# NORTH ALABAMA

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Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association

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# NORTH ALABAMA Extreme ports and

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# the APPALACHIAN FOOTHILLS + the TENNESSEE RIVER & 8 BIG LAKES 🕈 MILLIONS OF ACRES OF WOODLANDS

Tennessee River cuts a large valley across our width, creating an abundance of creeks, feet, a narrow strip of gentle rolling lowlands each side of the Tennessee River, and a rugged

our heritage. Our area includes the Bankhead National Forest, the Sipsey Wilderness Area, Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, eight expansive lakes, millions of acres of woodlands, and

explore and see what each of the 16

# DOWN THE RIVER & ON THE LAKES

World-Class Fishing Bass, Crappie, Catfish, Striper Bear Creek Lakes - 8,000 acres total Composed of four impoundments in Northwest Alabama, each with its own distinct personality. H. Neely Henry Lake - 11,200 acres Rippling blue waters and 339 miles of shoreline. Runs northsouth next to Gadsden. Lake Guntersville - 69,000 acres Alabama's largest impoundment with more than 900 miles of shoreline. Stretches from Scottsboro to Guntersville. Lewis Smith Lake - 21,000 acres A deep, clear lake near Cullman with feeder streams, bays and sloughs. Rainbow trout fishery is located on the Sipsey Fork. Pickwick Lake - 43,100 acres Runs from Florence, Muscle Shoals, Sheffield and Tuscumbia to the Alabama-Mississippi border. Weiss Lake - 30,000 acres Offering 447 miles of shoreline next to the resort city of Centre.

Wheeler Lake - 67,000 acres This reservoir on the Tennessee River runs from Huntsville through Decatur to Wheeler Dam in Lauderdale County.

Wilson Lake - 15,500 acres West of Wheeler Dam to the east city limits of Florence and Muscle Shoals.

www.NorthAlabama.org for details.

### CANOEING, KAYAKING, PADDLE BOARDING

#### **Beardo Outdoors**

*Florence, Ala., (256) 577-5138, www.beardooutdoors.com/* Beardo Outdoors is a small mobile outfitter. We offer basic daily rentals on Cypress Creek of canoes, paddle boards and kayaks. We make it easy. You're only 5 minutes from downtown Florence. We also offer custom guided tours to some historic locations like the Forks of Cypress, koger island, Patton Island and 7 Mile island . We also do custom group trips to locations mainly in the southeast region. So if you're planning to visit the music trail, bird watching, cruising the trail of tears or simply looking for some down time. The water is one of the best ways to capture the regions rich history and beauty while you enjoy the sound of the Shoals! Open 24 hours.

#### Lower Bear Creek Canoe Trail

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Aspect

Bear Creek Development Authority. www.bearcreeklakes.com The Lower Bear Creek Canoe Trail is the lower portion of Bear Creek at Red Bay, Ala., down to Pickwick Lake. This 35-mile stretch offers a serene trip, except in flood stage, and is suited for the beginning canoeist. Canoeing on Bear Creek is enjoyable at any time of the year, but May to October is the most popular season. The water level is normally low during the summer and fall.

#### Limestone County Canoe & Kayak Trail Elkmont, Ala. www.limestoneparks.com

A class 1 stream, with towering bluffs, untouched forests and rolling meadows. The route begins at Elkmont, Ala. just west of I-65 at Exit 361. It is 21.9 miles along scenic Elk River with five easy in-and-out points. Elk River water levels are TVA Dam controlled, which means good canoeing even during dry summers.

#### **True Adventure Sports**

#### Fort Payne, Ala. www.trueadventuresports.com

Your enthusiastic guides to the outdoor activities on Lookout Mountain (DeKalb County/Ft. Payne) providing outdoor gear, rock climbing, rappelling, camping, caving, canoes, kayaks, snacks, guided trips, lessons, and team building. Jet skis available for rent. Accommodations available for rent.

