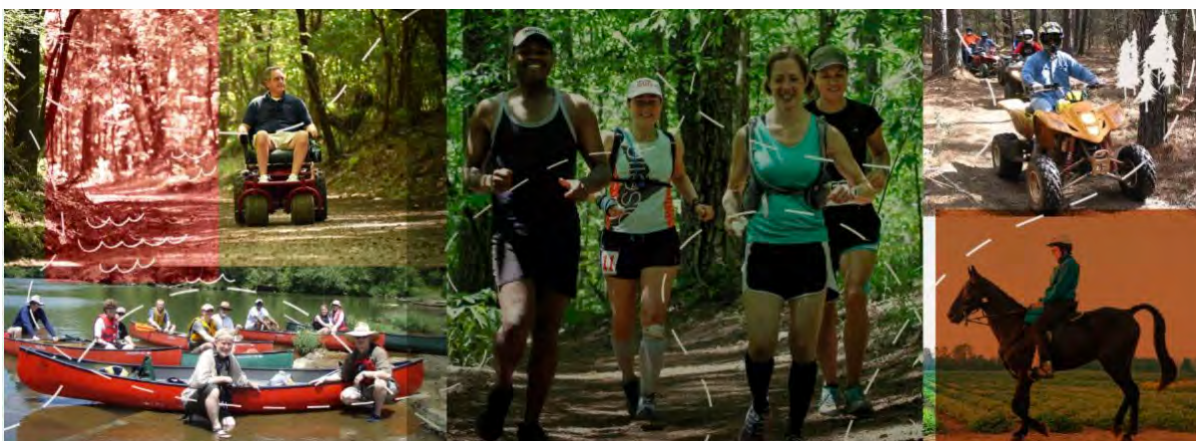




Alabama Outdoor Recreation

Alabama Outdoor Recreation Round-Up

A bi-annual newsletter of [Alabama Trails Commission](#) in partnership with [The University of Alabama Office for Business Engagement Services](#) .



APRIL 2026

About This Newsletter

Spring 2026 is upon us and Alabama's outdoor recreational opportunities are bursting with expansion. Let's take a look at some exciting accomplishments that have taken place in outdoor recreation since November. Continue reading to learn more.

Spring is the perfect time to get out and explore your neighboring communities and enjoy our great state's beauty from the mountains to the seaside.

We invite you to share what your organization is doing to expand on recreational activities for Alabama citizens.

Alabama State Parks

Article by Will Collins - Trails Coordinator - Alabama State Parks



Enjoying Oak Mountain State Park



Train Hoppers and Cyclists at
Oak Mountain State Park



Excavating at Lake Lurleen State Park

Spring on the Trail: Alabama State Parks Trail Crew Is Moving Mountains

Alabama State Parks' Trail Crew of four dedicated professionals is out in full force, clearing brush, removing fallen timber, and restoring access to more than 400 miles of trails from the mountains to the Gulf Coast.

Welcome Back: Lake Lurleen's Trails Are Open Again

After 19 months of closure during a major park renovation, the Trail Crew has worked to reopen a beloved 6.5-mile trail corridor

visitors back in mid-April with a new North Trailhead. It's been a long wait, but the trails are ready, and Lake Lurleen is primed for an incredible season.

Reviving a Hidden Gem: Buck's Pocket OHV Trail Gets a Full Makeover

In partnership with NOHVCC and ROHVA, the Trail Crew has spent the last two and a half months completely refurbishing the park's OHV trail. The reimagined trail is designed as a relaxed, family-friendly experience: a place to unplug, explore, fish, enjoy a trailside picnic, and soak in the stunning landscape. Riders who love slow-paced discovery will find their perfect route here.

Roll, Roast & Romp: Alabama's First Adaptive Trail Campout

In partnership with the Lakeshore Foundation, the Alabama State Parks Trail Crew is launching *Roll, Roast & Romp* — the state's first adaptive campout experience - April 24 - 26 at Oak Mountain State Park.

