The Nature Conservancy Formally Acquires Near 600-Acre Tract of Wheeler Mountain in Bibb County

BIRMINGHAM (Sept. 26, 2023) — The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in Alabama announced today that it has closed on the formal acquisition of a 596-acre tract at Wheeler Mountain in Bibb County, future-proofing the land area from potential threats of conversion to non-forestry uses including development. This acquisition is the result of a long-standing partnership with Resource Management Service, LLC (RMS) and a three-month campaign through TNC's Ireland Opportunity Fund that raised the $2 million necessary to make the land purchase.

"Our revolving loan fund enables us to quickly mobilize resources to protect vulnerable lands such as this, and we are grateful to those who supported this endeavor," said TNC in Alabama State Director Mitch Reid. "We will now work to manage and restore this tract's natural habitat and ensure its assets are protected for generations to come."

TNC in Alabama is currently working alongside the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to add the property to the National Forest System while it reintroduces prescribed fire management practices that will ultimately enhance the land's rich ecosystem — specifically its 80-to-100-year-old montane longleaf pine forests.

"Much of Alabama's natural longleaf pine forests have disappeared over the years, and we did not want to risk this same fate for Wheeler Mountain. Thankfully, we were successful in working with RMS to successfully close this acquisition and protect the rich biological diversity of this area in perpetuity," added Reid. "RMS' stewardship of this property since acquisition in 2006 maintained the conservation values inherent to this acquisition."

In addition to the land's rich longleaf pine habitat, this tract also includes Gully Creek — a tributary of the Cahaba River — which has long been a conservation target as not only one of the longest free-flowing rivers in the South, but also one of biodiverse aquatic wealth.

"The Wheeler Mountain property is one of the most diverse natural longleaf pine stands in Alabama. From its hardwood bottom with rich flora diversity and aquatic diversity in Gulch Creek to the top with its natural stone arch formation, Wheeler Mountain is a true natural gem. Our partnership with The Alabama Chapter of the Nature Conservancy enabled a win for conservation and a win for the landowner," said Jimmy Bullock, Senior Vice president Forest Sustainability for RMS.

For general information on The Nature Conservancy in Alabama, its Ireland Opportunity Fund or to learn about additional conservation projects, visit its official site.

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About The Nature Conservancy
The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We are tackling climate change, conserving lands, waters, and oceans at an unprecedented scale, providing food and water sustainably and helping make cities more sustainable. Working in 79 countries and territories, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. For TNC in Alabama-specific information, visit here.

About Resource Management Service, LLC: RMS is one of the world's largest and most experienced providers of timberland investment management services. RMS is committed to be a leader in environmentally and socially responsible sustainable forest management practices on our clients' forestlands. As a company founded, owned, and managed by professional foresters, RMS has long been guided by a forest stewardship ethic. Exercising good stewardship through responsible management of all forest resources meets the needs of our clients, customers, employees, society, and future generations. We believe sustainably managed forests provide clean air and water, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, outdoor recreational opportunities and jobs and economic benefits to local communities in which we operate. RMS also has a longstanding commitment to promoting forestry as a profession. We do this by demonstrating and communicating the important role foresters play in managing and protecting our forest ecosystems. Ultimately, RMS exists to advance the practice of forestry and appreciation for the societal importance of privately-owned forests and our goal is to be recognized as the premier creator of forest value. Based in Birmingham, Alabama, we are a Registered Investment Adviser with $4.9 billion of timberland assets under management in the United States and Brazil. For more information, please visit us at: www.resourcemgt.com

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