#### Cypress Creek Public Access Area

#### Florence, Ala., www.florenceal.org

With the addition of Cypress Creek Public Access point, the public now has a point where they can launch their kayaks and canoes and remove them at Wildwood park in Florence. Free parking is available. The area consist of 22 acres that will eventually include walking trails.

Continued >>

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UnPhilleredkayaking.com

# WHITE WATER RAFTING

#### Bear Creek Floatway - Hodges, Ala.

A Class 1 floatway with the exception of the difficult Class IV Upper Factory Falls area and the Class VI Lower Factory Falls area. www.BearCreekLakes.com

#### Warrior River - Locust Fork River - Blountsville, Ala.

Whitewater enthusiasts come from all over the southeast to enjoy the beauty and thrill of the Locust Fork River. With scenic beauty unsurpassed in Alabama - jagged cliffs, waterfalls, whitewater, smooth flowing sections, and sandy beaches - this mountain stream flows freely through Etowah, Marshall, and Blount Counties to form the Black Warrior River in northwest Jefferson County. Locust Fork boasts: class III and IV rapids and is site of the annual Locust Fork Whitewater Classic, the final race for the Alabama Cup. www.bocc.publishpath.com

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#### Bankhead National Forest / Sipsey Wilderness Double Springs, Ala. www.fs.usda.gov

The William B. Bankhead National Forest is one of Alabama's four National Forests, covering 181,230 acres. It is home to Alabama's only National Wild and Scenic River, the Sipsey Fork. Recreational Areas and offers so many trails you could spend weeks here.

There are six recreation areas scattered about the Bankhead National Forest, each offering a unique experience of its own. Facilities for camping, picnicking, fishing, hiking, and swimming are abundant. All facilities are designed with forest users in mind and provide varying challenges for everyone from the novice to the expert. Forest users will find that each area has its own personality and with the changing seasons, even that personality will change.

Sipsey is the largest national forest wilderness area east of the Mississippi. The Sipsey Fork river offers a peaceful float trip combined with the beautiful scenery and great camping that distinguishes the Bankhead from other National Forests. While canoeing the Sipsey Fork you will pass magnificent walls of rock which has been carved for thousands of years by the erosive power of water. As the Sipsey Fork begins to merge with Smith Lake the creek becomes non-turbulent and wide. This area must be paddled but offers a slow-pace if interested in fishing or just a slow-paced family trip.

#### Warrior River - Locust Fork River

Blountsville, Ala. www.bocc.publishpath.com

Locust Fork in Alabama is 10 miles long and it is classified as a class I-III section by American Whitewater. Along the scenic route you will find historic covered bridges, abundant fishing availability, easy access for swimming and picnicking, and remarkably beautiful natural scenery.

#### Alabama Scenic River Trail

Madison, AL, (256) 426-0558, www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com The Alabama Scenic River Trail is the only blueway that has it allfrom mountain streams to river delta to the salty waves of the Gulf of Mexico. Paddling and powerboat experiences and exploration abound along nearly 5000 miles of accessible waterways on over 43 waterways with over 40 outfitters and adventure services to serve and assist you. We have amenities and campsites to support everything from long-distance touring to organized paddles to races, overnight trips or any kind of day trip you might imagine.

Eagle Awareness Program Guntersville, Ala. www.marshallcountycvb.com; katy@marshallcountycvb.com Lake Guntersville State Park offers Eagle Awareness weekends annually in January and February, which include live birding shows and demonstrations, field trips to eagle nesting grounds, children's crafts, family movie nights and more. Lodging packages are available. Guntersville has one of the largest concentrations of American Bald Eagles in the country.

#### Flint Creek Canoe Trail

Hartselle Ala. www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com

A 20-mile route featuring campsites, mileage markers and information kiosks from Flint Creek on U.S. 31, Hartselle through Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge to Point Mallard Park in Decatur. The Flint Creek Canoe Trail features several access points and campsites so boaters can easily plan a day trip or a longer journey. The route is the newest addition to the Alabama Scenic River Trail system, which features more than 5,300 miles of designated canoe and kayak routes in the state.

