



DON SIEGELMAN
Governor, State of Alabama



TIMOTHY C. BOYCE
State Forester

Recently I officially opened Alabama's Hunting and Fishing Trail for People with Physical Disabilities. This is the first trail in the nation to provide a network of hunting, fishing and sport shooting to accommodate people with physical disabilities. The trail consists of 39 sites that have been modified to accommodate people with physical disabilities. There are 12 hunting sites, seven sport shooting sites and 20 fishing sites.

Alabama has an incredibly rich history of institutions and organizations that provide access and opportunity to individuals with physical challenges. By establishing this trail, we continue this proud legacy by making Alabama's natural heritage and natural beauty accessible to all Alabamians regardless of their physical capabilities.

I want to thank the businesses and landowners that have joined with the state to create this unique trail, and I challenge others to join with us as we plan to expand this trail in the coming months and years.

I recently visited three of sites on the trail: the USA Foundation Hunting Area in Mobile, which is designated for hunting, Walker County Public Lake near Jasper, which is designated for fishing, and the Swan Creek Wildlife Management Area in Limestone County, which is designated for sport shooting. Two properties owned by the Alabama Forestry Commission, Little River State Forest and Macon County Forest, are part of the trail. All provide excellent opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy outdoor recreational activities.

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources developed the trail in partnership with a broad range of private sponsors. For more information on Alabama's Hunting and Fishing Trail for People with Disabilities, contact the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources at (334) 242-3465.

As we begin 2001, I'd like to reflect on just a few of the accomplishments of the Alabama Forestry Commission over the past year.

The continued drought placed a heavy demand on the Forestry Commission's firefighting resources in 2000. During the fiscal year we responded to 6,437 wildfires that burned 87,441 acres. This extremely critical fire situation was handled in a professional and efficient manner with the assistance of the state's 988 volunteer fire departments and our other cooperators.

The drought also contributed to the Southern Pine Beetle epidemic faced by the state last fiscal year. Alabama had a record 24,465 spots containing 1,438,100 infested trees. The Forestry Commission will be monitoring pine beetle outbreaks through aerial detection as usual this year. I urge landowners to keep a close watch on their pine stands and control spots as soon as they are detected.

Providing technical assistance to forest landowners is a high priority for our agency. Last year 152 new TREASURE Forests were certified. Currently 1,541 families are managing 1.79 million acres under this program.

The E.A. Hauss Nursery in Atmore grew 37.5 million seedlings last year. Twenty-one different species or varieties of hardwood and wildlife seedlings, as well as loblolly, slash and longleaf pine were grown.

The AFC now has an outreach coordinator in each of our four regions. They are concentrating on making contacts with underserved landowners. This is one way our agency is making sure that all landowners have access to information about our programs. Read more about our outreach program on page 27.

I am extremely proud of my teammates within the Alabama Forestry Commission. We have made significant contributions to the quality of life for Alabama's citizens through our achievements in forestry. Our associates continue to handle their responsibilities with efficiency and professionalism. The Forestry Commission maintains an office in each of Alabama's 67 counties. If you need forestry assistance, please contact our personnel one of these offices.