



TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER®

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VICTORY FOR ENDANGERED SPRING PYGMY SUNFISH AND NORTH ALABAMA

HUNTSVILLE, AL — Tennessee Riverkeeper and the Center for Biological Diversity have reached an agreement with Mazda Toyota Manufacturing, U.S.A. to protect the critically endangered spring pygmy sunfish and minimize impacts from a planned automobile manufacturing plant. This agreement was reached in response to a notice of intent to sue from the conservation groups, arguing the manufacturing plant violated the Endangered Species Act. The factory will be built directly adjacent to Beaverdam Creek west of Huntsville, which is one of only two places the spring pygmy sunfish survives.

The agreement will protect at least 1,100 acres of the Beaverdam Spring and Creek Complex where the sunfish lives and provide \$6 million of funding to conserve the species and its habitat. The new land conservation area will be protected in its natural state and restricted to low-impact uses such as hiking and wildlife observation.

“This settlement will help ensure that citizens can enjoy clean water, wildlife and new jobs. These are values shared by Republicans, Democrats and independents,” said David Whiteside, founder of Tennessee Riverkeeper. “Clean, wholesome, toxin-free rivers are a God-given right, and Tennessee Riverkeeper is dedicated to protecting that right. This agreement is a victory for water, Huntsville and future generations of Americans.”

The agreement commits Toyota-Mazda to place \$4 million in a restricted endowment fund that will provide permanent funding for future conservation projects to benefit the spring pygmy sunfish, including habitat restoration, captive propagation, genetic studies and reintroduction efforts. It also commits \$2 million to be spent on immediate habitat restoration and monitoring in the Beaverdam Spring and Creek watershed.



Spring Pygmy Sunfish



“This photo, depicting early progress on stormwater-control measures for the site, was taken by SouthWings during surveillance in August 2018.”. Flight by SouthWings.org

ALARMING LEVEL OF MICROPLASTICS DISCOVERED IN TENNESSEE RIVER

CHATTANOOGA, TN — An alarming level of microplastics has been found in the Tennessee River. Experts conducted research on the surface of the river and scientists fear it is much worse in deeper water. Tiny pieces of plastic are the result of the breakdown of larger plastic items over time, or they are produced purposefully in various products. These pollutants are hard to see, and therefore hard to remove from water. They “biomagnify” in organisms, which means they build up during the food chain process after larger animals consume smaller prey. Experts believe microplastics can last for hundreds of years.

Microplastic pollution is attributed to the South’s habit of littering, citizens’ lack of involvement in recycling, and the amount of plastic packaging in the U.S. Most of the microplastic pollution is from polyethylene, which is used to make packaging. According to recent studies, the Tennessee River has 80 percent more microplastic than Yangtze River in China. Research on microplastics has been limited, making this a pollution threat that we are only beginning to understand.

MICROPLASTICS ARE MESSY BUSINESS

The Tennessee River is polluted by as many as **16,000 – 18,000** particles per cubic meter.

JOIN THE FIGHT

DID YOU KNOW?

Aquatic Biodiversity!
The southeastern U.S. possesses about 90% of the world’s species of mussels and crayfish, and about 50% of the freshwater fish of the continental United States.

RIVERKEEPER is on Twitter: Visit [Tennessee Riverkeeper on Twitter](https://twitter.com/TNRRiverkeeper), for news, updates, and brief articles:
[Twitter.com/TNRRiverkeeper](https://twitter.com/TNRRiverkeeper)

350 Waterkeeper organizations!
There are now over 350 Waterkeeper orgs. protecting local waterways worldwide. More info. www.waterkeeper.org

RIVERKEEPER UPDATES



PFC POLLUTION: RIVERKEEPER v. 3M Co.

DECATUR (AL) - DECATUR, AL — Tennessee Riverkeeper’s pollution lawsuit addressing PFOS and PFOA will remain in the Northern District of Alabama despite 3M’s attempts to consolidate the many lawsuits against them.

