

ALABAMA'S

TREASURED FORESTS

A Publication of the Alabama Forestry Commission



Spring/Summer 2019

Message from the STATE FORESTER

In my letter for this magazine, I want to take a different approach than I normally do. A little-known responsibility of the Alabama Forestry Commission is helping the state in times of disaster. Sure, when a tornado, hurricane, or ice storm hits, we are on the scene with chainsaws and equipment to clear the roads, but we offer much more than that. Through our training to fight wildfires, we have an incident management team ready at all times to serve the state. I want to take this opportunity to brag on the men and women who make up this team and agency.

As everyone knows, on March 3rd a series of tornadoes devastated parts of Lee County. Twenty-three people were killed, and the homes of many more were destroyed. It was total devastation in parts of the county. As is often the case, the Alabama Forestry Commission was called in to assist the citizens of Lee County. Through this effort, my eyes were opened to the true capabilities of the Alabama Forestry Commission.

Our team, led by James “Moto” Williams, jumped into action and took over the coordination of volunteers; at first in Smiths Station, and later in Beauregard. In the days immediately following the tornadoes, thousands of people went to both communities to try to help. Local officials were overwhelmed and needed our help coordinating these volunteers. Our job was to make sure they were capable of doing the work, getting them where they needed to be, keeping them safe and making sure they were supplied with food, water, and other necessities.

The men and women who took on this assignment gave of themselves selflessly for two weeks to be part of this team. I want to personally and publicly thank them for the hard work and dedication to this effort. I also want to thank their families who bore a large part of this burden as well. It’s hard to have your spouse or parent gone for two weeks, especially when it’s unexpected!

Moto Williams, Chambers County
Brad Lang, Tuscaloosa County
Joel Bartlett, Marion County
Jeremey Lowery, Butler County
Michael King, Crenshaw County
Nick Jordan, Clay County
James Robinson, Chambers County
Ethan Barrett, Hale County

Matthew Sorrells, Autauga County
Jason Berry, Walker County
Jeff Bradford, Fayette County
Chris Cotton, Geneva County
Jeff Owens, Butler County
Matt Lowe, Chambers County
Elishia Ballentine, State Office
Kelvin Daniels, State Office

Others assisted from the state office by providing the support this team needed. Thanks also goes to all of the men and women of the AFC who stayed behind to fill in for the people who were gone. Our work continued across the state while the tornado relief efforts occurred.

We have a great team. I continue to be impressed with the caliber of the AFC employees. The next time one of them is on your property helping you manage your timber, fighting a fire, conducting a prescribed burn, driving a tour trailer, or anything else, please remember to thank them for what they do, selflessly to help the people of Alabama!



Rick Oates, State Forester

Rick Oates

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The Alabama Forestry Commission supports the Alabama Natural Resources Council’s TREASURE Forest program. *Alabama’s TREASURED Forests* magazine, published by the Alabama Forestry Commission, is intended to further encourage participation in and acceptance of this program by landowners in the state, offering valuable insight on forest management according to TREASURE Forest principles. TREASURE is an acronym that stands for Timber, Recreation, Environment, and Aesthetics for a Sustained Usable REsource.



ALABAMA'S
**TREASURED
FORESTS**

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On the Cover:
Iconic Pulpit Rock on Mount Cheaha. The highest point of elevation in Alabama, Cheaha, rises more than 2,413 ft. above sea level.
Photo by Cole Sikes

This publication is provided at no charge to the forest landowners of Alabama, with a circulation of approximately 14,000. Published three times each year, the magazine is filled with forestry information and technical assistance designed to assist landowners in making informed decisions about the management practices they apply to their land. Articles and photographs are contributed by AFC employees and other forestry or natural resources professionals.

Alabama's TREASURED Forests magazine is also available on-line! www.forestry.alabama.gov



Good**FIRES**
www.goodfires.org/

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FOREST
www.visitmyforest.org/

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The publication of a story or article in this magazine does not constitute the Alabama Forestry Commission's endorsement of that particular practice, product, or company, but is an effort to provide forest landowners of Alabama with information and technical assistance to make informed decisions about the management practices they apply to their land.

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A Blank Canvas

Creating a Forest Masterpiece

By Cole Sikes, Alabama Forestry Commission

In 1997, Robert Amason Jr. began campaigning among his peers for any information about available land near his hometown of Tuscaloosa. One day, he finally received a phone call from an attorney inquiring about property available for purchase close to Aliceville in neighboring Pickens County. Always wanting a piece of land for his family, he “jumped all over” the opportunity. He sat through an auction over the phone for 480 acres of unseen forest. Not knowing what the land contained, a large gamble was made for Amason. Before his purchase, he asked two foresters to survey the property and they reassured him, “If you don’t buy it, I will.” Needless to say, Amason put forward all of his poker chips.

The initial 480 acres consisted of idle agriculture fields, undesirable regenerated trees, an old catfish pond, and essentially nothing that would assist in his plans for the property. Lack of any forested area allowed Amason to start from scratch. “It was very appealing to me to start with ‘a blank canvas’ as opposed to buying a property where the ‘painting’ was complete,” said Amason.

He shared this dream with his late father, Dr. Robert Amason Sr., a military veteran and retired orthodontist. He gave his son the love of the outdoors at a young age by taking him hunting and fishing. ‘Doc’ continued to assist his son with the day-to-day activities well into his 90s.

The first stroke of their paintbrush on his masterpiece was to establish a central hub on the land. The father-son duo built

a simple pole barn with an 800-square foot living area. Now having a piece of Alabama to call their own, the tasks of foresting open areas, reforesting areas with desirable trees, and controlling invasive species such as kudzu began immediately.

“I don’t have any forestry background at all,” said Amason. He soon reached out to the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for help. He quickly became friends with his local professionals who were instrumental in signing Amason up for various programs such as cost-share. He then designated his main TREASURE Forest management objective as timber production, with wildlife management and recreation not far behind.

The hand-me-down catfish pond was second on the agenda. All 18 acres were drained and altered to meet their objectives. Operating a construction business out of Tuscaloosa, Amason accumulates excess resources from his sites. He began adding structure to the lake in the form of concrete, piping, trees, and even farm implements, forming somewhat of a man-made reef. The pond was then limed, fertilized, and stocked with bream and bass, promoting a young and healthy aquatic habitat.

To provide for their wildlife, a variety of resources are planted each year. The family dedicates between 40 to 50 acres for row crops, and plants an additional 30 to 40 acres of other food plots annually. This strategy totals nearly 100 acres



of property specifically planted for wildlife forage. Preferred plantings have included corn, soybeans, chufa, and clover. This acreage does not include their mast-producing trees such as sawtooth oaks and fruit-bearing species. Combined, their forest offers ample amounts of nourishment to many animals.

Being avid hunters, sustaining a healthy wildlife population is crucial to the Amasons. When the original tract was purchased, there were few deer or turkey on the property.

"I owned the farm for five years before I saw the first turkey. It was a pretty memorable day as a matter of fact," said Robert. To understand in contrast, today Amason claims six to eight turkeys can be heard on any given hunt.

Having children of his own, he encourages their friends to hunt with them.

Each deer and turkey season, their friends and family have shared this experience together. "To me, introducing young people to hunting is a big deal, and having a child harvest his or her first deer is a pretty landmark occasion," said Amason. Over the years, sharing the property with loved ones has become a tradition.

Along with friends and loved ones, he has even opened his forest to wildlife from hundreds of miles away. Shortly after the Deepwater Horizon (BP) Oil Spill of 2010, Amason was

approached by his local NRCS office about an opportunity to enroll in a shorebird habitat program that benefits species who were displaced because of the disaster. The long-term goal was to create shallow mudflats to promote a new home for migratory birds. The program proved a success with a new population of herons and cranes.

The Amasons eventually added more acreage to the original tract. The timber makeup of the property is divided into roughly 550 acres of pine trees and 200 acres of hardwood mixture. His pine plantation is divided into 300 acres of 20-year-old pine, 150 acres of 25-year-old pine, and an impressive 100-acre stand aging in excess of 50 years old. Amason likes to keep an emphasis on hardwoods within his mixed stands for

forage purposes which are located along the property barrier of the Lubbub Creek and other streams that bisect the forest. His forest management success lead to TREASURE Forest certification in 2003.

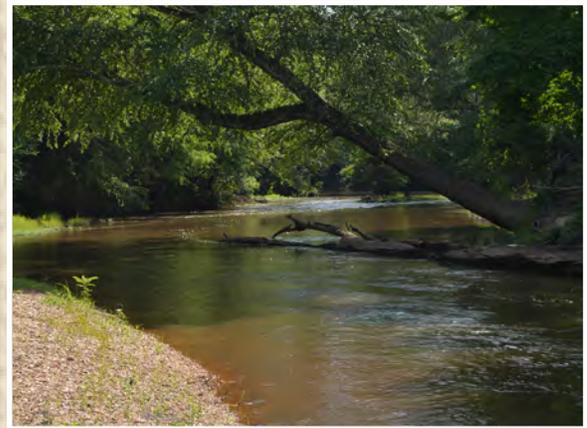
Educational efforts have also been implemented in this TREASURE Forest. The AFC hosted a field day for loggers and foresters where practices such as prescribed burns were

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"There's no place I'd rather be than at the farm."

A Blank Canvas: Creating a Forest Masterpiece

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*(Top right) Robert Amason Sr. discusses the progress of the migratory ponds with AFC Forester J.R. Harbison.
(Above) The father-son duo of Robert Amason Sr. and Jr. survey their hardwood forests.*

highlighted. Church groups and sport teams have also been hosted for recreational purposes. One of the most exciting events is a new program that gives military from the Wounded Warriors Project an opportunity to be guided on hunts for therapeutic relief. The program has already helped numerous veterans with their recovery. “We intend to expand on that in the years to come,” said Amason.

