

# ALABAMA

IT'S OUR NATURE

The Nature  
Conservancy





# ALABAMA

Cahaba. Paint Rock. Walls of Jericho. Little River Canyon. Talladega. Splinter Hill Bog. Mobile-Tensaw. The Gulf. Ask yourself about the places you, your family, and your friends love in Alabama, and the answers inevitably revolve around our iconic lands and waters.

Alabama's rivers and streams, marshes, forests, coasts, and mountains are the beating heart of a biologically diverse landscape like none other on Earth. Our state is the center of the world's biological diversity of freshwater invertebrates and the continental center of diversity for many other plants and animals. There are hundreds of species in Alabama that are found nowhere else on Earth.

This is our Alabama, and it is time for nature to depend on us. It is time to protect more of these places, more of our fresh water, and more clean air so that we, and the plant and animals that live here with us, can continue to enjoy these resources. We must address the unprecedented pressure we are placing on our natural world.

From the water, air, and food we need for life to the resources that provide recreation and energy, our ability to thrive and prosper depends on the choices we make right now.

You can help us with the critical work of conservation in Alabama.

*Cover : Tupelo and Cypress Swamp, Alabama River  
Opposite page: Locust Fork River  
Both photos © Hunter Nichols/TNC*



# The heart of

*Vietnamese fisherman, Bayou La Batre © Carlton Ward, Jr.*



# GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY

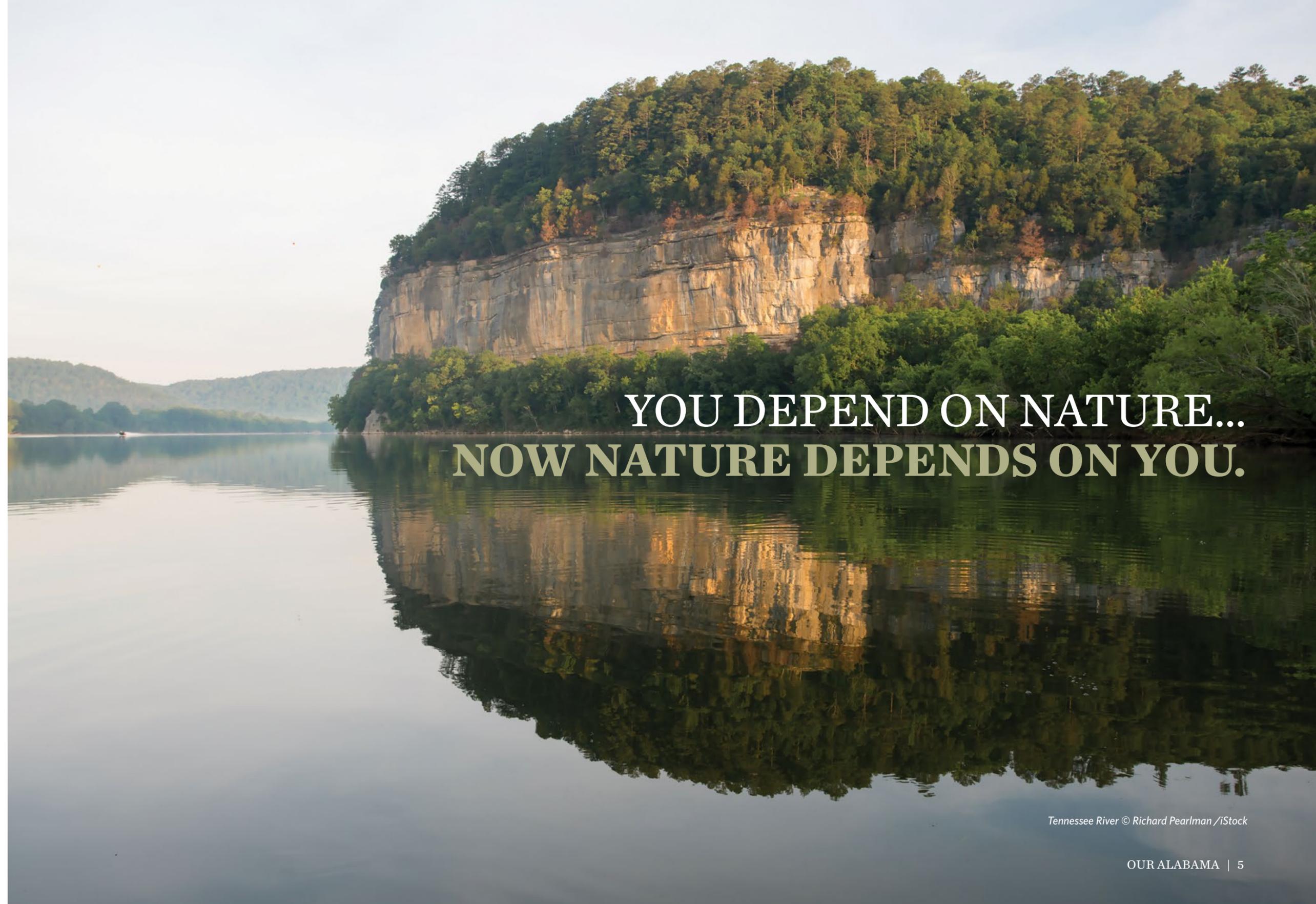
*Golden orb-weaver spider © Richard Pearlman /iStock*