Whitewater rafting at Buck's Pocket State Park.

## RAPPELLING

#### True Adventure Sports

Fort Payne, Ala. www.trueadventuresports.com Your enthusiastic guides to the outdoor activities on Lookout Mountain (DeKalb County/Ft. Payne) providing outdoor gear, rock climbing, rappelling, camping, caving, canoes, kayaks, snacks, guided trips, lessons, and team building. Jet skis available for rent. Accommodations available for rent.

#### Cherokee Rock Village

#### Leesburg, AL www.ccparkboard.com

A unique mountaintop public park with amenities such as picnic tables, pavilions, and miles of trails, caves, crags, and crevices plus a 100 mile view of 3 states. Rock climbing, bouldering, bird watching, hiking, mountain biking, picnicking, geocaching, and more outdoor family activities. Primitive camping available. Open 24 hours a day.

#### Hurricane Creek Park

Vinemont, Ala. www.hurricanecreek.homestead.com Hiking trails, a crystal clear creek, seasonal waterfalls, hanging cliffs, picnic area, rock climbing, and more.

#### Screaming Eagle Ziplines

Lake Guntersville State Park, Guntersville, Ala., www.lakeguntersvillezipline.com. and DeSoto State Park, Fort Payne, Ala., www.desotozipline.com

At Screaming Eagle at Lake Guntersville explore the wilderness from the bald eagle's perspective, high in the trees tops atop Taylor Mountain. Traverse, high in the air, over unique and fantastically shaped boulders and flowering flora characteristic only to DeSoto State Park. Enjoy six ziplines that range from 100 ft to 350 ft in length and six sky bridges that range from 50 ft to 150 ft in length. You won't be able to contain your spirit of adventure after you have completed this course!

#### **Smith Lake Zipline Arerial Adventures**

1177 County Road 385, Cullman, Ala., 256-841-7627, www.smithlakezipline.com

Zip Lines and Aerial Adventures provide a birds eye view of nature in a way that can't be experienced in any other way! Exploring the tree canopy and mixing in some adrenaline fun is the perfect way to get out, explore, and make lasting memories! Smith Lake Zip Line Adventures was built by American Adventure Park Systems, an industry leading Professional Vendor Member for the Association for Challenge Course Technicians (ACCT). American Adventure Park Systems has a proven track record of constructing safety first, high adrenaline and experience centered aerial adventure parks.

# **HIKING AND BIKING WITH** FRG

#### **NORTH ALABAMA'S STATE PARKS**

#### **Cathedral Caverns State Park**

Off Hwy. 72; (256) 728-8193; www.alapark.com

Inside the cavern, you will find and some amazing formations including Big Rock Canyon, Mystery River, Stalagmite Mountain, The Frozen Waterfall and Goliath, a huge stalagmite column that reaches the ceiling of the cave some 45 feet above! Human habitation can be traced back 8,000 years. Open year round, 9 am-6 pm, Mar 15 - Aug 31 Tours start at 10:15 a.m. Admission 5-12 \$8, 13 and up \$18.

#### Joe Wheeler State Park & Resort

Rogersville, Ala. www.alapark.com

A 2,500-acre park on Wheeler Lake offering a lodge, 75 hotel rooms, restaurant, marina, golf course, campground, cabins, tennis, boat launch, swimming, picnicking, hiking, banguet facilities, boat rentals, 30 person group lodge, and pavilions.

#### Monte Sano State Park

#### Huntsville, Ala, www.alapark.com

A 2,140-acre resort atop Monte Sano Mountain. Stunning vistas, mountaintop trails, family picnic areas, and a Japanese garden and teahouse. Offers 14 renovated cabins and 89 campsites.

