



## MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

# News Release

Contact: Lauren Thompson

Phone: 228-523-4053

12-35-LST

June 7, 2012

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### ***Early Morning Paddling Adventure in Bayou Heron***

BILOXI, Miss. – Here’s an opportunity for kayakers to take a vacation in their own home town. Join the staff of the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) as they celebrate South Coast Summer Fest with a *free* “Morning Paddling Adventure” in Bayou Heron on Saturday, June 16, from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Adults and children over age 6 are invited to participate in this lightly to moderately strenuous flat-water paddling adventure. Kayakers will leisurely paddle down the bayou to an American Indian midden (archeological site) and then paddle north up the bayou to see how the habitats change as the salinity of the water changes from salty to fresh.

Animals that may be observed during the adventure include egrets, ospreys, willets, clapper rails, raccoons, crabs and alligators (from a distance). Plants, both purposeful and wild, that will be seen include smooth cordgrass, black needlerush, salt marsh hay, saw grass, soapberry tree, toothache tree, yucca and pickleweed.

To join in the fun, meet at the Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center at 7:30 a.m. Saturday, June 16, to sign in for the event. The Center is located at 6005 Bayou Heron Road in Moss Point, Miss. Participants will get a little wet, so you may want to bring a change of clothes. It is also recommended that you bring waterproof boots, water, sunscreen, bug spray and a hat. Participants must wear closed-toe shoes. Kayaks may be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis or you can bring your own. For more information or to preregister for the event, please contact Jennifer Buchanan at 228-475-7047 or [jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov). Space is limited so sign up today. For more information on the South Coast Summer Fest please go to the event’s website at <http://southcoastsummerfest.com>.

The Grand Bay NERR is located in southeast Jackson County and includes wetlands and waterways from Bang’s Lake to the Alabama state line. A major goal of the Reserve is to provide for research coordination and dissemination of scientific data to the community and local decision-makers to provide sound information on which to base management decisions.

The 18,000-acre reserve is home to several rare or endangered plant and animal species and serves as an essential nursery habitat for numerous important commercial and recreational fish species. The Reserve is managed through state-federal partnership between the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and its local partners—Mississippi Secretary of State’s Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mississippi State University and the Nature Conservancy—and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. For more information on the Reserve and directions to the Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center please go to their website at [www.grandbaynerr.org](http://www.grandbaynerr.org).

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent

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uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at [www.dmr.ms.gov](http://www.dmr.ms.gov).

**PHOTO CREDIT: Photo Courtesy of MDMR/Grand Bay NERR**



**PHOTO CAPTION: Kayakers enjoy a coastal marsh paddling adventure.**

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