Why put in the effort for all this land? Amason claims, “There’s no place I’d rather be than at the farm.” The rest of his family shares this belief as well. Sometimes it is challenging for them to get together at the farm between jobs, obligations, and seasons of the year. This hasn’t stopped the Amasons. They spend every moment possible on their beloved TREASURE Forest. He has established a homestead for his family where memories will be made for generations to come. Robert would also like to live on the property one day after retirement. That’s if he can convince one more person to do so. . . His wife jokingly comments, “When they’ll deliver pizza to the farm, we’ll talk about it.”

When asked about any advice he would give to other Alabama landowners, he said, “Avail yourself to the vast amount of information that’s out there at this day and time.

Read everything. Seek advice from organizations and agencies. It’s invaluable.” Amason is grateful to the AFC and NRCS for their assistance and is not sure where his farm would be without them. He stated that he was surprised upon learning 20 years ago that there are landowners who are unwilling to take advantage of beneficial management programs. “It blows my mind. I can’t imagine why you wouldn’t take advantage of all that. Not only from a monetary standpoint, but also from a wealth of information.”

Canvases are available in many forms. They can be acrylic, linen, cotton, and synthetic. The variety that is frequently forgotten are ones made of blood, sweat, and dedication such as Amason’s. These canvases can’t be bought, only created and transformed. He is responsible for the 1,010 pieces of art (acres) in his collection which made him a recipient of a 2018 Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award. 🏆





You don't want to miss out on this year's Alabama Landowners Conference!

Oct. 22-24

Marriott Prattville Hotel & Conference Center at Capitol Hill
2500 Legends Circle, Prattville, AL 36066-7737

Pre-Registration Required

Early-bird Registration Opens August 1

Register at <https://www.alaforestry.org/event/2019-ANRC-Conference>



Welcome Banquet featuring Sean Dietrich

CONFERENCE EVENTS:

- ▶ Welcome Banquet
- ▶ Alabama TREASURE Forest Association Breakfast
- ▶ ANRC Awards Banquet
- ▶ Tree Farm Breakfast
- ▶ ATFA Scholarship Fund Silent Auction

CONFERENCE TOPICS:

- ▶ Outdoor Business Opportunities – How to create alternative revenue on your property
- ▶ Economic & Legislative Updates
- ▶ Chronic Wasting Disease
- ▶ Coordinated Wild Pig Removal
- ▶ Mushrooms & Foraging
- ▶ The White Oak Initiative
- ▶ Management funding opportunities for private owners
- ▶ Project Learning Tree
- ▶ Landscape Management

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Learn more at TREASUREForest.org or Contact ATFA's William Green @ 334-612-5235 or wmgreen@alfafarmers.org





THINNING: KEEP YOUR OPTIONS OPEN

By Robert Clement, Marion County Forester, Alabama Forestry Commission

Timber owners in most parts of the state are painfully aware of the poor market conditions for pine timber. The prices are as low as many landowners and foresters can remember. Some have sold pine timber for three to four times the price-per-ton than current market prices are bringing. This is especially true with pine thinning.

At the same time, many of the pine plantations in the state are entirely overstocked! Forest resource inventories are confirming this trend. It is not uncommon to see plantations with basal areas as high as 250 square feet per acre. This is a dangerously high basal area, ripe for disease and insect attack, the worst of which could be the dreaded Southern pine beetle.

A common thought among landowners when considering thinning the pine stands is “I am not going to give my timber away. I will hold it until prices increase.” This is understandable but unfortunate because this might actually be ignoring good forestry practices for what a landowner thinks is good business. This would be fine if timber were a fixed asset, such as stocks, bonds, or even precious metal. Timber, however, is a growing asset. The growth portion of the timber asset typically provides a much greater total value increase than per-unit price changes over time.

Landowners should not make this decision lightly, because they have a lot of money and several years invested in their plantation. Delaying revenue returns actually lowers the investment’s rate of return. Failing to follow through with a management plan may be a costly error. Overstocked pine plantations do not grow as fast and are much more susceptible to insects and disease.

What is the cost of lost growth? Additionally, the first thinning is predominately pulpwood which typically brings the least per-unit rate of any timber product. Why wait a few years for a slightly higher, but still relatively low rate? Waiting for higher prices also delays the revenue opportunities from higher-value products, such as sawtimber and poles.

The practice of growing timber in a pine plantation requires intensive management and a close watch on stand conditions. Pine plantations are designed to produce large amounts of forest products in as short a time frame as possible. Everything – from the spacing, to site preparation, to the genetic improvements of the tree themselves – has only one goal in mind: to produce the most usable volume possible on a given spot of ground. So of course, in a timber stand that grows as fast as the modern pine plantation, things change quickly. Stands with good management and in an optimal growing environment may be ready for their first thinning by the age of 10, but usually by ages 15-18.

Throughout the course of their lives, trees continue to expand both vertically and horizontally. When the stand is ready to thin, it means the trees are running out of room for lateral growth. The trees literally have no more room to grow in diameter, only upward. This causes the diameter growth of the trees to slow dramatically, but the vertical growth is hardly affected. This pattern is bad because the result is a lower top-to-total height ratio. A tree cannot expand outward due to the trees adjacent to it, but it can grow upward. The result will be tall slim trees with small crowns.



The crown is the food factory of the tree, so a tree with a small crown reduces its ability to produce food, subsequently increasing volume. The balance between crown size to tree height can get so badly out of balance the tree loses its ability to respond to thinning. When this happens, the landowner loses all management options except to clear-cut the stand. The length of time it takes a stand to reach this point depends on site quality and other factors, but can be as short as two to three years. At this stage, not only will a landowner lose revenue from a lower unit rate, but more significantly, from relatively smaller diameter trees. Furthermore, future revenues from higher-value products is not obtainable.

The landowner may think it a wise decision to postpone thinning to wait for a better market; however, it may force him/her to sell the entire stand in a poor market. By proceeding with thin-

ning, a landowner is staying on schedule to receive future revenue from higher-value products. No one knows for sure when and to what degree the market will bounce back, but timber is

the South's greatest renewable resource. That alone makes it a wise investment in a world that is quickly running out of non-renewable resources.

Timber lands are a vast renewable supply of fiber and chemicals of all kinds that may be used for products that haven't even been developed yet. In most respects, timber is still a great investment, but it is unique. The investment you make today will take decades to come to fruition, and who knows what the world



will be like 20-30 years from now. The best you can do is to make sound decisions, based on what you know now. 🌲

DON'T BE A VICTIM TWICE

PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM WILDFIRE

In the wake of recent tornados, many areas of our state received extensive damage to the forest resources. The tremendous amount of available fuel on the ground creates a very high hazard for wildfire. In order to protect you, your property, and your community from another devastating loss, the Alabama Forestry Commission is asking citizens to follow the guidelines below to ensure that no lives are lost or homes destroyed because of the careless use of fire.



AVOID OUTDOOR BURNING UNLESS IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

- **IF POSSIBLE**, haul debris to an approved debris disposal site in your area. (Your local Alabama Forestry Commission or County Commission office will know the location of available sites.)
- **IF HAULING** your debris to an approved site is impossible because of volume or distance, take the following safety precautions when attempting to burn.
 - **WHERE FEASIBLE**, debris piles can be covered with plastic and burned immediately after rainfall is received. (Just don't burn the plastic!)
 - **IF DEBRIS PILES** cannot be covered, they should only be burned during periods of high fuel moisture (after rain) and low winds.
 - **IF BURNING** more than one-quarter of an acre in size or within 25 feet of a natural combustible material, a burn permit must be obtained. This can be done free of charge by calling the toll-free number 1 (800) 392-5679. Obtaining a burn permit does not relieve you from liability in the event of a fire.



For more information, contact your local Alabama Forestry Commission office or visit our website at www.forestry.alabama.gov

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT:

A LOOK BACK AND A LOOK AHEAD



By Ray Metzler

*Certified Wildlife Biologist, Threatened & Endangered Species Specialist
Alabama Forestry Commission*

Informing and educating the forestry community, including forest landowners, about topics regarding our forest resources and their management is a goal of the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC). The management of endangered species and their potential impacts to forestry in Alabama are both items of concern and are part of ensuring the future of Alabama's vast forest resources.

The intent of this article is to provide a summary of Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing activity for the recent past and foreseeable future. I sat at my desk debating what the content and message for this article should entail. After thinking about it for a few minutes, two key messages came to the forefront of action items needed for conservation of many species being considered for protection under the ESA.

Aquatics dominate the list of 'candidate' species in Alabama for protection under the ESA. First and foremost, maintaining sufficient quantity and quality of aquatic habitat is essential for the continued health of Alabama's water resources, for the benefit of both our wildlife and human populations.

Alabama's forestry community recognizes their actions have impacts and have taken tremendous steps to protect both the quantity and quality of water resources. The state's forest industry worked cooperatively with government agencies to develop voluntary Best Management Practices for Forestry (BMPs) in 1992. BMP compliance is and should be a critical component of

each and every pre-harvest plan developed by a forester, logger, or landowner. These 'voluntary' BMPs are now essentially mandatory due to third-party agreements such as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, American Tree Farm System, and Forest

Stewardship Council. Support of and compliance with Alabama's BMPs is the easiest and most efficient way for members of the forestry community to benefit all of our aquatic resources – not just those offered protection under the ESA. Contact your local Alabama Forestry Commission office (www.forestry.alabama.gov) to obtain information or guidance regarding BMP compliance and its benefits to Alabama's water resources.

The demise of the longleaf pine ecosystem and subsequent reforestation efforts is the second key message involving 'candidate' species in Alabama. Recent efforts focused on restoring longleaf pine to its once prominent stature in southeastern forests have increased acres planted to more than 6-7 million acres – but this is still a far cry from the

90 million acres that once occupied the landscape. Forest management, primarily prescribed burning, of the longleaf pine habitat which has been restored during the past decade or so will be critical if species such as the gopher tortoise, eastern diamond-back rattlesnake, gopher frog, southern hognose snake, and Florida pine snake are to be present at levels to preclude the need to provide them protection under the Endangered Species Act.

