GEORGIA FORESTWATCH
PRESERVE PROTECT RESTORE GAFW.ORG

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Presidential Veto Used to Preserve ESG Investing

GAFW believes that climate change is the defining issue of our time, and we are at a defining moment. The data and facts derived from the peer-reviewed scientific process are indisputable and must come together nationally and internationally to reduce and address the sources and effects of climate change.

On March 20, President Biden used his first **veto** on **House Joint Resolution 30** that provided Congressional disapproval of a recent U.S. Department of Labor rule about environmental, social, and governance (ESG) funds in 401(k) plans. In 2022 the Department of Labor released a final rule safeguarding the savings of America's workers by clarifying that fiduciaries may **consider climate change and other ESG factors when making investment decisions and exercising shareholder rights**.

The regulation unwound one issued by the previous administration, which effectively barred retirement plan fiduciaries from considering ESG factors when choosing investments. It is expected that efforts to overturn the President's veto are unlikely to succeed, and step by step, we get closer to the full-throated response to climate change needed to ensure humanity's survival.

New Web Site Coming Soon

Please note that gafw.org will be offline from 4/13 - 4/20. If you need us during this time, please email **info@gafw.org**. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this exciting transition to our new site.

Upcoming Events from GAFW Partners

4/11/23 – **Protecting our drinking water from PFAS pollution**
Our partners at **Sierra Club** are hosting a briefing on PFAS in our water this evening, April 11th, at 8 p.m. Learn about PFAS from national experts and find ways to fight pollution in your community. **Register here.**

On March 14th, the EPA announced the national limits for 6 PFAS chemicals in drinking water. This is the first time the EPA has proposed a new standard for water contaminants in more than two decades. PFAS are uniquely harmful and persistent contaminants that cause cancer, organ damage, immune system suppression, and harm children's development. When finalized, the new rules will improve water quality for millions of Americans. Locally PFAS is a big issue in Rome and other cities around Georgia. Rome, GA, is spending $100 million on a reverse osmosis drinking water treatment system due to the PFAS and other chemicals discharged by Dalton and the carpet mills upstream.

4/17/23 – **The Economics of Logging in 2023—Insights from the Pacific Northwest**
Our partners at the **Climate Forests Campaign** are offering a Forest Protection Forum session on April 17th at 4 p.m. on Zoom by Ernie Niemi.

For more than 40 years, Ernie has investigated and described the relationship between the natural environment and local economies in California and elsewhere. In this presentation, he will draw on this experience to help audience members understand the positive and negative economic effects of logging. Ernie is President of Natural Resource Economics, a consultancy in Eugene, and Co-Director of the nationwide Forest Carbon Coalition. More about his work **here** and register for the webinar **here**.

4/20/23 – The **Upper Etowah River Alliance** will host its annual membership

meeting on Thursday, April 20, at 6 p.m. The fundraising event will be held at the Rock Barn in Canton, Ga. Get your tickets **here**.

4/20/23 – Climate Forests: the case for protecting ancient forests
Please join **Wild Earth Guardians** on Thursday, April 20, at 2:00 p.m. for a virtual conversation discussing how mature and old-growth forests are critical to solving the climate and biodiversity crises

The webinar will focus on how older and mature forests on public lands, by capturing and storing carbon, are vital to the greater effort to limit the worst effects of climate change by capturing and storing significant amounts of carbon today. We will also highlight the irreplaceable species that depend on these forests. A critical component of our discussion will be how prohibiting the cutting of mature forests on public lands is both feasible and achievable and how you and concerned citizens can act now to spur the Biden administration to implement regulations that preserve the nation's remaining mature forests. More information and register **here**.

5/22/23 – Recognition of Gwinnett's Little Mulberry Park
Join partners **Old-Growth Forest Network** in welcoming Gwinnett County to the Network with the induction of **Little Mulberry Park**. Though younger, this 890-acre wooded park will return as an old-growth forest for future generations. This park offers many trails through the woodlands where you can see large oaks, hickories, and beech trees surrounding an overlook from one of the county's highest points.

The April 22 celebration will begin with a recognition ceremony at 9:30 a.m., followed by an optional short guided hike and pollinator garden planting opportunity. Close-toed shoes are required for planting. **More info here.**

Are you a City of Decatur Resident?
This summer, **The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation** and **Bee City USA-Decatur**, GA (a.k.a. "Beecatur") is planning to sample pesticide residues from mosquito spraying applications in residential landscapes. They want to learn how mosquito sprays move through urban areas to understand their potential impacts better.

They are recruiting volunteers in the City of Decatur, GA, who are willing to sample for mosquito spray residues on their properties. Volunteers must either actively spray their home yards for mosquitos or live near an adjoining property where spraying occurs. Participating is easy! It only requires placing small silicone sampling bands on a wire loop in your yard a few days before a mosquito spray event. Participants will then collect bands and drop them off at a local collection site or can have them picked up by a volunteer. If you are interested in participating, please complete the **participant survey here**. Responses are requested by April 21st.

Upcoming GAFW Outings

Thursday, April 13 - **Raven Cliffs Falls Restorative Hike with Jessica & Maria**, Helen, GA. 11 am.

Saturday, April 22 - Wildflowers & Waterfall Hike at Mount Airy Creek with Jess, Dahlonega, GA. 10 am.

Thursday, April 27 - **Keown Falls & Johns Mountain with Bill & Leslie,** NW GA, near Resaca, GA. 10:00 am.

Thursday, April 27 - GAFW Book Club Meeting, Zoom, 7:00 pm.

Saturday, May 6 - **Cooper's Creek-Old Growth "Valley of the Giants" with Melanie & Cliff**, 10:00 am.

Thursday, May 11 - **Cradle of Forestry Guided Tour** , Pisgah Forest, NC. 1 pm.

Saturday, October 14 - Save the Date! GAFW Annual Retreat at Red Top Mountain.

Interested in leading a hike or other outing for GAFW? We are searching for additional leaders who are willing to share their favorite parts of the forest. Let us know at **outreach@gafw.org**.

GAFW Outings on Meetup

If this email was forwarded to you, **please register here** to receive GAFW updates.

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Thank You

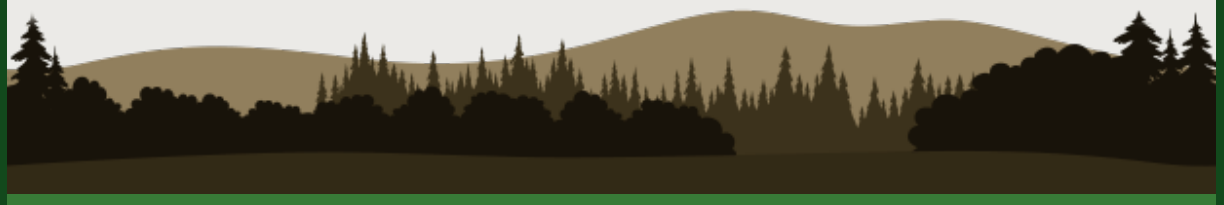
Georgia ForestWatch is the only nonprofit organization with a mission solely dedicated to ensuring the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests remain healthy and available for future generations, and we can only pursue our mission with the support of the community.

Please support our mission by ensuring your **membership is up to date** and providing **additional support** as you are able.

On behalf of our entire national forests in our beautiful state, we thank you for your support.

Our Mission

Our mission is to preserve and protect our national forests. Visit **Georgia ForestWatch** (GAFW) to learn more.



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