



ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION

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Rural Logging Efficiency Grants Awarded to Replace Bridges and Strengthen Timber Transportation

Montgomery, Ala – The Board of the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) voted unanimously at their quarterly meeting in April to award projects to six counties in the launch of the Rural Bridge Grant initiative. Established through the Alabama Legislature’s Rural Logging Efficiency Act of 2023 and funded in the FY25 General Fund Budget, this program is dedicated to upgrading the infrastructure of rural, county-maintained bridges that currently hinder the efficient transport of timber to sawmills and manufacturing facilities.

“The awarding of six grants to replace 15 substandard, weight-restricted bridges demonstrates the efforts of this agency to be a good steward of limited public funds,” said State Forester Rick Oates. “This funding not only shows our commitment to benefit the state’s rural economy, but also helps meet the goal of enhancing transportation routes for timber owners and forestry businesses.”

A total of \$1,664,784 was awarded across six projects. Each county received the full amount requested in its application, including Pike County for \$400,000; Walker County for \$400,000; Washington County for \$400,000; Choctaw County for \$225,000; Monroe County for \$168,300; and Clay County for \$71,484. Funds will be available for construction pending executed contracts between the counties and the AFC, and the signature of Gov. Kay Ivey. These grants are to be complemented by local matching funds to facilitate projects that ensure safe and unrestricted transportation routes for timber.

Applications were received from 25 county commissions. Combined, these counties sought over \$8.8 million in funding for rural public bridge maintenance, repair, and replacement. The quality of the applications was high, and the need for the work is clear, but the AFC could only award projects up to the limit of \$1.7 million in available funds, with a maximum award of \$400,000 per county.

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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.

Serving Alabama’s Forest Landowners for 100 Years