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Protecting land for people, for wildlife, forever.



OSI CELEBRATES CREATION OF NATION'S NEWEST WILDLIFE REFUGE

On a sunny October day, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Martha Williams were enthusiastically welcomed to Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau by leaders from the Open Space Institute and other local conservation organizations to celebrate the official opening of Tennessee's Paint Rock River National Wildlife Refuge—the nation's newest wildlife refuge. The event marked the culmination of a decades-long effort among area leaders to protect the land that would ultimately become the refuge. OSI and its Appalachian Landscapes Protection Fund played a major role in the creation of the new refuge, which establishes

an important link between conserved lands, protects wildlife, and provides critical safeguards for the Paint Rock River’s watershed.

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SECTION OF EXPANSIVE RAILBED SECURED

The Open Space Institute recently celebrated another major victory in its “Growing Greenways” plan to connect more than 250 miles of trails across New York’s Orange, Sullivan, and Ulster counties. With the acquisition of one of the longest remaining privately-owned stretches of the O&W rail corridor, OSI is creating new recreational access to the Shawangunk Ridge State Forest.

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5,000 ACRES OF MAINE FOREST PROTECTED

The Open Space Institute’s funding was instrumental in the recent protection of more than 5,000 acres in Northern Maine. Thanks to its varied elevations, vast forests, headwater streams, deep lakes, and extensive wetlands, the Kennebago Headwaters region is a haven for fish and migratory birds and supports wildlife resilience in the face of climate change.

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ADVANCING THE SHAWANGUNK-TO-CATSKILL CONNECTION

The Open Space Institute continues to build momentum toward the creation of a protected corridor linking New York's Catskill Park and Shawangunk Ridge with the acquisition of more than 200 acres in the Town of Wawarsing. OSI's protection of the property supports the storage of significant amounts of carbon and will safeguard wildlife habitat, as well as helping to maintain local water quality and slow the swell of floodwaters during heavy rain events.

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CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THE WACCAMAW REFUGE

South Carolina's Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge (WNWR) comprises 37,000 acres showcasing the region's natural diversity and complex cultural history. The Open Space Institute has been invaluable to the WNWR's expansion, having completed three recent transactions adding to the Refuge and protecting surrounding lands. The WNWR's 25th anniversary celebration was recently held at Hasty Point, a Refuge gateway protected by OSI and partners in 2020.

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OSI EXPANDS SOUTH CAROLINA'S CONGAREE CREEK PRESERVE

The Congaree Creek Heritage Preserve, located minutes from Columbia, South Carolina, has been doubled in size by the Open Space Institute and partners. Now forever saved, the lush 641-acre Taylor tract addition protects wildlife habitat and historical sites and expands recreational opportunities in an area with limited access to nature.

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LAND FOR INDIGENOUS HERITAGE, WILDLIFE MIGRATION

Support from the Open Space Institute's Transborder Fund, which focuses on wildlife migration between the United States and Canada, helped permanently protect 19-acre White Island off the coast of Maine. Conservation of the island secures an important migratory bird stopover and creates a cooperative stewardship structure that will integrate traditional Indigenous land uses.

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