

ALABAMA'S
TREASURED
FORESTS

A Publication of the Alabama Forestry Commission



Fall 2014

Message from the *STATE FORESTER*

Legislation establishing the State Commission of Forestry was passed by Alabama lawmakers in 1923. The Commission functioned independently until 1939, when it was consolidated with other agencies into the newly established Department of Conservation. The state forestry agency remained there for 30 years, until forestry interests in the state were successful in working with the Legislature to establish the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) in 1969. For the last 45 years, as an independent state agency the AFC has been the voice for forest interests in the state.

For nearly 40 of those years, the AFC has been involved in the TREASURE Forest program. Many of you receiving this magazine know the rich history of TREASURE Forest.* The concept was the brainchild of former State Forester C.W. (Bill) Moody, who knew that management of multiple forest resources on a landowner's property was the key to moving forestry forward in the state and the nation. Mr. Moody also understood that a partnership approach to the idea could bring an immense amount of talent to get the idea up and running. After pitching the idea to a few groups, the Alabama Forest Planning Committee, now the Alabama Natural Resources Council (ANRC), agreed to sponsor the program. In 1976, Kelly Mosley's property, "Pineland," was certified as the first TREASURE Forest in Alabama.

Since that time, TREASURE Forest has faced challenges but has continued to be a flagship program for both the AFC and the ANRC. As of the end of state fiscal year 2014 on September 30, there were 2,070 certified TREASURE Forests covering 1,921,758 acres in Alabama. This program grows because of the efforts of local planning committees in each county. However, these committees have begun to shrink in number across the state. Those of us on the ANRC have renewed our commitment to maintain and strengthen these local planning committees. It is through the local committees that Mr. Moody's partnership approach is best demonstrated. In addition to state and federal agency personnel, private sector forestry professionals and landowners provide the active membership at the county level. These committee members grow the TREASURE Forest program from the grassroots through outreach to new landowners, educational efforts and tours, individual on-the-ground assistance, and nominations of potential new TREASURE Forests.

The achievements of the best of these local planning committees will be on display at the Alabama Natural Resources Council's "Outreach Symposium and Awards Banquet" at the Marriott Prattville Hotel & Conference Center on February 6, 2015. We hope you can join us for natural resources educational opportunities in the afternoon, and the awards banquet that evening honoring TREASURE Forest and Tree Farm owners, county committees, and others. (See page 7 for event details or visit www.alaforestry.org.)



Greg Pate, State Forester

*If you'd like to learn more about the history of TREASURE Forest, enjoy the video "Fireside Chat with Bill Moody" who takes a trip down memory lane with landowners (the late) Dan James and (the late) Gary Fortenberry at tinyurl.com/youtube-AFC-Fireside-Chat or check out History of TREASURE Forest at www.forestry.alabama.gov/PDFs/History_of_TREASURE_Forest.pdf.

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Introducing SouthWRAP:
Wildfire Risk Assessment Website
Now Available for Public Use



Cover:
*Busy, busy, busy in the autumn
forest . . . a squirrel prepares for
the coming winter.*
Photo by Mark Burkett

Background this page:
*Fall colors grace the banks
of an Alabama stream.*
Photo courtesy of USFWS



GoodFIRES
www.goodfires.org/

VISIT MY FOREST
www.visitmyforest.org/



There's an "App" for that!
Scan this QR code with your smartphone
to view a digital edition of the magazine.

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“Family First” Grows a TREASURE Forest on Lochicohi Farm

*By Allen Varner, Stewardship Forester,
Alabama Forestry Commission*

As most married hunters know, mixing family and hunting can be a difficult thing when your son is very young and there is another on the way. For Dr. Wendell “Chip” Taylor and his wife, Louise, the choice was pretty simple . . . find a place where the family can be together that provides a place to hunt as well. Living in Birmingham at the time, both Chip and Louise wanted a place for family and friends to come and enjoy the outdoors during weekends and holidays. After looking for several years, the Taylors finally found their answer and acquired what is today known as Lochicohi Farm, so named after the first letters of each family member’s name (Louise, Chip, Conrad, and Hill Taylor).

During the Great Depression, this Hale County farm housed a small sawmill operation where another family harvested, milled, and sold local pine and hardwood timber grown on the property. A sizeable tract of bottomland hardwood (approximately 400 acres) located on the back side of the property had been high-graded, while the remainder was in large acreage fields in row-crop production with smaller hardwood woodlots. Much of the property was inaccessible because of backwater from a hundred-acre marsh. There was plenty of work to be done and the Taylors literally jumped in with both feet.

As hunters, wildlife management would naturally become the Taylor family’s primary TREASURE Forest objective. Because soybean had historically been grown as the main row crop on the

farm, white-tailed deer populations were strong. Hedgerows and scattered woodlots provided travel routes and escape cover. The first year they owned the property, the Taylors harvested 20 deer. That was great, but it wasn’t their true goal of “trophy” deer. To achieve this, improvements would be required.

When it comes to wildlife on the farm, Dr. Taylor’s philosophy is simple: never have an “empty table.” His goal is to provide some sort of food for wildlife year-round. Warm-season plantings include soybeans and a variety of peas. Cool-season plantings include winter wheat, buck forage oats, Austrian winter pea, and crimson clover. Approximately 20 acres of food plots (ranging from one to three acres in size) have been established and maintained in warm and cool season vegetation that are planted annually for target wildlife species. A total of five food plots have been strategically established using timber type and stand composition as a component for viewing and harvesting white-tailed deer and Eastern wild turkey. Soft edges (fallow areas) are left on most of the food plots to allow for a gentle transition from timberland to field.

Three four-acre sawtooth oak orchards have been established and maintained for hard-mast fruit production. Approximately 100 soft-mast fruit trees such as pear, Chickasaw plum, apple, common persimmon, and autumn olive have been planted around the property. Dr. Taylor’s father planted a soft-mast fruit tree called Chi on the farm. Native to Asia, the Chi fruit is 2 inches in

diameter, similar in shape to a raspberry, but tastes like a fig. On several occasions, they have witnessed deer eating fruit from this tree.

In addition to planting, another vegetation management scheme practiced by Dr. Taylor is selective bush hogging. Years ago while performing what he refers to as “tractor therapy,” he noticed a female persimmon tree and mowed around it. Each year he continued to avoid cutting down the persimmon, and today it is one of the most productive soft mast trees on the farm. It has become quite a gathering place for the local deer herd, who dine there at their own risk!

As quality deer management was the main focus on Lochicohi Farm, Dr. Taylor installed a 10-ton grain bin to support supplemental feeding of wildlife. Annually, 40 tons of fortified protein pellets from South Fresh Feeds Company are consumed by wildlife at 14 different feeding stations. These pellets contain 16 percent protein and are used to increase antler development. Game cameras are set up around the feeding stations to track the progress of antler development during the growing season.

An early improvement at Lochicohi Farm was the construction of a Clemson Beaver Pond Leveler/flash-board riser system to the 15-acre beaver pond located on the property. This structure was installed for water control during the fall and winter months, as well as to provide access across the marsh. During spring and summer, the water is drawn down to mineral soil and planted in vegetation such as Japanese millet, grain sorghum, and corn for migrating waterfowl. Areas with native plant species which are beneficial to waterfowl – such as buttonbush, bull rush, and smartweed – are left for natural forage. Numerous friends of the Taylors have harvested American black ducks as trophies from these natural wetlands on the farm.

Six wood duck boxes were erected around the property for nesting and brood-rearing waterfowl in the spring and summer months. The boxes are annually checked for nesting utilization purposes. Dr. Taylor has also preserved all cavity trees in and around the wetlands for natural nesting. Approximately 100 acres of Lochicohi Farms is seasonally inundated with water which provides excellent feeding and loafing waterfowl habitat during the winter.



Several hummingbird and song bird feeders were also established for non-game management, in addition to five bluebird boxes to provide proper nesting for bluebirds.

The 17-acre bass pond was built in 1993 and stocked with Florida-strain largemouth bass, copper nose blue gill, and thread fin shad to provide recreational fishing for family and friends. The goal is to grow trophy bass using proper pond management. The lake is fertilized when needed, and 700 pounds of fish are harvested each year to ensure stocking levels are appropriate. Fish caught under three pounds are taken, but those over three pounds are released. Structure for the main lake includes creation of peninsulas and islands, as well as stump beds and channels to increase fish habitat. Wood duck boxes are also used to mark sunken structures. To ensure water for the lake throughout the hot Alabama summers, a well was drilled.

To support the wildlife management objective, a 50-acre idle field was converted to loblolly pine in 1993 which provided cover for bedding white-tailed deer and nesting habitat for Eastern wild turkey. This pine stand, which also supports the Taylors' secondary objective of timber production, has been commercially thinned once. Another 150-acre agricultural area was established in loblolly in 1996. To prevent southern pine beetle infestations and promote a healthier more vigorously growing stand, these pines were thinned in late 2011. Thinning opened the canopy, allowing sunlight to reach the forest floor and stimulate native vegetation for wildlife.

An intensive prescribed burn management regime has been conducted in these pine stands to control unwanted hardwood competition such as sweetgum and Chinese privet. At a minimum, 40 acres are burned annually, with burned stands staggered throughout the property in a checkerboard fashion to provide different levels of stand composition for diversity. In addition to understory control, this practice also promotes growth of native browse and forbs for target wildlife species. Permanent firebreaks have been established around the perimeter of the pine stands to facilitate prescribed burning and to provide access for recreational ATV riding and hiking. All firebreaks have been seeded to prevent erosion and are maintained during summer months by bush hogging or herbicide treatments.