The Nature Conservancy envisions a world where people and nature flourish together—but we have only a short time to get it right. You can join us as we work to solve our most pressing environmental challenges. Over the next 5 years, we will work to:

- **Secure clean water** for our rivers so Alabamians can safely eat our native fish and seafood, enjoy swimming and boating, and trust the water we drink.
- **Build healthy and resilient lands** from north to south that filter our water and provide wildlife habitat that can endure as our climate changes.
- Leverage deeper investments to **restore living habitats** like natural channels, oyster reefs, and marshes that serve as a first line of defense for coastal communities.
- Inspire and mobilize Alabamians to **advance conservation** in communities across Alabama.

**Our Alabama, The Nature Conservancy's \$25-million campaign for conservation, offers innovative and practical solutions** to address these challenges in our waters, our lands and our coast.



**YOU DEPEND ON NATURE...  
NOW NATURE DEPENDS ON YOU.**

# UNIQUELY ALABAMA



More than **200,000 acres of land** in Alabama protected by The Nature Conservancy and partners

Every dollar invested in land conservation through Forever Wild **returns \$5 in natural goods and services** to the state



Outdoor recreation contributes **\$4.2 billion** to Alabama's economy annually

- Directly provides 135,000 jobs
- Generates \$14 billion in consumer spending
- Generates \$857 million in state and local tax revenue

The most **biologically diverse** freshwaters in the entire United States

- 20 fish species found nowhere else in the world

Ranked **third nationwide** for the number of imperiled species

- Approximately half of all extinctions in the continental United States since the 1800s have occurred in the Mobile River basin
- Currently home to 131 endangered species



**53 miles** of coastline

**69 percent** of the state is forested

- Third most forested state in the country



The smallest area of **public lands** in the south

The fourth most **biologically diverse** state in the country

**132,000 miles** of rivers and streams

What I love about Alabama outdoors is that it feels like home! I grew up in Mobile and spent lots of time on Mobile Bay and the beaches. I can truly say there is nothing that compares to the feel of the sand, the beauty of the beaches, or the perfect mixture of humidity and sunshine in the Alabama climate. I really enjoy the different terrain Alabama offers. You can start south with the flat green areas near the beach, then head north to Birmingham with plenty of mountainous scenic views. This state offers it all.

BRYANT TURNER



## Our Healthy Water

Goal: \$5,900,000 to protect our rivers and streams

We are drawn to the water for deeply personal reasons. Sometimes we enjoy time with family and friends along a scenic river; other times we need to be alone with our thoughts beneath a glorious Dauphin Island sunset.

