

# SunHerald

SOUTH MISSISSIPPI'S NEWSPAPER

75¢ VOL. 126, NO. 172

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2010

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## INSIDE

TOP STORY, 2A

### SOUTH MISSISSIPPI GROWING SLOWLY

Census shows growth in region, but Hancock and Harrison still below pre-Katrina population

MISSISSIPPI, 6A

### COURT RULES FOR GAY STUDENT

But judge won't force school to hold prom that she wanted to attend with her girlfriend

LOCAL, 2A

### DRUGS INVOLVED IN ATV DEATH

Sheriff says prescription pain pills, speed were factors; vows to crack down on ATVs on roads

SPORTS, 4B



### RED REBS, IRISH NAME COACHES

Harrison Central hires M.C. Miller as its football coach and St. Patrick chooses Joe Rocconi of Rossville, Tenn.

SPORTS, 1B



### REBELS FIND 20T MAGIC IN NIT

Murphy Holloway's 3-point play in double overtime lifted Ole Miss to the NIT semifinals

SOUND OFF OF THE DAY

**"Bravo! What an awesome job the Long Beach High School Choral Department did this past weekend with their performances of 'Les Miserables.' What a wonderful performance I saw on Saturday night. You all truly amazed the audience with your talent."**

More Sound Offs, 2A

INDEX

- Annie, Abby..... 10C
- Business ..... 8B
- The Buzz ..... 8C
- Classified..... 1D
- Comics ..... 11C
- Crosswords..... 6D
- Horoscopes ..... 10C
- Obituaries ..... 4A
- Opinion ..... 2C
- Sports ..... 1B
- TV ..... 10C
- World ..... 1C
- Your Life ..... 12C

CORRECTIONS

■ Biloxi Councilman Tom Wall wants the former Edgewater Golf Course changed to the original zoning of R-10. The zoning designation was incorrect on 2A Tuesday.

WEATHER, 6C

High 72  
Low 55  
Sunny, mild



## Clever endeavors

Does Beano really help with gas after a meal of beans? Is a dog's mouth really cleaner than a human's? Budding scientists seek the answers, 2A

## Shooting prompts proposals to make trails safe

Fine for hunting from roads would be increased, too

By MICHAEL NEWSOM  
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Lawmakers are trying to work out differences over a bill that prohibits shooting across recreational trails in wildlife management areas and increases fines for hunting from roadways.

Senate Bill 2857 is in response to the shooting of two horseback riders in DeSoto National Forest last year, legislators said.

The bill would prohibit shooting across trails in state wildlife management areas and would require anyone using the trails to wear orange clothing. It also would increase fines for hunting from the road and would set a fine for anyone who shoots and causes damage to a house or animals there. The bill contains exceptions for firing in self-defense and for law enforcement officers.

Sen. Tommy Gollott, R-Biloxi, authored the bill and said lawmakers will meet about it today. He expects Senate and House conferees to come to an agreement before a Monday deadline.

"I think it's going to pass," he said. "I'm doing everything I can to make sure we protect those people doing the horseback riding and whatever else on those trails."

One version would create penalties of up to \$1,000, up to six months in jail and forfeiture of hunting licenses for one year. Another specifies up to 12 months of jail time instead.

Gollott said he received many calls from constituents for greater protection for people using trails in wildlife management areas.

Last November, a mother and her 10-year-old child were shot while horseback riding in DeSoto National Forest, a 500,000-acre area that sprawls over five South Mississippi counties.

The mother was treated and released after being shot in the leg, but the child went to intensive care with a punctured lung and other injuries. A deer hunter was ticketed for hunting from a public road, which currently carries a fine of

# Protected land

Mayor says MDOT's plan to purchase, set aside 1,638 acres could be devastating for tax base