(Continued on page 12)



Photo by Alan Cressler

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT: A LOOK BACK AND A LOOK AHEAD

(Continued from page 11)

GOPHER TORTOISE

The gopher tortoise in Alabama is protected west of the rivers in Mobile and Washington counties and is being considered for protection in the remainder of its range east to Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has begun its species status assessment and will make a final rule no later than the fall of 2022.



Cooperative efforts between state agencies, industry, non-government organizations (NGOs), and private landowners are underway in Alabama to provide distribution and population data to the Service in an effort to preclude the need to list the gopher tortoise under the ESA. Additional data is needed, especially from private landowners. The next meeting of the Alabama Tortoise Alliance, a consortium of agencies, industry, landowners, and NGOs formed to unite and focus gopher tortoise conservation efforts in Alabama, will be in the fall of 2019. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for information regarding the upcoming meeting, contact AFC Threatened and Endangered Species Specialist Ray Metzler at (334) 239-1320.

GOPHER FROG

The gopher frog is an inhabitant of the longleaf pine ecosystem and is now known to only occur in one publicly-owned location in southwest Alabama. In recent times, it was known to occur at two additional privately-owned sites, but



S.A. Johnson, University of Florida

population status on those sites is currently unknown. It relies on ephemeral ponds to breed (late winter through spring) and surrounding uplands for the remainder of the year. It is known to occupy tortoise burrows, stump holes and other underground refugia. The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is currently surveying previously known occupied sites and habitat to assess distribution and occupancy.

EASTERN DIAMONDBACK RATTLESNAKE

The eastern diamondback rattlesnake is being considered for listing under the ESA and the Service has requested assistance with gathering population distribution information. The diamondback range in Alabama is locally common in the lower coastal plain and the adjacent band of red hills to the north. Favored habitats for the diamondback include dry pine flatwoods and longleaf pine-turkey oak hills. It is able to survive in altered habitats such as overgrown fields and abandoned farms. Although the eastern diamondback rattlesnake is usually associated with sandhill communities, it will venture into swampy and marshy habitats. It is known to overwinter in stump holes and gopher tortoise burrows. The general public often has a sense of disdain for snakes, especially rattlesnakes, and sometimes criticizes efforts by conservationists to enhance and better manage habitat for reptilian sandhill species such as the eastern diamondback rattlesnake.



Ericha Nix, Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries

Success or failure of restoration and management efforts of the longleaf pine ecosystem will be a deciding factor in whether or not some species are provided protection under the ESA. Kudos to those that have emphasized longleaf pine restoration and management on their lands in Alabama. In fairness, I must say it is typically the structure of the forest, not necessarily the species composition, that is important to the reptiles and amphibians discussed in this article. However, longleaf pine is much easier to maintain and manage than other southern pines in providing this needed structure.

BMP compliance and restoration of the longleaf pine ecosystem are two key factors that will play a role in the future listing of threatened and endangered species. Please ensure BMP compliance on your lands, and consider planting/managing longleaf pines on your property. 🌲



Regional Forestry Field Days

Mark Your Calendars!

October 17, 2019

Renfroe Preservation
 Pike County
 Near Hephzibah Baptist Church (2701 Henderson Hwy, Troy)
 then follow signs to Joyes Road/County Road 2211
 Coordinates: 31.7669, -86.0456

- *RSVP to Wiregrass Research & Extension Center (334) 693-2010*

October 22, 2019

Sherer Tree Farm
 Chilton County
www.alaforestry.org/event/2019-ANRC-Conference

- *Limited to 50 participants*
- *Buses will leave from the Prattville Marriott at noon*

November 7, 2019

Amason Farms
 Pickens County
 3195 County Road 2, Aliceville, AL 35442
 Coordinates: 33.10695, -88.12655

- *RSVP to Pickens County Extension Office: (205) 367-8148*

Come Learn About:

- Native Grasses
- Green Tree Reservoirs
- Cypress Swamps via boardwalk
- Longleaf Pine Straw Production & Harvest
- Central Alabama Fowl Preserve
(duck, pheasant, and quail)
- Portable Sawmill Demonstration
Deese Custom Sawmilling
- How an old piece of farmland can be sculpted into a family recreational retreat
- Hidden TREASURE of Lubbug Creek
- A vision, tractor shed, and a lot of sweat equity yields priceless memories for Amason Farms





Provided by the National Association of State Foresters

Smokey Bear, the face of the longest-running PSA campaign in United States history, turned 75 on August 9, 2019, continuing his legacy of bringing awareness to unwanted, human-caused fires in America.

Smokey Bear's wildfire prevention campaign has had a dramatic impact since its introduction in 1944. This progress continues today, with an approximate 14 percent reduction in the average number of human-caused wildfires from 2011-2018, compared to the previous 10 years. While it's clear his work has been successful, 9 out of 10 wildfires are still caused by humans, which means Smokey's iconic message is as important as ever.

To celebrate the wildfire prevention icon's milestone birthday, the USDA Forest Service, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Ad Council are announcing the addition of a new Smokey Bear balloon in the 2019 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, and promoting Smokey birthday parties and local events across the nation. Together, these three partners make up the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention (CFFP) Committee, the coalition behind Smokey Bear and his wildfire prevention campaign.

"The hardest working bear in the world, Smokey, has for decades now tirelessly shared with the public the message 'Only You Can Prevent Wildfires,'" said U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen. "And I'm certain that 75 years from now, Smokey will still be active in his duty of spreading the wildfire prevention message – reminding us to do our part in preventing unwanted wildfire."

"Smokey Bear and his friends know that wildfire is not just a western issue or a summer phenomenon. It's always wildfire sea-

son somewhere in the United States," said Jay Farrell, executive director of the National Association of State Foresters. "This is why it is so important that Smokey's message resonate year-round and nationwide with all Americans. This year's Smokey Bear wildfire prevention campaign and the hundreds of events held in his honor promise to do just that."

"This coalition of partners has created an extraordinary legacy for Smokey Bear over the past 75 years, and the Ad Council is so proud to be part of Smokey's story," said Lisa Sherman, President and CEO of the Ad Council. "Very few advertising icons have stood the test of time the way Smokey has, and thanks to our favorite bear, individuals across the nation know they play an important role in helping to prevent wildfires."

Smokey Bear has only said a handful of words over the last 75 years. To complement this signature message "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires" (voiced by actor Sam Elliott for the last 12 years), Smokey's famous friends are stepping in to speak through him about the importance of fire safety and wildfire prevention.

With the help of ad agency FCB and cutting-edge facial recognition and mapping technology, Smokey's friend Betty White is the most recent celebrity to lend her voice and carry on the beloved bear's legacy into his 75th year with an animated emoji PSA. Stephen Colbert, Jeff Foxworthy, and Al Roker have also lent their voices to the cause in similar PSAs launched earlier this year.

"75 years ago, FCB, in partnership with what would become the Ad Council, gave birth to Smokey Bear. All these years, he's been reminding us that 'Only You Can Prevent Wildfires.' In other words, there's a little Smokey Bear in all of us," said Susan

"Only YOU Can Prevent Wildfires"

Credle, FCB Global Chief Creative Officer. "This year, we are asking people to listen to their inner Smokey Bear. People sharing stories about why they love the outdoors and how they protect our country's beautiful wildlife — what a perfect gift to give Smokey Bear on his 75th birthday!"

The celebration of Smokey's legacy will continue this fall with the debut of his new character balloon in the 93rd annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade®. On Thursday, November 28, more than 3.5 million spectators and more than 50 million viewers nationwide will witness America's national champion of wildfire prevention fly through the streets of New York City in Smokey's return to the world-famous Macy's Parade line-up.

A fan-favorite, Smokey Bear first debuted as a giant character balloon in the 1966 Macy's Parade and participated in the holiday spectacle every year until 1981. In celebration of his 50th birthday in 1993, Smokey made his last appearance before this year's return to form. Catch Smokey in action during the 93rd annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade airing nationwide on NBC, Thursday, November 28 from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, in all time zones.

The story of Smokey Bear begins with World War II. On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, and the following spring, fired shells from submarines that exploded on an oil field near the Los Padres National Forest in California. Fear grew that more attacks could bring a disastrous loss of life and destruction of property, and even ignite raging wildfires.

With many experienced firefighters deployed in the war, it was up to communities to prevent wildfires as best they could. Quickly, the protection of forests became a matter of national importance. To rally Americans to the cause, the Forest Service organized the CFFP Committee with the help of the War Advertising Council (now known as The Ad Council), and the

National Association of State Foresters. Together, they created posters and slogans, including "Forest Fires Aid the Enemy" and "Our Carelessness, Their Secret Weapon."

Smokey Bear first appeared on a forest fire prevention campaign poster in 1944 thanks to FCB, the creative agency that to this day is an essential partner of the campaign. Two years later, he and his message were featured on a series of stamps used nationwide, and by the 1950s, Smokey Bear had made his debut in radio commercials voiced by Washington radio personality Jackson Weaver. In the decades since, the beloved icon has been featured in countless TV and radio spots, posters, stamps, billboards, and memorabilia alongside well-known actors and celebrities including B.B. King, Barbara Stanwyck, Betty White, Dolly Parton, Leonard Nimoy, Ray Charles, and Ted Nugent.

Since 1944, wildfire prevention PSAs have run exclusively in time and space donated by the media. In the last seven and a half decades, that equates to more than \$1.63 billion in donated media support. Today, Smokey's catchphrase is recognized by 96 percent of U.S. adults and 75 percent of young adult outdoor recreationists who know of him see Smokey Bear as a role model for children.

