



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Theodore Roosevelt NWR Complex Office
12595 Mississippi Highway 149
Yazoo City, Mississippi
39194-9260



October 24, 2013

Dear Sir or Madam:

As part of our continuing effort to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), Southeast Region, is proposing to establish an urban national wildlife refuge along the Pearl River in Rankin County, Mississippi. If approved, the refuge's Approved Acquisition Boundary would contain approximately 5,000 acres. Land purchases for a national wildlife refuge can only be made within an approved acquisition boundary; which is entirely non-regulatory and non-restrictive, and it is our policy to acquire land only from willing sellers.

The establishment of the proposed refuge would enable the Service to protect a vital portion of the Pearl River bottomland riparian ecosystem in an urbanized area, as well as offer wildlife-dependent public use opportunities within the greater Jackson metropolitan area. Cultural and historical resources would be protected and environmental education and interpretive programs would allow the public to better understand and appreciate the important natural resources in this area.

We will hold a public scoping meeting for the purposes of: providing information about the project, answering questions, and soliciting comments, ideas, and suggestions. Please refer to the information enclosed with this letter for the meeting time and location. I hope you will be able to attend. Your comments will guide us through the next step in the planning process, which includes development of a draft land protection plan and environmental assessment. In order to be considered in the preparation of the draft document, your comments must be received no later than December 30, 2013. Comments or requests for further information may be submitted to: Mike Rich, Refuge Manager, Theodore Roosevelt Refuge Complex, 12595 Mississippi Highway 149, Yazoo City, Mississippi, 39194; or (662)836-3004 (phone); or ProposedMSRefugeLPP@fws.gov (e-mail). The planning team expects these draft documents will be completed for public review and comment in early 2014. For updates on the proposal, visit our website at <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/ProposedMSRefuge>.

Please let us know if you have any questions, concerns or comments.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Rich
Refuge Manager
Theodore Roosevelt NWR Complex