Our rivers, streams, and wetlands form a vast circulatory system in Alabama. They connect Mobile Bay to the Cahaba, and Alabama to the Gulf of Mexico and beyond. But they are choked by dams and sediment runoff that block the veins and arteries of this complex natural system.

Our waters are the most ecologically diverse in the United States—but they also lead the nation in aquatic extinctions. You can help us change this.

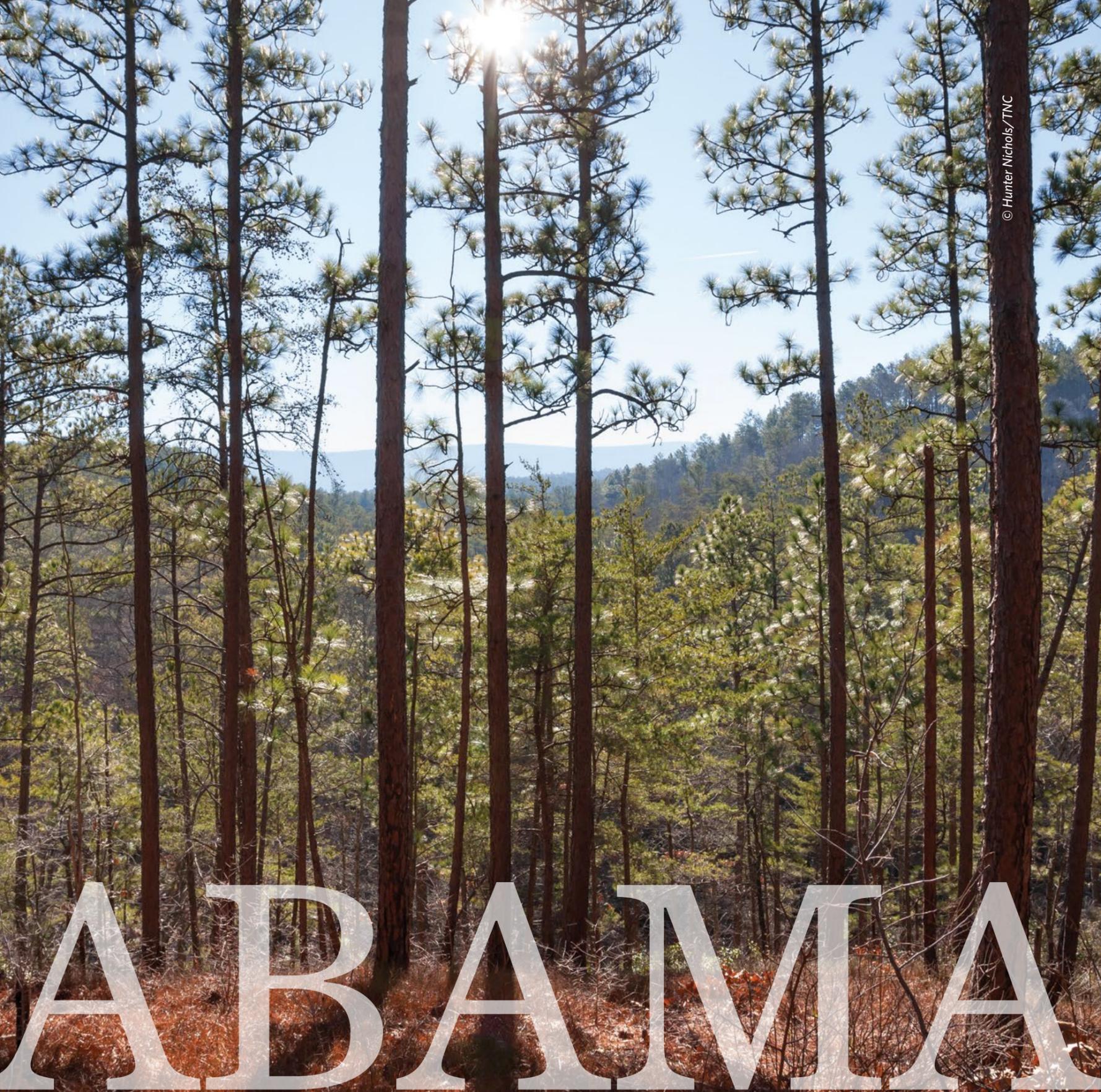
- The Nature Conservancy is embarking on an ambitious plan to ecologically reconnect the Cahaba and Alabama Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico, to allow native migratory fish to once again reach important spawning grounds.
- We have conducted over 40 bank stabilization and sediment abatement projects in the beautiful and diverse Paint Rock River near Huntsville.
- In the Locust Fork of the Black Warrior, we are working to map, prioritize, and restore the riverbank.