To learn more about Smokey Bear and wildfire prevention, visit www.smokeybear.com and follow Smokey on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter with the hashtags #SmokeyBear75 and #OnlyYou. To find a Smokey event near you, visit www.smokeybear75th.org. 📍



Check out the AFC's Smokey Bear Challenge video on our YouTube channel!
[Youtube.com/user/ALForestryCommission/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/ALForestryCommission/videos)

SMOKEY BEAR:

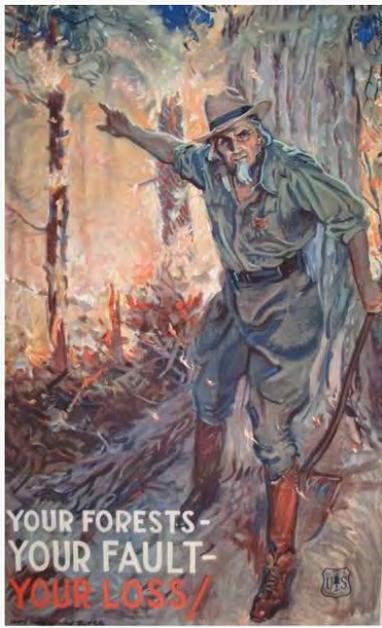


The Artists Who Created an American Icon

*Excerpted from "Harry Ludwig Rossoll et al: A Study of the Smokey Bear Artists"
By Robert G. Pasquill, Jr., Retired Forest Historian, National Forests in Alabama*

There are several stories regarding the actual ‘creator’ of Smokey Bear, and it seems none of the original artists received full recognition for their contributions until 50 or more years later, after they had passed away. There are primarily three artists connected to the creation story of Smokey Bear: Rudolph Wendelin, Harry L. Rossoll, and Albert Staehle. This study looks at the art of these three men as well as the other artists associated with the Smokey Bear images from 1944 to the mid-1970s.

Noted artist James Montgomery Flagg’s ‘Uncle Sam’ was well remembered from his World War recruitment posters and Liberty Loan drives. In June of 1937, Flagg painted his iconic Uncle Sam in a Forest Service uniform pointing to a forest fire.



Flagg, 1937

critical for the war effort, and the Forest Service’s fire-fighting corps had been depleted by the military draft. In 1944, the Forest

The caption read “Your Forests, Your Fault, Your Loss!” Flagg donated the painting, and President Roosevelt accepted it on behalf of the government. Thousands of posters were to be made from it in a campaign to prevent forest fires, which were destroying 40 million acres annually.

Smokey Bear’s genesis as the Forest Service’s fire prevention campaign mascot followed the brief loan of a popular deer from Walt Disney. In 1941, about 208,000 fires burned 30 million acres of forest and range land throughout the United States. Lumber was

Service and the Advertising Council worked together to create a fire prevention campaign poster. In August 1942, Walt Disney’s animated movie *Bambi* was released. Disney gave the Forest Service permission to use Bambi for one year in their fire prevention campaign in 1944.

THE ARTISTS

Harry Ludwig Rossoll (1909-1999), one of several men credited with ‘creating’ Smokey Bear, was a prolific artist up until his death. Born in Norwich, Connecticut, the son of German immigrant factory workers, his parents wanted him to go into chicken farming. However, from a very early age, he wanted to be an artist. Rossoll left home before finishing high school and studied commercial art in Chicago and at the Grand Central Art School in New York in 1929. In the early years of the Great Depression, he married Olga and moved to her home state of Mississippi. They lived in Jackson where Harry made a living as a commercial artist painting billboards and painting polka dots on women’s shoes and other items.

In 1937, Rossoll was hired by the U.S. Forest Service as an illustrator in the Southern Regional Office in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1938, one of Harry’s first illustrations for the Forest Service was the “Spirit of 1938,” a poster showing three Civilian Conservation Corps enrollees on their



Harry Rossoll, 1962

Photo by Oklahoma Historical Society

way to fight a forest fire. The poster was later modified to the “Spirit of CCC.” After working a full 52 weeks in 1939 as a commercial artist for the U.S. Forest Service, Rossoll earned \$2,100.

Rossoll created several illustrations for the Forest Service’s fire prevention efforts. His first attempt was ‘Ranger Jim,’ a dapper and trim forest ranger with a neatly tied necktie and pipe. Ranger Jim was a flop. Rossoll’s second creation was the ‘Forest Fire Devil,’ a horned creature made of wood that had a natural aversion to forest fires. It too was a flop. The third creation was ‘Joe Beaver’ who could beat out forest fires with his tail. The beaver was also a flop.

Finally, H.M. Sears, the Fire Control Officer for the Forest Service in Atlanta and a friend of Harry’s, suggested he try a bear. Before leaving the Forest Service to serve in the Navy in March of 1944, he submitted his bear. According to Rossoll, his sketch of Smokey was of a fat bear with a pointed snout and a bulb nose on the end. He thought it looked more like a possum in dungarees wearing an army helmet. His Smokey was not successful.

Rudolph ‘Rudy’ Andreas Michael Wendelin (1910-2000) was born in Ludell, Kansas. He began his Forest Service career as a draftsman and illustrator in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1933, transferring to Washington, D.C. in 1937. During the Second World War, Wendelin served as a Navy artist. When he returned to the Forest Service at the end of the war, he was put in charge of the Smokey Bear project. According to an article that appeared in *The Washington Post* in 2000 after the death of Wendelin, it was under his guidance that the bear changed. “What had originally been a baby bear and then a full-grown animal with long snout, fangs and fearsome claws, became a bear with more human features.”

With both Rossoll and Wendelin temporarily away from the Forest Service in 1944 as they served in the Navy during World War II, the Forest Service and the Wartime Advertising Council asked Albert Staehle to create a mascot for their wartime fire prevention campaign for 1945. He would also design the next two Smokey posters for the 1946 and 1947 campaigns.

Born in Munich, Germany, Staehle (1899-1975) came to New York when he was 14 years old. A third-generation artist, by 1944 he was one of America’s most popular illustrators with many award-winning posters to his credit. In 1937, Staehle had won a poster competition with his illustration of a matronly cow feeding her calf with a bottle of Borden’s milk. She would later be known as ‘Elsie the Cow.’ Staehle acquired the reputation of being an animal expert, giving human characteristics to animals in many of his advertisement illustrations for several national companies. His animals also appeared on the covers of *Saturday Evening Post* magazine.

In addition to these three artists, several sources give art critic Harold Rosenberg credit for coming up with the idea of Smokey Bear while working at the War Advertising Council. Best known as a supportive critic of Abstract Expressionism, Abraham Benjamin Rosenberg (1906-1978) was born in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY with a degree in law in 1927. Shortly after graduation, he contracted osteomyelitis, which forced him to walk with a cane for the rest of his life.

Although this condition kept him out of military service, Rosenberg began work in 1942 with the Office of War Information and continued to work for the Ad Council after the war. (The Office of War Information worked closely with the War Advertising Council, later called the Ad Council.) Through the 1950s, Rosenberg gave lectures at colleges and wrote essays. In 1967, he was appointed art critic for the *New Yorker* magazine. Writing for *The Norwich Bulletin* (Norwich, Connecticut) on the 70th anniversary of Smokey Bear on August 9, 2014, Richard Curland stated, “The visual



Rudy Wendelin, 1954

character of Smokey was first created by an art critic by the name of Harold Rosenberg.”

In the late 1940s through the early ‘50s, a couple of other artists provided different interpretations of Smokey Bear. In 1947, Russ Wetzel painted a cartoonish Smokey that, while popular, was determined to be too humorous for the serious fire prevention message.

In 1948, James Hansen drew a ‘praying bear’ asking people to be more careful with fire in the forest. Hansen continued to paint Smokey posters through the early 1950s.

Another contributor to the creation of Smokey Bear was William Bergoffen, head of the public relations for the Forest Service when the fire prevention campaigns began in the early 1940s. He is credited with suggesting to Rudolph Wendelin that Smokey Bear wear dungarees and his iconic belt buckle. Bergoffen was born in Monticello, New York, and graduated with a degree in forestry from Syracuse University. He began his career with the Civilian Conservation Corps in Georgia, then worked for the Forest Service in Georgia and Mississippi before transferring to Washington, D.C. in 1939. He died in 1999.



Staehle, 1945

Yet another person who is given credit for the creation of Smokey Bear is Richard Hammett, director of the Wartime Forest Fire Prevention Program. On August 9, 1944, the official date of Smokey’s birthday, Hammett wrote a letter to the Forest Service describing Smokey as a bear that was to have a “nose short (panda type), color black or brown; expression appealing, knowledgeable, quizzical; perhaps wearing a campaign (or Boy Scout) hat that typifies the outdoors and the woods.”

(Continued on page 18)

SMOKEY BEAR: The Artists Who Created an American Icon

(Continued from page 17)

While neither the Forest Service nor Ad Council ever appears to have copyrighted the image of Smokey Bear, the ‘Smokey Bear Act’ was passed on May 23, 1952. This act restricted the use of the Smokey Bear character for profit, requiring the authorization of the Secretary of Agriculture after consultation with the Association of State Foresters and the Ad Council. Improper use of Smokey Bear could result in fines up to \$250 and imprisonment of not more than six months, or both.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Harry Rossoll produced 1,000 cartoons in a “Smokey Says” series that appeared in 3,000 newspapers. He produced four cartoons each month during this time.

Several other artists were also associated with Smokey Bear in the 1950s and ‘60s. Morris Gollub, born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1910, started his career as an artist in a Civilian Conservation Corps camp at Custer National Park in South Dakota in 1935. In 1937 he became an animator for the Disney Studios. Between 1946 and 1971 he was a comic book illustrator for Dell Publishing and Western Comics. His artwork was used in ‘realistic adventure series’ such as Tarzan, The Lone Ranger, and Robin Hood. Beginning in 1955, Gollub drew ‘Smokey the Bear’ comic books for the Western Publishing Company. He also worked Pantomime Pictures, Sanrio, and Hanna Barbera, where he was a layout artist for shows including the Flintstones, Scooby-Doo, the Harlem Globetrotters, and the Smurfs. Between 1957 and 1959, Gollub drew a comic strip for newspapers through Columbia Features. His ‘Smokey the Bear’ color comic strip was written by Paul S. Newman. The artwork was credited to ‘Wes Wood,’ a pseudonym, or nom de plume (or more accurately, ‘nom de paintbrush’).

