GEORGIA FORESTWATCH
PRESERVE PROTECT RESTORE GAFW.ORG

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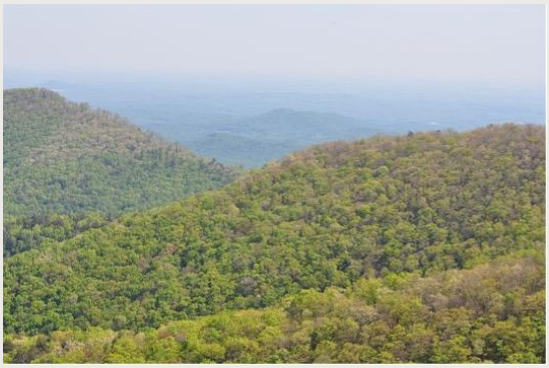

The Choice is Yours. Please Give Today.

We have raised $8,008, or 40%, of our $20,000 spring fundraising goal.

For those of you who have already given, we cannot thank you enough. For those of you who have not yet given, please consider **becoming a member** and making **a generous contribution today**.

GAFW prides itself on only asking for donations twice annually. In the spring and at year-end but without additional contributions, we will need to expand upon our fundraising appeals.

At this point in the spring appeal, we should be over halfway toward our goal, but we are falling short. **Please consider donating today** to ensure the weekly newsletter remains available. GAFW is positioned to remain the voice of standing forests, natural processes, and long-term ecological health in our national forests.

Donate to GAFW Today

Bipartisan BMT National Scenic Trail Act Introduced in the House of Representatives

Our hardworking partners at the **BMTA** are reporting Representatives Steve Cohen (Democrat from Tennessee), Chuck Fleischmann (Republican from Tennessee), Chuck Edwards (Republican from North Carolina), Scott DesJarlais (Republican from Tennessee), Lucy McBath (Democrat from Georgia) and David Scott (Democrat from Georgia) are co-sponsors of a **bipartisan House Bill** which, if approved by Congress and signed by the President, will designate the Benton MacKaye Trail as a National Scenic Trail.

Congressman Cohen recently announced the Introduction of the bipartisan Benton MacKaye Scenic Trail Act in **his press release**. The prestigious designation is reserved for trails that epitomize the stunning natural beauty of America's wide array of natural landscapes. The trails also offer outstanding recreational opportunities. Only 11 trails have received this honor, including the Appalachian Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, and the Continental Divide Trail**.**

For more information and to keep up with the latest developments, please **sign up for BMTA updates**. Please reach out to **your representative** asking them to sponsor H.R. 3683 or if you live in Representatives McBath or Scott to thank them for their support.

Sackett v. EPA - the U.S. Supreme Court Opposes Clean Water

Is water necessary for life?

- Water makes up 66% of the human body.
- Average adult humans contain 37 liters of water.
- Human brains are 75% water. Human bones are 25% water. Human blood is 83% water.
- More than 2 billion people on Earth do not have a safe water supply.

How much water is there?

- The overall amount of water on our planet has remained the same for two billion years.
- Only 2.5% of water is fresh, and only 0.01% is readily accessible surface water. If all the world's water were to fit into a gallon jug, the available clean, fresh water only equals one tablespoon.
- A person must consume at least 2 liters of water daily, and the average human drinks an average of 75,000 liters of water in their life.
- Without drinking water, humans can only live from a few hours to one week, depending upon the circumstances.

What are we doing with our water (instead of conserving it)?

- It takes 44 gallons of water to refine one gallon of crude oil.
- Freshwater animals are disappearing five times faster than land animals.
- It takes over 48 gallons of water to brew one gallon of beer.
- 4% of usable groundwater is already polluted.
- It takes 1,847 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef — that's enough water to fill 39 bathtubs all the way to the top.

Water is a shared global resource, and the Supreme Court's recent 5-4 decision in ***Sackett v. EPA*** finds that wetlands are only protected by the **Clean Water Act** if they have a "continuous surface connection" with a protected body of water that makes it "difficult to determine where the 'water' ends and the 'wetland' begins." An interpretation providing an even more draconian interpretation of the Clean

Water Act than that proposed by the Trump administration in its **2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule**. In other words, if a wetland is not visibly connected to another body of water, no matter how essential it is for habitat, flood control, or filtering pollution, it is not protected under the Clean Water Act.

You have often heard from GAFW that the most pressing concern in Georgia (aside from climate change) is sediment in our waterways. and that we should be increasing protections for rivers and streams, not undermining or loosening them. GAFW is disappointed in the outcome of this case and grows more concerned with each ruling that SCOTUS is setting arbitrary and unscientific standards to undermine the health of our natural resources. This win for developers and polluters places one of our most precious resources, water, at significant risk.

Water on Earth is a finite resource, and meddling with it is a zero-sum game. The amount of water on earth does not change; every polluted gallon leaves us with one less gallon to drink. Based on the universal understanding of this most precious resource, it is inconceivable, insane even, not to do everything we can to preserve it.

GAFW denounces the SCOTUS decision and begs our lawmakers to enact strict and strenuous water conservation legislation that punishes those who foul and ruin the very thing we need to remain alive. Do we have to wait for unclean (or no) water to flow from our kitchen tap before we make preserving our communal water clean and accessible?

Upcoming GAFW Outings

Saturday, June 17 - **Consauga River Snorkel Trip** - Space available. RSVP has been extended to Sunday, June 11th.

Thursday, June 29 - **GAFW Book Club Meeting** via Zoom.

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

GAFW Outings on Meetup

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

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Thank You

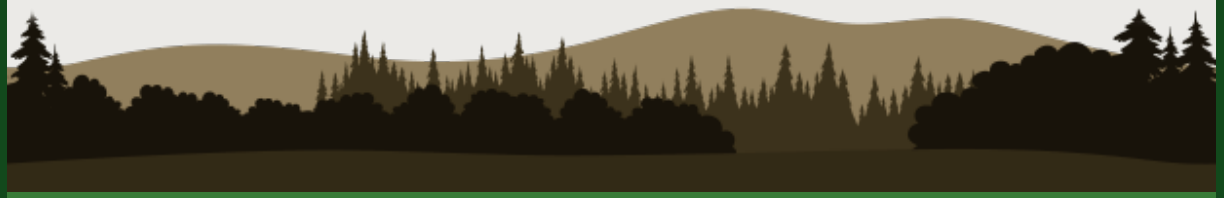
Georgia ForestWatch is the only nonprofit organization with a mission solely dedicated to ensuring the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests remain healthy and available for future generations, and we can only pursue our mission with the support of the community.

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.



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