

# CONSERVING LAND:

# ILLINOIS RIVER HEADWATERS CORRIDOR

## Illinois River Headwaters Corridor

The Illinois River Headwaters Corridor includes the headwaters of the Illinois River, which is located about fifteen miles south of Fayetteville, and flows northwest toward Wedington Recreation Area. This river corridor connects Northwest Arkansas Land Trusts' Greater Kessler Mountain Priority Area to Lake Wedington and the surrounding forest service land. Historically, prairie habitat was abundant in this area, but as much of this watershed has become developed, only isolated patches of prairie remain. Many farmers in this priority area contribute to Northwest Arkansas' agricultural economy.

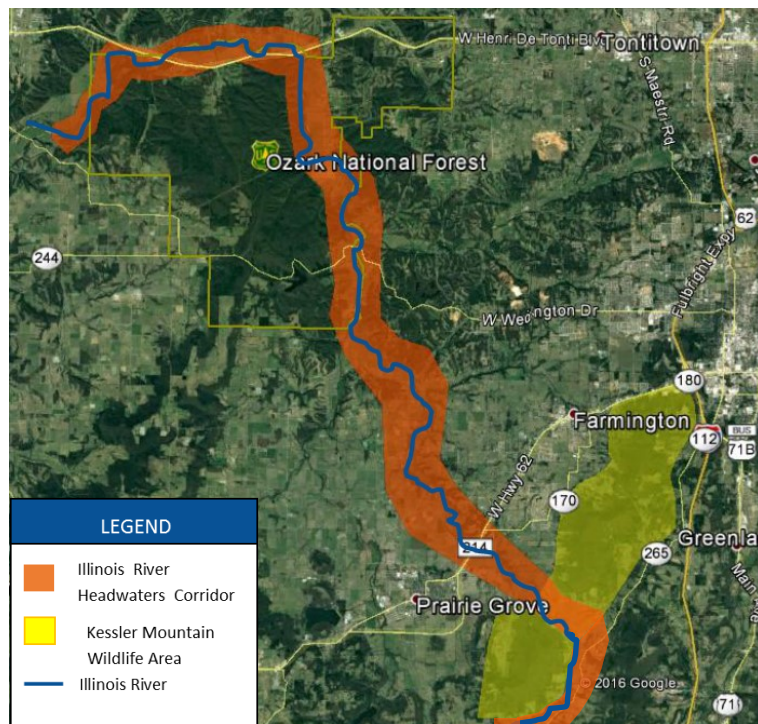
## Why is land conservation important in the Illinois River Headwaters Corridor?

Approximately 10% of stream reaches in the Upper Illinois River Watershed are considered impaired from sedimentation and high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus that wash into the river during rain events. Preserving a riparian buffer along the river will improve water quality and ensure healthy habitat is available for our region's aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. Rare and endangered species, including Ozark Cavefish, Gray Bat, and the Grotto Salamander depend on the region's karst system of abundant seeps, caves, and springs found throughout the Upper Illinois River Watershed. These karst features are vital to groundwater recharge and highly susceptible to contamination from runoff.

## How does land conservation benefit landowners and community members?

Conserving the land surrounding the river, as well as land throughout the watershed has many benefits for current and future generations, including:

- \* Protecting clean water in Illinois River Watershed
- \* Protecting property values
- \* Safeguarding habitat and movement corridors for wildlife
- \* Ensuring recreational opportunities continue on the Illinois River
- \* Preserving the rural and agricultural character of our community



## How does the Northwest Arkansas Land Trust work with landowners to conserve land?

The Northwest Arkansas Land Trust serves as a means to hold and conserve land for the purposes of permanent land protection. Landowners can preserve a single feature on their land, define appropriate limits to the land uses or future development of their property, or conserve the entire landscape. These options can yield significant tax benefits.

### To learn more, contact:

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