#### DeSoto State Park

Fort Payne, Ala. www.alapark.com

Lodge, cabins, motel, full service restaurant, campground, primitive camping, nature center, hiking and biking trails, Olympic-size pool, canoeing, boating, and fishing areas.

#### Buck's Pocket State Park

Grove Oak, Ala. www.alapark.com Secluded in a natural pocket of the Appalachian Mountain foothills, with more than 15 miles of trails. There are 24 modern campsites.

#### Lake Guntersville State Park & Lodge

Guntersville, Ala, www.alapark.com

A 6,000-acre park located along the shore of Lake Guntersville. Offering more than 24 hiking trails, swimming, boating, tennis, 18hole golf course,, Nature Center, cottages, chalets, and campground.

#### **Rickwood Caverns State Park**

Warrior, AL 35180, (205) 647-9692, www.outdooralabama.com Experience the thrill of Rickwood's miracle mile of underground caverns! The 260 million-year-old limestone formations, blind cave fish and underground pool are just a few of the natural wonders exhibited in the colorful cavern. The park features an Olympic-size swimming pool, snack bar, picnic area, large and small picnic shelter, hiking trails, playground, campground and gift shop.

#### www.NorthAlabama.org



#### **REGIONAL HIKING AND BIKING DESTINATIONS**

#### Hurricane Creek Park

Vinemont, Ala. www.hurricanecreek.homestead.com Hiking trails, a crystal clear creek, seasonal waterfalls, hanging cliffs, picnic area, rock climbing, and more.

#### Walls of Jericho

Scottsboro, Ala. www.outdooralabama.com

The Walls of Jericho Trail System in located within the Forever Wild Walls of Jericho Tract in Jackson County, Ala. which consists of 12,510 acres bordering Tennessee. The tract is comprised of mountainous and wooded terrain, hosting caves, springs, rocky bluffs, steep canyon walls and portions of the headwaters of the Paint Rock River. Bird watching, backpacking, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, stream fishing and wildflower viewing are all accommodated on Alabama's Walls of Jericho Tract. There are currently 3 hiking trails available, the Walls of Jericho Trail (6 miles round-trip), the Bear Den Point Loop (4.7 miles round-trip) and the South Rim Trail (1 mile round-trip).

#### **Athens-Limestone Bike & Vintage Car Trail**

#### Athens, Ala. www.visitathensal.com

This 89-mile trail is a bicycle, motorcycle, and vintage car trail offering a beautiful ride in Limestone County of Northern Alabama. The Trail connects historical sites, old cemeteries, and places to picnic.

#### **Richard Martin Rails to Trails**

#### Elkmont, Ala. www.limestoneparks.com

A multi-use rail trail open to hikers, walkers, runners, and horseback riders built on an abandoned rail corridor as part of the Rails to Trails Conservancy. The 10.2 miles trail winds through wetlands, the Civil War site Battle of Sulphur Creek Trestle and downtown Elkmont

#### Land Trust of North Alabama

Huntsville, Ala. www.LandTrustNAL.ora

Preserving greenspace, fresh water resources, and wildlife habitat. Six nature preserves offering 50+ miles of multi-use trails and horseback riding on preserves. Seasonal guided hikes, summer environmental education. Hours: M-F 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Trails open dawn to dusk.

#### Cherokee Rock Village

#### Leesburg, Ala. www.ccparkboard.com

A unique mountaintop public park with amenities such as picnic tables, pavilions, and miles of trails, caves, crags, and crevices plus a 100 mile view of 3 states. Rock climbing, bouldering, bird watching, hiking, mountain biking, picnicking, geocaching, and more outdoor family activities. Primitive camping available. Open 24 hours a day.

#### **Camp McDowell Outdoor Classroom**

#### Nauvoo, Ala. www.mcdowellec.com

Our classes take place outdoors in variable weather conditions, so students and chaperons should prepare to spend three-hour blocks outside. Camp McDowell encompasses 1,140 acres of diverse forests, meadows, streams and canyons. This landscape is an incredible natural resource.