You can help us reconnect rivers, protect endangered species, and grow our partnerships with communities so that together we can protect and maintain Alabama's waters. Our work will ensure clean and healthy waters for Alabamians from the Paint Rock to Mobile Bay and beyond.



Little River Canyon © Hunter Nichols/TNC

OUR ALABAMA | 9



© Hunter Nichols/TNC

# OUTR AT ALABAMA

I've loved the Paint Rock Valley ever since I sneaked into the Walls of Jericho more than 30 years ago. Since then, I've led more than 1,000 people into the Walls, spreading the gospel on just how biologically significant this magical valley and river are. I'm no scientist, but I know the biological research going on at Sharp-Bingham Preserve will help the entire planet better understand how forests work.

MIKE DALEN



## Our Resilient Lands

Goal: \$14,800,000 to protect our forests

The Nature Conservancy has protected more than 200,000 acres of ecologically sensitive land, with your help, since our founding in 1989. These are the lands on which we camp, hike, hunt, and spend time with our family. They provide a resting place for hundreds of millions of birds on their annual migration through our state. And they provide a safe shelter to the Red Hills salamander, the Alabama beach mouse, and the nearly 5,000 other species that call Alabama home, including over 125 that are critically threatened or endangered.

These lands are in peril. Climate change, demand for food and energy, invasive species, development, and other pressures are straining nature's ability to remain in balance and to support our communities. We must significantly increase the pace, scope, and scale of conservation in Alabama.

To do this, our approach has evolved from traditional land conservation to also include an ever-growing suite of strategies to restore treasured lands, safeguard wildlife, and increase nature's ability to adapt.

With your help, over the next 10 years we will:

- Protect and connect ecologically significant lands to safeguard habitat, wildlife corridors, and biodiversity to benefit species like the white-topped pitcher plant and the rare Morefield's leather flower.
- Restore fire-maintained habitats and manage these areas for climate resiliency.
- Expand partnerships with government agencies and land management organizations to influence broader change.
- Develop demonstration sites to advance carbon sequestration projects, manage for native habitats, and inspire broader adoption of conservation practices.
- Enable cutting-edge research for diverse hardwood ecosystems at our Sharp-Bingham Mountain Preserve in northeast Alabama, where we are working to establish Alabama's first voluntary carbon market to benefit private landowners.

You can help conserve Alabama's lands and the plant and animal species that depend on them.



Previous pages: Left, Huntsville Space and Rucker Center © Wikimedia  
Right, Talladega Mountains © Hunter Nichols/TNC  
This page: Sharp-Bingham Mountain Preserve © Hunter Nichols/TNC

