



# ALABAMA TREASURE FOREST Association Newsletter

In partnership with the Alabama Farmers Federation

January 2022

Vol. 8, Issue 1

## Landowners Converge For Education, Awards In Columbiana

By Marlee Moore

Over 150 landowners and natural resources professionals converged in Columbiana Oct. 21-22 for educational seminars, a longleaf plantation tour and awards presentations.

Held at the Alabama 4-H Center on Lay Lake, the Alabama Landowners Conference is a joint meeting of the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA), Alabama Tree Farm Committee and Alabama Natural Resources Council (ANRC).

Attendees were engaged during the conference, consistently asking questions to improve their properties. It was an impressive showing after a tough year, said ATFA President Mark Finley.

"We were so thankful to meet face-to-face and learn together," said Finley, a Winston County landowner. "It's important to continually improve our properties, and educational opportunities like the Landowners Conference allow us to learn from professionals and each other."

Seminars focused on carbon credits, longleaf pine management, turkey management, forest health and pesticide permits. A listening session allowed landowners to suggest future education and research topics – including invasive species, engaging younger generations, natural resources enterprises, drone use and cost-share programs. Attendees also toured a Shelby County longleaf pine plantation owned by The Westervelt Co.

Exemplary leaders were celebrated during the meeting. The ATFA's highest honor, the Bill Moody



The Alabama Forestry Commission's Carey Potter, right, prepped Alabama Landowners Conference attendees before they visited a longleaf pine stand in Shelby County.

Award, was presented posthumously to Richard Hill of Elmore and Butler counties. His widow, Pam, accepted the award.

W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Awards were presented to Gene Renfroe of Pike County, Roy Jordan of Marengo County, and Dr. Salem and Dianne Saloom of Conecuh County. The awards recognize outstanding voluntary efforts toward wise stewardship of Alabama's natural resources.

The ANRC and W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Awards Program jointly presented two sets of awards — the Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Awards and Outstanding County Awards.

Helene Mosley Awards recognize landowners for outstanding achievement in multiple-use forest management. This year's winners were Neil and Ellen Armentrout of Baldwin County and mother-daughter duo Kathy McCrimmon and Kelly Cosby of Calhoun County.

Forestry Planning Committees in Butler, Clay and Walker counties were recognized for improving forest resources management through cooperative programs.

The Alabama Tree Farm Committee also presented awards. Jordan Heath was named Alabama's Tree Farm Inspector of the Year, while Felicia Dewberry of Clay County received the Doug Link Leadership Award. Trice



The late Richard Hill of Elmore and Butler counties was honored with the Bill Moody Award, the highest honor of the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA). His widow, Pam, accepted the award. She, sons Trent and Tyler, and daughter-in-law Tish are pictured with ATFA Executive Director William Green, right.

and Johnnie Nichols of Autauga County were named Alabama's Tree Farmers of the Year and will represent Alabama in the regional competition.

A tree identification contest tested attendees' dendrology knowledge. Paul Williams of the Alabama Forestry Commission won the professional category, while Dewberry claimed top prize in the landowner division.

Additionally, a silent auction raised over \$1,300 for ATFA's scholarship fund. ■



Guests such as ATFA Secretary/Treasurer Jamestican Parham and his wife, Angela, learned about longleaf management, turkey management, forest health and pesticide applicator licenses.

Visit [www.TREASUREForest.org](http://www.TREASUREForest.org) to join the ATFA.



# 2021 Landowners Conference Awards And Honors



**(1)** The Butler County Forestry Planning Committee received an Outstanding County Award for improving forest resources management through cooperative programs. The award is presented by the Alabama Natural Resources Council (ANRC) and W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Awards Program. From left are ANRC's Tim Albritton, Garrett Lloyd and Paul Hudgins. **(2)** The Clay County Forestry Planning Committee received an Outstanding County Award. From left are ANRC's Tim Albritton and Clay County's Wiley McCollum, Lamar Dewberry, Landon Johnson and Ronald Dewberry. **(3)** The Walker County Forestry Planning Committee received an Outstanding County Award. From left are ANRC's Tim Albritton and Danny Cain. **(4)** Roy Jordan of Marengo County received the W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Award for outstanding voluntary efforts toward the wise stewardship of Alabama's natural resources. From left are program coordinator Dr. Mark Smith, Jordan and wife Becky, and nominator Bayne Moore of the Alabama Forestry Commission. **(5)** Dr. Salem and Dianne Saloom of Conecuh County received the W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Award. They are pictured with program coordinator Dr. Mark Smith. **(6)** Gene Renfro of Pike County, center, received the W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Award. He is pictured with program coordinator Dr. Mark Smith and nominator