“Consolidation of our lawsuit with the other cases would have deterred Riverkeeper’s efforts to clean up this toxic mess for every citizen in North Alabama. By keeping Tennessee Riverkeeper’s case separate from the more than 70 cases that are being consolidated we will be able to continue to focus on the local issues that are the subject matter of our lawsuit, namely the contamination of the Tennessee River and its environs and our goal to remediate it,” said David Whiteside of Tennessee Riverkeeper.

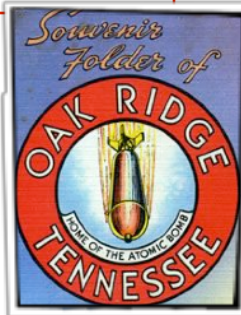
On September 26, 2018, lawyers for 3M Company filed requests with various courts with pending lawsuits against it to consolidate those suits. Tennessee Riverkeeper’s legal team opposed the motion and argued that the causes of action and parties in the actions differ so significantly that any advantages of centralization would be offset by delay. Riverkeeper’s attorneys successfully contended that there are significant factual differences among the actions that make centralization non-workable. The MDL Panel issued an order on December 7, 2018. Our case will remain in the Northern District of Alabama where it is now being litigated.



3M Company in Decatur. Flight provided by SouthWings.org

OAK RIDGE STP

OAK RIDGE (TN) - Tennessee Riverkeeper identified 251 sewage overflows which, since September, 2012, have dumped over 40 million gallons of raw sewage into East Fork Poplar Creek, Ernie’s Creek, and other bodies of water. Riverkeeper filed a lawsuit to address these problems on September 10, 2018.



Sewage overflowing in Nashville, Tennessee on Earth Day.

ASHLAND CITY STP

ASHLAND CITY (TN) - Tennessee Riverkeeper identified 59 sewage overflows which have continually dumped raw sewage into the Cumberland River, going back to January 2013. Riverkeeper filed a lawsuit to address these problems on February 23, 2018.

SIGNAL MOUNTAIN STP

SIGNAL MOUNTAIN (TN) - Tennessee Riverkeeper identified 1,533 sewage discharge violations which have dumped over 20 million gallons of raw sewage into the Tennessee River, since January 2015. Additionally, there were 195 sewage overflows during this time. Sewage has plagued the Chattanooga area for over a decade. Riverkeeper filed a lawsuit to address these problems on October 26, 2018.



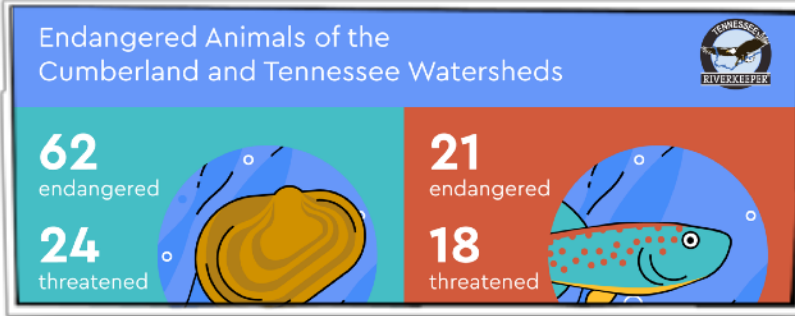
Riverkeeper has seven attorneys defending your water.

OUR SUPPORTERS + TAKE ACTION

PROTECT THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

The Endangered Species Act is helping to save more than 1,600 U.S. plants, fish, and animal species from extinction. Congress has shown intentions of attacking the Endangered Species Act with more than two dozens pieces of legislation that would weaken it.

Please sign the petition to tell Congress you support the Endangered Species Act and oppose any efforts to weaken it: <https://tinyurl.com/DefendTheESA>



Please join Riverkeeper in being better stewards of God's creation.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We welcome Guthrie Trapp and Rita Goyal to our Board of Directors.