By ANITA LEE  
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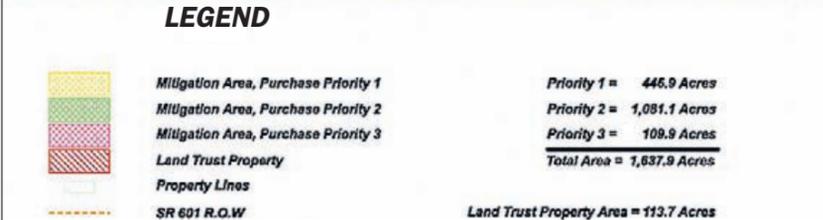
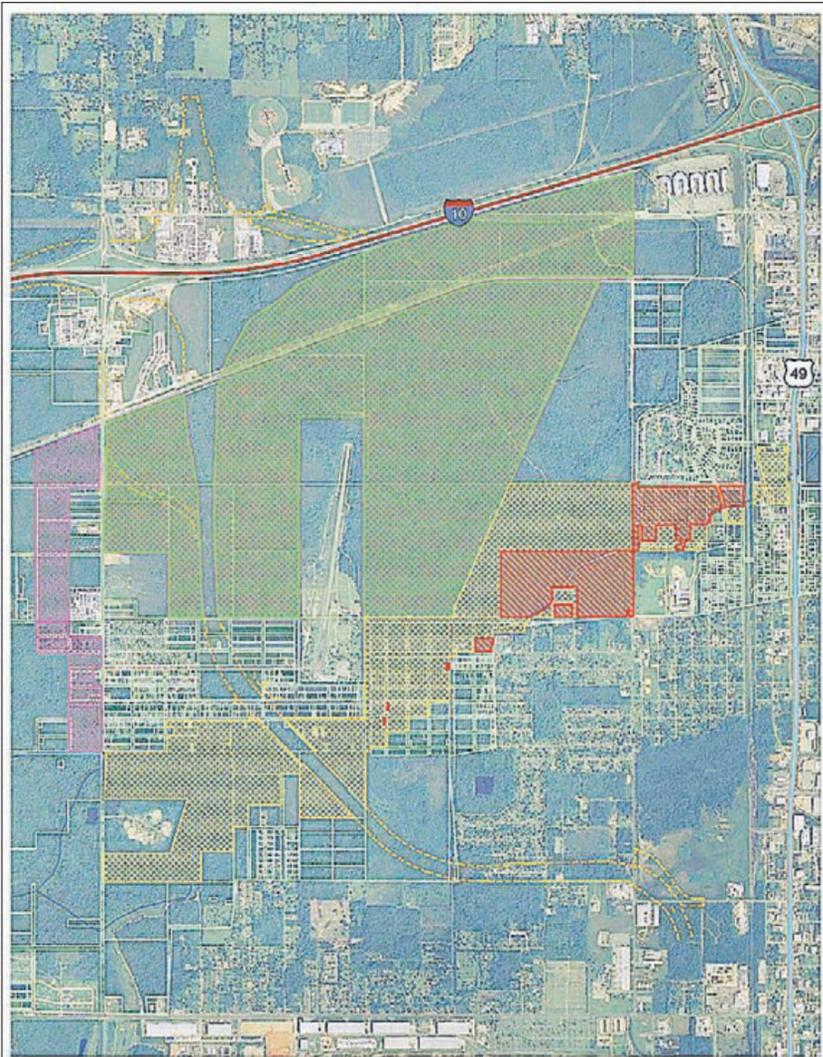
**GULFPORT** — Court challenges are pending, but the Mississippi Department of Transportation is moving ahead with plans to buy 1,638 acres south of Interstate 10 and turn it over to state and nonprofit groups for permanent conservation.

The environmental agreement MDOT reached with federal agencies would forever end proposals for commercial development just south of I-10 between U.S. 49 and Canal Road. The agreement also would allow MDOT to go forward with construction of a state port connector road from I-10 to U.S. 90, a route crucial to the port's plans for expansion.

The road would destroy 162 acres of wetlands. In exchange, MDOT plans to buy and place 1,638 acres in perpetual conservation easements. The state Department of Marine Resources would own the land, but about 447 acres on both sides of Turkey Creek would be managed by a nonprofit, the Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain.

"It's a piece of property we've been trying to get into the public sector for quite a few years and we're glad it's finally going to happen," said Bill Walker, DMR executive director. "There are issues along Turkey Creek with flooding and drainage. It's important to get that out of the private sector so it won't be developed in the future, which would add to the flooding and drainage problems in that area."

The Turkey Creek watershed stretches from Gulfport Lake into Long Beach.



While Turkey Creek advocates are thrilled with the conservation easement, Gulfport Mayor George Schloegel said there has to be a less extreme solution.

"For the city of Gulfport to have over 1,000 acres taken off its tax rolls in perpetuity would be devastating to say the least," Schloegel said. "When we are fight-

ing budget constraints each day, to lose that kind of revenue that is badly needed to pay our employees' sal-

LAND TO 11A



**WEB EXTRA** | Find a copy of the agreement to preserve the land at sunherald.com

## New Mississippi 15 route alternatives unveiled

Two plans follow existing highways

By KAREN NELSON  
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**LATIMER** — The state Department of Transportation is throwing two more alternatives into the mix of possible routes for a new Mississippi 15.

Those unveiled Tuesday follow existing highways almost exclusively. And a route through Latimer that faced opposition has been modified to travel about 3 miles north through De Soto National Forest land rather than through neighborhoods.

The new alternatives met with more approval than in meetings past, when people said they felt as if they were fighting to save their community from being cut in two.

Lori Massey, who helped



AMANDA MCCOY/SUN HERALD

Jared Lipskoch, left, and David Ferrell, right, of Solid Civil Design at a public forum Tuesday at Latimer Community Center show James Tanner, who lives in Harrison County off Mississippi 15, where his property is in relation to new highway plans.

lead that fight last fall, said Tuesday the group formed in Latimer called "Keep 15 in Its Rightful Place" pre-

fers a route that uses existing roads.

"We're happy if they use taxpayers' dollars in a com-

mon-sense way and not take people's homes and busi-

ROUTE TO 11A

**BILL TO 11A**  
**Web extra**  
Read Senate Bill 2857 and its amendments at sunherald.com