The controversy regarding ‘Smokey Bear’ versus “Smokey the Bear” began in 1952 when Steve Nelson and Jack Rollins wrote the song by that name. They added the ‘the’ to Smokey’s name to keep with the tempo of the song. The song was tremendously popular, and the argument over Smokey’s real name ensued. Most people who were children in the ‘50s and ‘60s fall into the ‘Smokey *the* Bear’ camp. While the Smokey in comic books and comic strips drawn by Morris Gollub retained the middle name of ‘the,’ the official name is ‘Smokey Bear.’

As a side note, in 1952, Eddie Arnold sang “Smokey the Bear” to a group of Boy Scouts in a public service program. As Arnold sings, ‘Pierre’ the camp cook – who happened to look very much like Harry Rossoll – draws illustrations to the song.

Another artist that created an early Smokey Bear poster was Elmo White. White created a variety of artwork ranging from postage stamps to patriotic posters. He was a career artist for the

federal government, beginning with the Government Printing Office and spending most of his later career with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. During World War II, White created a couple posters used in the war effort.



Smokey's Evolution from 1944-1992

In 1951, South Carolina artist Jackson Smyrl (1923-2007) was asked by the South Carolina Forestry Commission to do three fire prevention posters. His Smokey Bear poster garnered him national attention. At the time, Jak Smyrl was staff artist for *The State Newspaper* and known for documenting South Carolina’s history through his cartoons. After graduating from Camden High School, he attended Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn) but left to volunteer for the marines during World War II. After the war, he studied art at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh and at the University of South Carolina. During his junior

year, he began his career in commercial art taking a job on a daily Columbia newspaper. He was the first illustrator to put the Carolina Gamecock in a fighting stance.

By the late 1950s, numerous artists were providing illustrations for the Forest Service’s Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention (CFFP) program. The National Agricultural Library’s Special Collections has posters from 1946 to 1977, with artwork by Rudolph Wendelin, Richard Black, Merv Corning, Richard Foes, Galloway, George Giusti, James Hansen, Chuck Kuderna, Craig Pineo, Ken Smith, Willardson, Teresa Woodward, and Zermeno. Many posters from this era have only the last name of the artist, or no signatures at all. Not all of the posters, however, included images of Smokey Bear.

Born in Philadelphia, Richard Black (1921-2014) attended Syracuse University before serving in the Army Air Corps during World War II. After the war he opened a studio in Dayton, Ohio, and worked for several companies when Proctor and Gamble hired him in the mid-1950s to create a character named ‘Mr. Clean’ for a new household cleaner. He also painted portraits and landscapes. When one of his landscapes with animals appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1956 catching the attention of someone in the Department of the Interior, Black was recruited to paint Smokey Bear.

Merv Corning was a self-taught artist born and raised in Santa Ana, California. He left high school to join the Merchant Marines during World War II. Early in his career he was commissioned to paint four watercolors depicting aerial combat in the First World War. This led to a collection of over 40 World War I aerial combat paintings. Corning eventually formed the corporation Studio Artist with other artists. He is best known for

his aerial combat painting and his paintings for the National Football League. He passed away in 2006 at age 80.

Richard Foes worked for a time with Merv Corning at Studio Artists in San Francisco, painting depictions of World War I aerial combat. He also worked in the animation department for Disney on several Winnie the Pooh animated shorts and collector plates.

George Giusti, a graphic designer and illustrator born in 1908 in Milan, Italy, of a Swiss father and Italian mother, received his professional training at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan. He immigrated to the United States in 1938, spending the majority of his career in New York. As a freelance artist, Giusti designed posters for U.S. government agencies during World War II and designed a poster for the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention program in 1946.

Better known for his illustrations in children's books, Craig Pineo's Smokey Bear posters were used in the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention program from the late 1950s to the early '60s.

Several sources give Chuck Kuderna credit for the way the 'modern' Smokey Bear looks when he was involved with the 1965 campaign. Kuderna did Smokey Bear posters in 1962 and 1965, but he is better known for his artwork while employed for the Northrop Aircraft Incorporated in the 1950s.

Teresa Woodward was born in 1932. By the 1960s, she and her husband Tom Woodward were one of the top design teams in Los Angeles, California. She illustrated children's books and created the artwork on album covers for the Everly Brothers and other Warner Brothers recording artists. Her graphic art has been compared to the art of Peter Max.

Barrion Duane Nehr (1934-2015) was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Spending his childhood in the forests and fields, hunting and fishing, his love of the outdoors led him to attend the New York Ranger School in upstate New York. Upon graduation in 1960, he pursued a career in forestry, marking timber, building trails, and fighting forest fires. As a young man, he had exhibited a talent for drawing, and by his early teens, he was producing pencil and pen and ink sketches, always with a preference for wildlife. He also worked with oil paints, with an impressionistic style emphasizing color and light. In the late '60s, Barry was hired to paint background murals at the new Brasstown Bald visitor center on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest in Georgia.

His illustrations depicting the history and nature scenes of northwest Georgia caught the eye of Harry Rossoll, who helped Barry get a job with the Forest Service as his assistant. When Rossoll retired from the Forest Service in 1971, Barry Nehr became the Regional Illustrator. His murals can be found in various locations at state and national parks throughout the United States and in Georgia at the Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge, the Savannah River National Wildlife Refuge, and the Georgia Forestry Commission's mobile environmental classroom.

Nehr illustrated a Smokey Bear comic book entitled, *A Day in the Forest with Smokey*, which was published by the USDA Forest Service in 1972. After 20 years of service and illustrating several other Forest Service publications, he retired from the Forest Service in 1989. Nehr went to work for Southern Custom Exhibits in Anniston, Alabama, and continued to paint background murals for various clients, including the Munford Elementary School in Munford, Alabama.

POSTSCRIPTS

Rossoll retired from the Forest Service in 1971. In addition to his Smokey Bear illustrations during his career, he provided artwork on books and many other Forest Service projects. He was also commissioned to paint murals to celebrate the dedications of recreation areas and other public facilities. Some of his work can be found at Brasstown Bald Visitors Center in Blairsville, Georgia; the Cradle of Forestry on the Pisgah National Forest in Asheville, North Carolina; the School of Forestry at the Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas; and the Georgia Forestry Museum in Macon, Georgia.

In Montgomery, the US Forest Service/National Forests in Alabama Supervisor's Office is fortunate enough to have a Rossoll oil on canvas painting. Measuring 4½ feet by 5½ feet, the painting is signed and dated 1966. It depicts a family camping on the edge of what is thought to be Coleman Lake on the Shoal Creek Ranger district of the Talladega National Forest.

In the late '70s, Harry began painting murals for the Forest Heritage Center at Beavers Bend State Park in Broken Bow, Oklahoma. The project took 13 years to complete, but he ultimately painted 14 murals which were 7-foot by 21-foot dioramas depicting Oklahoma's forests from the age of dinosaurs to the modern day.

In 1984, Rossoll was awarded the 'Smokey Award' at a ceremony at the Forest Service office in Atlanta. He had retired from the Forest Service 13 years earlier after working for the agency for 35 years. The 9-inch silver Smokey Award marked his career in fire prevention.

According to an article written by Jay Grelen in August of 1999 for *The Daily Oklahoman* after the passing of Harry Rossoll, when asked about getting credit for the creation of Smokey Bear, Rossoll would become irritated, but never bitter. In March of 1999, Myrna Oliver, staff writer for *The Los Angeles Times* had written an article about Harry referring to him as the "Creator of Smokey Bear." Interestingly, in the Oliver article, Rossoll stated in 1993 that the highpoint in his career were the murals at the Forest Heritage Center in Oklahoma.

Rudolph Wendelin died in 2000 from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Richard Pearson, writer for the Washington Post, wrote an article shortly after Wendelin's death in which the headline read, "Artist who created Smokey Bear Icon." However, in the actual article, Pearson reported that Wendelin was "the man in charge of Smokey Bear" after the Second World War, and under Wendelin's guidance, Smokey Bear had undergone several changes in appearance.

At the time of the 50th anniversary of Smokey Bear in 1994, Representative Carrie P. Meek, Florida, introduced into the Congressional Record a tribute to Albert Staehle, "Creator of Smokey Bear." According to the tribute, "The original Smokey Bear was born from the imagination and pen of the late Albert Staehle, considered America's greatest animal illustrator."

Rossoll, Wendelin, Staehle. These three men all played a vital role in the creation and development of the Forest Service's most iconic image, and a host of others contributed their talents, pens, and brushes to the cause. Sadly, after the mid-1970s, the Smokey posters are rarely signed. By that point in time however, the image of Smokey Bear was well established. ☪

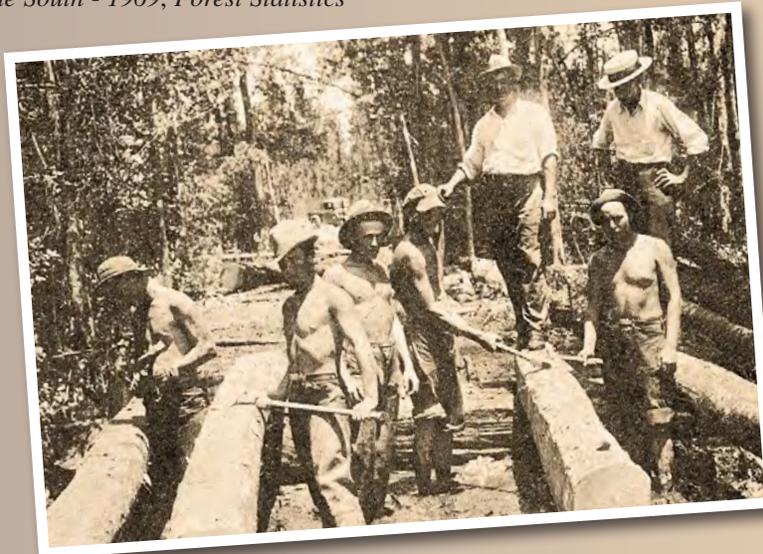
To read the full version of this study, visit: ppolinks.com/forestservicemuseum/2015_5_42.pdf

A Priceless Historical Resource . . . ALABAMA FOREST NEWS



By Dan Chappell, Forestry Program Specialist, Alabama Forestry Commission

Although a forester by trade, I like to consider myself something of an amateur historian. If you were to visit my office, you would find my desk stacked with *A Forest Atlas of the South - 1969, Forest Statistics for Alabama Counties in 1982*, a text book simply titled *Timber* (an English translation from the original French, copyright 1902), a binder with severance tax collection figures dating back to 1946, AFC Annual Reports from the 1950s when Forestry fell under the Department of Conservation, and so on. And believe it or not, at one point or another, I have made use of these documents in doing my best to answer the numerous, often interesting (sometimes puzzling), forestry questions that come my way.