(Continued on page 6)

Lochicohi Farm

(Continued from page 5)

At the same time the pine stands were commercially thinned, 200 acres of mixed bottomland hardwood was marked by a registered forester for a select-cut operation. The goal was to reduce stocking levels and improve stand species composition. It also provided browsing and traveling corridors for turkey and deer. Although a constant battle, beavers have been controlled in an effort to reduce mortality of quality bottomland hardwood timberland. More than 100 have been trapped using Kona bear or snare traps, and Dr. Taylor has also used live electric fence wire around culverts to deter beaver activity with some success.

In 2004, Dr. Taylor and adjoining landowner Thomas Wagner collaborated to erect a high game fence around the perimeter of their properties to control deer herd populations within the farm, and prevent trespassing as well. Approximately 1,300 acres are in this enclosure.

When the Taylors acquired the property, the existing main dwelling was run down and in bad shape. In 2009-2010, they remodeled the two-story white farmhouse, replacing all the windows, using cypress siding and a metal roof for a rustic appearance. Dr. Taylor designed the addition of a sitting area in the back of the home for enjoyable afternoons. The back porch columns were fashioned from whole bald cypress trees harvested from the swamps of Florida, adding a unique feature to the home.

Many pecan trees have been maintained around the farm house and barn, providing shade for family and friends during the summer, and increasing hard mast fruit production for wildlife, including the human variety. Forsythias and mulch were added around the base of these trees to prevent encroaching vegetation and add a manicured look.

Numerous ornamental shrubs and flowers, including knockout roses and Japanese yew, were planted around the farmhouse to



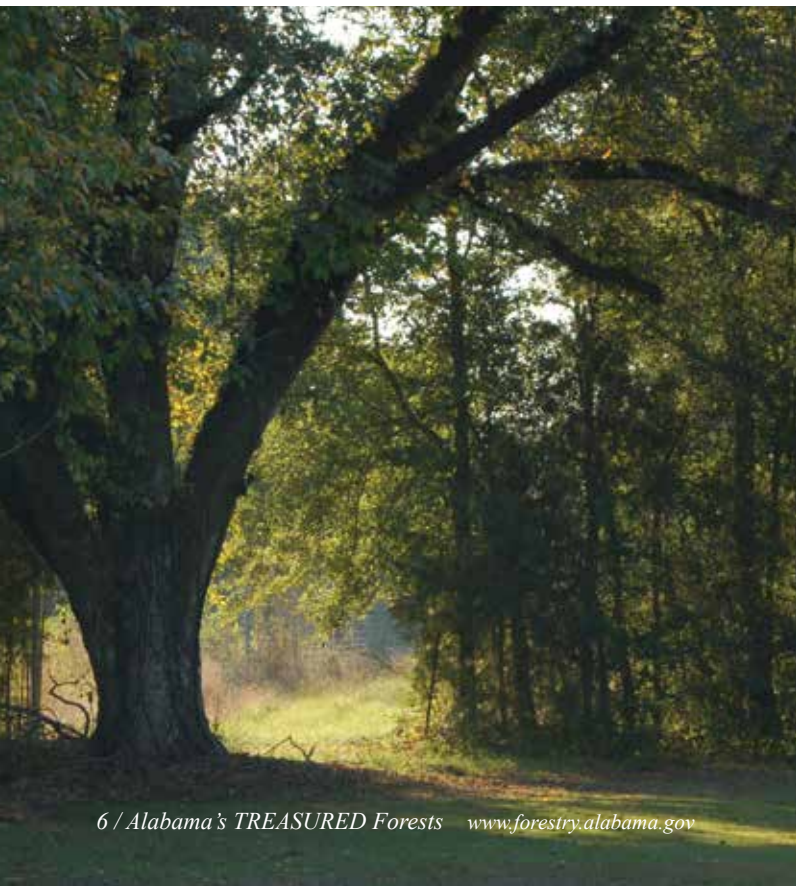
enhance the appearance and attract several species of butterfly. Crape myrtles and other flowering shrubs have also been established around the home and barn to increase pollinating insect populations. An irrigation system was also installed around the home to water the grass and shrubs during dry summer months.

In 2011, a raised-bed, walk-thru garden with drip irrigation was established on the west side of the main house for growing fruit and vegetables. To maintain the rustic theme and add to overall aesthetics, the raised beds were constructed with flagstone rock in a geometrical design. Numerous edible herbs and flowers are also grown in the garden. Louise is an active member of "Weekly Weeders," a local garden club, and she has hosted several garden events.

The Taylors are sharing people, often opening their property for educational events. A large number of landowners, foresters, and loggers attended the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association annual tour at Lochicohi Farm in 2006. Forest management lectures included fish pond management, waterfowl management, as well as the pros and cons of high game fences. In 2013, they also hosted the Alabama Natural Resources Council Regional Forestry Field Day Event. Each year, "Classroom in the Forest" field days take place for school children, unless weather events force cancellation.

Annually, Dr. Taylor invites father/son groups to come out to the farm for weekend fishing trips. These weekends help the Taylors reduce the stocking levels of fish in the lake. Being an avid swimmer, Dr. Taylor has auctioned off a day of fishing on their lake to raise money for the Birmingham Swim League. The family has also invited the swimmers out for team building exercises to increase trust and morale within the group. Numerous youth waterfowl, turkey, and deer hunts have taken place since the time of purchase of the property. The Taylors have also participated in the Governor's "One Shot" Turkey Hunt in the past.

While Lochicohi Farm is indeed a busy place, it provides a great example of making family and hunting work together. Both Chip and Louise will tell you that forestland management is a constant learning experience. Their land ethic is the reason their TREASURE Forest is a productive farm and why in 2012, they received the Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award. 🏆



Outreach Symposium & Awards Banquet



Friday, February 6, 2015

Come help us celebrate the achievements of award winning TREASURE forest owners, Tree Farm owners, and county natural resource committees!

Hear about new applied science related to natural resource management!

Applied Forestry & Wildlife Outreach Symposium	Awards Banquet
<p>Marriott Prattville Hotel & Conference Center 2500 Legends Circle Prattville 36066 Cost \$25.00 <i>until January 15, 2015*</i> 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro and Cons of Longleaf vs. Loblolly • Using the Forestry Internet • Forestry Content of the Farm Bill • Timber Theft & Land Security Issues • Eagles of Alabama 	<p>Marriott Prattville Hotel & Conference Center 2500 Legends Circle Prattville 36066 Cost \$25.00 <i>until January 15, 2015*</i> 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cocktail Reception (cash bar) • Dinner • Banquet Speaker TBA • Awards Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tree Farm - TREASURE Forest - County Committees - W. Kelly Mosley



Cost for both the Symposium and Banquet is \$50.00*

** Registration fees change January 15, 2015 • (Symposium \$30.00 & Awards Banquet \$35.00)*

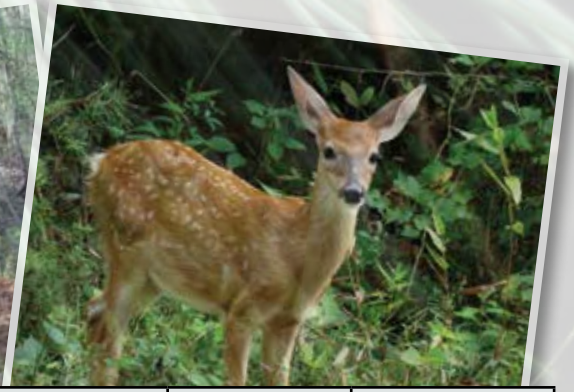
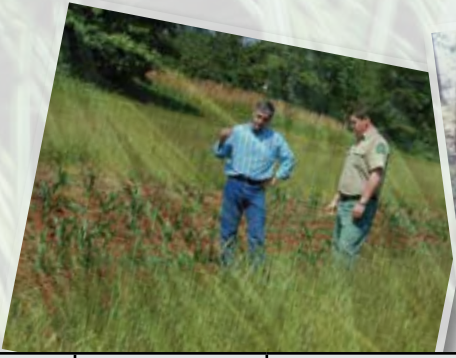
Register online at www.alaforestry.org

Forest Management Annual Calendar

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
Chemical Herbaceous Weed Control				
Chemical Site Preparation/Release				
Fire Breaks				
Food Plots				
Harvesting	<i>Always consult with your local AFC office</i>			
Mechanical Site Preparation				
Order Seedlings				
Prescribed Burning				
Road Maintenance				
Site Preparation Burning				
SPB Inspection				
Tree Planting				



www.forestry.alabama.gov



MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
<i>before harvesting your timber. They can provide a list of professional forestry vendors to assist you.</i>							
						*	

* Containerized seedlings can be planted in November with adequate soil moisture.



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

TREE Planting Procedure for Small, Bare Root Seedlings

By David Mercker, Ph.D.,
University of Tennessee Extension Forester

***“It is better
not to have planted,
than to have
planted incorrectly.”***

Tree seedlings receive foremost care while growing in a managed nursery: fertile soil, ample moisture, and weed/insect and disease control. Lifting seedlings out of this comfort zone shocks them. Consider: soil is dislodged from their roots, they are handled several times, packaged, shipped, exposed to threatening wind and heat, placed in planting bags or machine buckets, roots unveiled to open air, replanted in often very harsh soil, then left to high temperatures with the hope of adequate precipitation for sustenance through the first few growing seasons.

