
TALLAPOOSA

RIVER BASIN

The Tallapoosa River (Figure 1) flows southwest from the Appalachian Mountains in northwest Georgia to Fort Toulouse in Wetumpka where it intersects the Coosa River to form the Alabama River. The Tallapoosa River watershed (Figure 2) contains 4,675 square miles and flows over 258 miles. Georgia contains 15 percent of the watershed, while the remaining 85 percent is in Alabama. The Tallapoosa River is named for the Creek Indian word *Talwa posa*, which means “Grandmother Town”.

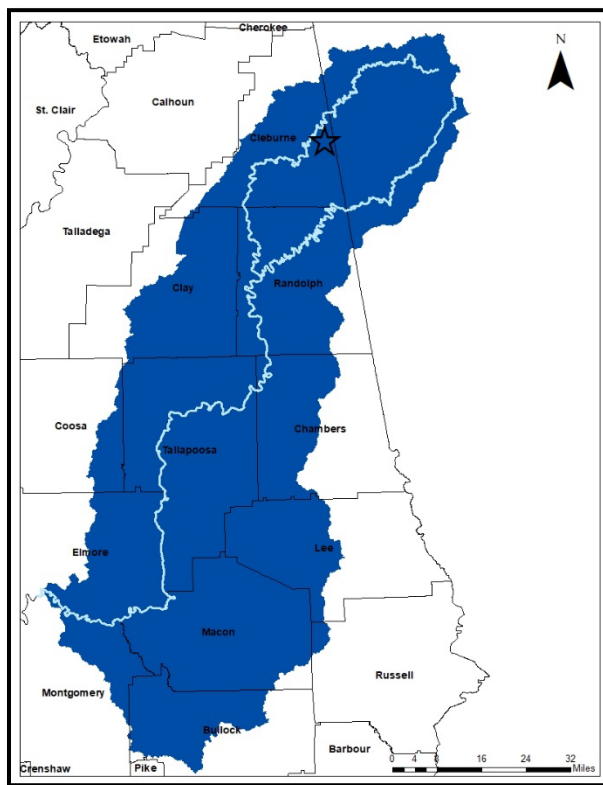


Figure 1. The Tallapoosa River and Little Tallapoosa River in Alabama.

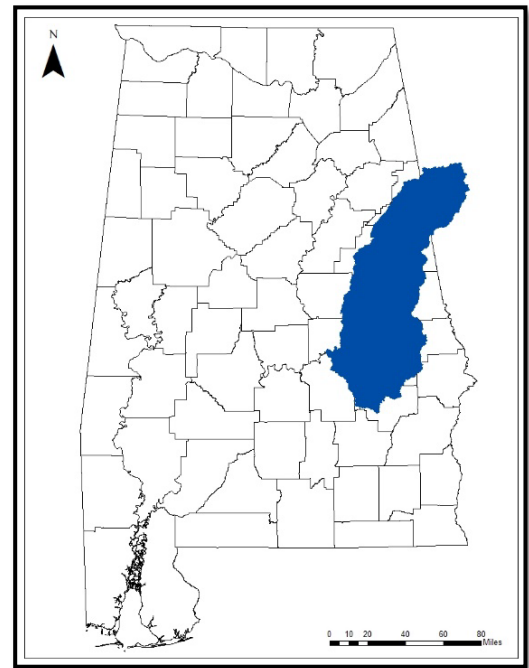


Figure 2. The Tallapoosa River Basin Watershed.

The Tallapoosa River watershed encompasses eleven counties within Alabama. A watershed is an area of land through which rainwater drains by flowing across, though, or under the soil surface to a common low point, typically a stream, river, lake, or ocean. (Brantley, Bell, & Dictson, 2019) The Tallapoosa River watershed contains the cities of Heflin, Lineville, Alexander City, Eclectic, Wetumpka, Auburn, Montgomery, Tuskegee, and Union Springs in Alabama.

The Tallapoosa River is controlled by hydroelectric release and is home to Harris Reservoir, Lake Wedowee, Irwin Shoals, Lake Martin, Yates Lake (Middle Pond), and Thurlow Lake (Lake Tallassee). The Tallapoosa River and its tributary Little Tallapoosa River are both navigable waters.

The Tallapoosa River Basin is home to numerous fish species such as largemouth bass, redeye bass, Alabama spotted bass, sunfish, lipstick darter, stippled studfish, Tallapoosa shiner, blacktail redhorse, bluegill, and catfish. Travelers along the river can also see a variety of wildlife and foliage, birds (Figure 3), turtles, and snakes. Much of the basin is forested (Figure 4) which provides great opportunities for hiking and nature watching. Recreational opportunities can be found at [Wind Creek State Park](#) at Lake Martin and [Kreher Preserve and Nature Center](#) in Auburn.



