



Burr & Forman's Lee Thuston Awarded the Mims-Ireland Lifetime Achievement Award by Alabama Wildlife Federation

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William "Lee" Thuston

Burr & Forman LLP is announces that firm-wide Managing Partner, W. "Lee" Thuston, was awarded the Walter L. Mims-Bill Ireland, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2015 Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards banquet in recognition of his outstanding conservation efforts and lifetime of service to the Alabama Wildlife Federation (AWF). AWF held the banquet on Friday, August 7, 2015 at The Marriott Legends at Capitol Hill in Prattville.

The AWF Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards are the most respected conservation honors in the state of Alabama; presented to individuals and organizations that make great contributions to the conservation of Alabama's wildlife and related natural resources. The Walter L. Mims-Bill Ireland, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award is a special award presented only rarely, to individuals who have spent their lifetime making a significant contribution to AWF and their success in wildlife conservation, hunting and angling heritage and connecting people to the outdoors.

Dr. Jeff McCollum of Decatur and Bolling P. Starke of Montgomery also received the Walter L. Mims-Bill Ireland, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award. This trio is a fierce combination that has set a path for many more great things to come in conservation in this State.

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In 1995, under the tenure of AWF President, Dr. Jeff McCollum from Decatur, AWF formed a Conservation Education Committee. Thanks to his progressive leadership, Discovering Our Heritage and the Alabama Outdoor Classroom Program came to life, and today involve conservation activities with more than 325 schools across the state and an estimated 50,000 students per year.

In 2000, AWF President Bo Starke, proposed to expand on those initiatives and launched AWF's effort to identify suitable property and develop a master plan for what is now known as our Alabama Nature Center (ANC) facility located at Lanark, AWF State Headquarters in Millbrook. Today, approximately 150,000 youth and adults have visited Lanark since the 2007 Grand Opening of ANC.

In 2002, AWF Director Lee Thuston, who served as AWF President in 2009, agreed to take on the roll of leading the 3-phase fundraising effort to secure the Lanark property, implement Phase I of ANC in 2007, and Phase II in 2015. When the NaturePlex, Phase II of ANC is complete in October of this year it will represent over ten million dollars raised and invest in conservation education by AWF in the last 10 years.

"We applaud the extraordinary leadership of these three gentlemen," said Tim L. Gothard, AWF Executive Director. "Their contributions to wildlife conservation as well as connecting young people and adults to the outdoors has truly made a substantial difference in conservation."

About The Alabama Wildlife Federation

The Alabama Wildlife Federation, established by sportsmen in 1935, is the state's oldest and largest citizens' conservation organization. The mission of the Alabama Wildlife Federation, a 501(c) 3 non-profit group supported by membership dues and donations, is to promote conservation and wise use of Alabama's wildlife and related natural resources as a basis for economic and social prosperity. To learn more about Alabama Wildlife Federation, including membership details, programs and projects, contact AWF at 1-800-822-WILD or visit www.alabamawildlife.org.

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