

TALLADEGA FOREST EXPANSION PROTECTS CRITICAL LANDS AND EXPANDS PUBLIC ACCESS IN ALABAMA

Nearly 1,500-acre project enhances recreation and strengthens wildlife habitat along the Talladega National Forest

ALABAMA (May 27, 2026) — Today, The Conservation Fund announced a conservation win for people and wildlife along the southern boundary of the Talladega National Forest, protecting and expanding one of Alabama’s most popular outdoor recreation areas.

This acquisition in Clay County secures 1,446 acres of ecologically significant forestland. It strengthens wildlife habitat, protects scenic views along the Pinhoti Trail — a southern extension of the Appalachian Trail — and enhances public access for hunting, hiking, and other outdoor recreation. By filling a critical gap in the forest, the project improves landscape connectivity and supports more effective, unified land management across the region, particularly within the highly popular Hollins Wildlife Management Area, known for its deer and turkey hunting opportunities.

“This project expands access to one of Alabama’s most treasured outdoor landscapes while protecting the natural resources that make it so special,” said Stacy Funderburke, vice president of the central Southeast region at The Conservation Fund. “By completing a key piece of the forest boundary, we have improved habitat connectivity and ensured that hunters, hikers, and outdoor enthusiasts can continue to enjoy these lands for generations to come.”

The property has been conveyed to the U.S. Forest Service and incorporated into Talladega National Forest, where it will be managed in part through the Hollins Wildlife Management Area. This transfer ensures permanent public access and long-term stewardship, while strengthening the Forest Service’s ability to manage the landscape as a connected and resilient ecosystem.

Funding for the acquisition came from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which was permanently funded with the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act and signed into law by President Trump in 2020. LWCF, established in 1965, reinvests a small percentage of offshore energy revenues — not taxpayer dollars — in conservation and recreation access projects that support critical natural resources, wild habitats, historic sites, and working lands. This project was made possible thanks to swift action by The Conservation Fund and thanks to LWCF funding secured by U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville, U.S. Senator Katie Britt and U.S. Representative Mike Rogers.

“Talladega National Forest is a premier destination for hikers, sportsmen, and families from all corners of Alabama and our nation. This acquisition not only promotes recreation and safety for Alabama’s outdoor community, but also allows us to better steward our lands,” said Senator



Britt. “I’m proud to have helped secure this critical funding that ensures Alabama the Beautiful continues to be enjoyed for generations to come.”

“I am excited to see this new expansion of the Talladega National Forest,” said Rep. Rogers. “This acquisition will protect the scenic views of the Pinhoti Trail, create more access, and more opportunities for hunters in the area. This will provide a large boost to the outdoor tourism in Clay County and the surrounding areas. I am always committed to preserving Alabama’s natural treasures in Congress, and I look forward to visiting the new portion of the Talladega National Forest.”

By building on a long track record of successful conservation in the region, this effort helps “finish the puzzle” of the Talladega National Forest’s southern boundary — ensuring a more connected, accessible, and resilient landscape for wildlife and people alike.

About The Conservation Fund

The Conservation Fund protects the land that sustains us all. We are in the business of conservation, creating innovative solutions that drive nature-based action in all 50 states for climate protection, vibrant communities and sustainable economies. We apply effective strategies, efficient financing approaches, and enduring government, community and private partnerships to protect millions of acres of America’s natural land, cultural sites, recreation areas and working forests and farms. To learn more, visit www.conservationfund.org.

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