Figure 3. Bald Eagle in Pike Road, Alabama.
Photo Credit: Jennifer Barker

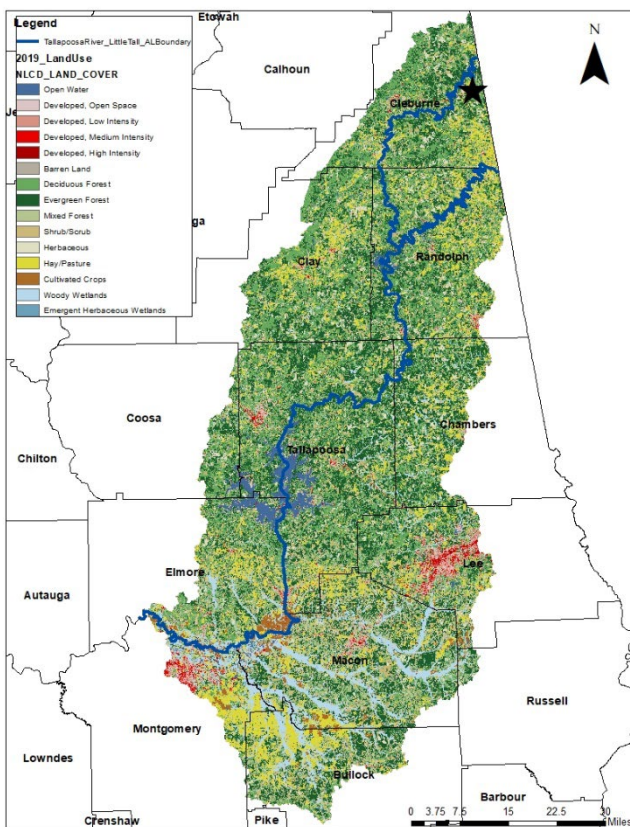


Figure 4. 2019 Landuse for Tallapoosa River Basin watershed.



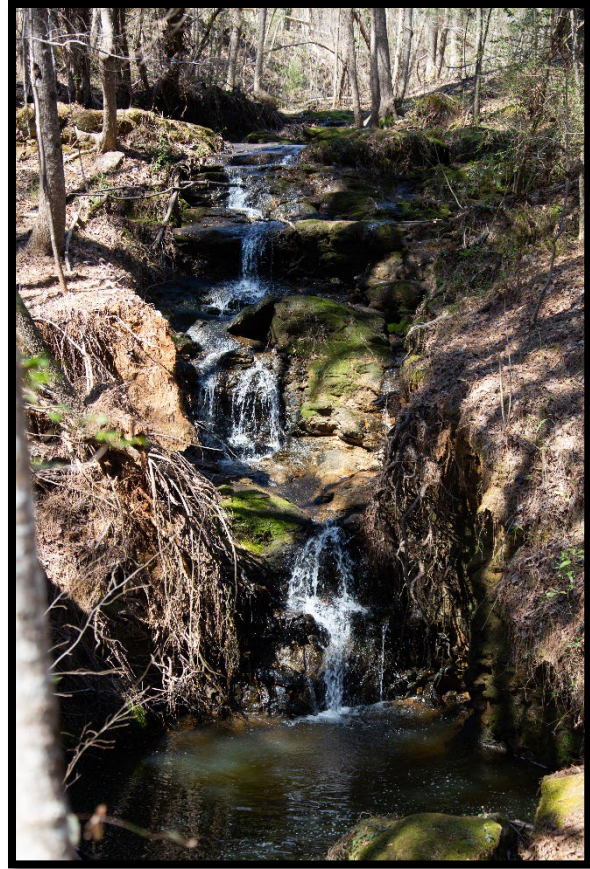
Figure 5. Wind Creek State Park.
Photo Credit: Heather Griffin

Wind Creek boasts 1,444 acres along Lake Martin providing fishing, swimming, camping, hiking, and a zipline. A great family getaway, Wind Creek (Figure 5) has something for everyone. The Kreher Preserve and Nature Center (Figure 6) is 120 acres of forested land that was donated to Auburn University by Dr. Louis Kreher and her husband in 1993. In 2008, the preserve became open to the public for outdoor recreation and environmental education.

You can also visit the [Talladega National Forest](#) located in Clay County and Cleburne County. "The National Forest commission created the Oakmulgee Purchase Unit, located south of Centreville, on January 21, 1935. The area was first settled in the early 1800's. On July 17, 1936, President Roosevelt, by proclamation, created the Talladega National Forest out of the Talladega and Oakmulgee Purchase Units. The Talladega National Forest, at one time, consisted of four ranger districts: Oakmulgee or the Cahaba

Working Circle, Tuscaloosa or the Pondville Working Circle, Shoal Creek and Talladega.” “The Talladega Unit was divided into two districts October 1, 1945, with the northern district, Shoal Creek Ranger District, headquartered in Heflin and the Talladega Ranger District. Thirty percent of the Shoal Creek/Talladega land was cut-over, cultivated, and vacated farmland.” [Tuskegee National Forest](#) in Tuskegee, Alabama is home to PineOaks Golf Club, Vaughans Mill Pond, campsites, and hiking trails.

For the history lover, Horseshoe Bend National Military Park in Daviston, Alabama, Fort Toulouse in Wetumpka, Alabama, or the Clay County Courthouse in Ashland, Alabama provide opportunities to step back in time. [Horseshoe Bend](#) also provides hiking, picnicking, boating, canoe trails, fishing, bicycling, birding, and horseback riding. [Fort Toulouse](#) is home to the partially restored 1814 American Fort Jackson, the William Bartram Nature Trail, and a 1,000-year-old Indian mound. The Clay County Courthouse (Figure 7) was built in 1906 and has been part of the Historical Registry since 1976.



*Figure 6. Kreher Preserve and Nature Center.
Photo Credit: Jennifer Barker*



Figure 7. Clay County Courthouse. Photo Credit: Jennifer Barker