The weekend will be packed with hiking, fishing, kayaking, and camping, all powered by a full fleet of Alabama State Parks' outdoor mobility devices: the Huckleberry Hiker, Grit Freedom Chair, ActionTrack Chair, and TerrainHopper. Every piece of equipment will be on-site and available for guests to use freely throughout the event.

The Trail Crew's Commitment to All Alabamians

From mountain bike corridor development to adaptive trail access, the Alabama State Parks Trail Crew is building more than trails — we're building opportunity. We remain deeply committed to creating trail experiences across Alabama that are fun, sustainable, and truly inclusive, setting the standard for outdoor adventure in the Southeast.

Want to support this work? Reach out to your local Alabama State Park to find out how you — or your organization — can roll up your sleeves and join the crew on a trail maintenance day.

Join the **Dirt Pass Program** and help keep Alabama's trails thriving: [Dirt Pass Trail Crew Program](#)

Learn more at [Alabama State Parks](#)

Alabama Trails Foundation

Article by Joe Watts - Communications Director - Alabama Trails Foundation



Jogloma-Scott Bridge - Talladega National Forest



Enjoying Outdoor Recreation

The Alabama Trails Foundation (ATF) has continued to highlight the “Year of Alabama Trails” campaign, with ATF President Paul DeMarco visiting nearly 30 counties across Alabama, highlighting the best of Alabama’s trails. Working with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, we successfully completed the Jogloma-Scott site bridge and pier project in the Talladega National Forest, holding the official ribbon-cutting on a beautiful December morning with over 50 people in attendance. The 60-foot pedestrian bridge offers a new destination for hikers, from the seasoned long-distance hiker to those interested in an easy half-day hike in and back.

[Connecting Appalachia: Alabama Trails Foundation Installs New 60-Foot Pedestrian Bridge on Pinhoti Trail](#)

We continue to raise funds for a new pedestrian bridge over U.S.

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better access to the U.S.D.A. Forest Service Field Office, all while creating a safer route for Pinhoti Trail hikers to avoid a road walk along U.S. Highway 281.

We've worked with Piedmont, Alabama to develop a new companion website for trail users ([Exploring East Alabama](#)) with additional content being developed as more hikers, bikers, and kayakers discover the rich tapestry of Alabama's Appalachians.

Our first ever "Trail Towns" conference is set for April 22, 2026 in Heflin, Alabama. This conference, billed as an East Alabama Conversation on Trails with Amy Camp, nationally recognized creator of the Trail Towns concept as our keynote speaker. [Trail Towns 2026](#)



Alabama Scenic River Trail

Article by Savannah Schmidt - Communications Specialist - Alabama Scenic River Trail



Paddling at the Annual Great Alabama 650

The Alabama Scenic River Trail invites beginners and seasoned paddlers to register for their Summer Paddling Program that will explore some of Alabama's most scenic waterways.

This October, you can also cheer on the longest paddle race in the nation, the 8th annual Great Alabama 650, where paddlers from around the world embark on a 10-day, 650-mile journey from Weiss Lake in Centre, AL to Fort Morgan on the Gulf.

Visit [Alabama Scenic River Trail](#) now to get event details, discover new initiatives, and see how you can make a positive impact in local communities.

Brierfield Ironworks and Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Parks

Articles by Erin Hall - Park Director - Brierfield Ironworks Historical State Park



Photos from Brierfield Ironworks Historical State Park

The 45-acre Brierfield Ironworks Historical State Park is home to the historic Bibb Naval Furnace, which was in operation in the 1860s. In addition to history, the park features walking trails, a campground, a seasonal pool, and rental cabins and pavilions. Located at 240 Furnace Parkway, Brierfield, AL 35035. More information here: [Brierfield Ironworks](#)

This year we received a grant from the Tombigbee RC&D to install new wayfinding and interpretive signage in the park and along our trails!



BUMP - Birmingham Urban Mountain Pedalers at Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park

In addition to many sites of historical interest, Tannehill Ironworks State Park now features adaptive mountain bike trails.

