

What People Are Saying About Forever Wild

(excerpts from posted comments to various articles regarding Forever Wild)

Posted by Rema H. George | January 22, 2010, 6:04AM

Lawmakers should protect 'Forever Wild' – Press-Register

I have been reading in the paper about the Alabama Farmers Federation wanting to turn the money that is allocated to “Forever Wild” into a subsidy for farmers. Paying farmers to not cultivate their land is wrong in the first place, and to even consider taking money from the “Forever Wild” program is ludicrous. “Forever Wild” benefits all Alabamians by preserving land and opening it for hunting, hiking, camping, fishing and bird-watching. How many of the proposed farmers would allow such activities on their private land that would be subsidized by state tax money? None? Compare this to the number of people who use the “Forever Wild” properties for various activities. This is really a no-brainer. All of us should contact our legislators and insist that the “Forever Wild” funding be left intact. I thank the Press-Register for supporting the program with its editorials.

Posted by chinagrove01 | January 14, 2010, 1:30PM

Forever Wild and the environmentals have nothing to do with buying up farmland. They buy wild and wetland areas - not farmland. The program was approved by 84% of voters and has been highly successful, protecting wetlands and areas such as Walls of Jericho and Turkey Creek from developers, not farmers. Hands off, Alfa.

Posted by hawk | January 14, 2010, 8:00AM

Some people in the state thinks that AEA runs things, ALFA has been the boss and has ran the state for years. The state of Alabama has the least amount of public land than any state. Most states add land each year because the large timber companies have been selling off large amount in the last few years.

Posted by Khelben | January 14, 2010, 6:43AM

How unfortunate. Does anyone think that there is any chance that ALFA doesn't get what it wants? What a cesspool of greed we have in this state. Maybe Forever Wild will survive, but remember, this is an election year and ALFA's influence is second only to Hubbert's. As long as they don't try to champion charter schools, they will probably get exactly what they want.

Posted by bhamliberal | January 14, 2010, 6:09AM

ALFA continues to act like a Wall St banker. They always seem to be in bed with folks that are pursuing some selfish interest. That is why I never call them for an auto or home insurance quote. And I urge my friends to do the same.

Posted by mskelton | January 12, 2010, 4:07PM

The Forever Wild program is very beneficial to all Alabamians. It allows the average person who doesn't have thousands of dollars to buy their own land the opportunity to share the outdoors with their children. The people who hunt these lands also spend thousands of dollars on licenses, stamps, and hunting equipment which stimulates the economy. It is a great program and should continue to be funded!

Posted by flavorfreak | January 11, 2010, 2:31PM

Forever Wild is one of the most successful programs this state has undertaken and deserves to be continued as it is currently funded and implemented. Leave it to ALFA to say the state should be paying farmers for NOT farming their land.

Posted by 5points | January 11, 2010, 2:40PM

Forever Wild = Amazing Progressive Success for Alabama.

Posted by HighlandAve | January 11, 2010, 3:06PM

The ideas are certainly not mutually exclusive. But instead of raiding a successful program that has gotten almost no negative feedback, let's keep Forever Wild as it is. If ALFA wants to come up with some ways to conserve land and water, great. They certainly have the money to do it. Use some of that money.

Posted by smellyjoe | January 11, 2010, 2:51PM

ALFA wants to use Forever Wild money to pay farmers to "protect" their land but not let the public on that land, which is BS. Anyone who wants Forever Wild extended as it is now and not with money diverted to the pockets of ALFA or its people should contact your legislator immediately. Demand that they support Forever Wild without any kowtowing to ALFA's idiotic suggestions.

Posted by contrarian1 | January 11, 2010, 2:59PM

In a state where we get few things right, this program has been huge success. It needs to be renewed in its current form. By the way, ALFA should know that the Federal government currently offers ways for farmers to protect their land, through CRP, WHIP, WRP and numerous other programs that pay annual allotments to folks who want to implement various conservation projects/goals on their own land. I am in absolute favor of protecting non-corporate farmers, but not at the expense of the Forever Wild program.

Posted by dividebyzero | January 11, 2010, 3:07PM

Forever Wild is one of the few state programs in Alabama that actually works. If ALFA wants to include farmland conservation easements, then let's take another 10% of the interest generated from the Alabama Trust Fund and do it!

Posted by Foghorn(1) | January 11, 2010, 3:35PM

What is Forever Wild if not a water and soil conservationist group? Their efforts have stopped land waste and helped the water table by preventing erosion to the natural land. Alfa just wants more of a cut. With crop rotation the farmers could preserve their own land also. Let's keep Forever Wild and get rid of Barron.

Posted by amidreaming | January 11, 2010, 4:58PM

Forever Wild has been a huge success: no hint of corruption, an independent board that doesn't get caught in Montgomery politics, acquisition of spectacular lands for public use (Turkey Creek Nature Preserve here in B'ham). They only pay fair market appraisal values and they only buy from willing sellers. The federal government already has multiple programs to place conservation easements on farm lands. Problem is the required match to the federal money. ALFA wants to rob Forever Wild to cover the match so their members get it all for nothing! And just how many farmers do we still have in Alabama and are those farm lands really in jeopardy of being converted to some other use. The main beneficiaries will be the owners of large timber tracts in the boonies of lower Alabama. How will that use of public money benefit the public? Forever Wild was enacted by the legislature only after an advisory voter referendum that passed by a huge margin: somewhere in the neighborhood of 73% voted in favor. There has never been such a consensus on any other issue in the state. This is an issue where we the voters need to contact our legislators and let them know we want Forever Wild re-authorized in its current form and tell ALFA to take a hike.