If planting steps are not very carefully followed, the mortality rate rises. Seedling survival is more likely if attention is given to the following procedures:

1 Plant in late fall or early winter

November, December, and January are ideal months for planting seedlings in Southern locations (later months for Northern locations). Tree roots grow during cooler months. By planting well before the growing season, roots will settle into their new environment, elongate, and begin preparing to supply water to the foliage when warmer temperatures arrive.

2 Plant on cooler days

Temperatures ranging between 35 - 60° F are ideal. Higher temperatures could cause transpiration rate to increase and dry the roots. (Transpiration is the process by which water vapor leaves a living plant and enters the atmosphere). Lower temperatures could freeze the roots, causing mortality.

3 **Protect seedlings during vehicular transport**

Transporting seedlings in an enclosed vehicle is preferred to open-air transport. If open-air must be used, cover the bags of seedlings with a tarp. High winds increase transpiration rate, rapidly drying the roots. It is best to transport on cool days or at cooler times of the day.

4 **Proper seedling storage**

Seedlings will remain healthier if they are stored in an enclosed cooler where temperature and moisture are regulated. Keeping the air temperature low and humidity high will slow transpiration. Maintain air temperature at 35 - 38° F. Find a place to store your seedlings well ahead of their arrival from the nursery. When stacking bags of seedlings for long storage periods, criss-cross them, leaving large air gaps for better ventilation. Otherwise, heat will build near the center of the bags. If controlled facilities are not available or if the seedlings will quickly be planted in the field, store them in a cool, dark location, away from the wind (cellar, barn, etc.) Periodically inspect the roots and needles to determine if watering is necessary.

5 **Seedling treatment at the planting site**


Once on-site, seedlings can deteriorate rapidly. High air temperatures and wind place stress on seedlings (particularly when humidity is low). Park your transport vehicles in the shade, in lower spots, shielding the seedlings from destructive elements. Insulation tarps provide desirable protection. Avoid opening seedling bags until near the time of planting. Avoid exposing roots to the open air for very long. If air temperatures reach 75° F, planting should cease. Large portable coolers are ideal for field storage of seedlings – a good consideration when selecting a contractor.

6 **Methods of planting**

Two methods are used for planting tree seedlings: hand planting and machine planting. Both are acceptable. Hand planting is more common on steeper terrain or in forested areas that have been recently harvested. Hand tools are used to penetrate the soil and create an opening for the roots. Once the seedling is planted, the hole is resealed with the tool and foot pressure. A machine planter is normally pulled behind motorized equipment with a 3-point hitch. The planter has a coulter (slicing through the soil), a foot (pulling the machine below surface level), trencher plates (opening the soil for seedling placement), and packing wheels to re-close and compress the soil. Compared to hand planting, machine planting generally has slightly better survival rate, delivers more consistency in spacing, and works best when converting old fields or pastures to forest.

Care should be taken not to “J” root seedlings, but rather leave the root in a natural, vertical position. Plant seedlings deep, at least to the original level planted while in the nursery (as noted by the darkened ring where the lower stem meets the roots). It’s better to plant slightly too deep than too shallow. Make sure that all air pockets are sealed by applying pressure to the soil surrounding the seedling. Straighten seedlings as needed.

7 **Conduct a survival check**

For the first two summers after planting, conduct a survival check. If cost-share funds were used to establish the planting, it may be necessary to maintain a certain level of live seedlings. The original planting plan should have specified this minimum survival level. Your forester can assist with your survival check. 

Tree Seedling Sources for Landowners

Successful tree planting not only requires good planning, skillful site preparation, correct handling, and proper planting, it also helps to have a reputable and reliable tree seedling source. To assist in this process, a list of tree seedling nurseries that serve Alabama landowners is presented here. This alphabetical listing is in no way an endorsement of any particular company or product.

The Alabama Forestry Commission also maintains a list of tree seedling nurseries on the agency website at www.forestry.alabama.gov/seedling_search.aspx. Qualified tree seedling vendors that market to Alabama landowners and wish to be added to this list should call (334) 240-9308.

Advantage Forestry

Peter Frankowski
302 South Main Avenue
Demopolis, AL 36732
Phone: (334) 287-0106
www.advantageforestry.net

ArborGen

Alabama SuperTree Nursery

Larry Foster
264 County Road 888
Selma, AL 36703
Phone: (800) 222-1280
www.supertreeseedlings.com

ArborGen

Bellville SuperTree Nursery

6482 Highway 169 South
Claxton, GA 30417
Phone: (877) 833-4760

ArborGen

Georgia SuperTree Nursery

78 Supertree Lane
Shellman, GA 39886
Phone: (800) 554-6550

ArborGen

South Carolina

SuperTree Nursery

5594 Hwy 38 S
Blenheim, SC 29516
Phone: (800) 222-1290

Baucum Nursery

3821 W. Roosevelt Road
Little Rock, AR 72204
Phone: (501) 907-2485
www.forestry.arkansas.gov/seedlings

Bell Brothers, Inc.

Danny or Gary Bell
5619 Highway 169
Claxton, GA 30417
Phone: (912) 739-2273

Blanton's

Longleaf Container Nursery

Robert Dismukes
302 Pecan Drive
Brewton, AL 36426
Phone: (251) 867-7629
Email: dismukesr@bellsouth.net

Blanton's

Longleaf Container Nursery

C.J., Jay, or Jason Blanton
1091 NE Daylily Avenue
Madison, FL 32340
Phone: (850) 973-2967
Email: BIGJMB1@vol.com

Buckeye Nursery, Inc.

Johnny Brown
1490 Buckeye Nursery Lane
Perry, FL 32347
Phone: (800) 838-2680

Chestnut Hill Nursery, Inc.

15105 NW 94th Avenue
Alachua, FL 32615
Phone: (800) 669-2067
www.chestnuthilltreefarm.com

Chiappini Farm

150 Chiappini Farm Road
Hawthorne, FL 32640
Phone: (800) 293-5413
Email: dchiapin@atlantic.net
<http://members.atlantic.net/~dchiapin/>

Deep South Growers

Rick or Candi Reed
1535 Harvey Vickers Road
Douglas, GA 31534
Phone: (912) 384-5450
Email: careed@hotmail.com

Delta View Nursery

659 Burdette Road
Leland, MS 38756
Phone: (800) 748-9018
Email: hardwoods@tecinfo.com

Florida Division of Forestry

Andrews Nursery

9850 NW 42nd Court
Chiefland, FL 32644
Phone: (352) 493-6096
Email: steven.gilly@FreshFromFlorida.com
www.FreshFromFlorida.com

Georgia Forestry Commission

Flint River Nursery

Jeff Fields
9850 River Road
Byromville, GA 31007
Phone: (229) 268-7308
www.gatrees.org/Seedlings/Orderinginfo.cfm

Hains Nursery

Mark Hains
5457 Harts Bridge Road
Andalusia, AL 36420
Phone: (334) 427-1029
Email: hains@alaweb.com

International Forest Company

Wayne Bell
1265 Georgia Highway 133 N
Moultrie, GA 31768
Phone: (800) 633-4506
www.interforestry.com

K & L Forest Nursery, Inc

Ken Singleton
3782 Hwy 41 South
Buena Vista, GA 31803
Phone: (229) 649-3572
Email: singleton@windstream.net

Liner Tree Farm, Inc.

4020 Packard Avenue
St. Cloud, FL 34772
Phone: (800) 330-1484

Louisiana Department of Ag and Forestry Beauregard Nursery

Jeannie Severio
6308 U.S. 190
DeRidder, LA 70634
Phone: (225) 925-4515
Email: jeannie@ldaf.la.gov

LTF Greenhouses

Neal Kicklighter
195 Ty Ty Omega Road
Tifton, GA 31793
Phone: (229) 382-4454
Email: sales@lftgreenhouses.com
www.lewistaylorfarms.com

Meeks' Farms & Nursery, Inc.

(Peter Frankowski, Alabama Sales)
187 Flanders Road
Kite, GA 31049
Phone: (888) 397-0166
www.meeksfarms-nurserys.com

Native Forest Nursery

Paul Ensminger
11306 Highway 411 South
Chatsworth, GA 30705
Phone: (706) 483-3397
Email: Paul@NativeForestNursery.com
www.nativeforestnursery.com

Plant World Nursery, LLC

7509 Lee Rd 146
Opelika, AL 36804
Phone: (334) 745-0459
www.plantworldal.com

Plum Creek Timber Company, Inc. Jesup Nursery

1689 Nursery Road
Jesup, GA 31545
Phone: (912) 427-4871
www.plumcreek.com

Plum Creek Timber Company, Inc. Pearl River & River Bend Nursery

1032 Camp Lane Road
Hazlehurst, MS 39083
Phone: (601) 894-1072
Email: Tom.Anderson@Plumcreek.Com
www.plumcreek.com

Plum Creek Timber Company, Inc. Shubuta Nursery

1444 Shubuta Eucutta Road
Shubuta, MS 39360
Phone: (601) 687-5766
www.plumcreek.com

Ray Bracken Nursery, Inc

David McLemore
460 Woodville Road
Pelzer, South Carolina 29669
Phone: (800) 992-4321
Email: davidm@raybracken.com
www.raybracken.com

Rayonier, Inc. Elberta Nursery (formerly Joshua Timberlands, LLC)

Sue Gondert
29650 Comstock Road
Elberta, AL 36530
Phone: (251) 986-5210
www.rayonierseedlings.com

Rutland Forest Nursery

Terrell Rutland
502 Owen Medford Road
Lenox, GA 31637
Phone: (229) 382-5504

Sanctuary Timber & Wildlife, LLC

7509 Lee Rd 146
Opelika, AL 36804
Phone: (334) 782-2360
Email: info@stwildlife.com
www.stwildlife.com

South Carolina Forestry Commission

Box 219
Trenton, SC 29847
Phone: (803) 275-3578
Email: taylortree@pbtcomm.net
www.state.sc.us/forest/nur.htm

Superior Trees, Inc.