With that as background, you can imagine how excited I was to be handed an old spiral bound notebook on a recent afternoon. Longtime AFC employee Brigetta Giles, who – to borrow a phrase taken from her retirement luncheon, did not ‘retire’ but just ‘refocused’ – brought this notebook to deposit at the State Office. Happening to be at the right place at the right time, I asked if I could look at this old notebook. I found inside a 148-

issue collection of *Alabama Forest News*, going back to Volume I, Number 1, January 1927, and continuing, without interruption, to the April 1939 edition. These pages present an unbroken

record of the state’s natural resources history during that period that is not only very readable, but at the same time very comprehensive. This newsletter was published by the Alabama State Commission of Forestry and “issued monthly at Montgomery, Alabama, in furtherance of THE INTERESTS OF ALL CITIZENS.” There is no price listed, and there are no advertisements.

These pages chronicle the era when small numbers of scientifically-trained foresters were working to take the latest ideas about forest regeneration and sustainable harvests from the classrooms of the first forestry schools out into the wider world. These pages lend much attention to wildfire prevention and suppression, often giving credit by name to specific citizens, such as Escambia County school teacher Miss Elsa Lundquist, who aided, if not spearheaded, suppression efforts. In Miss Lundquist’s case, she led ten students for five hours as they battled fire in the near vicinity of the school.



Landowners are chronicled who put new practices into place on their land, such as Mr. S. E. Jones of Comer, who had pre-suppression fire breaks installed across his 700 acres. The papers stress that wildfire was everyone's responsibility, and while the state would help where it could, the fact was that lean budgets meant that less than half of Alabama was considered 'protected' by manned fire towers and forest patrolmen. However, we see where, in 1929, federal funds allowed the Commission to purchase its first airplane for aerial observation during periods of fire danger. The aircraft was a bi-plane, powered by a 165 horsepower Wright engine, flown by the State Forester himself, Colonel Page S. Bunker, who was already a licensed pilot.

For the person interested in history, you can follow the step-by-step process for the National Forests coming to be in Alabama. The creation of Geneva State Forest and many State Parks are given in detail. There is also an article concerned with the pulp and paper industry casting its eye toward Alabama, as scientific advances were opening the possibility of using pine for this purpose. Then there is the annual essay contest, with first prize a one-year college scholarship, and second prize a round-trip tour of California, which never failed to elicit excellent craftsmanship of the written word from the state's young people, whose winning essays were published in subsequent editions.

As you would expect, there is a lot of attention paid to the Great Depression, and projects carried out by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). At that time, the Commission and the CCC shared not only a headquarters on Dexter Avenue, but much senior staff, as CCC camps that worked on State and private forestry projects were supervised by the Forestry Commission. As these camps and state parks were viewed as a public good by the authors of the newsletter, and as there were more applicants for CCC jobs than there were jobs to give, the newsletter boldly asks public-spirited citizens to donate land, a minimum of 500 acres, for the creation of additional parks and camps. Following the process of land acquisition, park creation, and project work completion from one volume to the next reflects the energy put forth by struggling people, working hard to get on their feet and make a lasting positive impression upon the state, all under very trying circumstances that continued forward for years.

Having been involved with the Forest Inventory & Analysis program for over 16 years now, this subject will always be an interest to me. We have recently launched the 'Eleventh Survey' for Alabama, a full survey consisting of visits to all 5,600-plus permanent plots, which we aim to accomplish over a period of

seven years. Knowing that the 'First Survey' occurred during the 1930s, I searched intently for news about it and was not disappointed. In an article entitled "The Forest Situation in Alabama" from March 1939, I read about the results newly published from the actual field work conducted during 1936. At that time, the area of the Alabama forest was estimated at 19,000,000 acres, being somewhat smaller than the 23,000,000 acres it is today. Hardwood stands have made a comeback since that time. In 1936, only 25 percent of forest cover was predominately hardwood; today it has rebounded to 42 percent. At that time, it was estimated that 13 percent of the forest had never been cut.

We don't track that statistic anymore, since only the most inaccessible, non-merchantable stands would remain in a state unchanged by some kind of man-made influence. A special mention is made of intensively managed acres in southwest Alabama that were producing sustained yields over time and serving as a model for the Southeast. Perhaps most importantly though, at that time, harvests and mortality were still outpacing growth by a wide margin, and the idea of a truly sustainable forest was still that, just an idea, a possibility yet to be realized.



Having the opportunity to read through these volumes of *Alabama Forest News* has given me a greater appreciation, not just for how much things have changed, but also for how much has stayed the same, and how the legacy of the Commission from that time still affects the forests that we have with us now. The AFC today works to engage the landowner, promote science-based timber management, inform the public about forest pests, perform air-based wildfire patrol and ground-based wildfire suppression, and encourage wise use of a resource that has such potential on this particular landscape. To quote from an issue directly, "It would appear in considering the facts outlined in the preceding pages that Alabama has been singularly blessed as far as forests are concerned, and that her citizens would exert every effort and influence to protect so great and valuable an asset." Those words remain as true today as when they were first written 80 years ago. 🏠

CARPENTER BEEES

VANDALS IN DISGUISE

By Robert Maddox, Morgan County Forester, Alabama Forestry Commission

What just buzzed past your head? What could create such a disturbance that you could almost feel the air being torn apart as this creature passed? You look around, the survival instinct kicking in. A few yards away you see this black and yellow blob plowing through the air. Then you hear the buzzing. Your brain thinks ‘BEE.’ But this is too big for a bee. This thing looks like it could carry away a potato chip.

DON'T WORRY, IT IS A BEE...A CARPENTER BEE.

Like other bees, carpenter bees are pollinators of crops and gardens. However, they are different in their physical characteristics and choice of nesting areas. These bees should be a concern to homeowners due to the damage they can cause to wooden structures.

IDENTIFICATION

Carpenter bees share many similar physical traits with their cousins, the bumblebees. Both have the three main parts (head, thorax, and abdomen). Where they differ is size and the recognizable tuft of yellow hair. Carpenter bees average a half inch to one inch in length, whereas bumblebees measure one-third to three-quarters of an inch. Bumblebees are covered, thorax and abdomen, in the characteristic yellow hair. Carpenter bees have yellow hair on the thorax only; the abdomen is hairless and shiny black. Depending on how close you want to get to a bee, you can identify between the two using either overall size or the presence of yellow hair on the abdomen.

Behavior of carpenter bees is also different from bumblebees. The big bees are solitary, keeping to themselves or their mate, pollinating and nesting by themselves. Bumblebees are colony insects. They fly, pollinate, and nest together. They fly with a ‘wingbee’ where carpenter bees patrol solo. Another key difference between the two bees is their aggressiveness. Bumblebees

will sting a person. Male carpenter bees will buzz and harass those threatening their nesting sites. Female carpenter bees are the ones that can sting, but only do so when directly threatened.

CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Carpenter bees do not nest in the ground or build honeycomb nests in trees or hive-boxes. They prefer digging tunnels into exposed wood to create their nests. These nests can develop into extensive galleries if used by multiple bees year after year. The resulting damage is both aesthetic and structural.

Waiting out the winter in previously excavated tunnels, carpenter bees emerge in the spring to mate and make new tunnels. It is the female that bores into wood surfaces to create a nest for the larvae. Softwoods (redwood, cypress, cedar, and pine) are preferred by the bees. Hardwoods that have aged or been exposed to the elements also provide viable nesting material. They will not occupy plywood. The most common areas to see carpenter bee nests in structures include eaves, fascia boards, siding, window trim, and wood shingles, as well as decks, fences, and wooden outdoor furniture.

Once you know what to look for, the tunnels made by carpenter bees are distinctive and easily recognizable. The female of the species chews a round, half-inch hole into the wood as the entrance. Sawdust underneath this hole is an indicator of an infestation. Yellow stains coming from the hole provide more evidence of bee occupation.

When the entrance is created, the bee burrows in about the length of her body, then makes a 90 degree turn into the wood which is parallel to the wood grain. In a typical year, this tunnel can extend four to six inches. These tunnels expose the wood to moisture, leading to rot and other pests. Repeated use of the tunnels further weakens the structure of the wood. In one extraordinary example, a gallery was found spanning ten feet. Woodpeckers compound the damage to the wood by going after the larvae in the tunnels.

PREVENTION

Painting all exposed wood surfaces is the most recommended preventative measure: two coats of exterior primer and at least one coat of finish. Oil-based or polyurethane is most effective; however, latex paint will also discourage carpenter bees if maintained periodically. Painted wood is not proof against infestation, but it makes the wood less attractive to bees.

Wood stains have little effect against carpenter bees. The current borate-based pressure treatment of exterior wood products does not claim to prevent infestation.

Metal window screening mesh can also be affixed to wood in areas experiencing carpenter bee activity.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU'VE FOUND CARPENTER BEES

Call a pest control professional if you are unsure or not comfortable with climbing a ladder and using insecticide. Your safety comes before controlling carpenter bees.

For the do-it-yourselfer, locate all the carpenter bee holes in the area you plan to treat. Look behind and on the bottom side of boards and fascia. It may help to circle the holes with markers for better visibility. Evaluate the wood for replacement, as it may be better to start over with new wood.

Active nests will require an insecticide treatment. New carpenter bees will emerge from a plugged tunnel if not treated. If you can, do this at night when the bees are sedate. Dusts containing the active ingredient carbaryl may be blown into the entrance to the tunnel. Pyrethroid-based sprays can be used to treat the tunnel and nest, and should be applied to the wood surface several inches around the hole.

