

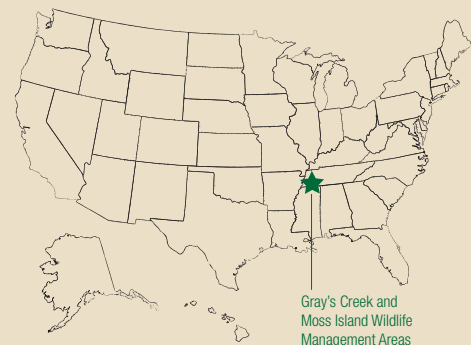


Gray's Creek and Moss Island Wildlife Management Areas

DEFORESTATION FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION has resulted in massive losses of critical fish and wildlife on bottomland sites across West Tennessee. This project initiates reforestation on approximately 600 acres a year and has been very successful. Converting row crop fields back to forest in an area heavily dominated by row crop cover is the overall goal of the project.

This effort is described as a bottomland hardwood reforestation project using high quality oak seedlings from local seed sources. Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has been acquiring bottomland hardwood sites for reforestation since 2000. This artificial regeneration effort is needed on Tennessee's WMAs to decrease soil erosion, enhance soil quality, improve water quality, improve air quality and improve wildlife habitat.

Tree planting was completed at the end of March. Two project crews consisting of 28 planters made quick work of reforesting wildlife management acres. Flooding issues from the snow and ice in late winter made the planting interesting, but the crews were able to plant all of the trees in just a few days. Soon after the hand plantings, smaller crews began machine planting. Everyone involved did a great job with planting, and the East Tennessee State Nursery once again provided very hearty seedlings. The planting sites were extremely muddy, but it should help boost seedling survival.



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