



Alabama Wildlife Federation

Press Release

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Alabama Rivers and Streams Network Awarded Water Conservationist of the Year by the Alabama Wildlife Federation



******PHOTO ATTACHED******

Photo Caption: Presenting the awards were Grant Lynch, AWF President; Mike Godfrey with Alabama Power Company; Chris Blankenship, Conservation Commissioner; and Horace Horn with PowerSouth Energy. Accepting the award for Alabama Rivers and Streams Network were Jeff Powell, Stuart McGregor and Dr. Paul Johnson.

Alabama Rivers and Streams Network was presented the Water Conservationist of the Year Award at the 2020 Alabama Wildlife Federation Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards ceremony on Friday, August 7, 2020.

This year's event was specifically modified to incorporate COVID-19 safety precautions. Usually an indoor banquet with 400 attendees, the 2020 event was limited to 90 attendees and held outdoors in the 7,200 square foot Matt W. Bowden Gathering Area at the Alabama Wildlife Federation's NaturePlex facility in Millbrook. Additional precautions included the use of face coverings and no self-serve food or beverage. Award recipients and presenters were allowed short, mask-free photo-ops. Governor Kay Ivey provided a congratulatory video prepared specifically for the 2020 Award Recipients.

The AWF Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards (GCAA) are the most respected conservation honors in the state of Alabama. Over the past 45 years, AWF has presented these awards to individuals and

organizations that make great contributions to the conservation of Alabama's wildlife and related natural resources.

Alabama Rivers and Streams Network is a diverse, partnership of industries, agencies, non-governmental organizations, and landowners, working together to protect water resources. Starting with four organizations in 2010, the Network now includes fifty (50) organizations.

Network partners have identified sixty (60) different watersheds and river reaches across the state for habitat and water quality restoration, and the recovery of imperiled and listed aquatic species. And the early results are impressive:

- Over 40 stream restoration projects
- Over 500 Biotic Integrity Surveys
- Over 5,000 stream/road crossing assessments
- 200,000 cultured freshwater mussels and snails released into native streams
- And due to studies conducted by Network members:
 - 4 aquatic species have been federally delisted; 1 down-listed; and 3 listed
 - 13 aquatic species have avoided federal listing

Presenting Sponsors for the event were Alabama Power Company and PowerSouth Energy. The Westervelt Company, Hammer LGC, Inc., and FirstGuard, LLC sponsored the food and refreshments for the event. Alabama Gulf Seafood was sponsored by the Alabama Seafood Marketing Commission. Additional sponsor support was provided by the National Wildlife Federation, Southeast Region.

AWF's GCAA was created to promote leadership by example and in turn increase conservation of the natural resources in the state of Alabama including its wildlife, forests, soils, water and air. The program is designed to bring about a greater knowledge and awareness of conservation practices and projects and to give proper recognition to those persons and organizations that make outstanding contributions to the natural resource welfare of their community and state.

The Alabama Wildlife Federation, established by sportsmen in 1935, is the state's oldest and largest citizens' conservation organization. The mission of the Alabama Wildlife Federation, a 501(c) 3 non-profit group supported by membership dues and donations, is to promote conservation and wise use of Alabama's wildlife and related natural resources as a basis for economic and social prosperity. To learn more about AWF, including membership details, programs and projects, contact Alabama Wildlife Federation at 334-285-4550 or visit www.alabamawildlife.org.

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