

LOWER MISSISSIPPI VALLEY JOINT VENTURE

Acquisition Funds Approved by MBCC - Upper Ouachita & Trinity River NWRs -

The Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture is a self-directed, non-regulatory private, state, federal conservation partnership that exists for the purpose of sustaining bird populations and their habitats within the Lower Mississippi Valley region through implementing and communicating the goals and objectives of relevant national and international bird conservation plans.



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On 5 June, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC) approved the addition of 3,300 acres to the Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge (Texas - 81 acres fee-title), and Upper Ouachita National Wildlife Refuge (Louisiana - 3,219 acres fee-title), both in the LMVJV's West Gulf Coastal Plain/Ouachitas Bird conservation Region. Acquisitions rely upon willing sellers. The funding for these acquisitions comes from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, commonly understood as the account where Duck Stamp funds are deposited.

The property at Trinity River NWR, located about 45 miles northeast of Houston, provides important wetland habitat (seasonally flooded forest) for migrating, wintering, and breeding waterfowl, as well as breeding colonial waterbirds, and was approved by Texas representatives.

The Upper Ouachita NWR acquisition protects bottomland hardwood forest habitat for migratory waterfowl and other birds. It is part of the final large inholding east of the Ouachita River, a high priority for acquisition since the founding of the refuge in 1978. The state of Louisiana currently objects to the Upper Ouachita purchase, in part due to limitations on hunting on refuge lands and perceived current Federal budget constraints. The Upper Ouachita NWR acquisition was approved by the MBCC, despite Louisiana's objections. However, it was approved on the condition that Louisiana and the Service resolve disagreements over a hunt plan for this refuge.

