Dear Friend,

While the official start of the summer season is still a few days away, this is the perfect time to escape the indoors and connect with nature. After all, June is "Great Outdoors Month"! We hope you find opportunities to enjoy outdoor activities with family and friends -- whether that’s fishing, boating, camping, hiking, or simply birdwatching in your own neighborhood. If you need help planning an outdoor adventure, check out the websites for Alabama’s State Parks or Forever Wild Land Trust.

Don’t forget, Father’s Day is this Sunday (and if you still need a gift, we’ve got you covered). To all the dads and father-figures out there, we hope you have a chance to celebrate in your favorite way with all those you care about!

Sincerely,

Tammy Monistere
Executive Director

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Upcoming Elections

At Conservation Alabama, we believe your voice and your vote are some of the most powerful tools around to help advance good conservation policy in our state. While presidential and congressional races often get the most attention, there are many other down-ballot races happening throughout the year that are just as impactful -- especially when it comes to local conservation issues in your city or district. That’s why we want to keep you informed about several upcoming municipal and district-level elections throughout the state.

**July 13:**
- Senate District 14 (portions of Bibb, Chilton, Hale, Jefferson and Shelby Counties)
- House District 73 (portions of Shelby County)
- City of Montgomery - City Council District 1

**July 27:**
- City of Tuscaloosa - City Council District 7

**August 3:**
- City of Dothan - Municipal Election

**August 24:**
- City of Birmingham - Municipal Election
- City of Mobile - Municipal Election

This summer, as you make plans for a backyard BBQ or a beach vacation, be sure your voting plan is in order, too. Mark election dates in your calendar, check your polling place, and request an absentee ballot if you'll be out of town.

For a full list of voting resources, visit our Voting in Alabama page.

Black Belt National Heritage Area Bills Introduced

Last month, Rep. Terri Sewell (AL-7) introduced the Alabama Black Belt National Heritage Area Act, a bill that would designate areas within the 19 counties of Alabama’s Black Belt as a National Heritage Area. Sens. Richard Shelby and Tommy Tuberville introduced a companion bill in the Senate.

Designated by Congress, national heritage areas (NHAs) are partnerships between the National Park Service, states, and local entities that serve to protect and support conservation and public access. The Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area is currently the only NHA in our state.

If passed, the Alabama Black Belt National Heritage Area Act would allow federal funding to be directed to the Black Belt region over 15 years, supporting long-term projects that would have substantial economic and environmental benefits. We’ll continue to follow this legislation closely, and keep you informed at critical moments when your voice can make a difference!
Special Session Later this Summer

While the regular legislative session concluded last month, the Alabama Legislature has some unresolved business. This means Governor Ivey will need to call legislators into a special session later this summer.

Chief among the issues to be considered is the drawing up of new district boundaries, which is done every 10 years following the national census. New districts must be approved before party primaries in March 2022, because every seat in the Alabama Legislature, all statewide constitutional offices, and the districts of all seven congressional seats will be on the ballot next year.

Other items that will likely be considered include a distribution plan for over $4 billion in federal Covid-19 relief funds, as well as legislation for lottery and gaming that stalled during the regular session.

Make sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram to hear when special session dates are announced.

Become a Monthly Donor Today!

Want to support Conservation Alabama's vital work all year long? Now is a great time to become a monthly donor!

A monthly donation is an ideal way to support the conservation cause. You'll be able to make regular, repeated gifts that fit into your budget and safeguard Alabama's people and places each and every month.

There are many benefits of becoming a monthly donor:

- **It's easy** - your donation is charged to your monthly credit card automatically each month and can be changed or cancelled any time.
- **It's productive** - monthly giving reduces the need for regular, costly fundraising appeals, so your money goes even further.

Please consider becoming a monthly donor today!