

# Natural Resource ENTERPRISES

www.naturalresources.msstate.edu

Issue 3, No. 3

## Hunting Lease Values Sixteenth Section Lands in Mississippi

In a recent study completed and led by Dr. Ian A. Munn of the MSU Department of Forestry, hunting lease values and the factors that influence lease prices on Sixteenth Section Lands in Mississippi were determined. Sixteenth Section Lands within Mississippi townships are owned by the state and reserved for public school districts to use in support of education. The Board of Directors of each school district determines how these lands will be utilized. Revenue is generated from these lands through the sale of timber and from leases, including oil, gas, mineral, farming, and hunting. Hunting leases are awarded to the highest bidder in a sealed bid auction, are allowed only on forested lands, and are advertised in local newspapers for two consecutive weeks prior to the lease auction. Due to this competition bidding process, prices for these leases are a more accurate indication of true lease value of hunting lands.

The average annual lease price for these lands was \$2,959.73 or \$8.73 per acre and the average lease size was 349 acres. Across the state, pine stands comprised 35% of the sections containing leases, followed by hardwoods on 29%, mixed pine hardwoods on 10%, regenerated pines on 9%, and open land and water accounted for the remainder of coverages. Of the 715 leases included in the study, 80% were of a five year length, 13% were of one to four year duration, and the remaining leases were of six or more year length.

Factors that increased lease prices were quality of habitat and game found on leased lands as well as the length in years and tract size of leases. The presence of hardwood forests increased prices paid for leased tracts while pine and regenerated lands



David J. Moorhead, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org

decreased these values. Hardwoods provide superior habitat for game and nongame wildlife in terms of food and cover and thereby, increased lease prices paid. Additionally, hunters paid significantly higher for hunting leases as the quality of game increased supported by hardwood forests producing a higher quality deer herd. Finally, leases of shorter duration, smaller size in terms of acreage involved, and distance from urban areas also increased prices paid for leases. Implications from this study are that landowners can increase values of their hunting leases by conserving hardwood forests on their properties thereby producing higher quality game animals and by considering reducing the number of acres and length in years of lease arrangements.

Read the full article at <http://sofew.cfr.msstate.edu/papers/Rhyne07.pdf>

- Daryl Jones, [djones@cfr.msstate.edu](mailto:djones@cfr.msstate.edu)



## Fall/Spring Recreational Angling *The other season*

Just ask any professional angler when their favorite time to catch fish is and most will say, well they will probably say when they're biting, but the fall of the year is when the weather is generally the most comfortable. It is also a great time to catch fish while not feeling too crowded on the water.

For landowners or others involved with recreational businesses this insight can increase incomes significantly during fall and spring hunting seasons. What? Yep, during hunting seasons... Adding amenities like recreational impoundments add diversity to income streams and allow for an increased income stream. Those who have been in recreational businesses for very long understand the importance of having diversity in these businesses. Adding a lake or enhancing an existing impoundment is a very nice complement to a hunting lease or other outdoor enterprise. This concept is actually very easy to understand especially if you have been following the stock market over the last several months. Generally speaking, the more capital you tie up in one area of your business, or stocks, the more dependent you are on that segment of the business to produce favorable outcomes. This can be somewhat of a gamble especially in nature when habitat and weather conditions can change, well, as fast as the wind blows.

Having a fishing spot or two available during both fall and spring hunting seasons is a great way to add success to a two or three day hunting adventure. As for the would-be hunters, I can attest that having other recreational options goes a long way to improving satisfaction on any given trip. Beginning in September during dove season and going all the way through the end of bow season,

bass and bluegill fishing can add excitement to days that may not be the greatest for hunting. Couple this with a spring "two step," wild turkeys in the morning and largemouth bass in the mid-day or evening, and you can provide just the retreat that may produce a flurry of requests from your clients.

