



## **Pat Byington**

For nearly 25 years, Pat Byington has been a leader in the environmental movement in the South. At the age of 23, in 1989, he became the Executive Director of the Alabama Conservancy. In eight years, the organization nearly tripled their membership, increased their budget from \$30,000 to \$280,000 and more importantly successfully led campaigns that established the Little River Canyon National Preserve, Dugger Mountain Wilderness and the Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge. He played a major role in 1991-92 in the establishment of the Alabama Forever Wild Program, the state's land acquisition program that to date has preserved more than 200,000 acres across the state.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Pat worked as the Southern organizer for Americans for Our Heritage and Recreation, supporting efforts to pass the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA) and several subsequent Land and Water Conservation Fund initiatives. Throughout the 2000's, he worked for The Wilderness Society Eastern Forest Program on conservation funding projects throughout the East, primarily focused on the South. Since leaving The Wilderness Society in 2010, he has been the director of the Eastern Forest Partnership, a coalition of 20 conservation groups from Maine to Alabama advocating for full funding of LWCF and organizing support for numerous LWCF and Forest Legacy projects in the East.

Deeply rooted in the South, Pat's family has lived in the East Tennessee region for five generations, including his 87 year old father - Hunter and 86 year old mother Pat, who live on Lookout Mountain (on the Georgia side 3 blocks from Rock City).

A passionate environmental advocate, along with his success in saving places throughout the east, Pat has successfully led as an environmental commissioner for the state of Alabama efforts to significantly reduce mercury and cancer causing pollution in Alabama's rivers, lakes and streams. In 2012, he helped lead the statewide effort to re-authorize the Forever Wild Constitutional Amendment. The measure passed, garnering 75% of the popular vote.

A noted environmental columnist, here are some commentaries written by Pat Byington over the years.

### LWCF

<http://augustafreepress.com/pat-byington-protect-the-land-water-and-conservation-fund/>

### Forever Wild

[http://blog.al.com/birmingham-news-commentary/2012/10/forever\\_wild\\_brought\\_together.html](http://blog.al.com/birmingham-news-commentary/2012/10/forever_wild_brought_together.html)