone barrens community. This mosaic of open grassland and woodland is an outstanding remnant of the original Big Barrens natural community. A focal grassland species at this site is the rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), which is the host plant for the rare rattlesnake master borer moth (*Papaipema eryngii*). This globally rare insect (G2S1) is known to occur from only two sites in Kentucky.

**Partners:** OKNP installed breaks, wrote the burn plan, and led the burn. The Nature Conservancy staff assisted to implement the burn.

## Blue Licks State Park State Nature Preserve



**County:** Robertson & Nicholas

**Property Size:** 54 acres

**Burn Unit Size:** 14 acres (2 units)

**Site Significance:** This site protects the federally endangered Short's goldenrod (*Solidago shortii*) and three other state-listed species: ague-weed (*Gentianella quinquefolia*), Great Plains ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes magnicamporum*), and cream gentian (*Gentiana alba*). These species depend upon disturbance in the landscape, which was historically created by the trampling and grazing of bison. Today, OKNP creates the necessary disturbance to maintain this natural community with prescribed fire

**Partners:** OKNP installed breaks, wrote the burn plan, and led the burn. Volunteers helped implement the burns. Kentucky State Parks helped block off hiking trails to maintain safety for the public.





# KHLCF Highlights: Prescribed Fire

## William Whitley House State Historic Site & Sportsman's Hill



**County:** Lincoln

**Property Size:** 90 acres

**Burn Unit Size:** 25 acres

**Site Significance:** HLCF purchased 80 acres next to the 10-acre William Whitley House State Historic Site, including Sportsman's Hill. Sportsman's Hill is the location of the first horse racecourse in Kentucky. Restoration of native trees and grasses to benefit songbirds and other wildlife species are managed on the tracts purchased by the HLCF.

**Partners:** KDFWR implemented this controlled burn as a 'Learn & Burn' to provide hands-on experience for private landowners with prescribed fire. They wrote the burn plan and worked with the onsite manager to install fire breaks.

## Jim Scudder State Nature Preserve



**County:** Hardin

**Property Size:** 230 acres

**Burn Unit Size:** 10 acres

**Site Significance:** This site protects one of the best remaining examples of limestone slope glades in Kentucky. These glades are dry, rocky openings on otherwise forested south-facing slopes. They provide habitat for several rare plant species, including agueweed (*Gentianella occidentalis*), barrens silky aster (*Symphotrichum pratense*), and white ladyslipper (*Cypripedium candidum*).

**Partners:** OKNP installed breaks, wrote the burn plan, and led the burn.





# KHLCF Highlights: Prescribed Fire

## Francis Palk State Nature Preserve



**County:** Pulaski

**Property Size:** 250 acres

**Burn Unit Size:** 207 acres

**Site Significance:** OKNP is using prescribed fire and other forest management treatments to restore short-leaf pine barrens, a rare open-canopied woodland of shortleaf pine and upland oaks with a diverse herbaceous understory of grasses and forbs. This preserve also contains a series of acid seep natural communities that contain over 70 species of plants, several of which are considered rare and

endangered. Fire can help maintain the barrens and keeps the edges of the wetlands open by reducing woody encroachment. A month following this burn, Francis Palk SNP was hit by an EF-4 tornado and site assessment is underway to determine future management plans.

**Partners:** OKNP installed breaks, wrote the burn plan, and led the burn. Kentucky Division of Forestry provided seven staff to help implement the burn.

