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Protecting land for people, for wildlife, forever.



## **PRESERVING AN IMPORTANT INDIGENOUS LANDSCAPE IN MACON, GEORGIA**

With partners including the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, OSI helped expand protection for some of the most significant prehistoric Indigenous mounds in North America. Located within city limits of Macon, Georgia, a 951-acre addition to Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park saved this heritage site from incompatible industrial development. The expansion also sets the stage to expand a unique urban park that tells the story of 17,000 years of continuous human habitation of the Ocmulgee basin. "This additional property includes some of our most important unprotected ancestral lands... We have never forgotten where we came from and the lands around the Ocmulgee River will always and forever be our ancestral homeland, a place we consider sacred and a place with rich cultural history," said David Hill, principal chief of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

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## PARTNERSHIP ENHANCES LOCAL TRAILS

Through a partnership with Ulster County in New York’s Hudson Valley, three rail trails are slated for upgrades. OSI was awarded \$2.1 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds to improve rail trail infrastructure. Projects will provide enhanced access to scenic views along the Rondout Creek and Shawangunk Ridge and improve accessibility.

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## CONNECTING A TENNESSEE TRAIL

The conservation of Piney River Bluffs, a 358-acre property in central Tennessee, completes protection of a remote, 11-mile section of the Cumberland Trail. The forested property provides biodiverse habitat in the face of climate change and is the first conservation victory in the Southeast of OSI’s Appalachian Landscapes Protection Fund.

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## FOREST PROTECTION IN MAINE

A recent project in western Maine marks the first funded through OSI’s Appalachian Landscape Protection Fund in the Northern Appalachian focus area. The 23,000-acre project connects hundreds of thousands of acres of conserved lands across the Maine-New Hampshire border, securing carbon and providing a refuge for wildlife in the face of climate change.

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## COASTAL BUFFERS AND WETLANDS

Through the protection of Pappas Island off the coast of South Carolina, OSI has secured permanent habitat for hundreds of sensitive coastal species. An expanse of barrier islands, marshes, maritime forests, and waterways, the land will be added to the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, where it also serves as a valuable coastal buffer against intensifying storms and rising seas.

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## OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG LEADERS

Through March 31, graduate and undergraduate students in New York's Hudson Valley are invited to apply for an OSI McHenry Award. Established in 2007, the awards provide funding for students and non-profits interested in projects that promote environmental conservation, environmental justice, historic preservation, the arts, and tourism. Apply now!

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## SOUTH CAROLINA PRESERVE EXPANDS

Less than an hour drive from fast-growing Myrtle Beach, OSI has protected more than 400 acres of land to protect and expand South Carolina's Cartwheel Bay Heritage Preserve. The expansion provides habitat and supports restoration of several rare, threatened, or endangered species, including Carolina bog asphodel and Florida scrub sunrose, while expanding local recreational opportunities.

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