Posted by cutoff | January 04, 2010, 8:56AM

Well...the road builders want to take \$100 MILLION a year from the corpus of the Trust fund to pay themselves to build roads. This will reduce the interest generated and will not only affect Forever Wild, but the General Fund. The unions take parts of the trust fund for "proration prevention. The economic developers take part of the proceeds from the trust fund to bribe companies to located in Alabama. We will wake up one morning and find the trust fund empty!

Posted by july2007 | January 04, 2010, 9:43AM

This idea is nothing more than ALFA trying to steal Forever Wild money. Notice a huge difference - when Forever Wild buys land, it is public. Under ALFA's idea, the farmer still owns the land. Tell me again just how the taxpayer is benefitting? Sadly, ALFA owns so many legislators it will probably pass.

Posted by orionmobile | January 04, 2010, 9:47AM

Forever Wild is without a doubt one of the best, if not the best, program ever implemented in Alabama. It was not a program decided by legislators. It is a program that was voted on and approved by voters in the state. It marks one of the rare times that Alabama actually did the right thing for our environment, unlike when we allowed Gulf Shores to be sold off to private developers rather than preserving it in pristine condition for the public to enjoy. For those who claim Forever Wild has reached its goal, Alabama still ranks in the bottom 1/3 of the country in preservation of wild lands for public enjoyment. We are allowing far too much development and preserving far too little of our green spaces and forests. We need to leave future generations a country with green spaces, wild animals, and a clean environment, not a big concrete and plastic collection of buildings and parking lots. Forever Wild has a specific purpose and should never be robbed for other purposes. It should continue to do what it has been doing for many, many decades to come. The question was asked, when have we preserved enough land? The answer to that is never.

Posted by stillinblue | January 03, 2010, 8:08AM

this sounds like it's a scam. Another attempt by some greedy group to raid the public till. Like someone who wants to take parts of hwy 27 off the public development block because its competing with their development plans. I don't really care for forever wild because it moves a scarce asset off the sale roster and increases the cost of the land that IS still available, (We are going to be stunted as we try and develop north of the population centers in Baldwin county and possibly mobile county) but I am STRONGLY opposed to giving money to anyone and not getting public ownership of the land. Besides the farmers could just back out when the market approached the right price for them.

Posted by skilleggs | January 03, 2010, 8:34AM

If the program has reached its goal, it is time to stop collecting revenues for it and direct them toward a more worthwhile cause. Several true needs should be developed and investigated and then presented to Alabamians for selection. DO NOT let politicians decide the future of any money that we as citizens should make decisions about. Regarding the farmers option--that's a JOKE. It will be just like all other funds--directed towards the richest and lest neediest "farmers". I know of two "farmers" who do not even dip a plow into the dirt and are making a killing from government handouts for NOT producing anything. And they then get more money from the IRS because they do not show a "profit" from their farms. LOL and cry.

Posted by elduac | January 03, 2010, 8:34AM

There is nothing good about this proposed raid on one of the best ideas Alabama has had in its history. Regardless of the effect on "development" setting aside some wild places is a good thing. Stopping unchecked development is a legitimate goal. Giving farmers a hand out with no return for the public is

dumb. Stillinblue - the essence is the scarcity, with so little wild land left if the government fails to protect it there would be none.

Posted by honkytonker | January 03, 2010, 10:51AM

Sounds like we have some foxes in the hen house. They want to funnel our tax money for natural public lands to their rich friends so called farms. Anywhere public money is this kind of filth is always sniffing around.

Posted by PNS2BFM | January 03, 2010, 8:25PM

Jeff Helms wants to pay farmers to NOT work their land. This in a state where we have people starving. Does anyone else see the problem with this?

Posted by etbhome | November 16, 2009, 9:05AM

Forever Wild land acquisitions are a benefit to the public now and into the future. Politicians have to pay off their handlers and benefactors first, leaving the public whatever is left. Let's hope there is enough left to keep this program alive.

Posted by x0128718 | August 23, 2009, 8:38AM

The "Forever Wild" organization is indeed one of which all Alabamians should be proud. Hopefully, your article will generate interest and further support for this organization. If we don't support this kind of preservation, many of Alabama's natural wonders will become golf resorts, strip malls or some other sprawling desecration to the land. I'm no tree hugger, and I hate rabbits, so this is about preserving a slice of the natural resources we all inherited for all to enjoy.

Posted by boatman55 | August 23, 2009, 10:02AM

Mike, you knew when "Little" Bill Ireland got behind this project over seventeen years ago that it wasn't a tree hugger bill. Mr. Ireland and others like him, including yourself if I remember correctly, got out and worked tirelessly to pass this bill and it passed by the highest margin in Alabama history. Mr. Ireland did not stop there he continued with Forever Wild for many years to see that it became what the people of Alabama expected. With his passing earlier this year Alabama lost a good friend. And I know that he considers Forever Wild one of this great legacies.

Posted by contrarian1 | August 23, 2009, 3:22PM

I agree, this is one of those rare government programs what it was designed to do. It is an absolute must that each and every sportsman, hunter, fisherman, hiker, bird watcher, mountain biker, tree-hugger and bunny lover work together to get this bill renewed when it comes up for renewal.