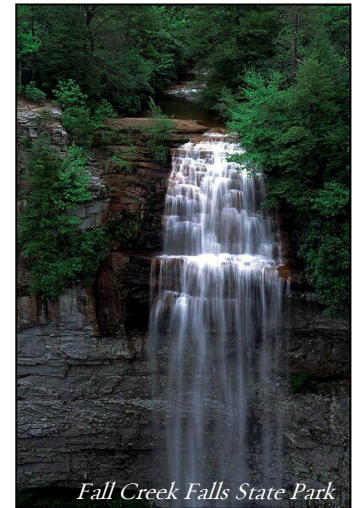


ALLIANCE FOR THE CUMBERLANDS

MISSION STATEMENT

To bring people together to achieve the ecological and economic sustainability of natural and human communities in the Cumberlands Region



Who Are We?

The Alliance for the Cumberlands is a partnership of public and private organizations unified in their commitment to protect the Cumberland Mountains and Plateau Region of Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, West Virginia and Virginia.

Why The Cumberlands?

The Greater Cumberland region stretches over 400 miles from West Virginia to Alabama and represents the western-most extension of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. The forests and waters of the Cumberlands are among the biologically richest temperate-zone systems in the world, harboring an extraordinary number of plants, fish, mussels, salamanders, fungi, and other species, many of which occur only in the Cumberlands, but nowhere else. The Cumberlands also contain thousands of caves that support one of the most diverse assemblages of cave animals on earth.

The biological importance of the Cumberlands is largely due to the unique geology of the region. Formed from the remnants of an ancient sea, the area is made of a low mountain chain (3,000–4,000 feet elevation) that is surrounded by a high plateau (~1,500 feet elevation). The plateau is heavily eroded and contains an abundance of deep river canyons. Some of these river canyons – known locally as “gulfs” – are nearly one thousand feet deep and contain unusual rock formations. The highest waterfall and the longest stone arch in the eastern United States are found there. Given the rugged and isolated nature of the land, the Cumberlands contain a vast array of habitats that support an abundance of life forms.

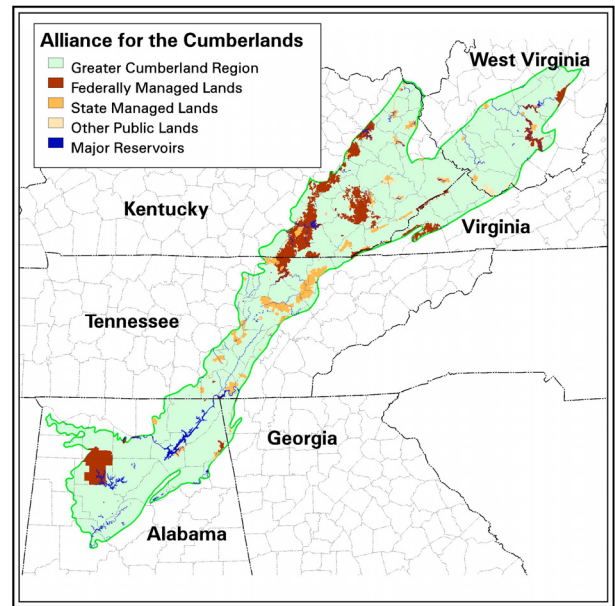
Today, forests still cover much of the region and high-quality habitats persist. However, many of the species and natural communities of the greater Cumberland region are imperiled because of increasing pressures from development and resource extraction. While some notable conservation work has been accomplished, a vast amount of work remains to be done. The time has come for more focused efforts to protect the unique natural and cultural features of this unique region.

Goals

Conserve and restore the lands and waters of the Cumberland Plateau; protect the area's unique natural, cultural and recreational resources; and foster sustainable forestry and agricultural practices

Educate the public about the need for conservation of the Plateau's wildlands and natural resources

Promote sustainable human communities and wise stewardship of natural resources on the Cumberland Plateau.



Who is in the Alliance?

The following organizations have been represented at the Alliance meetings.

- The Access Fund
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- National Park Service
- The Nature Conservancy (KY. & TN. Chapters)
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Southern Environmental Law Center
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- Kentucky Division of Forestry
- Kentucky Natural Lands Trust
- Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission
- Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
- Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation
- Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Tennessee State Parks
- Tennessee State Natural Areas
- Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning
- The Dogwood Alliance
- Tennessee Forestry Association
- Historic Rugby
- Cumberland Trail Conference
- Tennessee Division of Forestry

Interested in Learning More or Becoming a Member Organization?
 Contact Sandra Goss, 865.522.3809, skgoss@esper.com