Andrew Young, Emmylou Harris, Patagonia, Phish

Special thanks to Andrew Young, Emmylou Harris, Ken Levitan, Patagonia Foundation, Jack Johnson, Phish and their WaterWheel Foundation for the generous support of Riverkeeper in 2018.



Emmylou performs for Riverkeeper at Acme Feed & Seed in Nashville, TN



Mark Martin, Jack Johnson, and David Whiteside in Nashville, TN

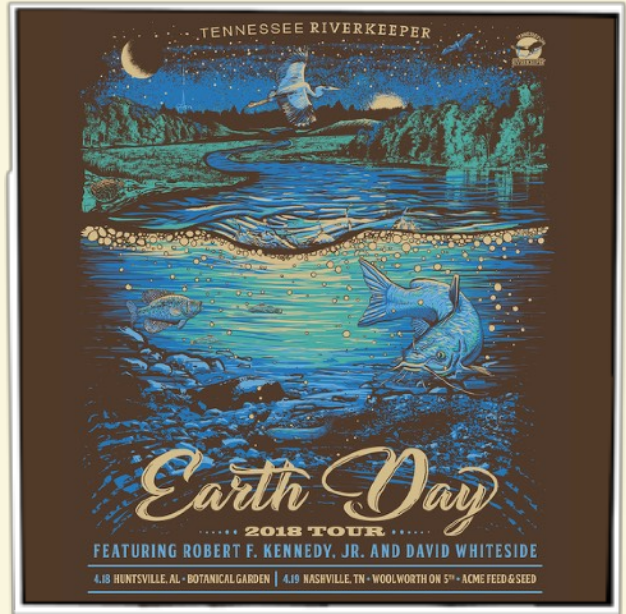
EARTH DAY 2018

Tennessee Riverkeeper organized an Earth Day Tour featuring Waterkeeper Alliance President, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Andrew Young, and David Whiteside with stops in Huntsville, Nashville, and Atlanta.



L to R: Seigenthaler, Young, Kennedy, Whiteside, Morales

L to R: Kennedy, Emmylou, Whiteside



Earth Day Poster by Derek Perez. PeregonCreative.com

About TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER

The mission of Tennessee Riverkeeper is to protect the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers and the tributaries by enforcing environmental laws and educating the public. Our communities are all interconnected neighbors upstream and downstream and everyone needs clean water, whether you're black or white, rich or poor, Republican or Democrat. Riverkeeper advocates for the watershed to ensure that future generations will inherit safe, clean water in their communities.

Tennessee Riverkeeper monitors polluters and their pollution permits, responds to citizen complaints, and utilizes water sampling data to further

protect the Tennessee River and its tributaries. When the organization discovers illegal pollution, Riverkeeper will seek solutions, including enforcement of environmental laws.

For more info visit: www.TennesseeRiver.org





TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER

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www.TennesseeRiver.org

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PLEASE CHECK A CATEGORY

- _____ Slackwater Darter\$25
- _____ Redfin Darter\$50
- _____ Boulder Darter\$100
- _____ Alabama Cavefish.....\$250
- _____ SPRING PYGMY SUNFISH.....\$1000
- _____ other amount\$ _____
- _____ Volunteer.....(list hours and type of work) _____

The spring pygmy sunfish (Elassoma alabamae) is a small, striped fish that rarely grows larger than an inch and is known for its complex courtship "dance," which involves fin undulations, vertical bobbing, weaving and "dashing." Since its discovery in 1937, the spring pygmy sunfish has hovered on the brink of extinction. Habitat loss and degradation caused the small fish to completely disappear from two of three springs it was known to inhabit, leaving the Beaverdam Spring and Creek complex, and the surrounding area, as the one of the last known areas of occupied habitat.

Please make checks payable to: **TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER**
You can also become a member at our website: www.TennesseeRiver.org