

[Photo: Turkey Creek is centered in the photo, with trees on both sides. The photo was taken on a gray, overcast day.]

[Video: Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum presents the following audio interview with Judy Steckler, "A Well-Rounded Community." The interview takes place in Mississippi, where Judy Steckler is with the Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain. The audio interview is overlaid with photographs illustrating the landscape and events described by Judy Steckler.]

[Photo: A close up view of the creek. A bright green plant is located on the lower left side, and a tree is to the right. The water reflects the trees around the creek.]

Judy Steckler: The greenway, the people that I have talked to, and who have expressed an interest in having the greenway, are ones that like to go to the creek.

I remember, in one public meeting, we had this young man.

Of course, he had children that were probably 10, 12 years old, but he's still young to me.

[Photo: At the forefront, a middle-aged man is preparing a jet ski next to a dock in the water. He is wearing swim trunks and a blue baseball hat. In the background, buildings surround the waterway.]

Talked about how he had experienced the creek as a child, and he wanted that same opportunity for his children. But he said, "All of this land is privately owned.

[Photo: A wooden structure is centered, surrounded by forest. The structure stands at least six feet tall, with tall wooden legs supporting the horizontal standing post. A ladder leans against it on the left. Simple wooden railings are in place at the top. A pathway appears to the left of the structure, and continues underneath it.]

But if the land trust buys property and puts it in conservation" -- and our philosophy is to allow for public use

[Photo: a roadway crosses over Turkey Creek and the surrounding grassland. A street sign marks "Turkey Creek" for drivers crossing over.]

on all of our properties –
"then we can develop a trail that takes you from a parking area to the creek,

[Photo: a senior woman is walking on a wooden pathway through a forest. She has short, blonde hair and is wearing a yellow long-sleeved shirt with black pants and a fanny pack. Her hands are clasped behind her back as she walks onward.]

whether you want to just use it to go and walk along the edge of the creek on this trail,

[Photo: Five young men are fishing along a river's edge. They appear to be around 10-12 years old. Two of the boys are wearing jeans, and three are wearing shorts. All boys are wearing t-shirts and have fishing rods in hand.]

you want to sit at a spot and do some fishing, or if you want to take your kayak,



[Photo: Five kayakers are in the water on an overcast day. On the far left is a man wearing a black shirt and baseball cap in a yellow kayak. To his right are two men in a blue tandem kayak wearing blue shirts. Centered is an individual wearing a wide brimmed hat in a light blue kayak. To the far right is a blonde woman with a purple baseball cap in a yellow kayak wearing a long-sleeved white shirt.]

and take it and launch it in the creek, then that's available."

[Photo: A close up of holly berry shrubs with bright evergreen leaves and red berries.]

I think there's a very good opportunity, and there's funding that's coming in,

[Photo: An open marsh with trees surrounding it's perimeter visible to the left and around the back. Approximately half the trees are bare. The marsh contains shallow water with patches of taller grasses, and lots of dried grass/straw on the ground.]

so there will be willing landowners will have the opportunity to put their property in conservation, whether they choose to do it with a conservation easement or actual sale of the property. We only work with willing landowners.

[Photo: a standing wooden dock sits on ground at the edge of a creek. The creek meanders in the background with trees on either side.]

If I come and approach you and

ask if you're interested and you say no, you'll never hear from me again.

[Photo: Turkey Creek is at the forefront, with a bridge crossing over the creek to the left. Across the creek are trees and grass.]

It also adds something else for the community that I think is real, real important. It's that buffer on the creek. One, having the buffer gives you a green area,

[Photo: The creek runs horizontally with trees in the background. Some trees are barren. An island of green grass is centered.]

with trees and plants, that cleanses the water before it flows into the creek. The other thing it does, it becomes a holding area.

[Photo: Close up view of the water and the reflections of the nearby trees and shrubs.]

When you have that wetland on both sides of the creek, then the water, as the creek rises, it has someplace to go.

[Photo: The left side of a car door is open and hanging over flooding water from a river. The water is murky, and it is raining. There is a bridge crossing the water in the background.]

If it's concrete, it's going further down the stream, because it's gonna find another place where it can go out and spread.

[Photo: Large tree branches hang over the creek at a 45 degree angle.]



I think that this is an excellent opportunity to have some protection from flooding

[Photo: Image of a forest with rhododendron on the left side, and trees overgrown with vines on the right side.]

by having the holding area, by having trees that do a great amount of absorption of the water.

[Photo: A male and female mallard duck swim side by side through water. Patches of shrubs and grass emerge. The male duck has an emerald green head with a yellow beak, and tan and white body feathers. The female duck has an orange beak spotted with brown, and varying shades of brown feathers throughout her body.]

And so if it's standing there, it's going back into the water table instead of going to another area, so we're not gonna find ourselves with a shortage of water supply.

[Photo: The forest floor has red and brown leaves dispersed on the ground. Many bare tree trunks are visible, with a few green leaves and plants scattered about.]

With the trees that you want in that area, and the green space, you're assured you're gonna have clean air to breathe.

[Photo: Turkey Creek meanders through the grassland. There is a road adjacent to the creek on the right. A black compact car passes by. There is a billboard

in the distance, to the far right-hand side.]

That's a high-traffic area with automobiles and large trucks, and the more trees that we have in that area, the better for cleansing the air.

