

The Mississippi River Trust (MRT) works with private and government partners to protect, restore and enhance bottomland forests and other wetland and riverine habitats, focusing on the active floodplain of the Lower Mississippi River.

Through our Lower Mississippi River Batture Reforestation Project, we are promoting more sustainable land and water management in the 2-million-acre active floodplain, also known as the “batture,” of the lower river. Working with the [Lower Mississippi River Conservation Committee](#) (LMRCC), [Bear Trust International](#) the [Natural Resources Conservation Service](#) we have a goal of enrolling 20,000 acres cleared land in Wetland Reserve Easements by 2020. Land already enrolled is being replanted in bottomland hardwood forests to protect water quality, expand wildlife habitat, improve flood control and provide other benefits.

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The MRT holds conservation easements on 49,873 acres of private land. Conservation easements are one of the newest and most owner-friendly tools available for private landowners wishing to preserve or promote a certain conservation ethic on his or her property. In donating a conservation easement to the MRT, a landowner agrees to restrict certain property uses, such as subdividing land for residential or commercial development. In return, a landowner typically receives certain tax benefits.

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The MRT supports in-stream restoration along the Lower Mississippi River. The MRT, LMRCC and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are working to restore and maintain flows in the river’s side channels, which are important habitat for fish, birds and other wildlife, including the endangered pallid sturgeon, interior least tern and fat pocketbook mussel. So far, more than 82 miles of side channel habitat have been rehabilitated, and more work is underway.