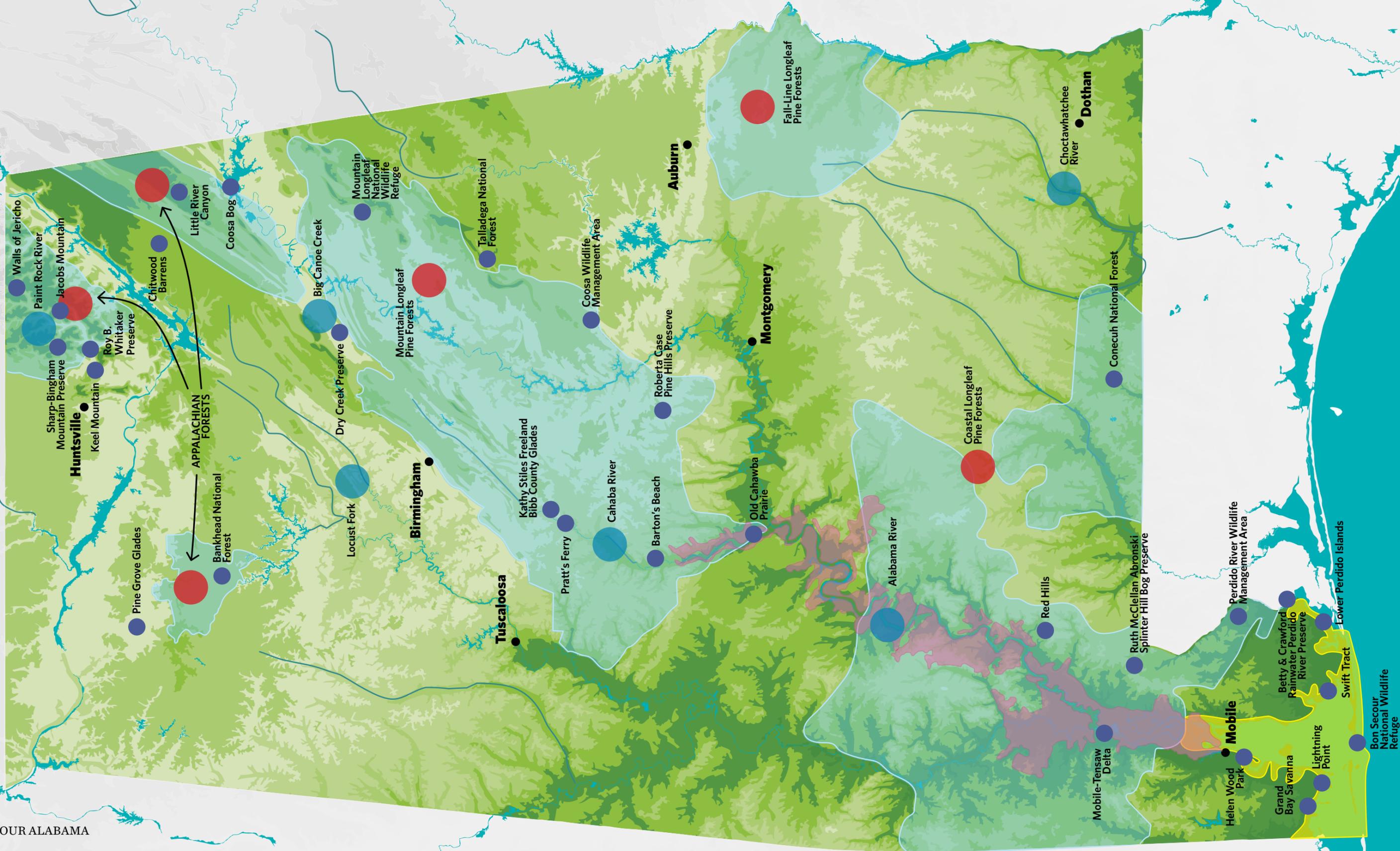


iStock

Edmund Pettus Bridge, Selma © iStock



Natural Bridge © Tim Thompson



Legend:

- Alabama Landscape Priorities
- Alabama Freshwater Priorities
- Places We Help Protect
- Alabama Coastal Priorities
- Forest Focus Areas
- Alabama River Forests



Little River Falls © Hunter Nichols/TNC



Cheaha State Park © Hunter Nichols/TNC



Vulcan Statue, Birmingham © William/iStock

Living in Alabama is a gift. As an old(er) person, I value the accessibility of the rivers and forests. I love the birds in particular and I can get into a canoe if someone will paddle. I have seen a kingfisher following us down the river and, in the distance, an alligator slowly crossing. The very best, though, is finding a place with a view where I can sit, take a deep breath, and just be.