Alan Webb
12493 East US Highway 90
Lee, FL 32059
Phone: (850) 971-5159
www.superiortrees.net

Tennessee Department of Agriculture

9063 Highway 411 South
Delano, TN 37325
Phone: (877) 868-7337
Email: nursery@state.tn.us
www.tn.gov/agriculture/forestry/reforestation.shtml

Wadsworth Christmas Tree Farm

3071 Dexter Road
Wetumpka, AL 36092
Phone: (334) 567-6308
Email:
frank@wadsworthchristmastrees.com

Warren County Nursery

Richard Hobbs
6492 Beersheba hwy
McMinnville, TN 37110
Phone: (931) 668-8941
Email: wcnursery@blomand.net
www.warrencountynursery.com

The Wildlife Group

Allen Deese
2858 County Road 53
Tuskegee, AL 36083
Phone: (800) 221-9703
www.wildlifegroup.com

Stewards *of our* Streams

Why taking care of our streams
is so important to Alabama's future



Photo by Dr. Guenter Schuster

*By Jeff Powell,
Aquatic Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

Did you know that Alabama has more different kinds of freshwater fishes, mussels, snails, and yes, crayfishes than anywhere else on the planet? Chances are you probably didn't, but right here in our own backyard, Alabamians can now boast of being Number One in more than just football. From the cascading streams of the Tennessee Valley to the slow lumbering rivers of the Mobile Delta, we have more than 310 different species of freshwater fish, 180 mussels, 160 snails, and 85 crayfish. Wow, these numbers still amaze me every time I rattle them off! In fact, some water bodies such as the Paint Rock River and the Cahaba River themselves have over 100 species of fish.

Maintaining this wonderful diversity is sometimes a challenge, but it is the responsibility of every citizen to recognize what type(s) of activities might influence it. Whether you're a large timber producer, a farmer, or even someone who lives in a subdivision in town, we all share this responsibility and are accountable for our actions that affect streams and water quality. The hard part sometimes is actually recognizing what these responsibilities are and what the consequences – and benefits – can be.

For example, in the North River watershed in Tuscaloosa and Fayette counties, we have discovered that reducing the amount of sediment from dirt roads that wash into streams during rainfall



Photo courtesy of USFWS

Photo courtesy of USFWS



Before



After



Slackwater darter

Conservation Fisheries, Inc

events can significantly reduce water treatment costs for municipal water suppliers. This reduction in sediment not only helps produce an economic benefit for the citizens of small towns such as Berry, Alabama, but also provides an important service for the freshwater critters that live in the streams. Freshwater mussels need clear water because of their elaborate spawning ritual. As I mentioned above, there are over 180 different species of mussels in Alabama and each one of these species has what we call a “preferred host fish species” that is required to be present during spawning. Therefore, when streams flow muddy because of runoff from a dirt road or from some kind of discharge pipe, this unique reproductive strategy can be inhibited.

The Town of Berry was able to reduce annual chemical costs to remove sediment by 46 percent.

Other impacts that often go unnoticed might be a poorly designed road culvert or an old dam that no longer functions as it was initially intended. Yes, old mill dams might seem to be permanent and historic features on the landscape, but these types of structures can result in backing up water and may even cause flooding at times. They can also be a hazard to those of us who enjoy canoeing or kayaking, and they can provide a barrier to fish during their migration runs.

An example includes culverts in Limestone County [photos above] that were replaced to allow a small fish called the “slackwater darter” (*Etheostoma boschungii*) to complete its spawning migration. For most of the year, this rather mundane little fish

(Continued on page 16)

Stewards of our Streams

(Continued from page 15)

lives under stream banks and rocks, but come December, males get on their best spawning garbs and begin migrating great distances in search of the perfect spawning area. These areas consist of small, headwater seeps – sometimes overlooked by the casual observer – and are often in the middle of a field, pasture, or even a backyard. The desired area is always wet and contains certain types of wetland vegetation that is used to attach the eggs. So, without clear passage from the river to the spawning ground, this little fish would not be able to reproduce.

Another example of a barrier was in St. Clair County at Big Canoe Creek. Goodwin's Mill was a large mill dam constructed in the late 1800s by local residents for grinding corn and other grains of the day. The old mill house was deconstructed in the 1940s and all that remained were the crumbling remnants of the dam. Like the culverts in Limestone County, Goodwin's Mill Dam was a barrier to fish . . . it restricted the distribution of mussels, and it was a hazard to canoeists paddling down Big Canoe Creek. It was also causing significant erosion to the property of a downstream landowner. Thanks to the willingness of a couple of key landowners, the old dam was removed in 2013 and the natural functions of the stream are now restored [photos below and right].

Being able to identify these types of projects, especially on private lands, is paramount to the health of our rivers and our economy. Unlike Western states where large tracts of land are in federal or state ownership, over 90 percent of the land in Alabama is in private ownership, and most of that is in some form of silvicultural management. Therefore, for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to fulfill its mission, we must be able to work effectively with private landowners. Unfortunately, the public often shy away from voluntarily coming forward to the Service with project ideas due to the negative perception associated with environmental laws and regulations. Here in Alabama, we'd like to change that perception because we fully recognize that without the support of private landowners and communities, we will never be successful at protecting our water resources and critters, and Alabama will never maintain that number one status with which we have been so richly blessed.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service offers programs as well as technical expertise to assist private landowners, and it works with communities and businesses to improve habitat and conditions in streams. There are also incentive programs that can often provide funding to assist with projects. If you would like to discuss a potential project or just talk about a unique freshwater species on your property, please contact me at (251) 441-5858. 📞

