



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Sept. 13, 2024

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**ADEM, State Parks, ADCNR Receive National Award  
for Partnering to Use Recycled Tires in Road Projects**  
*\$2 million in ADEM grants from state's Scrap Tire Fund  
helped fund repaving projects at three Alabama State Parks*

**GULF SHORES, Ala.** – The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), Alabama State Parks and the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) received a national award Thursday for partnering to promote the innovative use of recycled tires in recent paving projects at three state parks.

The agencies were jointly presented the Leadership in Conservation and Sustainability Award by the Rubberized Asphalt Foundation at the 2024 National Association of State Park Directors Conference held this week at Alabama's Gulf State Park.

The award recognized ADEM, Alabama State Parks and ADCNR for working together to advance the use of rubber-modified asphalt made from recycled tires. "The market development program has beneficially reused over 19,000 end-of-life tires in the paving of roads and parking lots in Lake Guntersville, DeSoto and Joe Wheeler State Parks," the award stated.

The projects were funded primarily with about \$2 million in grants provided in recent years by ADEM from the state's Scrap Tire Fund, which is used to remove scrap tires from illegal dumps, roadsides and other places, as well as promote the recycling of tires.

"Improperly discarded old tires are an environmental hazard that can cause multiple problems," ADEM Director Lance LeFleur said. "ADEM, working with our partners, is constantly looking for ways through various demonstration projects to create a market for old tires so they can be recycled rather than just thrown away. This award is recognition of that work and our partnership with ADCNR and State Parks. Our thanks to our partners and, of course, the Rubberized Asphalt Foundation for the award."

Alabama State Parks, a division of ADCNR, kicked in some of its own funds so the paving would cover more areas in the parks.

"We have invested a lot of resources and effort to improve the campsites, cottages and other amenities at the parks," said Conservation Commissioner Chris Blankenship. "The partnership with ADEM to use the rubber-modified asphalt to pave our roads complements what we have done and what we are continuing to do to upgrade these beautiful parks and make them even more appealing to our customers."

“Repurposing the old tires instead of sending them to a landfill is good for our environment and fits well with our sustainability initiatives in our State Parks. I appreciate the opportunities to work with ADEM to do good work in our beautiful state.”

ADCNR used \$829,000 from ADEM in 2022 to repave roads and parking areas at Lake Guntersville and DeSoto state parks with rubber-modified asphalt. This spring, ADCNR and ADEM held a ribbon-cutting at Joe Wheeler State Park for roads and parking areas newly repaved with the special asphalt, a project funded by a \$1.16 million ADEM grant.

Studies have shown that asphalt made with recycled tires has a long list of advantages over traditional asphalt. In addition to lasting up to 50 percent longer and being less prone to potholing and cracking, rubber-modified asphalt reduces tire wear, is quieter, improves fuel mileage because of lower rolling resistance, and is safer because of better traction and reduced misting on wet roads.

In addition to the State Parks projects, ADEM announced earlier this year that it was awarding more than \$1.3 million from the Scrap Tire Fund to St. Clair County to repave a portion of Annie Lee Road near Moody with rubber-modified asphalt.

The Rubberized Asphalt Foundation is a research foundation dedicated to the science and practical use of recycled tire rubber in asphalt.

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