



A controlled burn in the Longleaf Pine ecosystem on the Conecuh National Forest © Donna Vassallo

## Uncertainty Is a Guarantee

Successful conservation is never a given. Disasters like the Deepwater Horizon oil spill bring tremendous damage, and funds for recovery are not guaranteed. Pandemics and economic downturns challenge our ability to donate and support worthwhile causes.

And with each local, state, and national election, the conversations about whether we can successfully protect our lands begin anew. We ask, and work to answer, familiar questions such as which agency will be our biggest ally, who needs to better understand the importance of our work, and who will make protecting Alabama's lands and waters a priority.

For the past 40 years, The Nature Conservancy and its partners have persisted through every uncertainty to achieve landmark conservation wins for Alabama that our founders would have only dreamed of, including:

- Working with Alabama's Forever Wild Program to acquire and protect 12,500 acres in north Alabama now known as the **Walls of Jericho**
- Reintroducing **prescribed fire** on lands throughout the state, rehabilitating critical ecosystems and habitats
- Literally reshaping Alabama through the 40-acre **Lightning Point** project, which is now protecting one of our state's most iconic communities

These wins join a long list of conservation successes across the state, including helping to establish the Little River Canyon National Preserve, protecting 8,000 acres in the Mobile-Tensaw Delta known as the Land Between the Rivers, and establishing the Fenkvvcēkv (pronounced finuh-guh-jee-guh) Creek Preserve at Flagg Mountain.

None of these projects was a guarantee of success. They were the result of hard work from a lot of people and a belief that they could happen.



Calvert Prong of the Locust Fork of the Warrior River © Hunter Nichols/TNC

## Our Alabama

While success may not be a guarantee, what is for certain is that The Nature Conservancy will continue to be here to ensure that the lands, waters, and coasts of Alabama are restored and protected. We are here for the people of Alabama and for the natural wonders that make our state so special.

Our team is committed to working across aisles and in all communities to ensure that our land is resilient as we learn to live in harmony with our natural world. We are focused on ensuring that our waters are healthy for the great diversity of plants and animals that make Alabama special, and for the people that rely on them. And we are dedicated to ensuring that Alabama's communities, from Bayou La Batre to Estillfork, thrive as the world changes around us.

We will continue to pursue ambitious, transformative, and lasting projects, including:

- Protecting more than 50,000 acres of priority forest in Alabama
- Expanding prescribed fire operations across Alabama
- Biologically reconnecting the Alabama and Cahaba Rivers
- Developing carbon forest projects that help in our battle against climate change

This is our mission. Our strategies are sound, our finances are strong, and we are building on a legacy of success spanning 35 years. We will move forward, working with all who are willing, toward that world where all people and all of nature can thrive.

Thank you for your support of our work. Thank you for standing with us as trustees, as donors, as advisors and as friends as we continue this work, regardless of the ebb and flow of politics and popular culture.

Together we are making a difference here in Alabama and across the globe. Together, we will find a way to protect the places that matter across Our Alabama.

## ALABAMA



Beach Trail at Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge  
© Harold E. Malde

### The Future of Conservation

More than 40 years ago, a small group of individuals who believed in the possibility of large-scale conservation in Alabama came together, along with state and federal partners, to create the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge, approximately 7,000 acres of coastal beach dunes and pine oak woodlands, was an ambitious step into unknown conservation territory for The Nature Conservancy.

Established in 1980, Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge is the perfect example of a public/private partnership to benefit conservation. In the late 1970s and early 1980s when work was under way to create the refuge, the idea that there were significant conservation opportunities in Alabama and a willingness to support those opportunities was an unproven thesis.

At the time, it was unclear whether a nonprofit such as The Nature Conservancy could raise significant funds to acquire lands for lasting protection. It was also unclear whether the political will existed to complement private conservation efforts.

All these years later, it is clear that our thesis was correct. Bob Secour today is a refuge for neotropical birds such as warblers, thrushes, and flycatchers during the spring and fall migrations; for sea turtles such as the loggerhead and Kemp's ridley who find safety in the refuge's sands, and for countless other animals – and people – who spend time on Bon Secour's trails.