Tim Albritton of the ANRC and Natural Resources Conservation Service. **(7)** Jordan Heath was named Alabama's Tree Farm Inspector of the Year. From left are Alabama Tree Farm Committee Chair Lamar Dewberry and Heath. **(8)** Felicia Dewberry of Clay County received the Alabama Tree Farm Doug Link Leadership Award. From left are Alabama Forestry Association's Cliff O'Rear and Felicia and Lamar Dewberry. **(9)** Trice and Johnnie Nichols were named Alabama's Tree Farmer of the Year. They are pictured with Alabama Tree Farm Committee Chair Lamar Dewberry, left. **(10)** Foots and Allene Parnell of Chilton County were Alabama's 2020 Tree

Farmers of the Year and are representing the Southern Region in the national contest. They are pictured with Alabama Tree Farm Committee Chair Lamar Dewberry, left. **(11)** Kathy McCrimmon and Kelly Cosby of Calhoun County received the Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award. The award recognizes landowners for outstanding achievement in multiple-use forest management and is presented by the Alabama Natural Resources Council and W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Awards Program. From left are Alabama Forestry Commission's Darci DeBrunner, McCrimmon, Kelly and Cale Cosby and their children.

Visit **TREASUREForest.org** for more news, events and updates.



# Landowners Attend Regional Forestry Field Days

The Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA) helped sponsor two Regional Forestry Field Days with the Alabama Natural Resources Council and Alabama Tree Farm Committee. The events in Elmore and Shelby counties help educate landowners and provide continuing education units for industry professionals.



*A Regional Forestry Field Day coincided with the Alabama Landowners Conference Oct. 21 in Columbiana. Attendees toured The Westervelt Co. longleaf pine stands just down from the 4-H Center in Shelby County.*



*A Regional Forestry Field Day was held in Elmore County Oct. 15. The field day included a TREASURE Forest tour and lessons on quail management, pond management, longleaf versus loblolly pine, and Native American artifacts.*

## ATFA Awards Scholarships



*Brooks Milling*



*Emily Burke*

Two Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences students earned Alabama TREASURE Forest Association annual scholarships. Brooks Milling is a freshman from Mobile studying pre-forestry, while Emily Burke is a junior from Hoover studying wildlife ecology and management.

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

ATFA Members,

I hope each of you are well and have enjoyed the holiday seasons with your families! As we enter a new year, I'm excited for the Association as we continue to grow our programs and further our mission to promote, educate and improve. With the new year, we have many exciting projects and events that should provide several opportunities to get plugged in and further your natural resources education and expand your network.

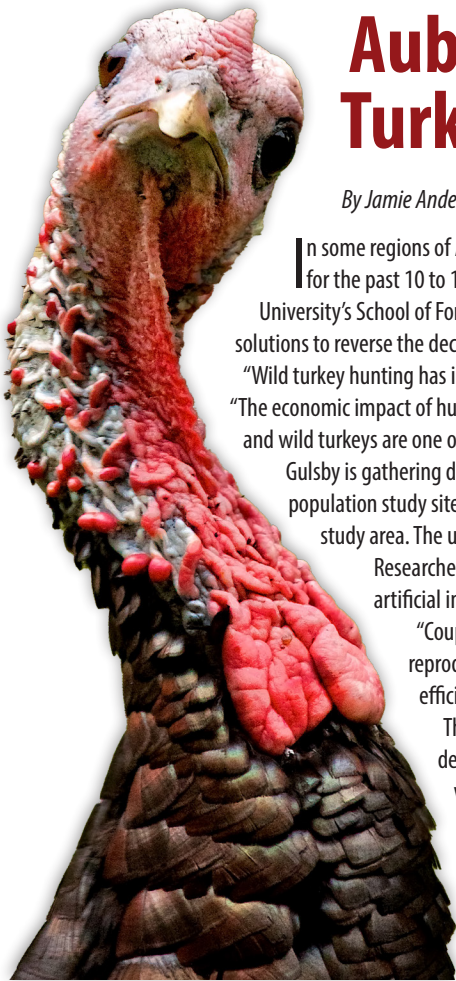
It was great to see many of you at the 2021 Alabama Landowners Conference in October. We had a successful meeting with over 150 attendees where we learned how to be better stewards of God's creation, networked with landowners and natural resource professionals, raised money for our scholarship fund, and more! You'll find a great recap on pages 1 and 2 of this newsletter. If you couldn't make it last year, we'd love to have you this year. We're busy making plans for the 2022 conference and will announce the dates soon. Thanks to all who attended, sponsored or helped with the conference. It was a great event, and I'm excited to see all of you again soon.

