



The mission of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality is to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of present and future generations of Mississippians by conserving and improving our environment and fostering wise economic growth through focused research and responsible regulation.

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Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Environmental News

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Draft Restoration Plan Available for Comment

The Mississippi Trustee Implementation Group (MS TIG) has released the Mississippi Trustee Implementation Group Draft 2016-2017 Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment for public review and comment. Comments will be accepted until February 10, 2017.

The plan proposes selecting three Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) restoration projects for implementation and considers the environmental impacts of the proposed restoration alternatives and projects:

- The Grand Bay Land Acquisition and Habitat Management proposed project alternatives consider acquisition, habitat management and a preferred alternative which is the combination of acquisition and habitat management within the Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR), and Grand Bay Savanna Coastal Preserve boundaries in Jackson County.
- The Graveline Bay Land Acquisition and Management proposed project alternative would include acquisition, preservation and habitat management on parcels near publicly-owned lands in the Graveline Bay Coastal Preserve also in Jackson County.
- The Upper Pascagoula River Nutrient Reduction proposed project alternatives include development of and implementation of conservation plans to reduce nutrient and sediment contributions in the river's watershed.

For more information and how to comment, visit: <http://www.restore.ms/draft-restoration-plan/>.



Beach Outfalls Challenge Launched

The goal of the Beach Outfalls Challenge is to enhance Mississippi's ability to restore and maintain ecological integrity of priority bays and estuaries by providing measurable improvements to water quality and reducing significant sources of degradation. The Challenge will serve as a catalyst for innovative thinking and revolutionary improvements that can dramatically improve the quality of the water emptying into the Gulf of Mexico.

Members of the public, companies, students and other entities are invited to submit their ideas to improve the design of the beach outfalls. A panel of judges will review all submitted ideas and will name three winners who will have their solution designed and implemented in a pilot-scale demonstrations along the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Registration for the Beach Outfalls Challenge began January 9, and is scheduled to remain open until March 15, 2017. To review the rules or to register, go to <http://beachoutfallschallenge.org/registration/>.

For any questions, please visit www.beachoutfallschallenge.org or email the Beach Outfalls Challenge Administrators at info@beachoutfallschallenge.org.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

January 9, 2017
Registration Opens!

March 15, 2017
Registration Deadline.

March 31, 2017
All Design Submissions are due from all approved Registered Competitors by 5:00 PM CST.

April 1-7, 2017
Design Submissions will be reviewed and a Compliance Cull will be completed by MDEQ.

April 8 - 20, 2017
Compliant Design Submissions will be reviewed by the Judging Panel and up to 12 Semi-Finalists will be announced.

May 5, 2017
The Semi-Finalists must prepare a video for public voting by 5:00 PM CST.

May 8 - June 2, 2017
The public voting period will be open.

June 8, 2017
Announcement of up to six Finalists.

Late June 2017
Finalists present at the Beach Outfalls Challenge Showcase! Exact date TBD.

Staff Change

Chad LaFontaine has been appointed Air Division Chief in the Office of Pollution Control of MDEQ. He will replace Dallas Baker who is retiring from the agency on January 31.



LaFontaine has more than 22 years of experience as an environmental engineer with MDEQ. Most recently, he has served as Interim Manager of the Chemical Manufacturing Branch in the Environmental Permits Division and Manager of the Greenhouse Gas and Energy Branch of the Air Division. His service to MDEQ includes work in the areas of compliance and enforcement, air permitting, regulation development, and emergency response.

"I am honored and blessed to serve MDEQ as Chief of the Air Division, and I look forward to working with a talented professional staff in continuing to protect Mississippi's air resource," said LaFontaine.

Chad graduated from Mississippi State University with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering and is a licensed Professional Environmental Engineer. Chad is a native of Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, and he and his wife, Kim, live in Brandon with their three children: Drew, Bailey, and Jacob.



Toyota Community Service Project

MDEQ's enHance program recognizes environmental leaders in the state that make a commitment to address and achieve ongoing environmental improvements. This newsletter will highlight in the next several issues projects by enHance members.



Toyota Mississippi has been a member of enHance since 2014 at the Leader level. One of its enHance community projects is having a positive impact on North Mississippi and the ability for residents and visitors to enjoy the natural resources of Tombigbee State Park.