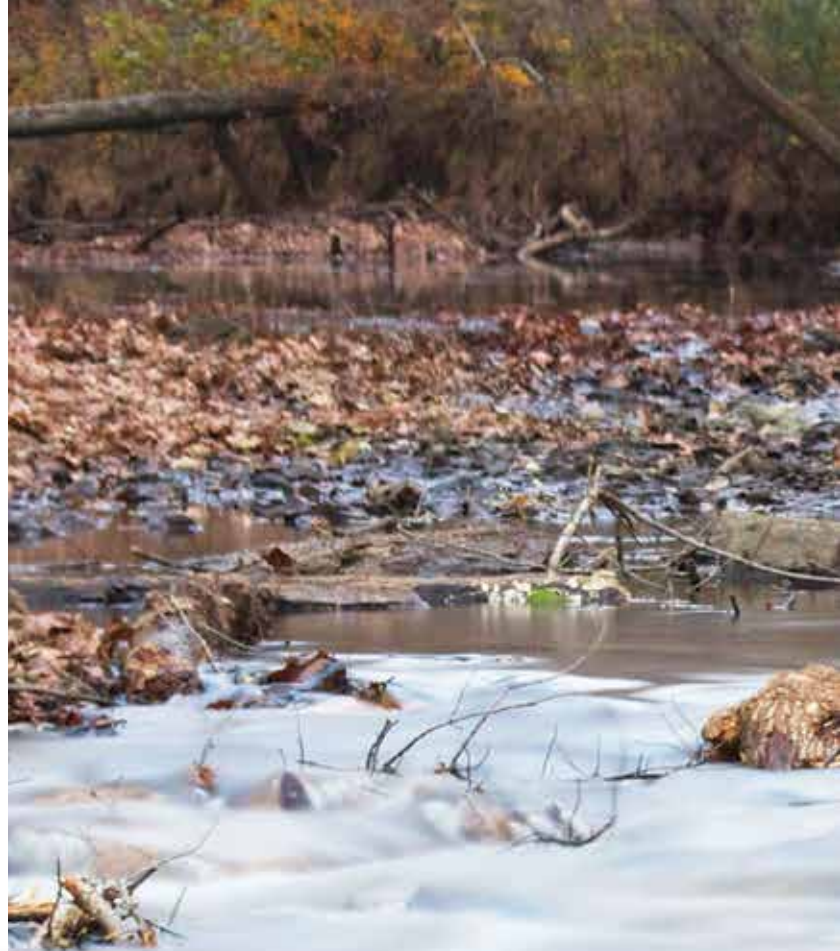
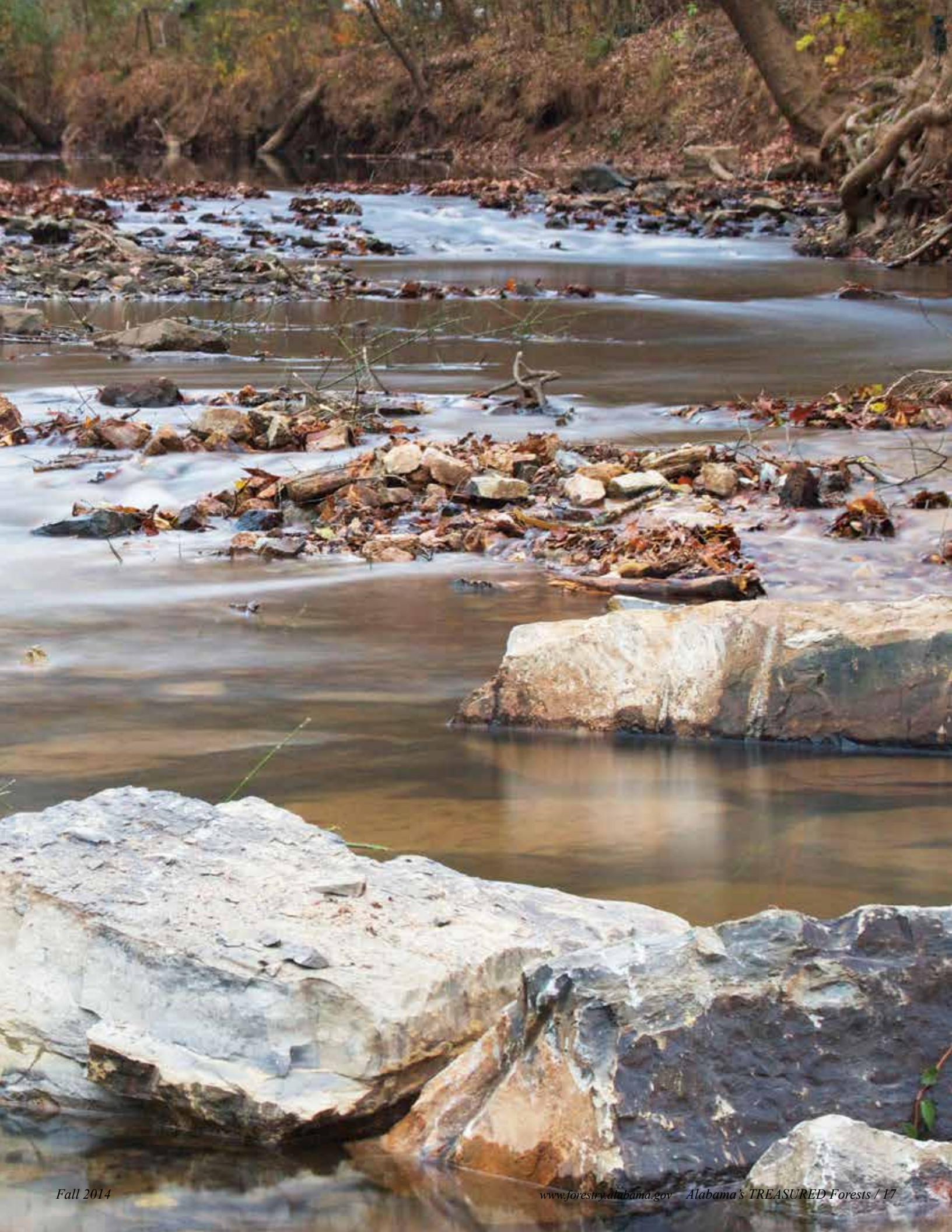


Photo by Frank Chitwood





Wood Duck Boxes

Installation & Maintenance

*By Justin Brock, Wildlife Biologist, Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries,
Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources*

Wood ducks are commonly seen on Alabama's marshes, swamps, and other wetland areas. This duck is perceived by many to be one of the most beautiful species in North America and is a favorite of waterfowl hunters. Fortunately for residents of Alabama, the wood duck can also do something that most duck species do not – that is, call Alabama home year-round. The wood duck is one of few waterfowl species found throughout the year in Alabama. Because of this, Alabama landowners can have a greater impact on wood ducks than on other waterfowl species that may only spend the winter months in the area, or just simply pass through on their way South.

There are many factors to consider when managing a property for wood ducks. The ducks need an environment that provides the right amounts of food, cover, and water to survive. However, the amount of quality nesting cavities is sometimes overlooked. In some locations, there are not adequate numbers of mature trees to provide natural nest cavities due to logging or other activities. In such areas, the construction of wood duck boxes may be a needed management strategy.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service first used wood duck boxes in 1937. Since that time, they have been used on numerous properties to increase local populations of wood ducks. Boxes should be placed in any habitat that has enough food and cover, but does not provide enough natural nesting cavities. Once an area has been identified, the number of boxes needed and the location of each must be determined.

Start small when initially placing wood duck boxes in an area. Place only the number of boxes that can be maintained annually. The recommended number is one per acre of suitable habitat, with the boxes spaced at least 55 to 110 yards apart. Once 50-80 percent of these boxes are being used, more may be added if they can be maintained.

Opinions differ on how much to conceal the boxes. Research shows that boxes placed in areas that are more concealed with dense vegetation are less susceptible to becoming a dump nest (i.e., nests where multiple ducks lay eggs and cause the nest to be abandoned). However, nests located in open areas tend to be more productive, even though they may have a higher chance of becoming a dump nest. Therefore, it is recommended that boxes be placed in open areas. Nest boxes should be observed to determine nest success.

Ideally, nest boxes should be placed over or very close to water. However, they do not have to be over water if this makes them hard to maintain. Remember, the farther the boxes are

Photo courtesy of USFWS



located from the water, the chances increase for predation as ducklings leave the nest.

Once a location is identified, the height of the box must also be considered. A height of at least 6 feet is recommended, but other factors such as water level fluctuations should be considered. Water levels can vary greatly throughout the year in some locations. Nest boxes should be placed higher than the average annual high-water events to avoid problems caused by fluctuating water levels. In many situations, such as along larger creeks and rivers, wood duck boxes may need to be placed up to 20 feet above normal water level to avoid problems.

One important tool to help enhance nesting success is the use of a predator guard. This predator guard should be installed below the box and, if mounted on a tree, all limbs or other debris allowing a predator access to the nest should be removed. The box and predator guard should be checked and maintained at least once a year. During the inspection, repair any damage to the box or predator guard. The inside of the boxes should be cleaned, and three to four inches of new sawdust or wood shavings should be added. Also, document the nest success of each box during inspection. This can be particularly important information when deciding if more boxes are needed, and it also provides general information on reproductive success in the area.

Erecting and maintaining wood duck boxes is an effective wildlife management practice for areas where natural nest cavities are limited. Utilizing the proper number of boxes that can be adequately maintained and monitored should provide years of enjoyment, as well as add numerous broods of wood ducks to the population. ♪



Teaching an Old

*By Tim Albritton, State Staff Forester
Natural Resources Conservation Service*

You can, and you should, teach an old dog new tricks. In this particular case, the old dog was me. I was thumbing through an old forest products magazine the other day and ran across an advertisement. The company was advertising the latest technology used in chain saw chaps. The ad's catch phrase was "Cut Wood, Not Legs." The magazine was dated August 1976. So this technology is nothing new; in fact, it has been around the entire 40 years that I have been using a chain saw. I am one of those old-timers that didn't think I needed safety protection while using my chain saw

because I had never had an accident. Never, that is, until this past October.

I was cutting a shooting lane through a thicket so that my son, Joseph, could get a clear shot if a buck were to pass his newly positioned ladder stand. I was busy cutting down small saplings and privet hedge that block our view along the Tallapoosa River bottomland we hunt. Everything was going as planned until I pulled the chain saw back a little too fast and hit my left knee about an inch below my kneecap. The saw was still revved up fairly high, and it ripped through my Carhartt jeans leaving a



Dog New Tricks

Chainsaw Safety

jagged cut about an inch long and a quarter inch wide in my knee.

My first thought was, “Wow, that’s never happened to me before!” Then, my second thought was, “I should have known better.” The fact is, I do know better. I always thought I would just be careful and nothing would ever happen to me, but it did!

My wife encouraged me to let the doctor take a look at it and I finally conceded a few days later. Thankfully, there was no nerve damage, but I did walk with a limp for about two weeks.

So, I began pricing chain saw chaps. I found out that they are not cheap! However, I can attest to this: the doctor’s co-pay, the

tetanus shot, the prescription ointment, extra-large band aids, and the iron-on patch for my Carhartt jeans cost about the same price as my new chain saw chaps.

A couple of weeks ago a neighbor asked my Dad and me if we wanted to cut up a tree that had fallen in his driveway for firewood, and help him get it out of the way. We did, and was I ever so proud to put on my new chain saw chaps and demonstrate how this old dog had learned a new trick!

The catchy phrase in the advertisement was right: “Cut Wood, Not Legs.” Take the advice of this old dog . . . get all your safety equipment first; then go cut wood!🐕

Western Wildfires –

Whenever a plea is made for firefighting personnel, whether by the U.S. Forest Service or another state, Alabama Forestry Commission employees are always quick to answer the call. With Washington and Oregon both experiencing some of the largest wildfires in their histories this past summer, they requested assistance. Collectively, the AFC sent out 15 wildland firefighters on these Western details to assist with wildfire suppression efforts through an agreement with the Forest Service. These individuals were selected based on their qualifications and their availability each week for ROSS, the Forest Service “Resource Ordering and Status System.”

