



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Agreement reached to phase out live greyhound racing at Southland Casino Racing in Arkansas**

*Live greyhound racing to end by December 2022 with gradual phase-out  
aimed at accommodating greyhound adoptions*

**WEST MEMPHIS, Ark.** (Oct. 17, 2019) – Southland Casino Racing and the Arkansas Greyhound Kennel Association have agreed to phase out live greyhound racing at the popular West Memphis entertainment destination over a three-year period, beginning next year and culminating by Dec. 31, 2022.

The agreement, which was recently unanimously approved by the association and its 16 member kennels, calls for the number of races at Southland to be reduced from its 2019 level of 6,656 races to 75 percent of that (4,992 races) in 2020, to 60% of that (3,994 races) in 2021 and to 40% of that (2,662 races) in 2022.

The agreement with the kennels had been contingent on the Arkansas Racing Commission's approval of a Southland petition confirming that under the Arkansas Casino Gaming Amendment of 2018, which was approved by voters in November, Southland is not required to continue conducting live greyhound racing in order to retain its casino license. The commission approved the petition earlier today.

The kennel association's member contracts with Southland had been set to expire at year's end, prompting discussions on new contracts. Southland and the kennel association discussed the current national climate for live greyhound racing and what that might mean to racing's future in Arkansas.

Greyhound racing in the United States has seen a marked and steady decline and now exists in only six states. In November 2018, voters in Florida, one of the six states, passed Amendment 13 to end live greyhound racing by 2021. The amendment passed 69 percent to 31 percent. Independent polling has indicated that such an initiative would pass if placed before Arkansas voters.

"The kennel association and Southland agreed that given these factors we needed an agreement that would provide certainty and clarity for the future by ending live racing via an orderly process and on our own terms," said David Wolf, president and general manager of Southland Casino Racing.

"We want to avoid a disruptive and abrupt end to live racing to the benefit of all parties, including everyone who has a job at stake," added Robert Thorne, president of the Arkansas Greyhound Kennel Association.

Wolf said the gradual phase-out is also needed to provide a long enough period of time to accommodate the adoption of about 1,200 greyhounds that currently race at Southland. Both Southland and the kennel association are strong supporters of the Mid-South Greyhound Adoption Option, which works to place retired Southland racing greyhounds in homes.

“We know it’s going to take time to adopt out the greyhounds, and our commitment is to make sure every greyhound that has raced at Southland finds its forever home,” Wolf said.

Southland has been conducting live greyhound racing in West Memphis since opening in 1956, and it became one of the most popular greyhound racetracks in the country. Delaware North has had an ownership interest in Southland since 1967.

In January, Southland will offer exclusive greyhound kennel booking contracts to the 16 association member kennels for a term to run through 2022. Maximum and minimum numbers of greyhounds qualified for racing will be established to align with the reduction in racing performances. Southland will not offer contracts to additional kennels that are not part of the association.

#### **About the Arkansas Greyhound Kennel Association**

We are a proud and productive group of men and women committed to Community, State and Greyhound Racing in Arkansas. We are proud of our heritage and history in the State and in the Greyhound Racing industry. Our combined experience and racing knowledge spans over five hundred years. And some of our association members are second and third generation greyhound kennel operators with Arkansas roots boasting family members immortalized in the Greyhound Hall of Fame Museum. The association is committed to community through volunteer efforts by our members. We also sponsor charity events that include the annual Paws for a Cause charity night and the Run for a Cure cancer benefit each October.

#### **About Southland Casino Racing**

Southland Casino Racing has been a major racing venue for more than 60 years and has over 2,000 slots and more than 40 live table games, as well as the World Market Buffet, Bourbon St. Steakhouse and the Starting Gate Event Center. Southland has long been a pivotal fixture of the West Memphis community, strongly supporting the community with jobs, business stability, and economic contributions. It has consistently won awards for its outstanding community service, including millions of dollars donated to neighborhood charities and educational institutions. Southland is owned and operated by Delaware North, a global leader in hospitality. More information is available at [www.southlandcasino.com](http://www.southlandcasino.com).