In addition to our normal educational endeavors, look for new opportunities in the coming months. Our board of directors is hard at work making sure the Association is providing the tools and resources needed to ensure landowner members can expand their knowledge and network. I sincerely appreciate all of you who have contributed to the Association, whether by hosting a field day, suggesting a seminar topic, leading Classroom in the Forest or purchasing one of our vanity license plates.

These interesting times have presented a great opportunity for the Association to grow and change how it serves members. I appreciate what each of you bring to this organization – together we will continue to promote, educate and improve. If you have questions or suggestions about past or future educational programs, liability insurance or the TREASURE Forest Certification process, please feel free to contact your local director or myself at (334) 612-5235. On behalf of the Alabama TREASURE Forest, we hope you have a happy and healthy New Year!

William M. Green  
Executive Director





# Auburn Professor Studies Turkey Population Decline

By Jamie Anderson, Auburn University

In some regions of Alabama and the southeastern U.S., wild turkey populations have declined for the past 10 to 15 years. Will Gulsby, associate professor of wildlife management in Auburn University's School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, is determined to identify these areas and develop solutions to reverse the decline.

"Wild turkey hunting has important economic and cultural benefits to Alabama and beyond," he said. "The economic impact of hunting, fishing and wildlife-watching in Alabama totals \$3.88 billion per year, and wild turkeys are one of the most sought-after game species in the state."

Gulsby is gathering data from public and private lands — which are rarely included as wildlife population study sites — using autonomous recording units across the nearly statewide region study area. The units record ambient sound during preprogrammed times each day.

Researchers will analyze the data with a convolutional neural network, a type of artificial intelligence.

"Coupling these technologies allows us to determine the timing of turkey reproductive behaviors at an unprecedented scale by maximizing data-processing efficiency," Gulsby said.

The project is multifaceted and broadly scoped. The team's first priority: defining characteristics of areas with abundant versus low turkey numbers. They will also determine the timing of turkey gobbling and how it is influenced by hunting pressure.

"Gobbling plays a role in mate attraction, so knowing when birds gobble can be used to determine the timing of reproductive activity," Gulsby said.

The project will determine the proportion of male turkeys capable of fertilizing clutches of eggs. Additionally, the team will fit hens with GPS tracking devices to monitor when they nest, the success and failure rates

of their nests, causes of nest failure and the survival of the young turkeys. Researchers will collect tissue samples for subsequent disease testing.

"Having more information on aspects of turkey reproduction allows us to better structure hunting regulations to match the species' biology, ensuring sustainable populations into the future," Gulsby said.

The research is funded by the Alabama Wildlife Federation and Turkeys for Tomorrow, a conservation nonprofit. ■



## ATFA Officers

### Mark Finley\*

President, Winston Co.

### Jamestican Parham\*

Vice President, Wilcox Co.

### Elliott Poole\*

Secretary-Treasurer, Sumter Co.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### North Region

Gean Harris, Cleburne Co.

Dan Nelson, Marion Co.

Don Mann, Madison Co.

#### Central Region

Lamar Dewberry\*, Clay Co.

John Frank Farrow, Tallapoosa Co.

Ron Hilyer, Elmore Co.

Charles Holmes, Perry Co.

#### South Region

Carol Dorill, Pike Co.

Wyatt Hendry, Washington Co.

Steve Lloyd, Monroe Co.

John Gilbert, Covington Co.

Gary Cole\*, Monroe Co.

### \*Executive Committee

### William Green

Executive Director

(334) 612-5235

wmgreen@alfafarmers.org

### Darci DeBrunner

Stewardship Coordinator

Alabama Forestry Commission

(334) 399-4702

darci.debrunner@forestry.alabama.gov



## TIMBER, RECREATION, ENVIRONMENT, AESTHETICS, SUSTAINABLE, USABLE, RESOURCE

The Alabama TREASURE Forest Association is dedicated to promoting good forest stewardship, educating others about responsible forest management and improving the forests of our state and nation. These lands are managed for many resources, including wildlife habitat, pine and hardwood timber, clean water, recreation opportunities and beautiful scenery. When utilizing a multiple-use management strategy, all of the benefits a forest provides are enhanced.

We are passionate about making our land better for the next generation. In a very real way, the future of Alabama's forests rests in the hands of landowners and like-minded individuals who support good forest stewardship. You can be a part of that effort. Purchase an "I'd rather be in the woods!" tag and support education and outreach efforts to raise awareness about the wonderful possibilities of sustainable land management.

### THE ALABAMA TREASURE FOREST ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

is published by the Alabama Farmers Federation, a member of the American Farm Bureau Federation. Correspondence may be addressed to **ATFA NEWSLETTER**, William Green, Editor, P.O. Box 11000, Montgomery, AL 36191-0001.