In mid-July, seven AFC associates responded for details in single resource positions such as Heavy Equipment Boss, Strike Team Leader - Heavy Equipment, or Crew Boss. Derrick Heckman (St. Clair County) and James “Moto” Williams (Chambers County) both received assignments in Washington State. Five men were dispatched to wildfires in Oregon, including Ethan Barrett (Hale County), Jason Berry (Walker County), Michael King (Crenshaw County), Joel Bartlett (Marion County), and Hank McKinley (Tuscaloosa County). Wildfire assignments included the Carlton Complex, Shaniko Butte, Bridge 99 Complex, and Sunflower, among others.


Another eight AFC firefighters were activated on July 25. Assembling at the National Forests of Alabama office in Montgomery, they were part of a 20-man wildfire suppression hand crew deployed to the Carlton Complex in Washington State. Crew members from the AFC included: Joey Donnelly (Escambia County), Dearl Driggers (Geneva County), Rickey Fields (Baldwin County), Ashley Haden (Russell County), Keith Niedermeier (Cherokee County), Jeffrey Owens

(Butler County), Lester Williams (Geneva County), and Shane Woodham (Cherokee County). They returned to Alabama on August 14.

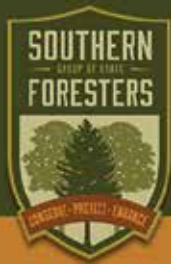
Additionally, Joel Bartlett departed for a second tour on August 9, headed to Washington State to assist as a Heavy Equipment Boss with the Snag Canyon wildfire response. Moto Williams and Michael King also departed for a second tour on September 22, assigned to the large King Fire in California. All returned safely.

According to State Forester Greg Pate, these AFC firefighters are required to pass the strictest training and physical fitness requirements. Most are veterans of Western details in recent years, having previously fought wildfires in states including California, Idaho, Montana, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Texas. “Although our staff is extremely small, we feel the need to help our sister states and brotherhood of firefighters in their time of need,” said Pate. “The experience these firefighters gain through such assignments helps us in meeting our mandate of suppressing forest fires in Alabama.”





ANSWERING THE CALL TO BATTLE



APPLICATIONS

[Public Viewer](#)[Professional Viewer](#)[Communities-At-Risk Editor](#)

Introducing **SouthWRAP**: Wildfire Risk Assessment Website Now Available For Public Use

At a Commissioners meeting on October 28 in Montgomery, the Protection Division introduced a new website that will help homeowners and communities across the state determine wildfire risk, as well as take measures to minimize or mitigate potential wildfire hazards. The Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal, nicknamed “SouthWRAP,” allows users in Alabama and 12 other Southern states to identify wildfire threats based on landscape characteristics, historical fire occurrence, weather conditions, and terrain. It also routes users to resources that can help them implement wildfire prevention practices.

Accessible at www.SouthernWildfireRisk.com, the tools are free to use. Professional users such as community planners and land developers, wildland fire managers and emergency services organizations, as well as civic leaders and local governments can use SouthWRAP to generate a report packaging all the wildfire risk data for their specific communities. Such a tool can be useful in defining mitigation options, allocating resources, and prioritizing programs that will better protect communities.

SouthWRAP is a web portal that grants public access to risk assessment data that previously hasn’t been readily available, particularly in a user-friendly format.

“We’re excited about this new wildfire prevention tool. It can and should be a ‘pivot point’ for Southerners as they learn what their risks are and how to mitigate them,” Alabama State Forester Greg Pate commented. “It is a tool that neighbor can pass on to neighbor – making our state and the South a safer place to live.”

“My colleagues and I were excited to hear about the Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal,” said Alabama Forestry Commission Chairman Salem Saloom. “This website will enable homeowners, civic leaders, community planners, elected officials and others to identify the risk wildfire poses to their communities. This tool empowers Southerners to be able to better protect their homes and property.”

According to Protection Division Director John Goff, “We are hopeful that all of our AFC associates across the state will utilize SouthWRAP in their counties. With its report generating capabilities, the ‘Professional Viewer’ is a great tool to aid wildland fire professionals in the development of CWPPs (Community Wildfire Protection Plans).”

What is SouthWRAP?

The South Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal, or SouthWRAP, is a web tool that enables civic leaders, community planners, elected officials and others to identify the risk wildfire poses to their communities.

Developed by the Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF), this tool empowers anyone in the Southeastern United States to be able to better protect their homes and communities.



www.southernwildfirerisk.com

Why SouthWRAP is a Powerful Tool

- It provides a mechanism for homeowners, local community planners, and decision-makers at all levels to work together to reduce the wildfire risk threatening Alabama communities.
- The vision is for SouthWRAP to become a collaboration center where information, data, and ideas can be exchanged between government entities at all levels (i.e. federal, state, county, and city).
- SouthWRAP will become the primary mechanism for providing risk information and create awareness about wildfire issues across the state and the South.
- SouthWRAP is also the starting point for decision-making . . . once a community knows the risk, it can then better protect its residences from wildfire with programs such as *Firewise* or other mitigation programs.
- Information from SouthWRAP can be used by communities to create prevention strategies, define mitigation options, allocate resources, and prioritize programs.

SouthWRAP provides easy-to-use, consistent, high-quality wildfire risk information that's accessible to anyone at any time.

(Continued on page 26)



Protecting Alabama from wildfire takes action on everyone's part.

Public Viewer

The featured tool in this application is called "Level of Concern." It allows users to identify the fire intensity potential around their home or any other point of interest on the map, and provides a link to additional resources for users wanting to know how to reduce their risk.



Professional Viewer

Designed to support the community wildfire protection planning needs of government officials, hazard-mitigation planners, and wildland fire professionals. This application contains advanced functionality and additional map themes as compared to the Public Viewer. The key features of this application include the capability to define a project area, generate a detailed risk summary report, and export and download wildfire risk GIS data.

Highly Accessible to the Public and Key Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes the risk assessment information accessible to virtually anyone with an internet connection and is not restricted to just a few power users with expensive GIS software and a robust computer • Increases awareness, communication, and visualization of the risk assessment information to a significantly larger customer base • Centralizes the deployment, administration, and storage of the risk assessment applications and data, which eliminates the need for local software installation and data management • Presents a seamless statewide picture of wildfire risk instead of the data being partitioned by county
User-Friendly, High-Performance Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides fast, intuitive, and easy-to-use applications that allow most users to learn the applications within minutes instead of weeks • Provides users with online self-training content • Removes the need for most users to learn complex GIS software • Allows non-GIS users to perform complex GIS functions quickly and easily (i.e. detailed risk summary report)
Adoptable and Adaptable Development Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the capability to deploy risk assessment information to the web • Serves as a prototype for other states or regions to adopt and implement • Reduces investment for others • Establishes a baseline application that can be easily enhanced in the future

The power of the "Professional Viewer"

SouthWRAP is able to generate a report summarizing wildfire risk for a region. User-friendly mapping applications display information such as fire potential, landscape features, and even places where people live in the wildland. Armed with this information, communities can better plan for, prepare for, and protect against wildfire.

Communities interested in getting started may register (at no charge) in the professional viewer. From there, easy-to-use "getting started" menus will guide you through the portal and toward better protection for your community.



Wildland Arson Hotline (800) 222-2927



Proudly serving Alabama forest landowners for over 90 years . . .

The Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) is the state agency responsible for protecting and promoting the vast resources of Alabama's forests. Understanding the value of these forests to our state's environment and economy, the AFC employs measures to prevent and suppress forest fires; detects, monitors, and alerts forest landowners of destructive invasive plants, insects, and diseases; provides forest management advice and professional technical assistance to private landowners; and provides educational and natural resources-related information to all citizens regarding the benefits of forest culture, preservation, and use, not only for the needs of today but for future generations as well.

Protect • Sustain • Educate

- ◆ **Wildfire Protection Program** – Protect Alabama's citizens and the state's 22.9 million acres of forest land from wildfire, 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- ◆ **Fire Mitigation Program** – Assist landowners with prescribed burning and fire lane construction to protect from harmful wildfires and promote wildlife habitat.
- ◆ **Fire Prevention Programs** – Educate the public, volunteer fire departments, and other stakeholders about wildland fire prevention, including providing Firewise hazard assessment/mitigation plans to homeowners located in the Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) and Community Wildfire Protection Plans in the WUI.
- ◆ **Partnership with Volunteer Fire Departments** – Support over 1,000 volunteer fire departments (VFDs) across the state through acquisition and distribution of federal excess property, communications, and training so that they can better and safely assist in fire suppression efforts.
- ◆ **Firefighter Dispatch Center** – Operate a state-of-the-art dispatch center to coordinate information between AFC firefighters and various volunteer fire departments across the state. Also provide a toll-free fire reporting system to ensure timely reporting and efficient response to wildfires across the state.
- ◆ **Aerial Detection System** – Operate aerial detection system for fires and invasive plants, insects, and disease.
- ◆ **Law Enforcement Program** – Investigate forestry-related crimes such as wildland arson, timber theft, and vandalism or theft of logging equipment.
- ◆ **Emergency Response Teams** – Integral partner with Alabama Emergency Management Agency (EMA) providing emergency response teams during natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornados, floods, and ice storms, as well as law enforcement assistance for special events and emergency situations.
- ◆ **Forest Protection Program** – Protect the state's forests from destructive insects and disease, including southern pine beetle detection and landowner notification program.
- ◆ **Forest Health Monitoring Program** – Monitor the health of Alabama's forests, notifying landowners of infestations, then providing advice and assistance in controlling invasive plants, insects, and disease.
- ◆ **Promotion of Productive Forests** – Provide technical assistance to forest landowners through on-the-ground assessments, written forest management plans, and stand management recommendations.
- ◆ **Technical Service Provider** – Provide cost-share assistance programs to help landowners meet their management objectives.
- ◆ **Ensure Water Quality** – Partner with landowners and other stakeholders in managing our state's forest resources to enhance and protect watersheds and riparian zones. Provide information and guidance to landowners and timber harvesters regarding Best Management Practices (BMPs) to help ensure water quality.
- ◆ **Promote Establishment and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitat** – Provide landowners with wildlife habitat management recommendations.
- ◆ **Annual Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) Data** – Collect data about Alabama's forest resources which is used for current and future economic development recruitment and planning.
- ◆ **Annual Survey of Alabama Forest Products Companies** – Collect information on forest products companies in the state to develop, attract, and locate opportunities for Alabama's forest products firms.
- ◆ **Urban Forestry Assists** – Work with cities and communities to enhance the quality of life by improving the management of urban trees.
- ◆ **Outreach Program** – Identify and inform underserved and minority landowners about good forest stewardship and available cost-share programs; provide technical assistance to help them implement recommended practices.

