

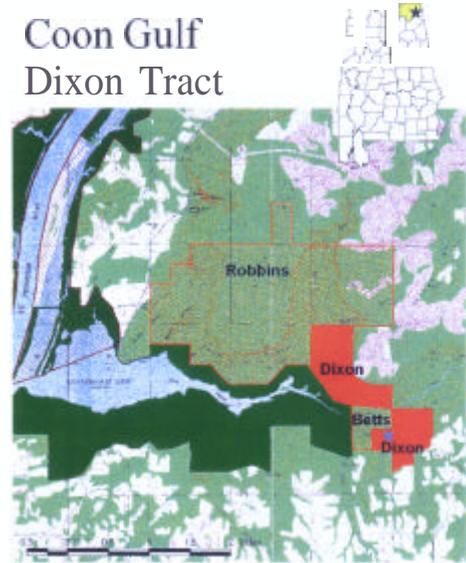
Forest Legacy Program 2002 Project

Coon Gulf- Dixon Tract, Alabama



Total funding required	\$717,200
Federal contribution	\$500,000
Non-Federal match	\$217,200

Coon Gulf Dixon Tract



The Coon Gulf-Dixon tract offers many unique natural attributes, which will be protected through the Forest Legacy Program. The tract would be secured through fee-simple title acquisition, held and managed by the State Lands Division of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The Coon Gulf-Dixon tract marks the first Forest Legacy Project submitted by Alabama, and could serve as the first of a series of phased in acquisitions in this area.

Key issues for protection

- The 652 acre tract abuts the TVA Raccoon Small Wild Area, which hosts over 33 rare plant and animal species. The area is under considerable pressure by development interests seeking rural wooded settings along this scenic portion of the Tennessee River due to its proximity to Huntsville and Chattanooga.
- The tract is connected, through TVA forest lands and the Tennessee River, to five federally and State owned Wildlife Management Areas totaling in excess of 50,000 acres.
- The tract includes Saltpeter Cave, which was the site of historic mining activities by confederate troops during the civil war, and is presently a refugium for two federally listed bats, the Indiana bat and the Gray bat, and serves as a maternity colony for the rare Rafinesque's big-eared bat. Saltpeter Cave is listed in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Grey Bat Plan as a priority gray bat cave. Bald eagles have nested on the adjacent tract for nine years.
- Protection serves as an example for the conservation of two additional tracts, totaling over 3,000 acres in Coon Gulf, which may be available for protection in a later phase in 2003.
- Securing the tract and cave support regional conservation efforts to protect the biodiversity, karst topography, and cultural resources of the forested Cumberland Plateau escarpment, as well as prevent the fragmentation of the climax oak/hickory cove hardwood forest community located on the tract.

Immediate and potential threats to the land

- The tract is within one mile of a gated community development that has brought additional development pressure to the Coon Gulf area.
- A large artesian spring on adjacent property has been marketed as a source site among the bottled drinking water industry.
- Strip mining operations persist in the immediate vicinity of Coon Gulf.

Other parties supporting the protection of this Property

- The Tennessee Valley Authority's Resource Management Office and Natural Heritage Program.
- The Nature Conservancy of Alabama
- The Land Trust of Huntsville and North Alabama
- Alabama Forest Resources Center
- Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources



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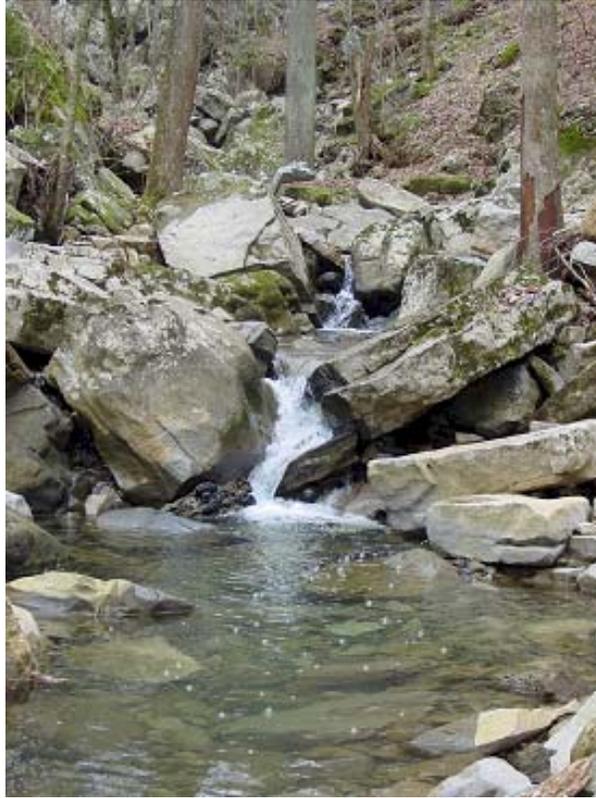
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Pine Creek flows through the Coon Gulf – Dixon property and provides many beautiful settings.



There is also a large, picturesque waterfall on the property.