Over the past two years, Birmingham Urban Mountain Pedalers (BUMP) has completed approximately 16 miles of adaptive mountain bike trails at Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park, establishing one of the largest mountain bike trail systems designed for wheelchair users in the Southeast.

This work has been made possible through an Innovate Alabama grant and a strategic combination of volunteer labor and professional trail contractors to maximize miles of trails and long-term sustainability. In addition to trail construction, BUMP has built two new accessible pavilions to support inclusive use of the park.

Expansion of the adaptive trail system will continue into 2026, with current projects supported by funding from the Jefferson County Department of Health.

Visit Gulf State Park for Venture Out



Hugh S. Branyon Back Country Trail

Gulf State Park is hosting its first-ever Venture Out event May 15th through 17th. This three-day festival will feature a variety of nature and outdoor-focused activities, workshops, and tours throughout the park and along the award-winning Hugh S. Branyon Backcountry Trail.

This family-friendly event is a collaboration between Gulf State Park, the Gulf Coast Center for Ecotourism & Sustainability, Valor Hospitality, the City of Gulf Shores, and the City of Orange Beach.

Learn more at: [Gulf State Park announces first-ever Venture Out 3-day festival](#)

2026 Season Kick-off for the 100 Alabama Miles Challenge

Article by Brian Rushing - UA Office for Business Engagement Services

We are now wearables compatible!

Create a Strava account, link it to your 100 Alabama Miles account, and log your miles automatically!

STRAVA

On April 25, 2026, the [100 Alabama Miles Challenge](#) will officially kick off its 9th season of inspiring all Alabamians to run, walk, hike, bike, swim, paddle, ride, or roll 100 miles each year! Public events will take place at multiple locations around the state, with additional events to follow over the coming weeks. A total of 28 events will be held at some of Alabama's best outdoor recreational venues, and those who attend will receive free program T-shirts and decals. Visit the [program's Facebook page](#) for event announcements.

The 100 Alabama Miles Challenge is a partnership between The University of Alabama and the Alabama Trails Commission, with funding provided by the Alabama Trails Foundation, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama, and the Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness and Sports.

Register for the Alabama Recreational Trails Leadership Workshop scheduled for May 22, 2026

Article by Brian Rushing - UA Office for Business Engagement Services



Photo of 2025 Trails Leadership Workshop held in Florence, AL

The University of Alabama and Alabama Trails Commission will host a fun and informative gathering for outdoor recreation professionals to explore how accessible and adaptive trails along with targeted marketing and programming can expand outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all abilities.

When: Friday, May 22, 2026 | Workshop 10:00 am to 2:00 pm | Optional Adaptive Bike Try-Out & Adaptive Mountain Bike Trail Tour 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Where: Tannehill Event Center, Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park, 12632 Confederate Parkway, McCalla, Alabama 35111

Cost: \$35 covers lunch and park entry fee (pay by credit card)

Registration Deadline: Noon, Friday, May 15, 2026

Optional Afternoon Adaptive Mountain Bike Trail Tours: Bring your own mountain bike + helmet (required) OR

Side-by-side ride-along (space limited). To sign up for either tour, email bes@ua.edu. Registration is required.

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The Alabama Outdoor Recreation Website: An Important Information Resource for YOU!

Article by Brian Rushing - UA Office for Business Engagement Services

The [Alabama Outdoor Recreation website](#) provides important information resources for the planning, development, and operation of outdoor recreation facilities and programs. These resources include:

[The Alabama Recreational Trails Development Resource Directory.](#)

[Planning Support & Funding Sources](#)

[Links to Best Practices and Standards](#)

[Keys to Long-Distance Trail Success](#)

The University of Alabama and the Alabama Trails Commission have designed this website to help shape the future of outdoor recreation in Alabama and they encourage anyone seeking to undertake an outdoor recreation project to use it as a resource!



Alabama Trails Commission

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