#### **Natural Bridge of Alabama**

Natural Bridge, Ala. (205) 486-5330

The 148-foot sandstone bridge towers 60 feet above winding pathways and is the longest natural bridge east of the Rockies. Found in a forest setting with natural gardens, picnicking, nature trails, concessions, and gift shop. Hours: Open daily 8 a.m.-sunset, year round.

#### Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge

#### Decatur, Ala. www.wheeler.fws.gov

Offers wildlife displays, orientation video, wildlife observation building, hiking trails, and many other recreational opportunities, including hunting and fishing.

#### **Dismals Canyon**

Russellville, Ala. www.dismalscanyon.com

A National Natural Landmark and one of the finest examples of ecological and geological features composing our nation's natural history. Pristine wilderness, romantic cabins, secluded campsites, hiking, swimming, canoeing, wildflowers, a country store, and more. Cabins and group tours available year round by reservation.

#### **Cypress Cove Farm**

#### Red Bay, Ala. (256) 332-1760

Identified as Site #51, Northwest Loop of the North Alabama Birding Trail, the farm features two wooded birding observation areas as well as three ponds and six miles of nature trails divided into 10 paths. Existing farm structures at Cypress Cove Farm have been modified for use as bird blinds and education facilities.

#### **Cane Creek Canvon Nature Preserve**

#### Tuscumbia, Ala. (256) 381-6301

Cane Creek Canyon Nature Preserve is a 700-acre, privately owned, scenic, natural area in the Little Mountain region of southern Colbert County. Open year-round to the public. There are more than 15 miles of maintained hiking trails. Hours: Open year round. Call to ensure gate is unlocked. Maps available on site. Free.

#### Little River Canyon National Preserve

#### Fort Payne, Ala. www.nps.gov/liri/index.htm

One of the deepest gorges in the East, this unit of the National Park System contains spectacular scenery, breathtaking waterfalls, and a number of rare plants and animals. Open year-round.

#### **Bankhead National Forest**

#### Double Springs, Ala. www.fs.usda.gov

The Bankhead National Forest offers over 90 miles of recreational trails. You can enjoy hiking, bicycle and horseback riding, and a trail for your all-terrain vehicle. The forest covers 181,230 acres and is home to Alabama's only National Wild and Scenic River, the Sipsey Fork.

Horseback riders have a choice of riding at Owl Creek Trail in the Sipsey Wilderness. There are 13.3 miles of trails in the wilderness designated for horses. In the northeastern portion of the forest, the 25-mile Owl Creek Non-Motorized Trail provides an opportunity to see beautiful waterfalls, sandstone cliffs, and deep gorges.

There are six recreation areas scattered about the Bankhead National Forest, each offering a unique experience of its own. Facilities for camping, picnicking, fishing, hiking, and swimming are abundant. All facilities are designed with forest users in

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## HTTIN'THETRAIL Hodges Equestrian Park

#### Hodges, Ala., (205) 935-3436

Hodges Equestrian Park is a campground that caters to the needs of horseback riders and nature enthusiasts, but all campers are welcome. The park has many miles of scenic trails winding through acres of woodlands and canyons, overlooks waterfalls, a restaurant, historical sites and many more points of interest. There are challenging trails for the adventurous rider, and less challenging trails for a more leisurely ride. Walking and hiking trails with beautiful waterfalls also abound.

Richard Martin Rails to Trails (see listing under hiking and biking.) Elkmont, Ala., www.limestoneparks.com

#### Seven Springs Lodge

#### Tuscumbia, Ala., www.SevenSpringsLodge.net

This facility offers horseback trail riding. Organized equestrian group trail rides held throughout the 3,500 acres of meadow and woodland, dotted with waterfalls. Silver grain silos cabins, outfitted as bunkhouses, along with campsites and horse stalls. Shady Grove Dude Ranch

Cloudmont, Ala., www.cloudmont.com

Atop Lookout Mountain, 600 acres of forest trails, waterfalls, and streams. Daily trail rides. Open year-round. Variety of lodging.