Plugging the holes and filling the tunnels is key. This applies for active or inactive nests, and can be done at any time of the



year. It is recommended to wait 12 to 24 hours after an insecticide treatment before plugging the hole. Recommended materials to use are wood filler, adhesive caulk, plastic wood, or a properly-sized wooden dowel. Do not use expanding foam filler from a spray can; carpenter bees can easily chew through this material.

The process of treating then filling the holes is labor intensive. To avoid repeating this activity later, consider painting or attaching wire mesh to the area.

OBSERVATIONS OF CARPENTER BEES

Carpenter bees have even been found to burrow into wood products such as telephone poles and doors. One non-wood material a carpenter bee was found to have burrowed into was the steering wheel of an AFC pickup. A colleague was kind enough to tell me this story and share pictures of the damage. Nature continues to surprise us.

A little while back I was visiting my mother in Mobile. While doing projects in the yard, I noticed a hole in the fascia of her shop. I had started to compile this article before I left, so carpenter bees were fresh in my mind. Closer examination and a warning fly-by from the bee confirmed this was the same culprit. So, I grabbed a can of 'bug kill' and the caulk gun and went to work. When I climbed up the ladder, I noticed another hole . . . then another . . . and so on, till I was working on five holes. I used a piece of flexible wire to gauge the length of the tunnels; thankfully they were not extensive. After spraying the holes and tunnels with bug kill, I took a water break.

When the wood dried, I climbed back up and made a mess with adhesive caulk, putty knifed it smooth, and climbed back down. I called my mother over to show her what I had done, what to watch for, and tell her more about carpenter bees than she ever really wanted to know. No sooner had I started talking than a carpenter bee came flying back to one of the holes. It hovered there, moving side-to-side a bit. Then it landed and proceeded to burrow through the caulk. It was slowed a little, but otherwise went in at speed. My mother looked at me with a smirk. All I could say was, "That's one tough bee." 🐝



Photo by Johnny N. Dell, Bugwood.org

A carpenter bee digs a hole into cypress wood.

New *Forests Forever* tags are here!



- Show your love for the great outdoors by asking your local probate office for the Forests Forever tag.
- Personalization is FREE with your tax-deductible \$50 vanity Forests Forever tag.
- Proceeds provide educational materials and workshops for teachers, including grants for forestry education.

TREASURE Forest Program

Created in 1974 by members of the Alabama Natural Resources Council, TREASURE Forest designation is earned by private forest landowners who affirm the principles of multiple-use forest management. It is this forest landowner recognition program that inspired the national Stewardship program which began in 1991. TREASURE is an acronym for Timber, Recreation, Environment, and Aesthetics for a Sustained Usable REsource.

Congratulations to these landowners who recently earned their TREASURE Forest certifications! Alabama currently has 2,148 landowners with a total of 1,934,306 certified acres being managed under the AFC's TREASURE Forest program. ♣

New TREASURE Forest Certifications

Landowner	County	TF Number	Acres
Neil Armentrout	Baldwin	2691	682
Greg Brantley	Conecuh	2683	41
Terri Finley	Franklin	2692	174
Larry Hardwick	Cleburne	2682	275
Charley Long	Calhoun	2687	290
Donald Mann	Madison	2690	194
Joe McClinton	Bullock	2688	272
Mike & Laura Mikos	Marion	2681	137
Johnny & Sue Mims	Crenshaw	2693	63
Earl Norton	Chambers	2689	208
C. Elliot Poole	Sumter	2685	605
R. Knox Poole	Sumter	2686	621
Buddy Stith	Chilton	2684	45
Total Acres			3,607





PALS volunteers spent four hours cleaning Oliver Myers and Wilson Roads during the 2019 "Don't Drop It On Alabama" spring cleanup in Russell County, collecting 500 waste bags totaling 15,000 pounds (7 tons) that later went to a landfill.

People Against a Littered State

By Johnnie Everitt, Forester/Work Unit Manager, Alabama Forestry Commission

The Alabama Forestry Commission is well known for its forestry protection, management, and education activities. It is less known for assistance with the creation of the 'People Against a Littered State' program or simply, PALS. The statewide PALS organization was established in 1987 by the Alabama Forestry Commission and then State Forester C.W. Moody to encourage Alabama citizens to clean up our state and, in short, to stop littering which gave our state a bad reputation. Spencer Ryan was selected to make Mr. Moody's project a reality, a position he has held for over 30 years.

Over the years, PALS has grown with chapters or cleanup activities in all 67 counties. This is primarily a grassroots organization involving a small army of volunteers. Many of these chapters are supported by local county commissions through the assistance of Spencer and his staff at their Montgomery headquarters. Their mission statement remains, "Alabama Communities Working Together for A Cleaner and More Beautiful Alabama."

PALS carries out a wide variety of activities throughout the year to make Alabama a cleaner place to live. These programs include the statewide "Don't Drop it On Alabama" Spring Cleanup each April; Alabama Adopt-A-Mile, a partnership with the Alabama Department of Transportation; Alabama Adopt-A-Stream; Alabama Clean Campus for all Alabama schools; and

Alabama Coastal Cleanup, a partnership with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources/State Lands Division/Coastal Section. Additionally, the Alabama PALS Governor's Awards program each November recognizes individuals, communities, school groups, and businesses who work toward the goal of creating a cleaner and more beautiful Alabama.

As an example of just how effective the PALS organization has been, over the past 30 years over 92,000 volunteers have participated with Alabama PALS Coastal Cleanup held annually in September. These volunteers have cleaned over 5,600 miles of coastline, collecting over 1,600,000 pounds of debris. This is incredible. Can you just imagine how much work has gone on throughout the state over this period? In addition, 934 miles of federal, state, and county roadways have been enrolled in the Alabama Adopt-A-Mile program.



PALS Clean Campus efforts at Maddox Intermediate School in Jasper, Alabama.

During the 2018 Alabama Coastal Cleanup, over 5,500 volunteers picked up 40,000 pounds of litter and 2,000 pounds of aluminum. Just think how your vacation to the beach would be without their efforts. PALS provided over 200,000 litter pickup bags throughout the state in 2018.

From an education standpoint, 17 Alabama Clean Campus school programs were conducted. Instilling good stewardship

and environmental awareness for future generations, these programs discuss the importance of recycling and litter control with our children. To help get the message across, a state poster and recycled art contest is held through local schools with recognition given at the Governor's Awards.

Colbert County is one of the original PALS chapters in the state. The chapter started 30 years ago through the assistance of Alabama Forestry Commission employees Mike Lanier and Danny Deaton. The county's solid waste officer Danny Alison and volunteer Ann Davis were instrumental in getting this program going and supported by the county commission. The local goal was to reduce illegal dump sites throughout the county, a major source for wildfires at one time. By cleaning these sites up, the county not only became healthier but saw a reduction in wildfires. Alison and Davis still serve on the local PALS chapter.



PALS volunteers battle beach litter during Coastal Cleanup.

Through the years, local chapters such as the one in Colbert County have contributed greatly to our state. These small groups have quietly made a big difference. Although local road trash pickups are not fun and may often go unappreciated, they DO make our areas look much better. Alabama's waterways are also targeted by the PALS organization through the Adopt-A-Stream program which promotes litter cleanup along the banks of our streams and rivers.

When the annual PALS "Don't Drop it On Alabama" Spring Cleanup campaign rolls around again, every county in our state will have some type of litter cleanup program scheduled. You are encouraged to join one of these efforts by contacting your local PALS chapter. These activities take only a couple of hours to complete and make such a marked difference in our communities. In addition, they provide a good way of getting some exercise in the great outdoors. So do something for your community and yourself by helping clean up. Also, consider becoming a member of PALS and know that your membership is an investment in a clean and litter-free Alabama. For more information visit www.alpals.org.

As a TREASURE forest landowner, please consider participating in the PALS Adopt-A-Mile or Adopt-A-Stream programs. These two programs will give you recognition for work you are already doing on your property. It's been 30 years since Mr. Moody and the Alabama Forestry Commission came up with the idea of a statewide litter and recycling program. What a difference his vision and an army of volunteers have made. 🌲



Lake Tuscaloosa's water pollution is diminishing thanks to PALS volunteer teams.



The Grand Old Lady

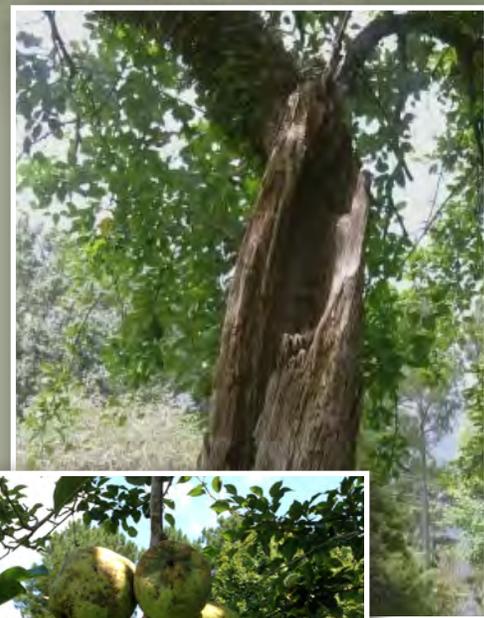
By J. A. Heitmueller, Cullman County Landowner

She stands like an old Confederate soldier, worn and weary from the rigors of battle, yet too proud to surrender and lower his battered frame. Her gray, gnarled trunk, with over a century of exposure to the elements, is stooped and fragile. Though twisted and sparse, her spindly, brittle limbs create a canopy of protection; reminiscent of a mother guarding her precious child, oblivious to her own needs.

Tiny shoots of green have emerged overnight, exposing vibrant blossoms of renewal. Sparkling rays of sunlight dart off the shimmering morning dew that has nestled placidly on the eagerly emerging white petals. Once again, the aged pear tree radiates in all her beauty, just as she has done on over one hundred previous celebrations of springtime.

