

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Atlanta Audubon Society Receives Grant to Restore Bird-Friendly Habitat at Land O' Lakes Unit of Blue Heron Nature Preserve**

**(Atlanta) November 1, 2017**— Atlanta Audubon Society has received a \$20,000 grant plus \$20,000 in matching funds to restore bird-friendly habitat at the Land O' Lakes unit of Blue Heron Nature Preserve in Fulton County. The project is funded by Southern Company, the parent company of Georgia Power, and the U.S. Forest Service through a 2017 Five Star and Urban Waters grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). (<http://www.southerncompany.com/what-doing/corporate-responsibility/economic-stewardship/restoration.cshtml> or <http://www.nfwf.org> .)

Atlanta Audubon and partners will remove invasive plant species in order to re-establish native, bird-friendly plant species and conduct avian surveys at the Land O' Lakes. The goal is to create bird-friendly, native, urban habitat that provides quality foraging, nesting, and stopover habitat. A total of three acres will be restored along Mill Creek, part of the Peachtree Creek watershed. This project will complement and enhance our 2015 project at the Emma Wetlands unit of the Preserve and follow Blue Heron's trail building project to connect the units of the preserve. The educational outreach events and conservation workdays will engage 50 volunteers and 300 participants. Partners include Atlanta Audubon, Blue Heron Nature Preserve, Amphibian Foundation, Rock Spring Restoration, Georgia Native Plant Society, Greening Youth Foundation, and National Audubon Society. Project work will begin in October 2017.

"Atlanta Audubon Society is very excited to receive another grant through the Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program to restore bird habitat at the Land O' Lakes property at Blue Heron Nature Preserve," says Nikki Belmonte, Atlanta Audubon Society Executive Director. "In recent years, Atlanta Audubon has received similar grants to restore habitat at Emma Wetlands at Blue Heron Nature Preserve and at the Confluence of the north and south forks of Peachtree Creek in Fulton County. An additional grant in 2016 allowed us to restore habitat in Dekalb County at Deepdene Park in Atlanta, part of the larger Olmsted Linear Park system, and at Friendship Forest, a municipal green space in Clarkston. By working with our various partners, we are able to increase the impact that we have on each site and improve the habitat for birds and other wildlife."

Support for the 2017 Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program is provided by the Wildlife Habitat Council, and major funding by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, FedEx and Southern Company.

Since 1999, the Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program has supported more than 885 projects, with more than \$10.7 million in federal funds, \$9.3 million in private and corporate contributions, and \$72.2 million in matching funds at the local level.

The 2017 grant winners were selected from a highly competitive pool of more than 250 applications. The projects that earned grant awards involve a high level of partnership between local government agencies, elected officials, community groups, businesses, schools and environmental organizations.

A full list of 2017 projects is available at <http://www.nfwf.org/fivestar/Documents/2017grantslate.pdf>.

*Atlanta Audubon Society is committed to building places where birds and people thrive.*

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**Media Note:** Photos: A MS Word version of this press release and a few photos from the Land O' Lakes Unit of Blue Heron Nature Preserve may be downloaded from the Atlanta Audubon DropBox folder at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/y3l9s32oktcs94e/AADL4n1VHbxzzwGhN455VJ-fa?dl=0>.