Bankhead National Forest (see listing under hiking and biking.) Double Springs, Ala. http://www.fs.usda.gov



#### Willow Oak Lodge

#### Spruce Pine, AL , (256) 810-5946

Located in the northwest corner of Alabama, this 1,000 acre preserve has been developed and managed specifically for wildlife habitat. Offers whitetail deer, turkey and quail hunting, as well as, lake fishing for bass. Accommodations include a lodge, cabins, The Haargett Place cottage, and Tim's Barn.

#### Athens, AL, (256) 874-2500, Defensive applications.com

Steel targets out to 300yds. Pistol range. Classes for pistol, concealed carry weapons (ccw), rifle and shotgun. Self defense classes Certified Black-belt Instructor, 'Don't Be a Victim' classes, NRA Certified Instructor. NRA CERTIFIED classes. Axe Throwing and live music every Saturday from 6-10pm. Matt Todd, owner- instructor

#### **Cypress Creek Indoor Range**

#### Florence, AL, (256) 275-7586, www.cypresscreekrange.com

Cypress Creek Indoor Range is a state of the art indoor shooting range, retail gun store, and training center in Florence, Alabama. We are proud to offer facility designed with elements representing the Shoals' beauty and history. We pride ourselves in being a family friendly destination for fun in a safe environment. Everyone is welcome - no membership required!

#### Sharon Johnston Park

#### New Market, AL, (256) 379-2868, madisoncountyal.gov/departments/ recreationdepartment/sharonjohnstonpark

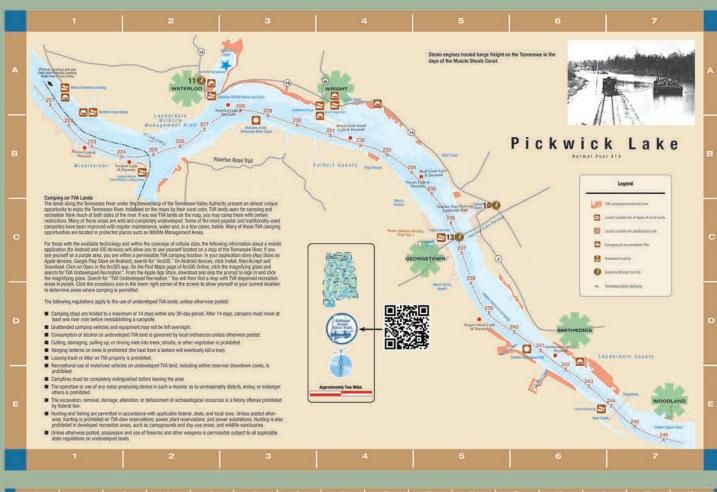
Sharon Johnston Park is located just 20 minutes from downtown Huntsville, the 250 acre park lies nestled in the rolling hills of northeast Madison County. The park includes: 12 acre fishing lake stocked annually with catfish, brim, crappie, and bass. Olympic size swimming pool, Campground facilities, Shooting range, Arena, Soccer fields, and marked 5k walking/running course All facilities are handicap accessible.



# Alabama Scenic River Trail

#### www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com

The Alabama Scenic River Trail spans the width and breath of the state including paddling and powerboat experiences and exploration abound along over 5000 miles of accessible waterways on over 43 waterways. Featured on the following pages are the Alabama Scenic River Trails found in North Alabama. It's all waiting for the whitewater enthusiast, the naturalist and the family who just wants to play.