(Continued on page 28)

. . . We are the Alabama Forestry Commission

Proudly serving Alabama

(Continued from page 27)

- ◆ **Alabama's TREASURED Forests Magazine** – Designed as an educational tool that focuses on good forest stewardship for Alabama landowners, this publication is published three times per year and offered at no charge. It provides timely information on forest management, wildlife habitat practices, cost-share programs, and technology.
 - ◆ **Various Literature and Presentations** – Produced for landowner groups covering topics such as “Selling Your Timber,” “Coastal Pre-Harvest Guide for Forest Landowners,” “Alabama Prescribed Burning Guide,” “Alabama’s Best Management Practices for Forestry,” “50 Ways to Protect Your Home from Wildfire,” and “Five Ways to Protect Your Forestland.”
 - ◆ **Workshops, Field Days, and Tours** – Work with local landowner groups and other natural resources agencies to organize and conduct events that educate landowners about good forest stewardship practices.
 - ◆ **Educational Programs** – Conducted for local schools, civic organizations, and other community groups to promote the importance of Alabama’s forests and forest resources.
- To learn how the Alabama Forestry Commission may be of service to you, contact your county AFC office or visit us online at www.forestry.alabama.gov.[®]

In Their Own Words: Letters to the AFC

To the Editor:

We were very proud to be one of the early owners of Alabama's TREASURED Forests. The land was sold to a paper company in 1996. Thank you for continuing to send the magazine. My husband enjoyed the information and pictures.

Bettie Jo Glenn
Stillwater, Oklahoma

To Dan Jackson

Montgomery, Alabama:

As snow quickly fell across Alabama, our dialysis clinic began to implement our emergency plan. We had a clinic full of patients and staff and we all needed to get home. I would like to extend my deepest praise to Forest Ranger Scott Sweatt for his generosity, kindness and expertise as he first transported our patients home and then returned to the clinic to rescue the staff.

After several hours in downtown Birmingham we realized that the over-the-mountain area where we were headed was impossible to reach. We made the difficult decision to turn around and go back to the clinic where we had been all day. Thanks to Ranger Sweatt, we safely navigated the ice, the hills, and the other cars and made it back. Ranger Sweatt was kind and made us feel safe throughout the entire experience; he even stopped in a convenience store so we could buy food to get us through the night . . . There were many “good Samaritans” in Alabama that night and I am thankful to have been in the care of one of the best.

I appreciate the service of the Alabama

Forestry Commission and especially Ranger Sweatt. Many blessings to you all.
Laura Johnson, LGSW
Social Worker, DSI South Dialysis
Birmingham, Alabama

To Alabama Forestry Commission:

Just a short note to compliment Ross Presley, Richard Johnson, Jason Barrett, and Rickey Fields. Recently these gentlemen did a control burn on property in Stapleton. They were very professional in the manner in which they did the burn and the way they conducted themselves. They represent your department in the great way they did their jobs and the way they protected the surrounding area.

Bill Broadus
Stapleton, Alabama

To Clarke County AFC

Grove Hill, Alabama:

On 10 March I called the Alabama Forestry Service asking how I could get some cypress knees. Two days later I got a call from a very nice man named Kevin Crawford. I told him I was flying down south from Cheyenne, Wyoming, to vacation with my daughter and three granddaughters, and I wanted to get some cypress knees to make into reminders of our vacation. I plan on sanding the knees then wood burning the date of our vacation (it was to celebrate my 70th birthday.)

My granddaughter and I drove north about 70 miles to meet him. We then walked out to the swamp and he cut five knees for me. This is a special thank you for Kevin being so very kind

and thoughtful. He made an old lady extremely happy by going out of his way to call me in Wyoming and then take me out to the swamp to cut cypress knees. I will remember that day forever. Kevin Crawford could not have been kinder or nicer to us.

You are lucky to have Forest Specialist Kevin Crawford working for the State of Alabama. I have told everyone up my way what wonderful and fine people are in Alabama. I do realize it may seem like a little thing to many people but to me it meant the world. Again, thank you, Kevin.
Judy Plummer
Cheyenne, Wyoming

To Benji Elmore

Grove Hill, Alabama:

Two of my relatives and I are small forestry landowners in Choctaw County. We experienced the epidemic of pine beetle devastation and have taken steps to reforest. The Alabama Forestry Commission Office in Butler, Alabama, advised us and provided other assistance as we took action to overcome this situation. One person, Mr. Allan Johnson, was particularly helpful in providing advice during each step of the process as we undertook action to establish a pine plantation in all our areas. He inspected all areas and provided viable options for us to choose. As the work progressed, he was available to assure that all activities were being implemented in accordance with the best forestry practices. He was always available to answer questions by telephone conversation and made himself available for face-to-face meetings as

needed. As a result of Mr. Johnson's assistance, I feel that I received the greatest economic advantage during the whole process. From the harvesting of the timber to the planting of the seedlings the options that I chose were beneficial and will result in a pine plantation that I can be proud of.

Another action that was taken by Mr. Johnson was the inspection of an area where a tornado occurred. After the tornado, he very soon conducted an inspection to determine damage. He immediately notified me that there was no significant damage and I slept better that night.

I continue to have contact with Mr. Johnson on matters related to forestry and he has demonstrated a depth of knowledge that is outstanding. His demeanor and personality make it a pleasure to deal with him on a personal basis. I look forward to future contact with Mr. Johnson as we continue to implement practices for good forestry management. In my opinion he is a great asset as an employee of the Alabama Forestry Commission.

Sincerely,
Shermon E. Roberts, PE (retired)
Union Grove, Alabama

To Ethan Barrett
Greensboro, Alabama:

Many thanks for taking your time and expertise in presenting a most informative talk on "Urban Forestry" yesterday to my UA forestry class. The 20 students and I now know much more about urban forestry and ways to help prevent fires in urban situations. Again, many thanks, Ethan!

S. Wayne Ford
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

To Steve Lamkin
Northport, Alabama:

Many thanks for conducting a very professional presentation yesterday to my UA forestry class at the AFC field office. My 20 students as well as Dr. Staudhammer and I now know much more about the AFC's role in "Timber Theft." Of course, we both know you cover much more than timber theft. Unfortunately, we ran out of time to discuss your other multi-varied roles in the AFC.

Many thanks also for taking care of the woodland garbage problem you implemented for me a few years ago. Of course, I would also like to thank you for

the many times you came to Coaling to our Tuscaloosa County 4-H Natural Resource Field Day and helped discuss natural resources to hundreds of our 4-H youth. It was such a special treat getting to work with you again.

S. Wayne Ford
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

To Benji Elmore
Brewton, Alabama:

On the morning of February 17, the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office investigated the theft of a utility trailer from a logging job site in the Rabun community. The trailer carried approximately \$15,000 worth of equipment and diesel fuel used for logging operations.

Forestry Investigator Donnie Parker offered the assistance of the Forestry Commission's plane and a description of the trailer and general area to search was relayed. At approximately 1200 hours, Investigator Parker called Sheriff's Deputy Al Tolbert advising him that their pilot, Mr. Robert Trimble, had located the trailer . . . The trailer had a flat tire which probably was the result of damage sustained during the theft. Approximately 100 gallons of diesel fuel had been pumped from the fuel tank but all of the other equipment was still in place. It is believed that without the assistance and efforts put forth by Investigator Parker and Mr. Trimble, the thieves probably would have returned for the trailer and/or more of the equipment. I ask that you convey to these two gentlemen our sincere appreciation for their help that day.

Respectfully,
Captain Robert E. King, Jr.
Baldwin County Sheriff's Office
Bay Minette, Alabama

To Jim Jeter
Northport, Alabama:

Thank you so much for presenting a most informative program to our University of Alabama Foundation of Forestry and Natural Resources class last Monday in the SEC Building. It was very educational to see the different roles in forestry since you and I were at Auburn to the present-day forest objectives.

Again, many thanks for using your valuable time and expertise in updating our students on the everyday changing

importance of forestry in our society.

