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Governor, State of Alabama



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State Forester

In 1926, the Alabama Forestry Commission began its seedling production program to provide quality affordable seedlings to Alabama landowners. In the last 76 years, the program has produced hundreds of thousands of seedling trees that have been planted, grown and harvested by the citizens of our state.

The impact of these trees has been significant, playing a major role in Alabama's growth, both by providing raw material for the number one state industry - forest products - and by helping Alabama become home to the second largest total acreage of commercial forest in the nation. These trees have also helped support the state's abundant wildlife populations and enhanced the state aesthetically by providing scenic high-ways, beautiful state parks and by helping maintain the pristine rivers, lakes and streams that run through Alabama.

Most of all, these same forests grown from tiny seedlings have helped thousands of Alabama families by creating jobs and providing both direct and indirect income. These trees have helped pay mortgages, educate children and put food on the table for Alabama workers and their families.

This year, the Alabama Forestry Commission's E. A. Hauss Nursery in Atmore celebrates its 50th anniversary in the production of seedlings. This single nursery has produced over one billion seedlings for Alabama landowners. I congratulate the Alabama Forestry Commission on this milestone and its continued commitment to provide this invaluable service to the citizens and landowners of our state.

Alabama has approximately 23 million acres of forestland and 47,000 linear miles of perennial streams and rivers in the state, ranking us seventh in the nation. This unique combination gives us a wealth of forest bio-diversity. Even though we rank only 29th in size, we stand at number seven in the number of plant and animal species.

It is important that we protect these valuable resources, not only for today but to ensure that we have healthy forests and clean water in the future. Alabama landowners are ahead of most states managing the forests with the TREASURE Forest program, but it's now time to take the same stand towards protecting our beautiful and abundant water resource.

Although forestry is only a small contributor to the overall water quality problem it does play a very important role in maintaining and improving water quality. Currently landowners and local citizens are taking part in Alabama's Clean Water Partnership, by actively becoming involved in local watershed decisions. Participating in the partnership allows community-based groups, units of government, industry, farms, forestry, special interest groups, and individuals to pull together available resources to develop and implement programs that address and meet the needs of a variety of interests.

Private citizens are serving as volunteer water monitors, participating in the planning and development of watershed protection plans for impaired and threatened waters, and taking many active roles in helping to protect and clean up Alabama's valuable water resources.

Now is the time to become involved in your area. Keeping Alabama's water resources clean and healthy is to everyone's benefit. For more information on the Clean Water Partnership, contact the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, Office of Education and Outreach, 334-394-4360 or e-mail them at [oeomail@adem.state.al.us](mailto:oeomail@adem.state.al.us).