CAMERON VOWELL



## Our Thriving Coast

Goal: \$4,300,000 to preserve our coast

The millions of birds who land on Dauphin Island's beaches, the Grand Bay pine savanna, and the marshes near Orange Beach and Gulf Shores are all coming home. Our coast is home for human and animal communities and natural ecosystems that have been here forever.

Our coastal ecosystems are among Alabama's most precious resources - and also among its most endangered. The impacts of offshore oil production, frequent and more severe storms, climate change, and pollution from cities and farms are compounding.

The Nature Conservancy is stewarding relationships built over time and applying lessons learned from projects on the ground and in the water to secure a sustainable future for our state's coastal and marine habitats. Our ambitious plans focus on connectivity—because what happens upstream has a direct impact on the coast and into the Gulf of Mexico.

With projects like the shoreline restoration at Lightning Point in Bayou La Batre, and the successful preservation of Grand Bay Savanna, we know that restoration at scale can be successful. These projects have set the stage for the work to come over the next decade on the coast. Over the coming years we will:

- Conduct research, implement restoration projects, and develop plans for entire watersheds to improve water quality in Mobile Bay and upriver.
- Acquire and steward coastal lands and restore shorelines.
- Develop and support stormwater management projects to improve water quality.
- Work with local communities to incorporate nature-based solutions into local planning and disaster recovery to improve environmental and community resilience.

We know that these strategies work, and we know that at scale, they can help all of us sustain our coast's bounty for people today and for future generations. You can help us do this work.



Black skimmers, Bayou La Batre © Beth Maynor Young/TNC

It has been a pure pleasure to be able to buy conservation land for the last 20 plus years for The Nature Conservancy. In life it is rare that one can do something for a living that feels like a contribution to humanity and biodiversity. We all owe it to our next generation of people, plants, and animals to have an environment that is clean and as functional as possible. I love the quote from Robert Swan: **“The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.” We must do it, or at least do our best trying!**

**STEVE NORTHUTT**



## NATURE SUPPORTS YOU. WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR NATURE?

### OUR HEALTHY WATER

- Complete full-scale river assessments and use results to compel decision-makers to invest resources that address threats to waterways and restore our waters for nature and people.
- Implement restoration projects in priority watersheds that reduce pollution and make our rivers and streams more resilient. Demonstrate to decision-makers that green infrastructure can reduce the negative environmental impacts of stormwater, reduce non-point source pollution, and reduce sedimentation, while costing less than traditional methods of flood control.
- Help aquatic species migrate by removing or managing instream barriers to create more connected and resilient stream and river systems.
- Support the incorporation of science-based instream flow studies into Statewide Water Policy and other mechanisms to protect ecologically appropriate flows in priority rivers.
- Share knowledge, expertise, and science, both nationally and internationally, on freshwater projects in priority areas in Alabama.

### OUR RESILIENT LANDS

- Protect additional acres of ecologically significant lands to safeguard Alabama’s native habitats, wildlife corridors and rich biodiversity, while connecting core forest blocks to improve climate resiliency benefit surrounding communities.
- Use prescribed fire as a tool to maintain habitats that are naturally adapted to fire and manage these areas for climate resiliency. This approach will prepare Alabama’s forests for changes in climate, locally and regionally.
- Expand partnerships with state, federal and non-governmental land management agencies and organizations, as well as with local communities and indigenous peoples, to ensure that forest restoration and sustainable management is planned and implemented.
- Develop demonstration sites that advance carbon sequestration projects, manage for native habitats, and drive others to replicate this restoration work.

### OUR THRIVING COAST

- Use innovative methods in watershed planning to benefit water quality and ecosystems, collaborate with partners and stakeholders on restoration projects, and support long-term scientific studies and monitoring.
- Develop, implement, and support restoration projects to improve the ecological function and sustainability of coastal habitats through land acquisition, land stewardship, and living shorelines that incorporate nature-based solutions, using Lightning Point as the flagship project.
- Develop and implement stormwater management projects to improve water quality for ecosystem health and promote public safety. By working upstream from the coast, we can improve the long-term sustainability of coastal habitats as climate impacts amplify.
- Work with local governments to incorporate nature-based solutions into local planning and disaster recovery to improve environmental and community resilience.
- Share knowledge, expertise, and science, both nationally and internationally, on coastal restoration projects in priority areas in Alabama as appropriate.



**EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR CONSERVATION**

**The William R. Ireland, Sr.  
Opportunity Fund**

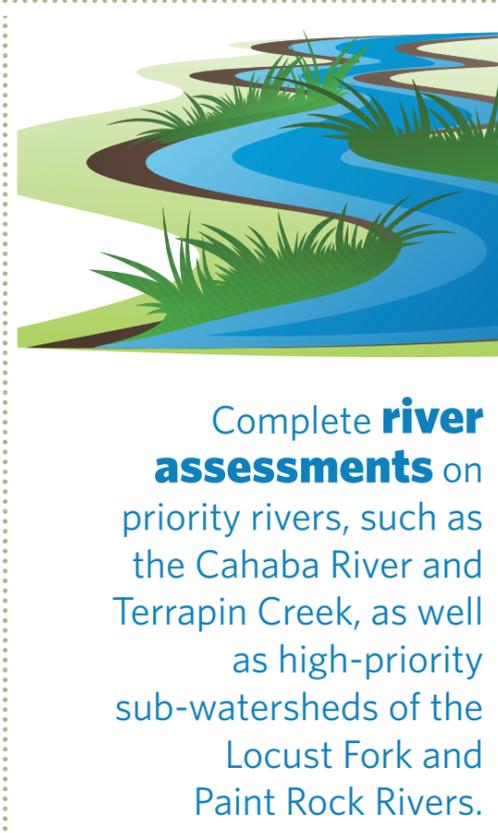
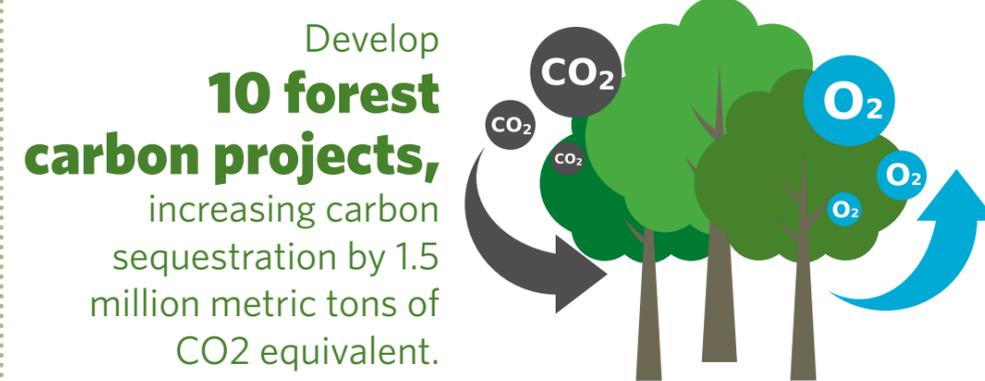
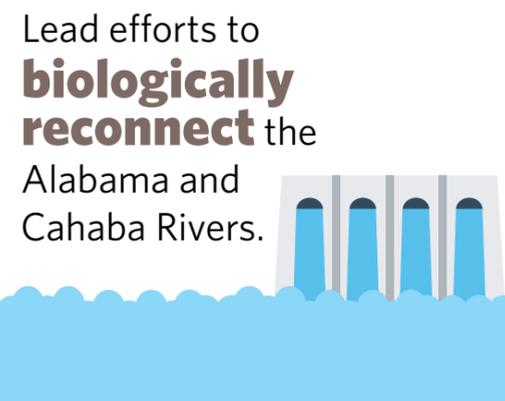
Since 2015 The Nature Conservancy has secured hundreds of acres for permanent protection using the William R. Ireland, Sr., Opportunity Fund. This revolving fund has fulfilled its promise. Interest free dollars from the fund have been used for acquisition, and have since been recouped, meaning the funds can be used multiple times to secure more lands in the future. This is a rare opportunity to multiply the impact of your contribution in perpetuity.