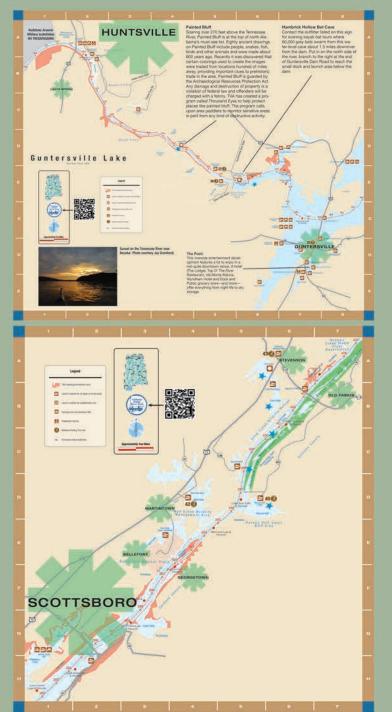
No camping/no open fires on Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge lands (green on map)

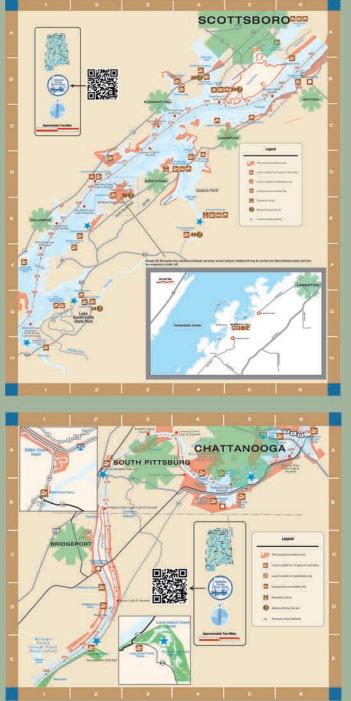


The Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge was established to protect various wildlife species across the present landscape. Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge was established July 7, 1938 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. It was

Redstone Arsenal Military TRESPASSING

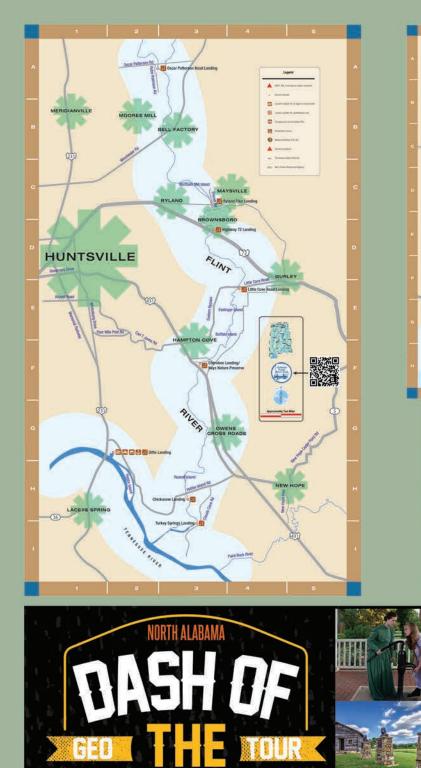
the first refuge ever superimposed on a hydro-electric impoundment and in the early stages, considered an experiment to determine the possibility of attracting migratory waterfowl onto a multipurpose impoundment. www.fws.gov/refuge/wheeler

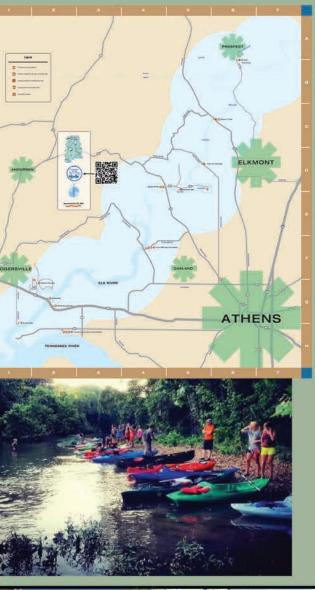






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