Toyota Mississippi is investing five years and \$250,000 in a partnership with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks and Tombigbee State Park. In addition to the funds donated by the company, more than 900 Toyota Mississippi employees have contributed over 5,500 volunteer hours. Volunteer projects include re-roofing and a facelift to the lodge, complete renovation of a cabin, landscaping, painting, upgrades to the playground, installing a regulation size T-ball field, and building a bridge that reopened parts of Tree Trunk Trail that had been closed for nearly a decade. Since Toyota began work at the park in 2015, the park's revenue has increased by 30 percent.

To learn more about enHance, visit www.enhance.ms, more info about Toyota is available at www.toyotanewsroom.com, and to find out about Tombigbee State Park go to <http://www.mdwfp.com/parks-destinations/ms-state-parks/tombigbee.aspx>.



Rankin County School District has ENERGY STARS!

A campaign by the Rankin County School District to reduce energy consumption in its buildings has earned 25 of its 28 schools the prestigious ENERGY STAR designation for superior energy performance. From 2015 to 2016, the district reduced energy costs by approximately \$402,623, and a total of \$3.5 million has been saved since the Energy Management Program started in 2006. Rusty Ponder serves as the Energy Management Coordinator for the district and has led this initiative.

MDEQ staff helped four schools in the district attain ENERGY STAR status beginning in 2010 by collecting data and submitting the initial information. Nissan, a member of MDEQ's enHance program, used this opportunity to become a mentor for the district's efforts as an enHance community service project. Brett Rasmussen, Utilities Engineer with Nissan, has helped the district with the certification process.

An ENERGY STAR facility must meet strict performance standards set by EPA, use less energy, and cause fewer greenhouse gas emissions than its peers. To qualify for the designation, a building must score in the top 25 percent based on EPA's National Energy Performance Rating System and be certified by a Professional Engineer.



Photo taken January 11 at the Rankin County School District board meeting recognizing the schools attaining ENERGY STAR status.

Solid Waste Management Facility Annual Reporting

Due February 28

The annual report on solid waste management or disposal activities conducted during Calendar Year 2016 by owners and operators of all solid waste management facilities is due to the agency no later than February 28, 2017. These reporting requirements apply to landfills, rubbish sites, transfer stations, land application sites, processing facilities, composting facilities, and beneficial use determinations.

Facility specific reporting notifications and forms will be available in late January. Electronic forms will be available at www.deq.state.ms.us/solidwaste. To access the forms, click on “Solid Waste Reporting” on the left hand side of the page. Hard copies of these forms will also be mailed to all facility owners and operators in late January.

Operators are asked to submit two copies of the completed Annual Reporting Form and the supporting information. Forms should be completed and submitted for all solid waste facilities with a valid solid waste management permit or authorization, even if the facility was inactive during the calendar year. For questions or for more information, contact Trent Jones at 601-961-5726 or tjones@mdeq.ms.gov.





#FossilFriday

Since National Fossil Day on October 12, MDEQ and its Office of Geology have been posting a Mississippi fossil every Friday on Facebook and Twitter with the hashtag #FossilFriday. The agency recently launched an Instagram account and will post the same fossil photos there. The hashtag is used across social media to highlight interesting fossils.

