

A MESSAGE FROM . . .



BOB RILEY

Governor, State of Alabama

Alabama is one of the most blessed states in our country with its natural beauty and abundant resources. Much of this beauty is located in one of our state's four national forests. The USDA Forest Service manages over 666,000 acres of land in Alabama that includes the Bankhead, Talladega, Conecuh, and Tuskegee National Forests. These treasures are working forests that are managed for multiple uses like recreation, wildlife, timber, fish, water, soil, and wilderness.

There is something for everyone in Alabama's national forests. Hundreds of miles of hiking, biking, horseback, and ATV trails run through this diverse land. Clean lakes and beautiful streams provide opportunities for swimming, boating, canoeing, and fishing. Hunting is allowed in the wildlife-rich management areas and the forests give generous opportunities for bird watching, photography, picnicking, and camping. Mile after mile of rural roads provide sightseeing or just that quiet spot away from everything. Around 41,000 acres of the national forests are kept as wilderness land where you can go and enjoy nature undisturbed.

The stewards of this valuable resource are the men and women of the USDA Forest Service. This year the agency is celebrating its centennial - 100 years of service to the land and the people that enjoy it. Alabama is most fortunate to have our national forests and the wonderful people who carefully manage it for all of us to enjoy. The job they do is invaluable to our state and every citizen living here. Congratulations to the USDA Forest Service on their 100th anniversary and keep up the good work of providing special places for each one of us. 🌲



TIMOTHY C. BOYCE
State Forester

This year the USDA Forest Service is celebrating its 100th anniversary. In this 100-year journey they have gone from an agency primarily responsible for protecting and conserving national forests and grasslands to one of the most valuable assets to state and private forestry in the nation.

Aside from being the caretakers of 192 million acres that include 155 national forests, 20 national grasslands, and 222 research and experimental forests, the Forest Service in the last century has become a vital and crucial part of the forest community at the grass roots level. They provide leadership across the nation in wildland fire management, operations, research, and technology. Much of Alabama's wildland firefighting program is dependent on the support of the Forest Service. It is only through their financial assistance that we are able to provide the fire protection that we do: through the purchase of equipment and gear, training of our firefighters, aerial detection, communications, fuel reduction, fire prevention, and education. Not only do they assist the Alabama Forestry Commission as an agency but they also have a large impact on rural volunteer fire departments. Through the National Fire Plan and the Rural Community Fire Protection Program, grant monies are administered by our agency for rural volunteer

departments. These funds provide for the organization, training, and equipping of fire departments in our state's rural communities.

The Forest Service is behind many of our forest management programs such as southern pine beetle and stewardship forests. They provide research and technology in the area of forest health for such things as non-native invasive species as well as insects and diseases. They support programs for water quality and clean air. Through us they help provide technical assistance and education to landowners and communities about how to care for their land. In addition, they are the leader in conservation education efforts not only through their national forests programs, but because they have become important assets in their local schools and communities.

In September Hurricane Ivan damaged and destroyed forestland and communities in much of south Alabama. It is through supplement emergency funds that the AFC has been able to reach out and provide assistance to landowners, communities, and fire departments in the initial response and recovery efforts. This assistance will continue for several years because of the USDA Forest Service.

In the early 1900's, Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief of the Forest Service, made a remark that has proved simple but true for 100 years. He summed up the mission of the agency as, "to provide the greatest amount of good for the greatest amount of people in the long run." The USDA Forest Service has met and exceeded their mission. On behalf of the Alabama Forestry Commission I want to say congratulations to the 37,000 employees of the Forest Service and I hope that you have many more years of service to our nation, state, and local communities. 🌲