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Georgia-Pacific's Wauna Mill Donates 682 Acres to The Nature Conservancy

CLATSKANIE, ORE. – The Nature Conservancy today announced a 682-acre land donation from Georgia-Pacific to The Nature Conservancy.

The land is part of the Blind Slough Swamp Preserve located near Brownsmead, known as one of the best examples remaining in Oregon of a Sitka spruce swamp. This coastal habitat was once prevalent from Alaska to Oregon but has declined significantly in Oregon and Washington. The preserve is bordered on three sides by Columbia River tidal sloughs and channels, and it adjoins the Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge.

Some Sitka spruce on the preserve stood tall when Lewis and Clark paddled by, making them more than 400 years old. The preserve provides important habitat for coho and fall Chinook salmon and winter steelhead, which use these lower Columbia sloughs for feeding and rearing. The preserve hosts an abundance of birds and other wildlife, including nesting bald eagles.

The property was originally owned by Crown Zellerbach, a previous owner of the Wauna Mill, and was used to store log rafts. In 1992, the subsequent owner, James River Corporation, which no longer stored logs there, donated a conservation easement on the land to The Nature Conservancy to create the Blind Slough Swamp Preserve. Georgia-Pacific purchased the Wauna Mill in 2000.

The preserve is open to the public and frequently enjoyed by canoe and kayak paddlers. The Conservancy leads volunteer teams from the community in removing invasive plants on the property including purple loosestrife, English ivy, yellow flag iris, bamboo and reed canary grass.

In 2005 the Wauna Mill donated \$15,000 to The Nature Conservancy to assist with invasive species monitoring and removal at the preserve. The Conservancy also used the donation to create an early detection monitoring plan for Chinese mitten crab, New Zealand mud snails, zebra mussels, and yellow floating heart – invasive species on watch lists that, if allowed to spread, could have devastating impacts on Columbia River habitats.

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“We’ve had a long relationship with The Nature Conservancy,” notes Georgia-Pacific Public Affairs Manager Kristi Ward. Mill records show that as far back as the 1970s, The Nature Conservancy had some involvement with assessing the ecosystem around the property. “We’ve been impressed with how The Nature Conservancy has been actively managing the property and it makes sense for Georgia-Pacific to donate the property outright to them.” Georgia-Pacific has worked with The Nature Conservancy on a number of other projects across the country.

“We’re very thankful to Georgia-Pacific for this latest example of its support for the conservation of rare and important habitats,” said Russell Hoeflich, Oregon director for The Nature Conservancy. “Although they will no longer own land at Blind Slough Swamp, we know this is a place that Wauna Mill employees care about, and we look forward to working with them to ensure that this special place stays healthy and protected for future generations.”

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Located in Clatsop County, Georgia-Pacific’s **Wauna Mill** has been providing careers in the community since 1965. Employees produce nationally branded consumer products that you use in your homes every day. The Wauna Mill is a proud manufacturer of Quilted Northern® and Angel Soft® bath tissue, Brawny® and Sparkle® towels, Vanity Fair® and Dixie® napkins, and other commercial brands.

Headquartered at Atlanta, Georgia-Pacific is one of the world’s leading manufacturers and marketers of building products, tissue, packaging, paper, cellulose and related chemicals. The company employs more than 40,000 people at more than 300 locations in North America, South America and Europe. Georgia-Pacific creates long-term value by using resources efficiently to provide innovative products and solutions that meet the needs of customers and society, while operating in a manner that is environmentally and socially responsible and economically sound. The familiar consumer tissue brands of Georgia-Pacific Consumer Products LP include Quilted Northern®, Angel Soft®, Brawny®, Sparkle®, Soft 'n Gentle®, Mardi Gras®, So-Dri® and Vanity Fair®. For more information, visit www.gp.com.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. To date, the Conservancy and its one million members have been responsible for the protection of more than 18 million acres in the United States and have helped preserve more than 117 million acres in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific. In Oregon, the Conservancy owns or manages 47 nature preserves and has helped protect over 500,000 acres of important habitats, with support from 21,000 member households. Visit us on the Web at nature.org/oregon.