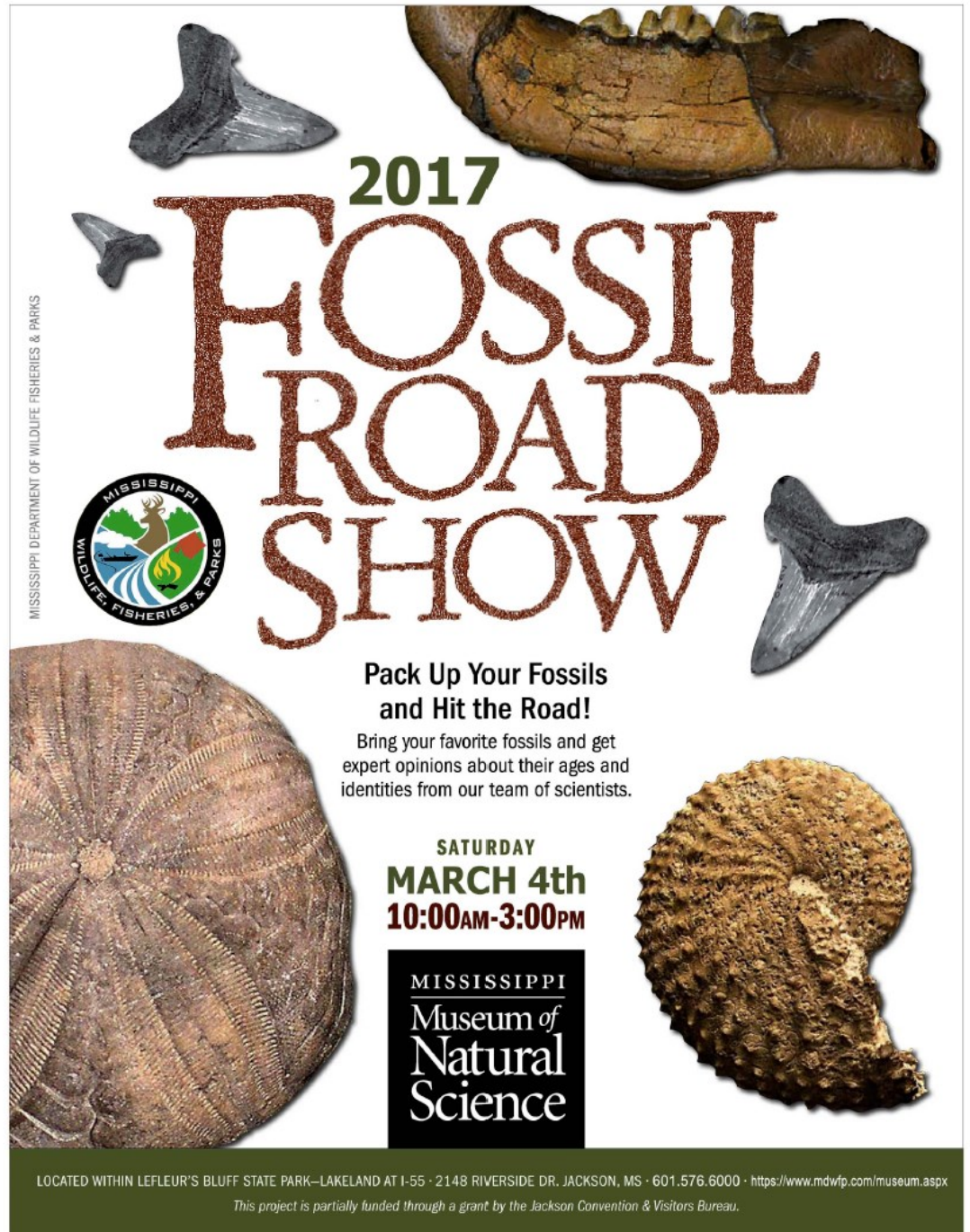
The State of Mississippi, from border to border, contains intriguing and significant fossils that draw researchers from around the country and the world.

Follow along each Friday on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#)!



Ice age Mastodon (*Mammut americanum*) from the ancestral Mississippi River Pre-loess terrace gravels near Bovina in Warren County. This photo was posted on November 11 for #FossilFriday.

MDEQ Geologists will be participating as experts to identify your finds!



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & PARKS

MISSISSIPPI
WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, & PARKS

2017 FOSSIL ROAD SHOW

**Pack Up Your Fossils
and Hit the Road!**

Bring your favorite fossils and get expert opinions about their ages and identities from our team of scientists.

SATURDAY
MARCH 4th
10:00AM-3:00PM

MISSISSIPPI
Museum of
Natural
Science

LOCATED WITHIN LEFLEUR'S BLUFF STATE PARK—LAKELAND AT I-55 • 2148 RIVERSIDE DR. JACKSON, MS • 601.576.6000 • <https://www.mdwfp.com/museum.aspx>

This project is partially funded through a grant by the Jackson Convention & Visitors Bureau.



MDEQ Environmental Action Links

- Draft permits currently at public notice, <http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/publicnotice.aspx>
- Environmental Permits Division Scheduled Public Hearings, <http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/publichearingheader.aspx>
- Geology Permit Application Public Notice, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/geology_public_notice.aspx
- Permits and certificates issued in the last 90 days, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_permits.aspx
- General permit coverages issued in the last 90 days, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_gnp_issued.aspx
- Notices of Intent for coverage under a Statewide General permit received by the Environmental Permits Division, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_gnp_notice.aspx
- List of the 401 Water Quality Certifications currently at public notice, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_wqc_public_notice.aspx
- List of the compliance inspections recently conducted, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_eced_tasks.aspx
- Orders issued by the Mississippi Commission on Environmental Quality, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_orders.aspx

Connect with MDEQ



MDEQ Social Media



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Picture of the Month

Wild Pea flower in Jack-
son County.

Taken by James Starnes,
Office of Geology.