The Nature Conservancy is seeking to expand the fund to \$10 million to accomplish the kind of conservation at a scale that allows us to build a resilient and connected landscape in Alabama. The Ireland Opportunity Fund is a model for protection and philanthropy at scale, and is a necessary path forward to meet our goal of protecting 50,000 acres of priority forests in Alabama over the next 10 years.

*Paint Rock River © Hunter Nichols/TNC*

# CAMPAIGN OUTCOME HIGHLIGHTS

Complete **10-15 restoration projects** in priority watersheds, including at least two related to urban stormwater.



There's so much natural beauty in southwest Alabama, particularly the wonderful Mobile-Tensaw Delta. My husband and I also enjoy walking in the forests of Blakeley State Park. We love kayaking in the lower Delta to see wild irises, Delta lilies, and lotuses, and in the Upper Delta to see swallowtail kites, owls, hawks, and migrating warblers. We enjoy sharing this beauty with our children and grandchildren. I hope others may be inspired, as I have been, to support the preservation of these natural treasures.

MARY ELIZABETH PERRY



## Our Alabama Campaign Goals

This \$25 Million campaign will fund our strategic goals over the next five years to accomplish transformational conservation for people and nature in Alabama.

Our Healthy Water	\$5,900,000
Our Resilient Lands	\$14,800,000
Our Thriving Coast	\$4,300,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$25,000,000</b>

### Our Alabama Major Gift Chart

The following gift chart is intended to guide thoughtful discussion about the gifts necessary for a successful \$25 Million campaign. These broad gift levels represent the anticipated giving potential of TNC Alabama donors.

No.	Amount	Total	Cumulative Total
1	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
2	\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$9,000,000
3	\$1,500,000	\$4,500,000	\$13,500,000
4	\$500,000	\$2,000,000	\$15,500,000
10	\$250,000	\$2,500,000	\$18,000,000
30	\$100,000	\$3,000,000	\$21,000,000
40	\$50,000	\$2,000,000	\$23,000,000
50	\$25,000	\$1,250,000	\$24,250,000
Many	< \$10,000		\$25,000,000



Locust Fork River © Hunter Nichols/TNC

# Alabama Needs You.

## **You make all this happen.**

Our Alabama is a place where the land rises from the Gulf to form mountains—and where our people, including you, rise to the challenges of this time.

It is the home of surprising discoveries. It is where the average kayak trip happens to be through one of the most diverse ecosystems on the planet. It is the place where a trail through the Appalachians truly starts, and where people’s relationships with Alabama’s lands and waters are as close as family.

And it is the land of defied expectations—where the “unachievable” is possible. It is the place where hundreds and thousands of acres can be preserved in perpetuity, where more than 200 miles of rivers can be reconnected, and where species on the brink of extinction can be saved.

This is Our Alabama. And it is our people—people like you—who are making this happen. With targeted investments from visionary donors, The Nature Conservancy and its partners will meet the challenges before us, achieve the unachievable, and defy expectations.

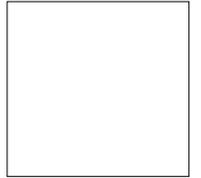


*Little River Canyon © Hunter Nichols/TNC*



The Nature Conservancy  
Alabama Chapter  
209 20th Street North #70  
Birmingham, Alabama 35203  
[nature.org/alabama](http://nature.org/alabama)

205-251-1155  
[give.alabama@tnc.org](mailto:give.alabama@tnc.org)



- Like us at [facebook.com/thenatureconservancyinalabama](https://facebook.com/thenatureconservancyinalabama)
- Tweet us at [@NatureAlabama](https://twitter.com/NatureAlabama)



*Lightning Point shoreline, Bayou La Batre © Mike Dumas/TNC*