Tips for enhancing impoundments for off-season fishing

- Create aquatic targets for anglers to aim their casts (i.e., logs, brush tops, dirt mounds).
- Encourage fishing by installing piers or boat houses along the edge of your lake.
- Use the fall to improve your water chemistry by adding lime if needed.
- Install fish feeders to entice foraging activity during periods of the day when anglers are present.
- If you are just getting started, think about light construction efforts that will enhance habitat and overall fish production in your lake.
- Always have a variety of lures and rods available when guests are around.
- Encourage youth participation at every occasion.

To better understand these and other enterprise management techniques please visit us on the web at [www.naturalresources.msstate.edu](http://www.naturalresources.msstate.edu) or <http://msucares.com/pubs/> to view establishment and management recommendations for specific wildlife and fisheries habitat practices.

- Adam Tullos, [atullos@ext.msstate.edu](mailto:atullos@ext.msstate.edu)

# Landowner spotlight

## Tim Carpenter Eagle Lake Lodge & Outfitters

Eagle Lake Lodge and Outfitters, located on Eagle Lake, just north of Vicksburg, Mississippi, provides a variety of hunting, fishing, and outdoor experiences on Eagle Lake, surrounding oxbow lakes, and wildlife management areas in the Delta. The cabins and lodging are located on three landscaped acres of pecan, hackberry, and leyland cypress trees with flower gardens and a fishing pier. A taxidermy shop and a gift shop are also on the property.



*In our last newsletter we highlighted Tim Carpenter owner/operator of Eagle Lake Lodge & Outfitters in Eagle Lake, Mississippi. This month we again highlight Mr. Carpenter with a new endeavor. He has entered into a partnership with Clark Carter, Gip Carter, and John Abney of Carter Farms in Rolling Fork, Mississippi.*

For the past several years Tim Carpenter has leased land from Carter Farms for his outfitting business and has developed a good working relationship with the Carter Family. Last winter, the Carters and Abney purchased a 60-acre property near their farm, with hopes of developing the property. However, they needed some direction. On a site visit with NRE associates, Carpenter, Carter, and Abney discussed their many different options. The partners put together an idea of an outdoor recreational enterprise, which at its base sold hunting memberships to build capital revenue that will be reinvested into the LLC to improve the facilities and recreational opportunities, benefitting both the landowner and the members.

"Partnering with Tim has worked because he was able to bring his expertise of operating recreational enterprises and we could bring the logistical support like hooking up the utilities, building roads etc.," said Abney. Abney went on to say, "I was skeptical of the plan initially but started to see Tim's vision come to life and that skepticism has gone away."

The NRE Program has promoted partnerships between landowners and other enterprise owners because partners can bring different skills and resources to the project. Furthermore, as did the Carters, Carpenter, and Abney, we encourage all parties to create a business plan and enter into a legal agreement (i.e., LLC, LLP) when establishing a partnership to ensure all parties understand what is expected of themselves and their partners. This formalization of the partnership begins the process of legitimizing the business for the future and as Carpenter says, "validates the vision."

The partners have made great progress since late winter, with road construction, revamping an existing building into a camp house (named Bear Lake Lodge), forestry operations, food plots, and laying a network of trails for future enterprise opportunities. They have a couple of members already and held a dove hunt this past September as one of their first activities with much more to come.

"Having vision, creating a plan, following that plan, working extremely hard, and truly being positive about your project are the keys to success," says Carpenter.

Carpenter must be doing something right as his other business is doing well and I anticipate the same for this endeavor. We'll keep you updated on this partnership in the future!

- Adam Rohnke, arohnke@ext.msstate.edu

Natural Resource Enterprises  
Box 9690  
Mississippi State, MS 39762

## Farm Pond Management

Don't forget to continue to manage your farm pond during the fall and winter months.

Winter drawdown can be done mid-November through February to control weeds, for fish management, for repairs, or for liming.

Catfish can be stocked in October through March whereas bluegill and redear sunfish can be stocked October through January.

These are just a few of the activities that can be done in the months to ensure you have good fishing in the spring and summer months. To learn more, visit [msucares.com/wildfish/fisheries](http://msucares.com/wildfish/fisheries) or come to the MSU Demonstration Pond on Blackjack Rd.

