



ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION

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www.forestry.alabama.gov

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AFC Launches Rural Bridge Grant Initiative to Strengthen Timber Transportation

Montgomery, AL – The Alabama Forestry Commission is pleased to announce the launch of its Rural Bridge Grant initiative, effective January 10, 2025. This vital program, established through the Alabama Legislature's Rural Logging Efficiency Act of 2023 and funded in the FY25 General Fund Budget, is dedicated to upgrading infrastructure and easing costly transportation challenges resulting from the need to route loaded trucks around corridors with statutorily limited bridges in rural areas.

The Rural Bridge Grant initiative invites county commissions to submit applications for funding to address rural, county-maintained bridges that are weight-restricted or otherwise hinder the efficient transport of timber to sawmills and manufacturing facilities. Eligible projects include the maintenance, repair, replacement, and construction of rural public bridges. Counties are encouraged to apply for grants up to \$400,000, complemented by local matching funds, to facilitate projects that ensure safe and unrestricted transportation routes for timber.

State Forester Rick Oates emphasized the significance of this initiative, stating, "The Alabama Forestry Commission is excited to offer this innovative economic resource, which will benefit all levels of the forestry sector and signals a commitment to our state's rural economy. We extend our gratitude to Governor Kay Ivey and the Alabama Legislature for their support in providing these necessary funds. We anticipate receiving applications that align with our goal to enhance transportation routes by upgrading substandard bridges, ultimately reducing costs, and providing new efficiencies for timber owners and businesses."

Applications must be submitted by close of business on March 14, 2025, at the State Office of the Alabama Forestry Commission located at 513 Madison Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama 36104. Award announcements are expected in late Spring 2025.

For more information about the Rural Bridge Grant initiative, including application forms, the application process, and contact details, please visit www.forestry.alabama.gov.

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The mission of the Alabama Forestry Commission is to protect and sustain Alabama's forest resources using professionally applied stewardship principles and education, ensuring that the state's forests contribute to abundant timber and wildlife, clean air and water, and a healthy economy.

For more information about forestry-related issues, contact your local Alabama Forestry Commission office or visit the AFC website at www.forestry.alabama.gov

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