Each year we marvel at the strength and resilience of this grand old lady, wondering how many more years she can continue to remain as a symbol of a glorious new season. Five generations have shared their days with her. Such an array of growth, change, joy, and sorrow she has overseen during her reign as the arboreal matriarch of our family.

There is no record of her beginning, be she planted by nature or the hand of man. No hint of the maladies she has endured or the many creatures for whom she has provided solace or refuge. She defiantly struggles onward year after year as we salute her, ever joyful for her continuing presence in our lives. 🍷



MEMORIALS

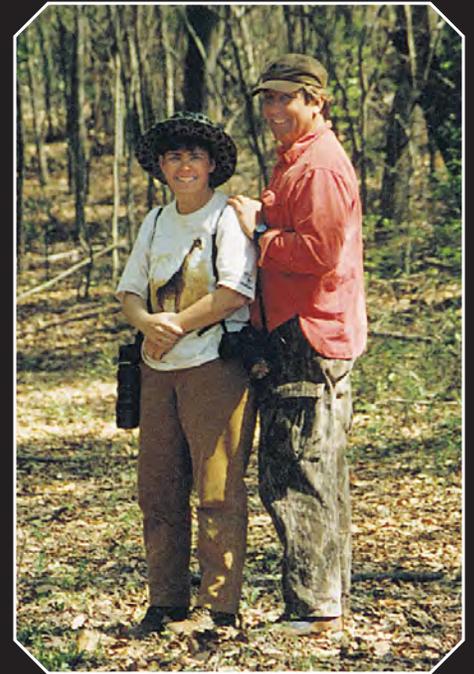
David Ball 1947– 2019

David Buchanan Ball, aged 72, passed on May 25, 2019. Preceded in death by parents and his wife of over 40 years, Ruth Law Ball, he is survived by two children, five grandchildren, a brother and sister.

Born in Atlanta on January 9, 1947, David graduated from the University of Tennessee. He had a long career in commercial real estate in Mobile where he formed his own company and was active in historic renovations, civic planning and various trade organizations. David was an avid outdoorsman who traveled the world hunting, fishing, and adventuring. He was also active in environmental and conservation efforts with the Alabama TREASURED Forests Association and the Gulf Coast Conservation Association, a predecessor to the Coastal Conservation Association.

David and Ruth's Clarke County property, known as 'Paradise,' was certified as a TREASURE Forest in 1993 and received the Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award in 1998. Good friends of the Clarke County AFC staff, they were very active on their property, managing for multiple-use objectives including timber, wild-life, recreation, aesthetics, and education. Following Ruth's death a few years ago, and due to failing health he eventually moved to Maine to live with his daughter, and the property was sold.

Donations in memory of David may be made to the Coastal Conservation Association at www.joincca.org. ☪



Ruth and David Ball



Bob and Carol having fun together in 2003 at Big Creek.



Photo courtesy of the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association

Bob Pittman 1937– 2019

Robert Earl 'Bob' Pittman died on April 12 at the age of 81. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Carol; three children, eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, a brother, and two sisters.

Born in Toxey, Alabama, on July 20, 1937, Pittman graduated from Choctaw High School in 1955. He worked for Allstate Insurance and Dean Witter, with stints in Atlanta and Chicago before retiring to south Alabama.

With property near Grand Bay in extreme southwest Mobile County, Bob was proud to say that they owned the 'Southern-most' TREASURE Forest in the state! A past Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA) president and 2006 Bill Moody Award winner, he will be remembered as a dear friend to many in the ATFA. ☪



It is with great sadness that the Alabama Forestry Commission acknowledges the loss of Mr. C. W. 'Bill' Moody, State Forester of Alabama from 1970 to 1993, who passed away on Monday, August 12, following a battle with cancer. Recognized as a leader, mentor, and role model to forestry associates, he was also a friend to forest landowners and forest industry. A pioneer in forest stewardship, Mr. Moody is credited with founding the TREASURE Forest program in Alabama. The AFC family extends its heartfelt condolences to the Moodys.

**Look for Mr. Moody's full memorial in the next issue of
Alabama's TREASURED Forests magazine**



Dr. Richard F. Hill

1943–2018

*By Paul E. Hudgins, Alabama Registered Forester
Soil Conservation Technician,
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service*

Once again, the telephone rang early on a Sunday morning, and another friend and forest landowner had left this world too early. Dr. Richard F. Hill, retired veterinarian, had lost his fight. Just shy of two months earlier, he had suffered a major stroke while staying at his cabin in Butler County, fondly referred to as 'Paradise.' Richard spent many a day at the farm . . . hunting, fishing, tending food plots, planting mast producing trees, working his honey bees, or just sharing his little piece of heaven with anybody that would visit.

Richard was proud to be a TREASURE Forest landowner and was honored to serve on the Alabama TREASURE Forest Board of Directors. He often attended landowner field days, forestry planning committee meetings, and other events promoting the TREASURE Forest Association and philosophy of 'taking what God has given us and doing what you can to leave it a little better than you found it.'

Speaking at his father's funeral, one of Richard's sons remembered sitting together atop a hill in northern Butler County and his dad asking him what he thought of this clear-cut piece of property. He didn't know how to answer, but his dad said he saw paradise. And thus, 'Paradise' was born and grew into what it is today . . . a beautiful piece of property with hills covered in hardwood, plantation pines, ponds full of fish, and fields full of wildlife.

Richard touched many lives throughout his life as a veterinarian, but I believe he touched even more through a place called Paradise. I know that when the boys open the door to the cabin, walk the woods of Paradise, catch that big ol' bass, or kill that wise old turkey, they will remember what their father taught them. Richard will be truly missed by all that knew him, but he will be thought of often as we travel the forests of Paradise, look back through old pictures, or remember the fond memories of a friend that loved the Lord, his Country, his family, and his piece of Paradise. Until we meet again good friend, keep a look out on the hill. ☩

Dr. Richard F. Hill of Wetumpka went peacefully to his heavenly home on November 25, 2018, at the age of 75. Those left behind to cherish his memory are his loving and devoted wife of 53 years, Pamela; two sons and their spouses who loved him dearly. 'Doc' will be missed by his three grandchildren and two step-grandchildren. He is survived by his siblings as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Born on March 21, 1943, in Montgomery, Dr. Hill graduated from Auburn University with a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science in 1965 and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in 1969 where he was a member of Alpha Psi veterinary fraternity. He practiced veterinary medicine for one year in Oneonta; then for 34 years in Crestview, Florida. He also served his country as Captain, US Air Force, with two years active duty and six years in the Reserves. He was a faithful member, deacon, and Sunday School teacher at Thelma Baptist Church as well as First Baptist Church of Crestview. Dr. Hill loved spending time with his family and friends and was constantly in the service of others through Xtreme Outdoors Ministry. In retirement he enjoyed spending time at his beloved Paradise, built from the vision of his own dream with the help of his dear sons and brothers.

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Who
is the



ALABAMA NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL



Approximately 70 percent of Alabama is covered with forests. In addition to providing clean air, water, and recreational opportunities, Alabama forests provide the raw material for a \$20 billion dollar forest products industry. Combined with the \$3 billion annual impact of forest-associated outdoor recreation, it's easy to see why forests and wildlife are considered essential components of Alabama's economic and social landscape.

Members of the ANRC (**listed below**) are leaders of state and federal government agencies as well as private organizations with an interest in forest resources. The Council collaboratively develops programs and activities that motivate Alabama landowners, leaders, and citizens to be wise stewards of our forests and related sustainable natural resources through the coordinated services and programs available from participating organizations. The Council has successfully served forest landowners throughout the state since 1971 and currently focuses on several key activities.

To learn about upcoming events in your area, follow the
 Alabama Natural Resources Council on Facebook!

- Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, Auburn University
- Alabama Cooperative Extension System
- Alabama Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources, Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries Division
- Alabama Department of Education, Agribusiness Education
- Alabama Farmers Federation
- Alabama Forest Resources Center
- Alabama Forestry Association
- Alabama Forestry Commission
- Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee
- Alabama TREASURE Forest Association
- Alabama Wildlife Federation
- Association of Consulting Foresters, Inc., Alabama Chapter
- College of Agriculture, Auburn University
- School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, Auburn University
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA Forest Service, National Forests in Alabama
- USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Parsley Hawthorne

(*Crataegus marshallii*)

By Fred Nation, Environmental Services, Baldwin County

In spring, parsley hawthorn produces masses of pretty flowers. It is often seen as a large, irregular shrub, but it sometimes attains the dimensions of a small, attractive tree, to 25 feet tall with a trunk of 4 or 5 inches. The leaves are about 2 inches long, divided into three to seven sharply dentate, irregular lobes. Resembling parsley, the leaves are deciduous with yellow fall foliage. Sharp, stiff thorns of various lengths are usually present on the branches, though they are absent on a few individuals. The bark exfoliates in patches, giving the trunk an interesting multicolored appearance. The flowers are white with five petals, about two-thirds of an inch across, with 20 stamens and red anthers [the part of the stamen that produces and contains pollen].

The range of parsley hawthorn is from Virginia, west to Missouri; south to east Texas, and east to north and central Florida. In Alabama it can be found in the mid-story of rich hardwood forests statewide.

Herbalists have used hawthorn flowers as a heart tonic and diuretic (eliminates excess body fluids). A tea is brewed from the leaves and twigs to treat sore throats. American Indians are reported to have used the fruits to treat gastrointestinal complaints.



Photos by Fred Nation

The pretty fruits are eagerly foraged by birds and mammals. They are ovoid, bright red, ripening in the fall, and they resemble tiny

apples. This is not surprising, since apples and hawthorns are closely related: both are in the large rose family, Rosaceae.

The attractive leaves, flowers, and bark all make parsley hawthorns desirable landscape ornamentals, with nearly year-round horticultural interest. They are often available at nurseries and garden centers, and they are a great choice to plant in a limited area, where the handsome fall fruits will be a bonus for us and for the birds! 🍎