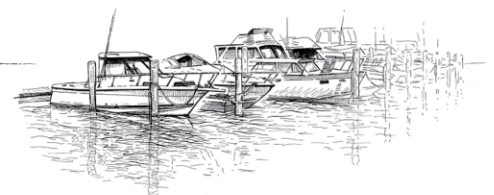
[Photo: A black dragonfly rests on a thin branch. Strands of a remaining spider web are visible near the dragonfly.]

So, environmentally, I think it offers an awful lot.

[Photo: To the left, a church sign reads: "Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church | 1455 Rippy Road – Gulfport, MS 39503 | Service Hours | Morning Workshop Service: 9:00 | Sunday School: 10:45 | Pastor: Lindsey Robinson." Behind the sign is a white wooden church with brick accents. A man and woman stand near the trunk of a SUV white car. The man is wearing a blue shirt with tan shorts, and the woman is wearing a pink floral dress. Bright green trees and shrubs are visible to the left and right of the church.]

Yesterday at a meeting, when they were talking about projects through the BP funding, they were saying,

[Photo: A young woman in her young 20s is holding a small dog, around 8 pounds, at the waters edge. The young woman has blond hair pulled back and is wearing a military camouflage hat with the American flag at the front. She is also wearing a black t-shirt, and tan shorts. The dog has larger ears, perked up, a black nose, and white paws with a white tip at the tail. The fur is composed of different



shades of black and brown. The young woman and the dog are both wearing life jackets. The front of a kayak appears at the bottom right-hand corner.]

"We have got to give our young people an opportunity to do something other than the Game Boys and sitting with their electronic devices."

[Photo: A senior man is sitting in a folding camping chair at the waters edge, beneath the shade of a larger tree. He is wearing a navy blue baseball cap with a navy shirt, black pants, and white shoes and socks. To his right, a group of three young men are fishing by the waters edge. The man to the left is standing, and looking out over the water. He is wearing a white tank top with blue jeans, and a black sweater tied around his neck. The young man to his right is sitting on the grass, focusing on his cellphone. He is wearing faded jeans and a gray long-sleeved shirt. The young man to the far right is sitting in a folding camping chair, looking out over the water. He is wearing a black baseball cap, black long-sleeved shirt, and white pants. His jacket is wrapped over the back of the chair. Fishing rods are stationed to the left and right of the young men. The grass at the foreground is bright green.]

And this gentleman that said, "I want this to happen so my boys can experience Turkey Creek as I did." Recognize that he wanted to teach them to fish, so he's gonna take them to the creek, and they can fish.

[Photo: A close-up image of a female Merlin falcon, with her head turning towards the background. Her feathers are an assortment of light gray, white, reddish brown, and dark brown. Her beak is dark brown. Her eye color is not visible.]

He's going to teach them to listen to the bird sounds in the woods and identify birds.

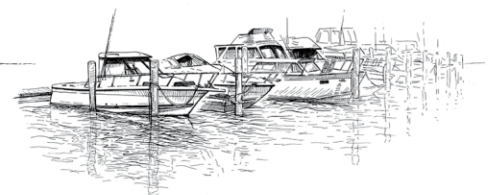
[Photo: A squirrel is resting its front arms on the ground, while its legs are higher up, pushing of the tree trunk, as it finishes its climb down the tree. The squirrel is holding a large acorn in its mouth. Moss, twigs, and leaves are visible on the forest floor.]

He'll teach them about the mammals that are there.

[Photo: A close up of the forest floor from a top-down perspective. On the left side of the image are various green plants, including moss and ferns. To the right is a colony of Turkey Tail mushrooms. They are white/gray with brown stripes with a touch of dark green.]

He can teach them water safety, plant identification. And all of those opportunities give our young people a great

[Photo: a young girl, around 11 years old, is searching for critters in a patch of fallen leaves and branches on the forest floor. She is wearing gloves covered in mud, a striped long-sleeved blue/green shirt, and black pants. Her hair, styled in box braids, is pulled back in a ponytail.]



mental development and growth.
And you can read a book, and you can read all about the trees

[Photo: Monarch butterfly is perched on a yellow flower, drinking nectar.]

and the butterflies, but if you can see a monarch butterfly lay its egg, and see that caterpillar eating all those leaves on the plant and forming that cocoon,

[Photo: Top-down view of a Monarch Butterfly drinking nectar from a yellow flower.]

those are the things that children will learn that will stay with them. And once they've gotten interested in that part of the science

[Photo: a green frog covered in mud is being cradled in a hand, also covered in mud. A brown leaf is also the hand next to the frog.]

and the nature, they're gonna continue wanting that experience.
So there's no ulterior motive.

[Photo: A toddler, around three years old, is looking at a turtle resting on a log in water. The boy is wearing a navy cap and has brown curly hair.]

There's no economic motive. But it does bring economic development to a community, because somebody's got to rent

[Photo: A small dog, around 8 pounds, is sitting in a green kayak wearing a life vest. He is resting on someone's lap. His larger ears are perched as he

gazes towards the right. His fur is colored with white, various shades of brown, and black. He is wearing a red collar with a green tag.]

or sell those kayaks and canoes.
Someone's selling the bait, if you want to go fishing, or the lures for fishing.

[Photo: An image of an informational nature board showing different invasive plants and native animals is present. A larger sign is situated to the left, and reads: "Mississippi Coastal Bird Trail | Turkey Creek." A Laughing Gull is illustrated on the sign with its wings spanned open.]

So all of it makes for a well-rounded community when you have natural resources.