S. Wayne Ford
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

To Brad Lang, Warrior Work Unit
Northport, Alabama:

Just a note to say "thank you" for all the hard work you and your department put in at Lake Lurleen State Park after the April 6 storm. We are almost back to normal; but this would not be possible without your reaching out to help us. My staff and I owe you a debt of gratitude for helping us in our time of need. We were at a loss as where to start and there you were to help us recover quickly.

Rosemary Burnette
Park Manager, Lake Lurleen State Park
Coker, Alabama

To the Editor:

I enjoy the articles and the beautiful photographs. Thanks,
Jim Cook
Vestavia, Alabama

To Baldwin County AFC
Loxley, Alabama:

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of the Alabama Forestry Commission in Baldwin County for their recent efforts to control a forest fire in the Elsanor Community May 22. I own 30 acres . . . Acreage belonging to my adjoining property owner caught fire on May 22. Alabama foresters from Baldwin County quickly recognized the fire and made all necessary fire control measures to contain this fire. Their efforts contained the fire and prohibited it from advancing to my property and that of other property owners who homestead their properties.

I would like to especially commend Joey Donnelly and crew for the professionalism while managing this fire. They made necessary efforts to control the fire with minimal effects to my property and they took great detail to make sure all fencing and gates were left intact and all fire guards left a very manageable state. Please share my comments with those who are entrusted with the management and leadership of the Alabama Forestry Commission.

Sincerely,
Mark Kraft
Seven Bridges Management, Inc.
Daphne, Alabama

MEMORIALS

James A. Hughes 1931-2014



The TREASURE Forest family in Alabama has lost another beloved member. James A. Hughes, Houston County TREASURE Forest landowner, passed away on July 23, 2014, at the age of 82. He not only practiced good stewardship, but also encouraged others to do the same. Anyone that ever heard Mr. James Hughes speak could have no doubt as to how much he truly loved the TREASURE Forest program and believed it was indeed making the world a better place for current and future generations.

A native of Cottonwood, Alabama, Mr. James Hughes served in the U.S. Air Force after graduating from high school and then attended Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn University) to study electrical engineering. Following his graduation in 1958, Mr. Hughes began work with Georgia Power in Macon and later Jonesboro, Georgia. The first year he lived in Jonesboro, he was chosen Outstanding Young Man for his multitude of community service activities, including involvement in the United Methodist Church, scouts, and Little League baseball.

Mr. Hughes returned to Cottonwood in 1962 to serve as head of the Bank of Cottonwood. Under his leadership, the bank grew and a new facility was built under his direction, opening in 1974. After 18 years of service at the bank, he began to manage the farm holdings of W.M.

Lewis, Jr. and became a renowned tree farmer. An eager learner and a gifted, caring teacher, Mr. Hughes was known across Alabama for his stewardship of all natural resources.

In 1986, then Alabama State Forester C.W. (Bill) Moody established the “State Foresters TREASURE Forest Advisory Committee,” naming landowners James Hughes and Dan James as key original members. When this Committee was eventually converted to become the Board of Directors of the Alabama TREASURE Forest Landowners Association, James Hughes was named its first president. The significant contributions of these gentlemen and this committee have been recognized in the success of the TREASURE Forest program as well as the association’s impact on Alabama forestry and stewardship. Over the years, their leadership and enthusiasm set an example followed by landowners throughout the state.☝

Portions excerpted from the AFA Newsroom, Vol. 9, No.15, August 1, 2014 (a publication of the Alabama Forestry Association), and www.sunsetmemorialpark.com/Obituaries.php?oID=1278, as well as History of TREASURE Forest (www.forestry.alabama.gov/PDFs/History_of_TREASURE_Forest.pdf)

Charles B. Roberson 1931-2014



Lauderdale County TREASURE Forest landowner Charles Braden Roberson passed away on July 8, 2014, at the age of 82. A graduate of Lauderdale County High School, Mr. Roberson was a veteran of the U.S. Army serving in Korea, and a graduate of Auburn University. He enjoyed a successful and rewarding career as an entrepreneur in agriculture and property development. His tireless commitment to various civic clubs and volunteer organizations was well recognized in the community. However, his most cherished legacy is perhaps his dedication to the family’s forest. Adjacent to Joe Wheeler State Park, the Roberson Family Farm is located in the Rogersville community of Alabama. It was the host farm of the 2003 Annual Alabama Landowner and TREASURE Forest Conference tour. The theme that year of “Focus on Our Families” was most

appropriate as he, his wife, his sister, and her husband lead four generations in working the family tree farm, transforming it from cotton and hay to more than 500 beautiful acres of planted pine, planted and natural hardwoods, and wildlife habitat.☝



Charles Roberson in deep concentration as he feeds pines seedlings into the tree planter.

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W. Kelly Mosley Award

Auburn's Cliff Webber
Recognized for Conservation Efforts

Cliff Webber, a retired research fellow and current visiting professor in Auburn University's School of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences, was recently recognized for his contributions to natural resources conservation in Alabama with the W. Kelly Mosley Award for Achievement. The award is given annually to an unsung champion for Alabama's environment and is administered by the Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences.

Webber was nominated by the staff of Alabama Water Watch (AWW), who pointed to his years of work to improve water quality in the Auburn area and statewide as reasons for his nomination.

"Cliff Webber has worked selflessly and tirelessly over the past 20 years, educating children, participating in water quality studies and advocating for clean water and a healthy environment," said Eric Reutebuch, associate director of AWW. "There are few people in this state who have given so much of their time and talent over the span of two decades for the protection of our environment."

Webber has served as a leader of Save Our Saugahatchee, heading monitoring efforts within the creek's 220-square-mile watershed. He was instrumental in drafting the city of Auburn's erosion and sediment control ordinance, which, since 2002, has prevented tons of sediment from reaching local streams. Webber also led efforts to negotiate safeguards and ongoing monitoring of contamination in Chewacla Creek caused by a local quarry and has led outdoor workshops for area schoolchildren, teaching them the basics of watershed stewardship. He has also worked with state legislators in the development of a comprehensive state water management policy.

Established in 1980, the W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Awards Program recognizes outstanding volunteer conservation efforts in forestry, wildlife, fisheries, soil, water, air, wildflowers, non-game wildlife, environmental education, conservation and urban forestry. The program is named in honor of the late W. Kelly Mosley, an Auburn alumnus and businessman who was an early advocate of forest stewardship and whose Marengo County farm, Pineland, was the first certified TREASURE Forest in Alabama. ♣

Cliff Webber, left, receiving the W. Kelly Mosley Award from John Jensen, center, interim director of the Auburn University School of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences, and Eric Reutebuch, associate director of Alabama Water Watch.





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Bigleaf Magnolia

(*Magnolia macrophylla*)

By Fred Nation, Environmental Services, Baldwin County

Ever wonder how a tree gets its name? Not much doubt about this one . . . Bigleaf magnolia is a small-to-medium-sized, deciduous tree with an irregular crown, often with multiple stems from the ground. The leaves seem impossibly large, up to a yard long, and a foot wide. The leaf bases are “auriculate,” with a pair of earlike lobes. The undersides are chalky blue-green. In winter, after the big leaves are on the ground, they are often visible from quite a distance as a curious bleached, almost white area on the forest floor.

The late spring or early summer flowers are creamy white, fragrant, with purple streaks at the bases of the petals, and they are often a foot across. They are a good match for the leaves: *Magnolia macrophylla* has the distinction of producing both the largest simple leaves and the largest single flowers of any North American tree. The fruits of bigleaf magnolia hold still another surprise for visitors who walk up on them in summer or fall: they are a bit larger than a tennis ball, scaly, almost perfectly globose [ball-shaped], and they are rose pink in color.

Bigleaf magnolia, also called “cowcumber magnolia,” was first described and named by French naturalist Andre Michaux in June 1795, near Charlotte, North Carolina. In Alabama they are widely scattered in rich moist forests throughout most of the state. Wherever they occur, from Virginia to Ohio and south to the Gulf Coast, population densities are low, and they are considered to be an uncommon tree. In Florida, the smaller, more shrubby Ashe magnolia is rare and endemic to the panhandle. Some authorities consider it to be a separate species, *Magnolia ashei*, while others view it as a subspecies of the southeastern populations.

Along with its relatives, bigleaf magnolia has a distinguished history as a medicinal plant. During [America's] civil war, Dr. Francis Porcher, a Charleston physician, wrote a book called *Resources of the Southern Fields and Forests*, to suggest substitutes for medicines lost to the Confederacy by the Union blockade. He suggested it “as a stimulant, aromatic tonic, with

considerable diaphoretic powers. The leaves, steeped in brandy, or a decoction of them, are valuable in pectoral affections, recent cold, etc. The tincture, made by macerating the fresh cones and seeds, or bark of root in brandy, which best extracts its virtues, is much used as a popular remedy in rheumatism and inflammatory gout.” The Cherokee Indians have used the bark of bigleaf magnolia as an analgesic, to cure pain including toothache, and as a treatment for gastrointestinal disturbances.

When encountered in the forest, bigleaf magnolia is a pleasant and surprising sight. Container-grown stocks are now sometimes available from growers and garden centers. They can be dramatic and interesting additions to our parks and home landscapes as ornamentals – if provided with a sheltered location to protect those huge leaves from damaging winds. The Alabama state champion *Magnolia macrophylla*, newly declared in 2014, is a giant of its kind. Located in Wilcox County, it measures 42 inches in trunk circumference, 58 feet tall, with an average crown spread of 37 feet. 🌳



Photos by Fred Nation